

Civilizations of the Ancient Near East

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VOLUME I

1995

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Royal Ideology and State Administration in Hittite Anatolia

GARY BECKMAN

TO JUDGE FROM THE thousands of clay tablets thus far recovered from Hittite sites, the use of cuneiform writing in Khatti was restricted to the royal bureaucracy. Our main sources of information are the archives of the Hittite capital of Khattusha (modern Boğazköy), collections of tablets produced by the subordinates of the king in the course of overseeing the Hittite state's regular functioning on the political, economic, and religious levels. The archive of a provincial governor posted at Tapikka (Maşat Hüyük) has also been recovered, as well as a few relevant letters, diplomatic texts, and miscellaneous administrative records from the Syrian cities of Ugarit (Ras Shamra), Alalakh (modern Tell Açana—pronounced Atchana), and Emar (Meskene).

In contrast to the situation in regard to most other well-documented cultures of the ancient Near East, very few records dealing with the social and economic life of private individuals are known. Whether such matters were dealt with on the perishable wooden tablets occasionally mentioned in the cuneiform texts, or were simply not committed to writing, is disputed; but the material that we do possess is of particular importance for the study of the present topic.

In the Boğazköy archives, we repeatedly en-

counter statements of the principles underlying Hittite kingship, as well as demonstrations of the operation of these ideas in the actual practice of the royal establishment. Nevertheless, because this material was almost all composed by persons sharing the interests and outlook of this establishment, we have little information on how others, be they vassal rulers or Hittite peasants, might actually have viewed a particular Hittite king or the Hittite state in general.

It must also be borne in mind that most of the texts recovered at Boğazköy were written in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BCE, that is, in the final half of the Hittite state's four-hundred-year history. Although we do have a few (mostly fragmentary) tablets inscribed in the Hittite Old Kingdom or Middle Kingdom, most compositions from the earlier periods are known only in copies into which later scribes may well have introduced changes to bring their work into conformity with contemporary conceptions.

THE IDEAL OF KINGSHIP

Justification for the rule of the Hittite king is stated succinctly in a blessing spoken by a priest while the monarch does obeisance to the gods:

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May the Labarna, the king, be dear to the gods! The land belongs to the storm-god alone. Heaven, earth, and the people belong to the storm-god alone. He has made the Labarna, the king, his administrator and given him the entire Land of Khatti. The Labarna shall continue to administer with his hand the entire land. May the storm-god destroy whoever should approach the person of the Labarna, [the king], and the borders (of Khatti)!

That is, the king himself was not the proprietor of the Land of Khatti but merely the steward appointed by its divine owner, and as such was under the deity's protection. Therefore, on the human level there could be no legitimate challenge to the rule of the king. In a text from the last years of Khatti, a subordinate is enjoined, "You must be a true slave [of the king]! You shall not lift up your neck!"

Nonetheless the ruler was vigilant in defending his position against encroachment from any direction. In a mythological passage contained in an early ritual for the construction of a new palace, the king addresses the divinized throne: "The gods, the sun-god and the storm-god, have allotted to me, the king, the land and my house, so that I, the king, might protect my land and my house. You shall not come to my house, and I will not come to your house."

The king's stewardship found its practical expression in his office as chief priest of the national deity. In the earlier period this was the service of the storm-god of Khatti, but later it was directed primarily toward the sun-goddess of the city of Arinna. A significant royal title under the Empire (or Hittite New Kingdom) was "Priest of the sun-goddess of Arinna and all the gods."

As priest, the king stood at the point of contact between the sphere of the gods and that of humans. He was personally responsible for organizing the people's efforts in the defense and exploitation of the Land of Khatti for the benefit of its gods, who expected that a share of the booty from military campaigns as well as regular sustenance drawn from the production of Hittite farmsteads and herds would be delivered to their temples. That the gods were thought to be literally dependent on the toil of their human servants is manifest in a passage from a prayer in which Murshili II points out the negative con-

sequences for the deities of a plague raging among the Hittite population:

All of the Land of Khatti is dying, so that no one prepares the sacrificial loaf and libation for you (the gods). The plowmen who used to work the fields of the gods have died, so that no one works or reaps the fields of the gods any longer. The miller women who used to prepare the sacrificial loaves of the gods have died, so that they no longer make the sacrificial loaves. As for the corral and sheepfold from which one used to cull the offerings of sheep and cattle—the cowherds and shepherds have died, and the corral and sheepfold are empty. So it happens that the sacrificial loaves, libations, and animal sacrifices are cut off. And you come to us, O gods, and hold us culpable in this matter!

In better circumstances than those here recounted, the gods duly favored the undertakings of their human servants in return for their attention. On the ideological plane it was the management of the mutual demands and services of these two levels of the universe that constituted the *raison d'être* of the Hittite state.

Given the unequal relationship between humans and gods, it is not surprising to find, in an Old Hittite incantation, the monarch's role as supervisor of Khatti and its people on behalf of their divine overlords expressed through the image of a herdsman:

Let the surrounding enemy lands perish at the hand of the Labarna! Let them hand over (their) goods of gold and silver to Khattusha and Arinna, the cities of the gods! And let the Land of Khatti graze in stable manner(?) in the hand of the Labarna and Tawananna! Let it be broad!

And as the representative of human society, the king might be called on to plead the case of his subjects in the face of divine displeasure manifest in plague or other calamity. Indeed, because he was the personification of the Hittite state, the cause of the gods' anger might well be an action or omission for which he was directly responsible. Justification or atonement for the conduct of the ruler himself, of his predecessors in kingship, or of those under his rule was the function of the Hittite royal prayers.

Conversely, a boon granted to the king and his family constituted a gift to all of Hittite society. A prayer delivered to the god Telipinu on behalf of Murshili II requests:

To the king, queen, princes, and to the Land of Khatti give life, health, strength, long years, and joy in the future! [And to them] give future thriving of grain, vines, fruit, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, mules, asses—together with wild animals—and of human beings!

Standing in such close contact with the world of the divine, the person of the king was subject to special standards of purity. This may be seen in regulations for palace servants in which it is demanded, for example, that drinking water presented to the king not be contaminated by the hair of others, and that leather intended for his use be obtained only from the palace kitchen, where it would have been prepared in the proper manner. There also seems to have been a latrine reserved for the exclusive use of the royal family.

Obviously the king was a special individual. His ideal superior physical qualifications are stressed through metaphor in an incantation: "His body is new; his breast is new; his [head] is new; his male appendage is new. His [teeth] are those of a lion. [His] eyes are those of an eagle, so that he sees like an eagle!"

Among humans he enjoyed the special favor of the gods, who are said to "run before" him and his subordinates in battle, leading to inevitable victory over his enemies. Divine concern for the military success of Hittite rulers is also apparent in a prayer of Khattushili III in which he refers to "those who were formerly kings (of Khatti), to whom the storm-god had presented the weapon."

In the annals of the Old Hittite king Khat-tushili I, it is reported that "the Great King, Tabarna, beloved of the sun-goddess of Arinna—she set him in her lap, took his hand, and continued to go before him." In other early texts there is revealed a special concern for the person of the king on the part of Khalmashuit, the divinized throne.

During the Empire period, for which we have much fuller information, it seems that each king enjoyed the protection of a particular patron deity, for example, Murshili II that of Telipinu, Muwattalli II that of the *piḥaššašši* storm-god, Khattushili III that of Shaushga of the city of Shamukha, and Tudkhaliya IV that of Sharruma. Indeed, while humbler members of Hittite soci-

ety each had an anonymous "tutelary deity," the king was entitled to the attention of a major member of the pantheon.

This personal deity of the king stood in an almost parental relationship to his charge and was responsible for the successful progress of his career. Muwattalli II addresses his divine patron in a prayer:

O *piḥaššašši* storm-god, my lord! I was a (mere) mortal, but my father was a priest for the sun-goddess of Arinna and for all the gods. My father engendered me, but you, *piḥaššašši* storm-god, took me from (my) mother and raised me. You made me a priest for the sun-goddess of Arinna and for all the gods and installed me in kingship for the Land of Khatti.

Similar gratitude is also expressed by Khattushili III toward Shaushga in a text justifying his usurpation of the throne. (See "Khattushili III, King of the Hittites" in Part 5, Vol. II.)

Visual expression of the patron deity's succoring relationship with the king is found in the "embracing" scenes often depicted on royal seals of the Empire period and quite strikingly—featuring Tudkhaliya IV and Sharruma—in the rock sanctuary of Yazılıkaya.

In view of his privileged position, the ideal Hittite king was expected to display compassion toward his human charges. A text that might be called *A Mirror for Princes* exhorts the king, "Give bread to the hungry one. Give oil [to the exhausted one(?). Give] a garment to the naked one. If heat afflicts him, [place him in a cool spot]. But if cold afflicts him, you [place] him in a warm spot."

The living Hittite monarch was not divinized; rather, he "became a god" only on his death. This concept is simply an extension of the Hittite view of the power of the dead within a family. Just as the ghost of an ordinary person could cause trouble for survivors if the physical remains had not been properly disposed of and sufficient funerary offerings provided, so too could the unhappy spirit of a departed king adversely affect the fortunes of all of Khatti.

That is, the powers of a dead king were so much greater than those of an ordinary departed person that the spirit of the former was properly placed among the gods. The practical consequence of these ideas was the ancestor cult docu-

mented by sacrificial lists for dead kings and other deceased members of the royal family.

ROYAL TITULARY

The Hittite king bore many different titles, varying by period, context, and predilection of the individual monarch. However, under the Empire, most important official documents begin with some variation of the sequence: "The Labarna so-and-so, the Great King, King of the Land of Khatti, the Hero, Beloved of such-and-such a deity."

Labarna, which also appears in the variant form Tabarna, is often translated by modern writers as "emperor." The first two Hittite kings were named Labarna, and it remains uncertain whether these rulers had simply adopted a title as a proper name, or conversely, whether their personal name developed into a title in a manner parallel to that of Latin "Caesar" in a later civilization. In any case, the term is most probably a loanword from the indigenous Hattic language, along with the companion designations Tawananna for the ruling queen and *tuh(u)kanti* for the crown prince. There is no good evidence for the suggestion that the Hittites believed that there existed some sort of mystical identification of each king with the spirit of the first ruler to bear the name Labarna.

The title of Great King belongs to the international diplomatic terminology of the second millennium, designating those rulers of western Asia whose realms were not dependent on any other state. In the course of the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries, only the kings of Khatti, Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Mitanni, and perhaps Akkhiyawa were entitled to style themselves "Great King."

The final two elements of this titulary, Hero and Beloved (of a deity), refer to the previously discussed martial success and divine protection attributed to the Hittite ruler.

Perhaps the most important title of the Hittite monarch within Khatti itself, however, was "My Sun-god," usually rendered as "My Majesty" or "His Majesty" according to context. While it has often been maintained that this term was borrowed from Egypt, the appearance of the des-

ignation already in the Hittite Old Kingdom, before significant contacts with Egypt had been established, as well as the total absence of other Egyptian elements among Hittite conceptions of kingship, make it unlikely. Rather, it seems that the expression—really a respectful salutation—was taken over from northern Syria, where already in the Mari period a ruler could be so addressed. In this regard it is surely significant that the term invariably appears in Hittite texts in an Akkadian writing.

ROYAL DUTIES

The duties of the Hittite king can be subsumed under five primary categories: religious, military, diplomatic, judicial, and administrative. Because most of these topics are discussed thoroughly elsewhere in these volumes, only brief remarks are called for here.

As set forth above, the religious obligations of the Hittite monarch, which underlay the entire system of thought supporting the monarchy, were the most important of his responsibilities. Thus Murshili II was forced to postpone a crucial military operation in order to perform a festival for the goddess Lelwani.

There were indeed a great number of rites that called for the presence of the Hittite king. One of the largest groups of texts in the royal archives is that presenting instructions for the performance of religious ceremonies. Such tablets were surely composed and recopied in order to provide a secure basis for the fulfillment of this paramount royal obligation.

Most of this worship took place in the capital, but for many ceremonies it was necessary that the ruler travel to various cities of the realm. A number of these rites were organized into circuits with collective designations, for instance the "Festival of the Crocus(?)," which lasted for thirty-eight days in the early spring, and the "Festival of Haste," which took up a similar period in the autumn. It is likely that the king availed himself of the opportunity afforded by his presence in the provinces during these religious journeys to attend also to other, administrative, business. (See "Music, Dance, and Processions in Hittite Anatolia" in Part 10, Vol. IV.)

It should be noted, however, that while the king might have been the center of attention in the ceremonies in which he participated, his role was largely passive, while the recitations and more elaborate ritual actions were carried out by professional priests.

The king was the commander in chief of Hittite military forces, responsible for organization, maintenance, and direction of the army. In practice, he delegated many of these tasks to subordinates, but correspondence found in the archives demonstrates that the ruler was kept informed of even minor military matters. And certain kings, like Shuppiluliuma I, pursued military careers before ascending the throne and continued their active participation in campaigns afterward.

The king also directed Hittite diplomacy, an undertaking closely allied with the military affairs of Khatti. The aim of this diplomatic activity was the establishment of settled relations, codified in written treaties, with all known foreign polities not accepted as the legitimate subordinates of other states and therefore incapable of independent action. Such relations could be instituted on the basis of equality, as with Egypt and Babylonia, or on that of vassalage to the Hittite king. War or the threat of war was often a necessary preliminary to the settling of these arrangements.

Negotiation of treaties was the task of the king's ambassadors, designated by the humble term "messengers," who also dealt with such further matters of international relations as the exchange of valuable goods and interdynastic marriages. Nonetheless, Hittite diplomatic texts are invariably styled as the dictation of the Hittite monarch alone.

The king was the chief judge of the land. Certain serious crimes were brought directly to his attention, although the requirements of ritual purity prohibited his immediate contact with some types of offenders. He also considered appeals of judgments made by his administrators and adjudicated serious disputes among vassal rulers.

The authority of the king and his representatives was to be respected. The *Hittite Laws* warn, "If someone contests a judgment of the king, his house will become a ruin(?). If someone contests the judgment of a dignitary, his head

will be cut off." In land grants of the Old and Middle Hittite periods, the penalty of beheading is also threatened against those who should challenge the monarch's settlement of real property.

Finally, the king was the head of the entire Hittite administration and the ultimate superior of every member of the Hittite bureaucracy, the activities of which will be sketched later in this essay.

Were there any constraints on the Hittite ruler's freedom of action? While it is unlikely that the king could afford to undertake activities or policies opposed by significant portions of the ruling group of Khatti, and probable that some of the attested depositions of Hittite rulers were brought about by the flouting of just such considerations, in theory—as we have seen—the king was subject only to the wishes of the gods.

As these desires were frequently ascertained by means of various types of oracles, it may be that the religious personnel conducting the consultations manipulated them toward particular ends. In all of the many preserved oracle texts, however, there is no evidence of any such tententious behavior, and in any case the problems queried are invariably matters of detail, such as from which direction a town should be attacked, rather than questions of policy, such as whether a war should be undertaken in the first place.

ROYAL SUCCESSION

In most societies of the ancient Near East, kingship was normally passed from father to son, and this was indisputably the rule in Khatti in the Empire period. Many modern writers, however, have been reluctant to recognize this straightforward mechanism at work in the Old Kingdom. It was once widely held by scholars, for example, that in earliest Hittite history each king was merely "first among equals," elected to paramountcy by the assembled men at arms of Khatti. And a more recent interpretation holds that rule in Khatti was originally inherited matrilineally. Both of these views are fallacious.

The postulation of an elective kingship in Khatti was certainly conditioned by the expectations which many scholars brought to the study of an early society whose rulers spoke an Indo-

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European language. But the organization of the Germanic tribes of the Roman period, as described by Tacitus, for example, really has little to tell us about conditions in a much more ancient Anatolia.

Within the Hittite documentation itself, primary textual support for elective kingship has been drawn from the *Succession Edict* of Khat-tushili I. Here the old king, apparently on his deathbed, disinherits his nephew Labarna before the assembly and names his grandson Murshili I as successor. It is clear from the tenor of the text, however, that the king does not ask for the acquiescence of his audience in this choice, but rather assumes their compliance. Because he believes that he will soon die, and it is explicitly stated that Murshili I is still too young to assume rule immediately, Khattushili requires the assistance of the assembly for practical reasons alone.

Indeed, a close examination of the role of the assembly in all periods reveals that its function was judicial and not political. There is no evidence that this body intervened in any of the instances of disputed succession that arose in the course of Hittite history.

Similarly, the matrilineal view of early Hittite succession has been influenced by ideas concerning a later population, in this instance by the questionable claims of classical writers that matriarchy was practiced in western Anatolia in the first millennium. Ostensible Hittite textual evidence for matrilineality has been drawn chiefly from an exegesis of the *Proclamation of Telipinu* (see the box).

Advocates of the matrilineal interpretation believe that Telipinu's statement of the principles governing accession to the throne reflects a reform in favor of patrilineal inheritance and that the murders reported in the preceding narrative were committed by persons defending their rights under the now-abolished matrilineal system. Cross-cultural studies show, however, that under such a regimen a man's inheritance passes to the son of his sister, and none of the beneficiaries of the murders in Khatti can be seen to have a claim to the throne on such a basis.

It is important to note that the key term in Telipinu's formulation must be rendered "first-rank son," and not "eldest son"; that is, the mon-

arch's choice is limited to a group and not to an individual.

Though mentioned only laconically here, the integration of a daughter's husband into the paternal family, to the extent of making him the heir of her father, is a form of marriage known in second-millennium Anatolia from the Old Assyrian period onward and reflected even in local mythological narratives. On the human level, for instance, an Old Hittite document found at the site of Inandik tells us that a prominent man named Tuttulla adopted another man, Zidi, while at the same time giving him his daughter in marriage. The natural son of Tuttulla is forbidden to challenge this act, thus indicating that the inheritance of property is also in question here.

In Khatti the transmission of property down the generations was patrilineal. Significant latitude, however, was allowed the father in the distribution of his wealth, as demonstrated by a late document in which an important personage named Shakhurunuwa divides his extensive landed holdings among his sons and grandsons through his daughters.

When we recognize that the office of king was passed on in a manner analogous to that concerning any other "property," we realize that all of the murders mentioned in the *Proclamation of Telipinu* were in fact perpetrated by, or in favor of, those with a claim to inheritance according to the patrilineal system. These claims could be either through biological descent in the male line in the case of a son, or through marriage to an eligible daughter in the case of a brother-in-law or son-in-law. In the latter instances, of course, the generation in which the claim is founded varies.

In its ruling on succession, therefore, the *Proclamation* presents no reform, but by stating so clearly the potential rights of a son-in-law, it serves as a justification for Telipinu's own actions in deposing Khuzziya and taking the throne himself.

Royal genealogies stress descent in the male line. Thus Khattushili III entitles himself "Khattushili, the Great King, King of the Land of Khatti; son of Murshili, the Great King, King of the Land of Khatti; grandson of Shuppiluliuma, the Great King, King of the Land of Khatti, de-

scendant of Khattushili, King of Kusshar." In other contexts the "throne of kingship" and "the throne of the father" are interchangeable terms.

Again, in conformity with the freedom allowed a father making a bequest, the king could designate as *tul(u)kanti*, "crown prince," and heir apparent any of his first-rank sons. Thus Shuppiluliuma I instructs a vassal: "Now you, Khuqqana, recognize only My Majesty in regard to lordship! My son of whom I, My Majesty, say, 'Let everyone recognize this one,' and whom I thereby distinguish among (his brothers)—you, Khuqqana, recognize him!" In a recently discovered bronze tablet, which presents a treaty from the thirteenth century, Tudkhaliya IV relates how his father Khattushili III had removed an elder brother once intended for rule and "placed me in kingship."

The choice of successor which this system left to the reigning monarch had the advantage of allowing him to choose the most able of a group of possible candidates groomed for rule, but it was inherently unstable because it encouraged violent action on the part of disappointed aspirants to eliminate both rivals and the preceding king. It is just such nefarious activity that is so vividly illustrated in the *Proclamation of Telipinu*.

Indeed, Tudkhaliya IV seeks to guard against the large number of persons with some claim to consideration for highest office by commanding subordinates,

My Majesty has many brothers and many cousins. The Land of Khatti is full of the seed of kingship. The seed of Shuppiluliuma, the seed of Murshili, the seed of Muwattalli, and the seed of Khattushili, is numerous. You must not recognize any other man in regard to lordship! In regard to lordship, down to the second and third generations, protect the seed of Tudkhaliya!

It remains uncertain only if a king could choose the husband of a first-rank daughter as his heir if a son of proper standing was available. In any case, the king could strengthen the claim of a son-in-law through formal adoption as his own son. The operation of this mechanism explains how in the Middle Hittite period, against the Hittite conception of incest, Nikkalmati could be both sister and wife of Tudkhaliya III—this king had apparently been adopted by his predecessor, Arnuwanda I.

The position of a designated successor could be secured through a coregency. Such an arrangement is well attested for Tudkhaliya II and Arnuwanda I, as well as for another Tudkhaliya of the Middle Hittite period and his "father." Joint rule is also quite likely in the cases of Khattushili I and Murshili I, and of Khattushili III and Tudkhaliya IV. Furthermore, a number of Old Hittite historical texts discuss campaigns under the joint direction of an unnamed king and "the father of the king," which may be evidence for coregency at the dawn of Hittite history.

The Telipinu Proclamation

This edict of Telipinu is one of the most prominent texts from the Old Kingdom because its opening narrative has provided the armature around which historians have constructed our knowledge of the events of this period. The king briefly recounts the history of Khatti in the Old Kingdom period, explaining how murder was instrumental in the succession to the throne. Thus King Murshili I was killed by his brother-in-law Khantili I, Zidanta I by his own son, Ammuna, and the other heirs of Ammuna by a conspiracy in favor of Khuzziya I. The story concludes with Telipinu's own supplanting and exile of his brother-in-law, Khuzziya. Telipinu states that he took this

action only on learning that Khuzziya had designs on his own life and that of his wife Ishtapariya, Khuzziya's sister.

But for its ancient audience the most important section of the *Proclamation* was the prescription for royal succession:

Let only a prince of the first rank, a son, become king! If there is no first-rank prince, then whoever is a son of the second rank—let this one become king! If there is no prince, no (male) heir, then whoever is a first-rank daughter—let them take a husband for her, and let him become king!

INSTALLATION AND SYMBOLS OF OFFICE

Although we have recovered an inventory of materials remaining from when "His Majesty and the Queen were seated in kingship," as well as oracular inquiries intended to determine the optimum time for such an event, no actual "coronation" ceremony has been found among the Bogazköy tablets. Nevertheless, we do have a good idea of what was involved on this recurrent occasion from a ritual for the installation of a substitute king. As it was intended that the evil forces announced by an omen should mistake an unfortunate prisoner of war for the actual ruler, it stands to reason that the rite by which the former replaced the latter replicated the essentials of an actual accession to the throne. Thus we read,

The prisoner is anointed with the oil of kingship and (the officiant) speaks as follows: "This one is now the king. [I have given] him the name of kingship. I have clothed him in [the garment] of kingship. I have put on him the cap."

Anointing with fine oil was an integral part of the ceremony of enthronement throughout the contemporary Near East. Khattushili III writes to another king that it is the duty of one ruler upon the accession of another to send "nice gifts, a garment of kingship, and fine oil for anointing oneself." In Hatti, however, it is uncertain whether this unction took place only when a man became king, or also when the designation of the heir to the throne was made known.

While the bestowal of "the name of kingship" might refer only to the employment of one or more of the titles discussed earlier, it may well indicate the adoption of a throne name during the course of the rite. Khattushili I had originally borne the personal name Labarna, and it seems that most kings of the Empire period had exchanged Hurrian personal designations for traditional Hittite names. The most certain example concerns Murshili III, whose birth name of Urkhi-Teshub is still contemptuously employed in most of our sources, which were composed by persons hostile to his rule.

The "garment and cap of kingship" given to the prisoner must indicate the usual regalia of the sovereign seen in the art of the Empire pe-

riod—a long robe reaching to the ankles and a sort of skullcap. In addition, the monarch wears earrings and shoes with upcurved toes. These last two accoutrements, however, are not restricted to the royal outfit. Significantly, the affinities of the king with the sun-god are underlined by the depiction of this deity in imperial iconography—as in the rock sanctuary of Yazılıkaya—in garb identical to that of the human ruler. (See fig. 1; another part of the sanctuary is pictured in the chapter on Anatolian reliefs and statuary in Part 10, Vol. IV.)

Although it is not mentioned in the substitution ritual, in most artistic representations the king carries a curved staff of office, the *kalmuṣ*, which scholars often translate by means of Latin *lituus*. Some authorities believe that this symbol is derived from a shepherd's crook and reflects the concept of king as shepherd discussed earlier.



Fig. 1. Relief of King Tudkhaliya IV from Yazılıkaya. HIRMURE ARCHIVES, MUNICH

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THE QUEEN, HAREM, AND ROYAL FAMILY

The king of Khatti had a single first-rank wife, who bore the title of queen and whose chief function was to produce children of the first rank. In addition the king had concubines of free status, designated as "the shut-in ones" and "the released ones," as well as slave concubines. These persons and their offspring constituted the royal harem.

The term "great family" probably indicated only the immediate royal family, including the adult sons of the ruler and their own wives and children. More distant relatives, descendants of previous kings, would be included under the designation "prince," literally, "son of the king." Some of these collateral families were established as cadet lines of rulers in other towns.

Since patronymics are not attached as a matter of course to the names of persons mentioned in the texts, the extent to which the ruling group of Khatti—the higher military commanders and officials called variously "lords," "dignitaries," and so forth—was composed of members of the extended royal family is uncertain, but it is likely that they had a strong participation in these circles. On the other hand, those functionaries known as "sons of the palace" seem to have been of a lower rank.

The wife of the king also received the title Tawananna, pendant to Labarna, but only on the death of her predecessor, who was in most cases the mother of her husband. That is, the office of Tawananna, which may originally have entailed chiefly religious duties, was inherited separately from that of king. On occasion this could lead to conflict between the holders of the two highest positions in Khatti, as when Murshili II deposed his Babylonian stepmother from the Tawananna position, accusing her, among other offenses, of introducing inappropriate customs into Khatti and squandering the goods of religious institutions under her administration.

Beyond reproductive and religious functions, which are illustrated by many texts, the Hittite queen also presided over at least a large part of the royal domestic establishment, known as the "house of the king." In a letter to Ramesses II

of Egypt, Queen Pudukhepa, wife of Khattushili III, remarks, "When I entered the royal household, the princesses I found in the household also gave birth under my administration." The queen was assisted in her work by such groups of officials as the "chamberlains of the queen" and the "waiters of the queen." Her active participation in administration is illustrated by a group of texts that record testimony taken in her presence from bureaucrats accused of pilfering the palace stores.

The queen could also be involved in diplomacy and governance of the empire. As we have seen, Pudukhepa participated in the correspondence between the royal courts of Egypt and Khatti, and her seal, as well as that of her husband Khattushili III, is said to have been included on the copy of a peace treaty sent by the Hittite chancellery to Egypt. Actual impressions of joint seals of this queen both with her husband and with her probable son Tudkhaliya IV (fig. 2) have been found on tablets at Ugarit.

But we cannot be certain that the active participation of Pudukhepa in political affairs was typical of Hittite queens, for it is clear from our sources that she was an extraordinarily energetic and capable individual. Moreover, it seems more than likely that Pudukhepa undertook some of her activities only in order to relieve



Fig. 2. Impression of seal of Tudkhaliyah IV and Pudukhepa, Ugarit. CLAUDE F. A. SCHAEFFER, *UGARITICA III: MISSION DE RAS SHAMRA* (1956)

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Khattushili, whose poor health is well documented. It is indeed possible that the previously mentioned troubles between Murshili II and his stepmother had their roots in her own attempts at the sort of independent action later attested for Pudukhepa.

THE ECONOMY OF KHATTI

The ancient Anatolian economy was based primarily upon the production of small-scale agriculture and herding. The peasantry upon which this ecological and economic system rested was organized into family households, which were further grouped into villages. The Hittite language, like Sumerian and Akkadian, employed the same word for "house" as a structure and "household" as an economic unit. A typical household was that of Pulliyanni:

Two males, Pulliyanni and Assharta; three boys, (named) . . . ; four women, (named) . . . ; three girls, (named) . . . ; two old women, (named) . . . —fourteen persons (in all); four oxen, two asses, two cows, one heifer, two plow-oxen—as for bulls, a calf—in all that is six cattle; ten goats, seven kids—in all that is seventeen goats; one house, a vineyard, olive tree, fig trees . . .

There were three fundamental relationships in which a Hittite village might stand to its socio-economic environment. In a free village the peasants would either cultivate their own fields, held privately or in some cases communally, or work royal land under various sharecropping and labor-service arrangements. Unless specifically exempted, all free persons owed taxes in agricultural products and also corvée labor to the state. This corvée could be performed in public works, such as the building of fortifications or the construction of the royal installations of Khattusha, or in agricultural labor in fields owned directly by the state.

A village could also be dependent on the king or on a landowner from the ruling group of Khatti. In the first instance the settlement and its fields would be administered directly by royal bureaucrats. No doubt the inhabitants would be assisted in their cultivation by free peasants performing their corvée service.

In the second instance the village and its agricultural lands would have been conveyed to the owner as a gift of the king. Such donations are attested in a number of royal deeds of gift, most from the Old Hittite period. Individual parcels of land held in a similar manner are registered in the so-called cadastres or field lists. It is important to observe that while the land given to an individual could amount to an impressive acreage, it was not consolidated but scattered in different localities. Thus the king sought to prevent the nobility's establishing independent local centers of economic power which might serve to challenge his own rule. The noble proprietor of village or field would be responsible for gathering agricultural taxes and organizing the corvée of his peasants.

Finally, a village could belong to a state institution, such as a local palace, a temple, or the mausoleum of a deceased ruler, which then acted as the agent for the extraction of surplus from the producers. Persons attached to these lands would again be assisted by the corvée of free peasants.

Hittite rulers often made donations of land to temples. For instance, Khattushili III gave the estates of two of his defeated enemies to the goddess Shaushga, and Pudukhepa vowed to present extensive territories and their personnel to the goddess Lelwani if her husband was cured of illness. It was one of the tasks of local administrators to maintain the labor force on temple estates at full strength, filling vacancies when necessary with persons carried off to Khatti by the army.

STATE REVENUES

The finances of the Hittite state rested chiefly upon the agricultural surplus collected as taxes from the free peasantry or produced on lands controlled in various ways by the state. In addition, a percentage of the small industrial production of textiles and metals (copper, tin, bronze, iron, and silver) was gathered. The Hittite state also demanded tribute in precious metals, raw materials, and foodstuffs from vassal polities and seized booty from enemies in the course of military campaigns.

The wealth captured within Anatolia consisted primarily of large and small cattle as well as civilian prisoners to meet Khatti's pressing manpower needs, but warfare in Syria resulted in the acquisition of sumptuous objects of gold and silver. Members of the Hittite military were allowed to retain some of this treasure for themselves, but the lion's share went to the king.

The extent to which the Hittite state taxed and participated directly in trade remains uncertain. It does seem, however, that merchants stood in some relationship to the royal establishment, enjoying the protection of the king and possibly collecting tribute from Syrian vassals. Fines levied in court constituted a final source of state revenue, but these could not have been particularly important for the governmental finances, for the Hittite Laws show several instances in which the king orders their remission.

HITTITE ADMINISTRATION

The day-to-day regulation of the system of collecting and redistributing wealth was the task of the royal bureaucracy. We do not know nearly as much about this organization in Khatti as we do for some states in ancient Mesopotamia, because such primary documents as were kept by the Hittites were inscribed on wooden tablets, which have vanished. Among the cuneiform texts, we do find some summary records, a few statements of normal expected revenues, and a number of compositions instructing officials on how to perform their jobs.

At the head of this system stood the king, of whom the bureaucracy was simply an adjunct. Hundreds of names of offices and professions are attested in the Hittite archives, but the majority are designations for cultic functionaries of little importance for the present discussion. Some of the important administrative and military posts bear designations such as "chief of the wine" or "chief of the men of the tongue (of the royal chariot)," which show that they grew out of originally rather menial tasks performed within the royal household.

High or low, it seems that all Hittite officials were bound by an oath to the person of the king, to whom they owed their appointment, directly

or indirectly. Although we do know of a few instances in which an office was passed from father to son, this does not normally seem to have been the case. Only scribes routinely followed in their fathers' footsteps, but instruction in literacy was probably carried out within the home, and scribes did not usually occupy positions of political power.

Of course we are best informed about the activities of those bureaucrats who were active in the capital itself. In the texts that they created, the Sumerian term "palace," which probably stands for the Hittite phrase "house of the kings," can refer not only to one of several royal residences, but also to the state and its administration. The parallel to the use on a more modest level of the same Hittite word for "house" and "household" is obvious.

Local officials operated from a network of redistributive institutions, most of which were called "palaces," a usage that demonstrates their connection to the central authority in Khattusha. A provincial palace received goods from a multiplicity of communities, each of which was represented before the bureaucracy by an individual. Other establishments within this system were the "stone houses" or mausoleums of dead kings, and storehouses, literally "seal houses" or "tablet houses," of which approximately one hundred are listed in one record. It is uncertain if the poorly attested "granaries" and "implement houses" were independent institutions or belonged to one of the previously mentioned authorities.

These institutions both funneled wealth to the central government at Khattusha and redistributed foodstuffs, livestock, raw materials, and finished products on the local level. Many cultic texts record disbursements of animals and other things required for rituals from a "palace," and it seems that the "storehouses" constituted a network of armories for the Hittite military.

Within Anatolia, the administrative level directly beneath that of the Hittite king in Khattusha was that of the "Lands," which were governed by prominent members of the royal family—often by sons of the reigning king, but also by his uncles. We read in the *Proclamation of Telipinu* that, already in the earliest days of Khatti, the sons of Labarna were dispatched as

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administrators to the countries that the king had subdued.

Khatti's internal regional system did not remain stable, but varied according to administrative and political exigencies. In the Old Kingdom we find mention only of Khatti itself, of Pala to the northwest of the central Hittite area, and of Luwia to the west. Under the Empire the most important Lands are Pala-Tumanna and Kasshiya to the northwest, Khakpish to the north, the Upper Land to the northeast, the Lower Land to the south, and Kizzuwatna with its capital city Kummanni to the southeast in later Cilicia.

Somewhat anomalous was the position of the appanage kingdoms, whose rule was passed down within a collateral line of the Hittite ruling house without intervention by the current Hittite king. At various times Tarkhuntassha in southwestern Anatolia and Khalpa (Halab, Aleppo) and Carchemish (Karkamish) in northern Syria held this status.

On an intermediate plane stood the royal appointees known as "stewards," economic administrators who probably presided over the units known as *telipuri*, or "districts." Because all cities in which stewards are known to have controlled storage facilities are to be located in central Anatolia, it remains uncertain whether the system made up of these officials extended over all of Khatti or was restricted to the central area.

Although his relationship to the "steward" is unclear, the local officer best known to modern scholarship is the "lord of the watchtower," a royal appointee who held sway over a territory of some size in frontier regions of Khatti, supervising a number of towns. It is the records of such an official from the Middle Hittite period which were found in the archive of Tapikka, northeast of Khattusha.

From these texts, as well as from a composition giving instructions for holders of this office, we know that among the responsibilities of the "lord of the watchtower" were military affairs including surveillance of enemy forces in the border area, the organization of agriculture on state lands, the upkeep of royal buildings and temples, and the administration of justice within its jurisdiction. A loose translation as "provincial governor" thus seems appropriate for the designation of this important functionary.

In some matters the provincial governor was assisted by the elders of the local settlements or by other lower-echelon officials. The most important of these petty officeholders were those known as "city commissar" and "mayor." It is uncertain whether the monarch directly appointed these men or merely confirmed them in office. In any case, their efforts seem to have been directed chiefly to matters of fire protection, public sanitation, and security against external foes.

The elders of certain cities, such as Zalpa and Khattusha itself, played an important role during the formative years of the Hittite state, and councils of elders later retained some political significance in less-developed peripheral areas in Anatolia. Within Khatti proper, however, the functions of these groups were reduced to cooperation with royal officers in the administration of justice and the organization of local cultic matters.

Available Hittite texts concerning religious establishments deal much more frequently with rites carried out within their precincts than with their acquisition and disbursement of goods. The latter topic is, of course, touched on in the course of the description of certain ceremonies, and we do possess a number of documents listing territories that belonged to religious corporations. Hittite temples were undoubtedly administered in some fashion by their priesthoods, but they were also under the ultimate control of king, so no state-temple dichotomy existed in Khatti.

As the monarch was the chief priest of Khatti, it is impossible to separate the concerns of the temples from other state business documented in the records of the royal archives. For example, an important source for both religious and political history is the census of local cults in northern and central Anatolia carried out under Tudkhaluya IV. Note also that while no certain examples of state "storehouses" have been excavated, good archaeological evidence for a Hittite redistributive institution is provided by the remains of Temple I at Khattusha, whose magazines contain more than 250 very large vessels for the storage of foodstuffs.

As already mentioned, we have little textual documentation of the redistributive activity of the gods' houses, and there is no evidence at all

that these religious institutions performed the kind of active economic role—granting loans, setting weights and measures, administering oaths to litigants, and the like—attested for Mesopotamian temples in the Old Babylonian period.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE

As was the case with the internal divisions of Khatti, the number and identity of states subject to the Hittite Empire varied over time. Following the course of events, some polities joined or fell away from Khatti, while others, such as Kizzuwatna, began their association as vassal kingdoms and were eventually absorbed into the central Hittite state.

The most important constituents of the Hittite empire in Anatolia were Ishuwa in the east, the Arzawa lands (Arzawa proper, Mira-Kuwaliya, the Shekha-River Land, Khapalla, and Wilushiya) in the west, and Kizzuwatna in the south. Most prominent in Syria were Mitanni, Ugarit, Niya, Nukhasshe, Khalpa, Carchemish, Kinza (Qadesh), Amurru, and Ashtata. The chief city of this last small kingdom was Emar, where an important group of texts documenting primarily the economic activities of the native population has been discovered.

The rulers of these vassal kingdoms were usually members of the dynasties that the Hittites had subjugated. The vassal states were not integrated politically or economically into Khatti. Rather, their kings simply assumed a number of obligations toward Khatti and were bound by treaty to the person of the Hittite Great King. A Hittite treaty was enforced by oaths witnessed by the gods of both parties. The importance of this type of document for Hittite political practice is underlined by the fact that more than half of the treaties so far discovered from the ancient Near East were composed in Khatti.

The most important obligations laid by treaty and oath upon vassals were payment of tribute, military assistance to a Hittite army campaigning in the vicinity, renouncing all independent foreign relations, extradition of fugitives from Khatti (of artisans, ordinary peasants, and herdsmen, as well as of political intriguers), and protec-

tion of the rights of the designated successor to the Hittite Great King.

The fulfillment of these duties was monitored to a certain extent by Hittite bureaucrats and diplomats, though the details of this practice are still far from clear. In Syria, the king of Carchemish functioned as viceroy of the Great King. His intervention in various local and intervassal affairs is documented in a number of records discovered at Ugarit and Emar. Should his decision be unacceptable, appeal to the highest authority in Khattusha was possible. Remarkably, we have no evidence of friction between the Hittite king and his subordinate in Carchemish during the almost two centuries that this system was in existence.

In addition, the Syrian documents allude to the activities of various Hittite tax officials, of a dignitary called "overseer of the land," and of military officers. Here also, as in any section of the empire, a local ruler could be provided a Hittite garrison, whose function was no doubt as much to keep an eye on the vassal as to serve as his bodyguard.

HITTITE FEUDALISM?

Many writers have described the governmental system I have briefly sketched here as "feudal." This term is strictly appropriate only for the world of medieval western and central Europe for which it was coined, and it ought to be avoided in discussions of the ancient world because of the misleading connotations that it inevitably carries for the social and political structures of the society so designated.

In any case, a very important characteristic of feudalism was absent in Khatti. Although the reality was often at variance with the ideal, the government of medieval France, for example, can be described as a chain of authority. Individuals at each level of political power owed service to an overlord, who in turn swore fealty to a superior on the next higher plane, which was of course occupied by fewer men. The state as a whole was constructed as a pyramid culminating in the person of the king.

In the Hittite polity an analogous arrangement might be seen only in the organization of the

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empire, where each vassal swore an oath to the Great King, while his own population remained his "personal" servants, with no direct ties to the overlord in Khattusha. Within Khatti itself, however, each noble and official, each "(man) of the oath," was bound immediately to the Great King.

Indeed, the records of both the monarch in Khattusha and the governor in the provincial town of Tapika reveal a bureaucratic ethos in which local officials did not assume significant initiative in regard to problems arising within their administrative area; rather, they turned to the king for decisions on the most basic local concerns.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN KHATTI?

It is difficult to address the question of change over time in the organization of the Hittite state because of the temporal skewing of our sources stressed at the beginning of this essay. But we have already seen that the character of the Hittite monarchical system did not alter significantly over the course of recorded history, being an absolute kingship from the start.

Some scholars have written of the development of a "bureaucratic state" in Khatti during the Empire period, but this formulation is misleading, for a large corps of royal officials was already in place under the Old Kingdom, and nothing resembling a modern bureaucracy could ever have existed under the social and economic conditions of ancient Anatolia. We can, however, confidently postulate that the system of government became more elaborate with the expansion of the Hittite state, and that certain normative procedures were gradually established for what had once been an ad hoc administration.

It is interesting to note in this regard the development of compositions addressed specifically to royal officials. Old Kingdom bureaucrats were admonished by simple cautionary tales to be honest, diligent, and competent in the performance of their duties, while Middle Kingdom and Empire period officials were given lengthy and detailed instructions. The arbitrary and absolute tenor of these administrative regulations must

be emphasized—they were definitely not statements of the rights of the king's servants. One text specifically forbids an official to refuse to perform a royal order on the grounds that it had not been set forth specifically in his written instruction.

CONCLUSION

Because Khatti grew largely by the accretion of peripheral vassal units, and only rarely and haltingly through the integration of these polities into the central Hittite state, the structure as a whole remained fragile. Subordinate rulers were always ready to throw off the Hittite yoke upon the accession of a weak or inexperienced man as Great King, or when the central government was reeling under the blows of external enemies.

Systemic crises occurred regularly in Hittite history: for example, in the Old Kingdom, when early expansion into Syria could not be sustained; in the Middle Kingdom, when Khatti struggled with Mitanni for control of Kizzuwatna and began to lose territory to the Kashkaeans in the northern regions of Anatolia; and in the Empire period during the early years of Murshili II, when the state was threatened with general collapse. It was undoubtedly such a crisis that brought an end to Khatti in the first quarter of the twelfth century.

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SEE ALSO *Legal and Social Institutions of Hittite Anatolia* (Part 4, Vol. I) and *The History of Anatolia and the Hittite Empire: An Overview* (Part 5, Vol. II).