

A HITTITE HIEROGLYPHIC SEAL IMPRESSION FROM TEL APHEK*

Itamar Singer

During the fifth season of excavations at Aphek-Antipatris in 1976, a Hittite bulla,¹ the first to come to light so far in the Land of Israel, was discovered in the Late Bronze Age palace on the summit of the tel. The site, located on the ancient Via Maris about 20 km. east of Tel Aviv, has been under excavation since 1972 by an expedition headed by Prof. M. Kochavi of Tel Aviv University Institute of Archaeology (for the site and its history, see Kochavi 1975:17 ff.). The writer is deeply indebted to Prof. Kochavi for entrusting him with the publication of the bulla.

The Late Bronze Age palace of Area X (Kochavi 1977a,b; 1978) has also yielded six cuneiform fragments to date, including a fragment of a Sumerian-Akkadian-Canaanite lexicon, testifying to the importance of Aphek as a scribal centre during the late Canaanite period (Rainey 1975; 1976).

The Hittite bulla (Registration No. 27640/1) was found in a 4-metre wide passage (Locus 2753) separating two units of the acropolis complex. A fragment of a Sumerian-Akkadian literary text, an Egyptian signet ring of the New Kingdom and a Mycenaean III B stirrup-jar were found in the same passageway, all apparently having fallen onto the ground from the adjacent palace.

The bulla (Pl. 19:1-2; Fig. 1:1-3) is of unbaked clay, dark-grey-to-black in colour. One facet of the lump, which forms a 45° angle with the impressed surface, is smooth and without pattern (Pl. 19:2; Fig. 1:2, 3, marking A), having apparently been pressed against a firm surface while the clay was still soft. One of the broken faces bears two parallel cylindrical impressions (markings B, B₁). Similar impressions, which appear to have been made by sticks, thongs or the like, were noted on some bullae from Boğazköy (Güterbock 1942:3). At the left-hand side of the impression may be seen fingerprints partially pressed over the outer ring (Pl. 19:1; Fig. 1:1, marking C). Since the greater part of the bulla is missing, its original shape is unknown;² nor can it be determined to what sort of object it was attached.³

* I wish to thank Prof. H.G. Güterbock who read the manuscript of this paper; his remarks are noted within the text. Photographs accompanying the text are by Moshe Weinberg and drawings are by Naomi Schechter.

Hieroglyphs are identified by their numbers in the following sign lists: *G* = Güterbock 1942:84-104; *L* = Laroche 1960; *M* = Meriggi 1962. Hittite hieroglyphic inscriptions are referred to by the abbreviations used in Laroche 1960:pp.xxi ff. Additional abbreviations: *Beran* = Beran 1967a; *Boğ.* *V* = Güterbock 1975a; *Korucutepe* = Güterbock 1973.

1 The term *bulla* is used here in the sense defined by H. G. Güterbock (1942:1): "a clay lamp used for sealing of strings."

Singer: A Hittite Seal Impression

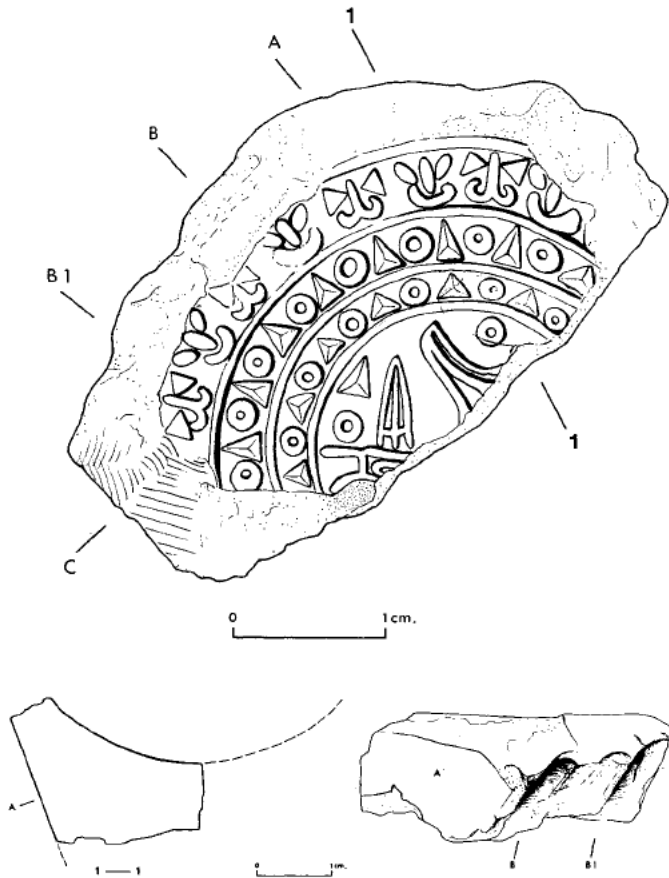


Fig. 1. The Hittite bulla: (1) The seal impression; (2) Section of the bulla; (3) Side view of the bulla.

The impressed surface of the bulla is concave. The seal was fully stamped onto the clay, but since the bulla is broken, only the left-hand side of the impression is preserved (Pl. 19:1; Fig. 1:1). The diameter of the reconstructed impression is 40 mm. and its central field is 19 mm. The frame consists of three ornamented rings, their width increasing towards the outer periphery (inner ring: 2.5 mm.; middle ring: 3.5 mm.; outer

- 2 The majority of the bullae from Boğazköy, Tarsus, Korucutepe, etc. are conical, but there are also cylindrical, flat or irregular shapes (Güterbock 1942:3).
- 3 In his basic work on Hittite sealing procedures, H. G. Güterbock (1939:33 ff.) defines two categories of sealed items: (a) commodities packed into clay vessels, wooden boxes, baskets, hides, textiles, etc. and then tied up, the end of the strings or cords subsequently sealed with a clay bulla and then stamped; (b) documents written on either clay or wooden tablets. Theoretically, our bulla could have been attached to either a container or to a wooden tablet, but the former alternative is the more likely, particularly considering the smoothed face, which indicates that it may have been pressed against a firm surface.

ring: 4.5 mm.). Non-royal seals with more than two ornamented rings are quite unusual (Güterbock 1942:30);⁴ the only other example known to me is *Boğ. V 26*, which has four rings.

The inner and middle rings have a common design: alternating circles and triangles, with equilateral triangles in the former and isosceles triangles in the latter. The outer ring is patterned with two alternating signs: *L 155/G 70* ("pomegranate") and *L 441/G 176*. Both of these signs are found in varying combinations in borders (Güterbock 1942:31 f.), but an identical combination to that on our seal is unknown to me.

In the central field (of which less than half is preserved) appear: (1) the title KING + CHILD (*L 46*); (2) the left-hand part of the first sign in the name of the seal owner, and (3) a "secondary group" consisting of two circles and a triangle (*L 370*), the latter symbolizing HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

The concave surface of the seal and its general design date this bulla to the Hittite Empire period (14th–13th centuries B.C.E.) by analogy with the main seal groups from Boğazköy, Ras-Shamra and Tarsus (Beran 1967a:82, par. V).

The two components of *L 46* – the "royal cone" (*L 17*) and the "hand" (*L 45*) for CHILD – are nearly touching each other, the inner cross of the cone being clearly visible. The "fingers" of the hand are broken off.

The differentiation between SON and DAUGHTER and, consequently, between PRINCE and PRINCESS was not previously demonstrable (Güterbock 1942:10 ff.; Laroche 1960:33, no. 46). Recently, on the basis of the bullae from Korucutepe, Güterbock was able to suggest a clear differentiation based on which component appears underneath the "hand"; i.e. the "word-divider" (*L 386*) represents SON, and the pointed oval, the sign for WOMAN (*L 79 / M 324.1*), represents DAUGHTER (1973:137 and n. 7; 1975a:53).

Careful examination shows that the space under the "hand" on our seal is slightly rubbed off; if originally there had been a sign there, it has been completely obliterated. In any case, the identifying element could very well have been located on the broken part of the impression. It should also be noted that this component is sometimes placed somewhat distant from the bottom of the "hand" (*SBo II 16*; *RŠ 17.372 = Ugaritica III: Fig 41*; *RŠ 17.228 = Ugaritica III: Fig. 38*), and at other times almost at its extremity (*RŠ 17.314 = Ugaritica III: Fig. 49*). There are also a few cases in which the element is omitted altogether.⁵

4 As pointed out by Güterbock, this could be accidental, since frequently the clay bulla has a smaller surface than that of the seal, and the seal runs off the available surface for imprinting.

5 *SBo II 7, 10, 26*; *Tarsus 40*; *Malatya 6*, left. On the grounds of the Malatya inscription, where the sign in question accompanies a female representation, Güterbock (1942:12) considered the possibility that *L 42* without any additional element represents PRINCESS. This interpretation has since been revised on the basis of the new evidence from Korucutepe, as evaluated by Güterbock; it seems that such omissions are purely fortuitous and have no bearing on the reading. The following examples are indicative: *SBo II 10* and *11* both belong to Malaziti, although on No. 10 the element is omitted; on *Tarsus 40* the *L 46* sign appears in an antithetic position, the right-hand sign having the element, whereas on the left-hand sign it is omitted.

Consequently, in considering possible candidates for the seal owner, both alternatives, a prince or a princess, must be taken into account.

For the identification of the owner of the seal we have, unfortunately, only part of the first sign of the name. That this actually is the first sign may be established with a fair degree of probability: the central axis of the legend is given by the pointed triangle of *L 46*, which usually stands upright or is slightly bent outwards (*SBo I* 104; *SBo II* 11; *Korucutepe* 4; *Tarsus* 54), or inwards (*Boğ. III* 12, 13). Thus there is hardly any room remaining above the sign in question for an additional sign, since this space is occupied by the small circle of the "secondary group."

The preserved part of the sign consists of three converging lines: two slightly concave, running parallel until shortly before the break, where the lower of the two broadens somewhat and turns downwards, and a third, S-shaped line, also broadening near the break. Above this sign, to the right of the circle and near the edge of the break, there seems to be a small point which may or may not belong to the sign. Although it does not protrude from the surface, evidence that it once existed may be deduced from the narrow crack (clearly visible on the photograph) which runs from the border of the central field through the lower part of the circle but is terminated abruptly at this point.

Before we venture to suggest possible identifications of the sign, two general observations should be made: a) In the majority of Hittite seal impressions, the signs of the legend face right; statistically, seven out of ten impressions have a right-facing stance, one faces left and two are symmetrical (Laroche 1960:249 and n. 3).⁶ It is therefore likely that we have the rear part of a sign, or the left-hand side of a symmetrical sign. b) In more than half of the seals belonging to princes(ses), the *L 46* sign appears in antithetic position. Upon calculating the available space left on our seal, such a possibility is almost certainly excluded. On the remaining seals *L 46* either appears only once or is accompanied by an additional title on the opposite side, in which case *L 46* is usually found on the right-hand side (*SBo II* 16, 21; *Boğ. III* 12, 13; *Tarsus* 17), with only one exception (*Boğ. III* 14). Statistically speaking, there is thus only a very slight chance that the seal of our prince bore an additional title. (In any case, the available space enables at the most a short title, such as *L 326 SCRIBE*).

6 An even higher proportion of right-facing legends was found among the 73 seals and seal impressions of princes(ses) listed below, only one of which has the legend facing left (*RŠ* 17.316 = *Ugaritica* III:Fig. 48b):

Alaca H. 5; *Boğazköy*: *SBo I* 104, 105, 111; *SBo II* 5–17, 19, 21–32, 67, 230; *Boğ. III* 10–15; *Boğ. V* 8, 9, 28; *MDOG* 89, 46 Abb. 40 left; *MDOG* 93, 66, Abb. 55a; *Korucutepe* 4, 5; *Ortakaraviran*; *Ras-Shamra*: 17.137, 17.228, 17.251, 17.314, 17.316, 17.318+349, 17.433; *Tarsus* 13, 14, 17, 40, 45 (=53), 46, 54, 59; *Tell Açana* 2 (bi-convex seal); *CIH XL* 5, 8c, 9, 10, 13, 17; *Hogarth* 195 (gold ring), 325, p. 90 Fig. 114A (bi-convex seal); *Newell* 386. For occurrences of *L 46* on stone inscriptions, see Laroche 1960:No. 46 (all except *Malatya 6* belonging to the Hittite Empire period).

Following are suggestions for identification of the sign in question on the Aphek seal:

1) The nearest resemblance that I can find is to the outspread wing of a bird, as depicted on the signs *L 130* to *L 134*.⁷ The closest parallel may be seen in *SBo I 160* (= *Beran 162*), the first sign thereof having only its left-hand side preserved – exactly like on our seal. This truncated sign was originally considered to be part of a winged sun in the *Aedicula* (Güterbock 1940:32), but has recently been identified by Beran (1967a:34, 72) as a bird's wing, viz. the left half of *L 130*. The general form of the wing resembles that of the sign on our seal, although it is somewhat smaller and does not have an inner partition. The small point above the "wing" on our seal (see above p. 181) might be the very end of the bird's neck-lock, such as that appearing on *Beran 161–162*.⁸

The phonetic value of *L 130* has been established on the basis of *SBo I 64* (= *Beran 161*) as *ar* (Beran 1962: 53; 1967a:71 and n. 7; Laroche 1966:No. 148.6). The reading of *SBo I 64* (= *Beran 161*) is *Ar-nu(wa)-tá*; *SBo I 60* (= *Beran 162*) is completed accordingly: *A[r-n]u(wa)-[tá] LUGAL(?)* (Beran 1967a:34, 72). According to the cuneiform legend, *SBo I 60* (= *Beran 162*) belongs to Arnuwanda and Ašmunikal. *SBo I 64* (= *Beran 161*) is ascribed by Beran on stylistical grounds to Arnuwanda III, successor of Tudḫaliya IV (cf. also Otten 1967:230).

L 132,⁹ *L 133*, *L 134*, which also have the value *ar*, depict the spreading wing facing the opposite direction; therefore an identification with the sign on our seal impression is less likely (see n. 6 above). Regarding *L 131* (attested only on stone inscriptions), its phonetic value has yet to be established.

Admittedly, the above-suggested identification with *L 130* or a variant thereof encounters some difficulties. In addition to the differences in shape, the "wing" on our

7 This conclusion is supported by Prof. Güterbock in his letter of April 15, 1977 in which he writes: "Of the various possibilities for identifying the damaged sign, the 'bird' seems the most probable to me."

8 Cf. the improved drawing of *SBo I 60* in Beran 1967a:Pl. VI:162, in which traces of the bird's "lock" (?) and "tail" (?) are visible. The wing of the bird on *SBo I 64* (= *Beran 161*) differs considerably from that on our sign.

9 *L 132.2 = Boğ.III 14* (see photograph in *MDOG 87:23 Abb. 6*), the seal impression of a prince and "great-scribe" was read by Laroche (1958:117; 1966:No. 144) as *Ar-ná-li-i* (comparable to Arinnil or Arnili). However, following the reading *za/zi* for *L 376* in the Empire period (Hawkins, Morpurgo-Davies and Neumann 1974:161), we are confronted with the name *Ar-ná-li-za/zi*, which has an uncommon ending.

We would therefore suggest reading the name on *Boğ.III 14* as *Ar(i)-ná-ZIT¹zi*, a name which is attested in cuneiform (Laroche 1966:No. 124). The third sign admittedly looks more like *L 278 (li)* than *L 312 (ZITI)*, but cf. *RŠ 17.316 (= Ugaritica III:Figs. 48b;50;51)* and *SBo II 96*, which also have an off-centre "handle" (Laroche 1956:134); for the direction of the legend, cf. *SBo II 10, 11, 69–71*, etc., (versus the observation of Beran 1957:46 n. 32). The complex value *ar(i)* suggested here conforms to the well-known attempt of the Hittite seal manufacturers to avoid names with more than four signs (Laroche 1956:125, 130). Compare also the composite value *ar(a)* of *L 133–134*.

Prof. Güterbock prefers to maintain the reading *li* for the third sign in this seal impression.

impression is considerably larger: a completed drawing of the “bird” would fill more than half of the central field, leaving little space for additional signs. If *L 130* was actually the only sign on the seal, it probably represented the name Arnuwanda, as in the Darende Inscription side B (Hawkins 1974:310) and in Masson 1975:235, seal no. 8. A prince by the name Arnuwanda is not known, but the seal could belong to one of the kings with this name prior to his accession. (Arnuwanda II appears in Güterbock 1956:111, Frg. 36 in connection with a journey to an Egyptian dominated territory; the wheat shipped to Hatti in the second year of Merneptah probably falls within the reign of Arnuwanda III.) However, in the afore-mentioned royal seals, the name Arnuwanda is written with three signs, which could not be easily accommodated on our seal.

If the reading *ar(i)* for *L 132* suggested above (n. 9) is correct, theophoric names with the element *Ari-* are within the range of possibilities. (For a variant writing of *Ari-*, see Güterbock 1973:137; 1975a:48 n. 87).

2) There is some similarity between our sign and one of the variants of the “antler” *L 103*. (Compare the third variant from the left in Laroche 1960). The “antler” *L 103*, as well as the fuller representations of the “stag” (*L 102*), represents the ideogramme ^dKAL/^dLAMA. Both signs stand for the name ^m^dLAMA = Kurunta (see Houwink ten Cate 1965:120 n. 3), king of Dattaša/Tarḫuntašša, in the seal impressions *SBo II 5–6* (*L 102*; PRINCE) and in the Meydançık inscription (RAMURE KING (of) W; Laroche *apud* Mellink 1974:111). A letter sent by Rameses II to Hattušili III (*KUB III 67*; see Edel 1976:46 ff., 82 ff.) describes the dispatch of Egyptian physicians to treat the ailing Kurunta; as recompense, consignments of some commodity (Obv. 3'; perhaps “[stone of] Ḫupišna” = alabaster?; cf. Laroche 1968:777) were sent to Egypt. This is noteworthy in our connection if we assume that the consignments could have been sealed with Kurunta’s seal. The Egyptian letter *KUB III 27* also mentions a prince named Kurunta (Edel 1976:89).

However, the usual representation of the “antler” *L 103* differs considerably from our sign (cf. Güterbock 1942:89 No. 50b; *Boğ. V 29*).

3) *L 88*, imperial *tu*, could very well be represented by our sign, but this would require the “boot” to have a left-facing stance, i.e. that the entire legend faces left, contrary to the customary direction of hieroglyphic seal impressions – although a few such instances are encountered: *Boğ. III 16*; *RŠ 17.159* (= *Ugaritica III*: Figs. 24, 26); *RŠ 17.133* (= *Ugaritica III*: Fig. 23). A further difficulty is that an inner partition of the sign, similar to that on our seal, is not found elsewhere.

4) The “horn” *L 108* might be compared to our sign, but its phonetical value *sú* is attested only on inscriptions of the first millennium, whereas during the Empire period, the value *su* is rendered by *L 370*.

There may be a slight resemblance to other signs (e.g. *L 434*) but these would be acceptable only if very unusual variants were involved.

We have considered above some possible identifications of the first sign on the seal, with a preference for *L 130*. Admittedly, none of these proposals is free from difficulties. The identity of the seal owner therefore remains enigmatic.

In an attempt to answer the question when and under what circumstances did the bulla reach Aphek, we must therefore fall back on the title of the seal owner and the historical background.

Who are the persons to be taken into account as possible owners of a Hittite seal bearing the title "prince(ss)"?

Apart from the Hittite court, seals with hieroglyphic characters were used at the courts of the Hittite sub-kingdoms and at least in some of the vassal states. Within the confines of Anatolia, Hittite seals are attested for the "Upper Land" (*Boğ. III 9*, seal of Ḫattušili III prior to his accession to the throne), Dattaša/Tarḫuntašša (*SBo II:5-7*; see p. 183) and Išuwa (*Korucutepe 1-2*; see Güterbock 1973:136 ff.). The "Tarkondemos" seal and *Boğ. V 6-7* belong to a king of Mira (Güterbock 1975a:51 ff.; for the Ortakaraviran seal impression see n. 13).

In Syria Hittite seals were in use at the court of the viceroy at Carchemish (*Ugaritica III:30 ff.*, 131 ff.) and presumably also at Ḫalab and Alalaḫ. (See the title "prince" on the seal *Tell Aḫana 2* and on the stone inscription *Tell Aḫana*, left). Šaušgamuwa, king of Amurru, owned at least three Hittite seals, which he used alongside the dynastical cylinder seal of Aziru (*Ugaritica III:30 ff.*), and there may have been some additional vassal courts in Syria also using Hittite seals.¹⁰ On the other hand, the use of Hittite stamp seals was not adopted at the court of Ugarit (*Ugaritica III:66*).

The title "prince", cuneiform DUMU.LUGAL, could be borne by a legitimate offspring of a king or a prince (Bin-Nun 1973:11). As pointed out by Güterbock (1942:10), the title was retained by its bearer even when he fulfilled a special state function; thus, on many seals of princes we find additional titles such as "(great-) scribe", "governor", "palace attendant". However, there is one obvious exception to this rule: royal princes appointed to rule in the Hittite sub-kingdoms, as well as their successors on the throne, relinquished the title "prince" in favour of that of "king";¹¹

10 Note the use of Hittite hieroglyphic seals by residents of Syrian towns: *RŠ 19.78* (= *PRU VI:52*), bearing the seal of Aki-Tešub of the town Armana, and *RŠ 18.02* (= *Ugaritica III:47 ff.*, 147 ff.) with the seal of Kiliya priest of Ištār of the town Zinzara.

Hittite seals or seal impressions were found at the following sites in Syria and Palestine: Ugarit (for references see Laroche 1960:xxxiv); Alalah (*ibid.*:xxxiv); Ḫalab (*ibid.*:xxxv); Carchemish (for references see Buchanan 1967:21 n. 16); Hama (*ibid.*); Tell Kazel (unpublished, Laroche, *RHA 27:130*); Megiddo (*Megiddo II:Pl. 162:7*); Tell el-Far'ah (*BP I:Pl. XXXVI*; *BP II:Pl. LXXIII:58*, 65 and p. 30; cf. Gelb 1939:21). Recently Hittite seal (impressions) were found on the Middle Euphrates at Meskene-Emar (Laroche 1975:212) and at Tel Ashara-Terqa.

Although these seals might have belonged to Hittite officials, merchants, etc., some of them may have been in the possession of local residents.

11 See the seals of Inī-Tešub and Talmi-Tešub, kings of Carchemish (*Ugaritica III:20 ff.*, 121 ff.); Ari-Šarruma, king of Išuwa (Güterbock 1973:140 f.; 1974:422); Ḫattušili, king of the "Upper Land" (*Boğ. III 3*) and the stone inscription of Talmi-Šarruma king of Ḫalab (*Alep I. I*). *SBo II 5-6* attributed to ^mLAMA king of Dattaša/Tarḫuntašša (Güterbock 1942:10 f.; see

their seals are royal in every respect, including the “privilege” of having a cuneiform legend in the frame (Güterbock 1973:137 and n. 5). Consequently their direct descendants were granted the title of “prince(ss).”¹²

The title “prince” (*L 46*) borne by Šaušgamuwa, king of Amurru, on his Hittite hieroglyphic seals (*Ugaritica III*:30 ff., 131 ff.) shows that princely status could be passed on through the female line to non-Hittite dynasts of vassal states. Šaušgamuwa may have enjoyed this status by right of being a son of the Hittite princess Gaššuliyawiya (Kühne 1973:182 n. 68) or, alternatively, by his marriage to a sister of the ruling King Tudḫaliya IV.¹³

To sum up the evidence, the prince(ss) on the Apehek seal could have been: (a) a descendant of a Hittite king or prince (but excluding a monarch of a Hittite sub-kingdom); (b) a descendant of the king of a Hittite sub-kingdom (Carchemish being an apt example);¹⁴ (c) a king of a vassal state connected by marriage to the Hittite royal family (e.g. Šaušgamuwa, king of Amurru).

Regarding the destination of the object sealed by the bulla, it is rather improbable that it was intended to be delivered to Apehek. Direct contact between a Hittite prince(ss) and a town in the very heart of the Egyptian-dominated province of Canaan is not consonant with our knowledge of the period. The seal impression must be consider-

above p. 183) is an exception: his title on the seals is “prince” (paralleled by DUMU.LUGAL in the text of *SBo II 5*). However, these may have been the seals he used prior to his accession, since on the door-jamb inscription from Meydançık (Laroche *apud* Mellink 1974:111) he is titled “king” (see above).

12 *SBo II 15*, seal of Tili-Šarruma, the son of a king of Carchemish (Laroche 1966:No. 1326.1); *Korucutepe 4*, seal of the prince Šaušgaziti, probably son of the king of Išuwa; Ḫutupiyanza, the son of Zida, Šuppiluliuma’s brother bears the title DUMU.LUGAL in *KBo V 8 II 18–19* (*AM 152*); Ḫešmi-Tešub, the son of Šaḫrunuwa, king of Carchemish, is titled “son of king” on a document from Emar-Meskene (Arnaud 1974:190).

13 The latter alternative is preferable, in my opinion, judging from the Šaušgamuwa-Tudḫaliya treaty, where it is emphasized that Tudḫaliya made Šaušgamuwa his brother-in-law by marrying him to his sister (Obv. I 8 ff., II 1 ff.) whereas no mention is made of Šaušgamuwa’s mother.

No hieroglyphic seals of Šaušgamuwa’s father Bentešina – which could have settled the matter – were found in Ugarit.

A parallel case would be attested by the seal-impresion of a prince found at Ortakaraviran near Konya (Mellaart 1959:32; Fig. 1), for which Mellaart (1954:240) has suggested a connection with Mašḫuiluwa, king of the vassal state Mira-Kuwaliya and son-in-law of Šuppiluliuma. However, the second sign in the name is *i(a)* and not *s(a)*. (Unless this is a corruption of *L 433* or *L 415*?).

Mattiwaza, to whom Šuppiluliuma married off one of his daughters, is called “son of king” and granted prerogatives equal to those of Šuppiluliuma’s own sons (*KBo I 1 Obv. 65* ff., Rev. 24). However, as pointed out to me by Prof. Güterbock, Mattiwaza may have borne the princely title in his own right by virtue of being a son of Tušratta, king of Mitanni.

14 Evidence for independent correspondence between the court of the Hittite viceroy in Carchemish and Egypt is supplied by the hieratic transcript of a letter sent by Ini-Tešub to Rameses II, probably on the occasion of the signing of the Hittite-Egyptian peace treaty (Barnett-Černý 1947:94; Edel 1969:185 n. 1).

ed in the context of the relationship between Hatti and Egypt, Aphek being a station, apparently a very important one, on the international route connecting the two empires; the Aphek bulla is therefore a so-called *en route* find, an archaeological vestige of the well-documented Hittite-Egyptian contacts of the Late Bronze Age. At the same time, it is the first Hittite bulla to be found south of the confines of the Hittite empire.

As noted above, the form and style of the seal date it to the Hittite Empire period. To the best of my knowledge, the present state of research hardly enables a more accurate dating based on stylistical considerations (with the exception of seals belonging to monarchs¹⁵). For a more exact dating within the Empire period we must turn to historical considerations, that is, we must try to establish the periods during which official communication between Hatti and Egypt was most likely.

Two such periods may be considered: (1) the greater part of the reign of Šuppiluliuma I, i.e. ca. 1380–1350; (2) Ḫattušili III's reign in the first half of the 13th century B.C.E.

During the former period, diplomatic contacts between Šuppiluliuma and Amenhotep III and Akhenaten are attested in the Amarna correspondence (*EA* 41). Of particular interest is the letter sent by Prince Zida, Šuppiluliuma's brother, mentioning an exchange of gifts (*EA* 44), evidence that royal princes carried on independent correspondence with the Egyptian court; such a consignment would probably have been sealed with Zida's own seal.¹⁶ To the end of this period belongs the letter sent by Tutankhamun's widow (Güterbock 1956:94 ff.). The murder of Prince Zannanza¹⁷ *en route* to Egypt marks the rupture between the two countries. During the remaining years of Šuppiluliuma's reign and the reigns of Arnuwanda II, Muršili II and Muwatalli, relations became increasingly hostile, culminating in the battle of Qadesh; the second half of the 14th century and the few years of Urḫi-Tešub's reign at the beginning of the 13th century may therefore be practically excluded as dating possibilities for the Aphek bulla.

The second period to be considered is the reign of Ḫattušili III, when relations between the Hittite and Egyptian courts were most amicable and correspondence prolific, evolving around the peace treaty (Edel 1974:105 ff.), the royal marriage (Edel 1953a; 1953b; Helck 1963) and a projected visit of Ḫattušili himself to Egypt (Edel 1960). There are a number of recorded instances in which Hittite princes and princesses journeyed to Egypt, although there is no evidence connecting any of them to the Aphek

15 Royal seals can be dated with considerable accuracy on the basis of stylistic and palaeographical grounds (Güterbock 1940, 1942; Beran 1967a:68 ff., see especially p. 82 par. V; 1967b:72 ff.; Otten 1967: 224 ff.).

16 *SBo II* 26 is a seal of a prince (probably) named Zida (Laroche 1966:No. 1552:3). He bears the additional title of *L 363* GREAT + *L 173* (an upside-down spear (?) signifying *MEŠEDI* (?)). Unless a most exceptional representation is involved, there is no comparison to our seal.

17 No seal of this prince is known. The name, if spelled phonetically, would start with a different sign than that on our seal (cf. also Liverani 1971).

bullae.¹⁸ It may be that there were still other – as yet unknown – diplomatic, commercial or interfamilial exchanges¹⁹ between the countries. Naturally, the owner of the seal did not necessarily have to be the person who passed through Aphek, since the consignment or letter was most likely sealed prior to its dispatch.

The last kings of Hatti apparently remained on good terms with Egypt, as evidenced by the wheat supplies sent at the beginning of Merneptah's reign to relieve the hunger in Hatti (Wainwright 1960:24 ff.). However, the absence of any evidence for Hittite-Egyptian correspondence after Ḫattušili III indicates that the contacts decreased considerably (Edel 1976:22). A dating of the bulla to this period is less likely.

In conclusion, there are two periods during which diplomatic contacts between Hatti and Egypt are well attested: the reigns of Šuppiluliuma I and Ḫattušili III. Although it is difficult to choose between the two alternatives, the written sources favour dating the bulla to the latter period. This also concords well with the archaeological context in which the bulla was found.

18 (a) The prince Tiḫi-Tešub, the royal messenger, appears on a tablet from Ugarit (*RŠ* 17.137; *Ugaritica III*:37,135 ff.) together with Tili-Tešub, “the messenger in charge of the mission to Egypt”. The latter is one of the Hittite envoys who brought the tablet of the peace treaty to Egypt, and it is reasonable to assume that Prince Tiḫi-Tešub was also involved in these contacts with Egypt.

(b) An envoy from Carchemish, possibly a member of the royal family of that city, whose name is reconstructed by Edel (1969:183 ff.) as Piyaššili, participated in the peace delegation to Egypt.

(c) Two daughters of Ḫattušili were married to Rameses II (the second marriage is only attested in Egyptian sources; Helck 1962:233), but unfortunately their Hittite names are unknown.

(d) A visit of the prince Hišmi-Šarruma, probably the name of Tudḫaliya IV prior to his accession (Güterbock *apud* Laroche 1956:118 f.), is recounted in *KUB III* 34 Rev. 15, which mentions ships transporting wheat (Helck 1962:392).

Two Hittite princes, Nerikili and Kurunta are mentioned in the Egyptian letter *KUB III* 27 (Rev. 15, Obv. 8') in a mutilated context, but there is no basis to identify these as Hittite messengers to Egypt (Edel 1976:89 and n. 162 *contra* Helck 1962:475).

19 In the negotiations conducted prior to the royal marriage, one of the explicit Hittite demands was for the granting of guarantees of free access to the Hittite princess during the visits of her brothers and sisters in Egypt (Otten *apud* Helck 1963:91).

REFERENCES

For abbreviations used for hieroglyphs, hieroglyphic monuments and seals see introductory note (*).

- Arnaud, D. 1974. Notes brèves. *RA* 68:190.
- Barnett, R. D. and Černý, J. 1947. King Ini-tešub of Carchemish in an Egyptian Document. *JEA* 33:94.
- Beran, Th. 1957. Siegel und Siegelabdrücke. *Apud* Bittel, K.a.o., *Boğazköy III*. Berlin: 42–58.
- Beran, Th. 1962. Vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Boğazköy in den Jahren 1958 und 1959. IV. Ausgewählte Einzelfunde. *MDOG* 93:36–58.
- Beran, Th. 1967a. *Die hethitische Glyptik von Boğazköy. I. Teil.* (WVDOG 76). Berlin.
- Beran, Th. 1967b. Die Siegel der hethitischen Grosskönige. *Instanbuler Mitteilungen* 17:72–92.
- Bin-Nun, S. R. 1973. The Offices of Gal. Mešedi and Tuḫkanti in the Hittite Kingdom. *RHA* 31:5–25. (appeared 1976).
- BPI*. Petrie, W. M. F. 1930. *Beth-pelet I*. London.
- BP II*. Macdonald, E. Starkey, J. L. and Harding, L. 1932. *Beth-pelet II*. London.
- Buchanan, B. 1967. Five Hittite Hieroglyphic Seals. *JCS* 21:18–23.
- EA*. El-Amarna Tablets, text nos. from Knudtzon, J. A. 1915. *Die El-Amarna Tafeln*. Leipzig.
- Edel, E. 1953a. KUB III 63, ein Brief aus der Heiratskorrespondenz Ramses'II. *Jahrbuch für Kleinasiatische Forschungen* 2:262–273.
- Edel, E. 1953b. Weitere Briefe aus der Heiratskorrespondenz Ramses'II. *Geschichte und Altes Testament, Festschrift für A. Alt*. Tübingen:29–63.
- Edel, E. 1960. Der geplante Besuch Hattušilis III. in Ägypten. *MDOG* 92:15–20.
- Edel, E. 1969. Die Teilnehmer der ägyptisch-hethitischen Friedensgesandtschaft im 21. Jahr Ramses'II. *Or* 38:177–186.
- Edel, E. 1974. Zwei Originalbriefe der Königmutter Tüja in Keilschrift. *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 1:105–146.
- Edel, E. 1976. *Ägyptische Ärzte und ägyptische Medizin am hethitischen Königshof.* (Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Vorträge G 205). Opladen.
- Gelb, I. J. 1939. *Hittite Hieroglyphic Monuments.* (Oriental Institute Publications 45). Chicago.
- Güterbock, H. G. 1939. Das Siegel bei den Hethitern. *Apud Symbolae ad iura Orientis Antiqui pertinentes P. Koschaker dedicatae*. Leiden:26–36.
- Güterbock, H. G. 1940, 1942. *Siegel aus Boğazköy* 1, 2. (Archiv für Orientforschung, Beiheft 5, 7). Berlin.
- Güterbock, H. G. 1956. The Deeds of Suppiluliuma as Told by his Son Mursili II. *JCS* 10:41–68, 75–98, 107–130.
- Güterbock, H. G. 1973. Hittite Hieroglyphic Seal Impressions from Korucutepe. *JNES* 32:135–147.

- Güterbock, H. G. 1974. Zwei hethitische Zeichnungen. *Apud Mélanges Mansel I.* (Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları Dizi VII Sa. 60). Ankara:421–424.
- Güterbock, H. G. 1975a. Hieroglyphensiegel aus dem Tempelbezirk. *Apud Bittel, K.a.o. Boğazköy V.* Berlin:47–75.
- Güterbock, H. G. 1975b. Die Inschriften. *Apud Bittel, K. a.o. Das hethitische Felsheiligtum Yazılıkaya.* Berlin:167–187.
- Hawkins, J.D. 1974. Buchbesprechung: Winfried Orthmann, Untersuchungen zur späthethitischen Kunst. *ZA* 63:307–311.
- Hawkins, J. D., Morpurgo-Davies, Anna and Neumann, G. 1974. Hittite Hieroglyphs and Luwian: New Evidence for the Connection. *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen I. Philologisch-Historische Klasse. Jahrgang 1973. Nr. 6 (Ausgegeben 1974).* Göttingen:145–197.
- Helck, W. 1962 *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* Wiesbaden.
- Helck, W. 1963. Urhi-Tešup in Ägypten. *JCS* 17:87–97.
- Houwink ten Cate, Ph. H. J. 1965. *The Luwian Population Groups of Lycia and Cilicia Aspera during the Hellenistic Period.* Leiden.
- Kochavi, M. 1975. The First Two Seasons of Excavations at Aphek-Antipatris, Preliminary Report. *Tel Aviv* 2:17–42.
- Kochavi, M. 1977a. *Aphek-Antipatris, Five Seasons of Excavation at Tel Aphek-Antipatris (1972–1976).* Tel Aviv.
- Kochavi, M. 1977b. The Canaanite Palace at Tel Aphek and its Inscriptions. *Qadmoniot* 10:62–68. (Hebrew).
- Kochavi, M. 1978. The Canaanite Palace at Tel Aphek and its Inscriptions. *BA.* (in print).
- Kühne, C. 1973. Ammistamru und die Tochter der “Grossen Dame.” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 5:175–184.
- Laroche, E. 1956. Document\$ hiéroglyphiques hittites provenant du palais d’Ugarit. *Apud Schaeffer, C. F. A. Ugaritica III.* Paris:97–160.
- Laroche, E. 1958. Bibliographie: Boğazköy III. *RHA* 16:115–119.
- Laroche, E. 1960. *Les hiéroglyphes hittites. I: L’écriture.* Paris.
- Laroche, E. 1966. *Les noms des hittites.* Paris.
- Laroche, E. 1968. Textes de Ras Shamra en langue hittite. *Apud Nougayrol, J. a.o. Ugaritica V.* Paris:769–784.
- Laroche, E. 1975. Communication: Fouilles de Meskéné-Émar. *Comptes-rendus des Séances de L’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.* Paris:211–213.
- Liverani, M. 1971. Zannanza. *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* 16:161–162.
- Masson, Emilia. 1975. Quelques sceaux hittites hiéroglyphiques. *Syria* 52:213 – 239.
- Megiddo II. Loud, G. 1948. *Megiddo II.* Chicago.
- Mellaart, J. 1954. Preliminary Report on a Survey of Pre-Classical Remains in Southern Turkey. *AnSt* 4:175–240.
- Mellaart, J. 1959. Archaeological Survey of the Konya Plain. *AnSt* 9:31–33.
- Mellink, M. 1974. Archaeology in Asia Minor. *AJA* 78:105–130.

- Meriggi, P. 1962. *Hieroglyphisch-hethitisches Glossar*. Wiesbaden.
- Meriggi, P. 1975. *Manuale di Eteo Geroglifico. II: Testi 2^a e 3^a serie*. Roma.
- Otten, H. 1967. Zur Datierung und Bedeutung des Felsheiligtums von Yazılıkaya. *ZA* 58:222–240.
- PRU*. Palais Royal d'Ugarit.
- Rainey, A. F. 1975. Two Cuneiform Fragments from Tel Aphek. *Tel Aviv* 2:125–129.
- Rainey, A. F. 1976. A Tri-lingual Cuneiform Fragment from Tel Aphek. *Tel Aviv* 3:137–140.
- Ugaritica III*. Schaeffer, C. F. A. 1956. *Ugaritica III*. Paris.
- Wainwright, G. A. 1960. Meneptah's Aid to the Hittites. *JEA* 46:24–28.