

THE GEOPOLITICAL LAYOUT OF LATE BRONZE AGE ANATOLIA'S COASTLANDS: RECENT ADVANCES AND IMPORTANT CAVEATS

Trevor Bryce*

It is a pleasure to join in honouring two eminent scholars who have made such valuable contributions to the field of Hittite studies. I would like to mark the occasion by reviewing some of the developments that have occurred in Hittite scholarship over the last two decades, particularly with respect to advances in our understanding of the political geography of Anatolia's coastlands during the Hittite period. It is appropriate to begin with the kingdom of Tarhuntassa, to whose study the honorands have made several major contributions.

In terms of new text material, the bronze tablet discovered in 1986 near the Sphinx Gate at Hattusa (Otten 1988) is undoubtedly the most important find for Hittite scholarship since Hugo Winckler's excavations of the Hittite capital at the beginning of last century. The text of the tablet, a treaty drawn up between Tudhaliya IV and his cousin Kurunta, ruler of the appanage kingdom of Tarhuntassa, has provided us with a range of new information on the history and political geography of the Hittite world in the last decades of its existence. Cross-referencing the treaty's extensive list of towns, rivers, and mountains which formed the kingdom's boundaries (as redefined by Tudhaliya) with other sources of information has provided valuable indications of Tarhuntassa's size and location (see e.g. Alp 1995, Dinçol, A., Yakar, Dinçol, B., Taffnet 2000, Yakar, Dinçol, A., Dinçol, B., Taffnet 2001). While the kingdom's northern borders remain uncertain (see below), there is now general agreement that in the south it extended along the Anatolian coast through the regions of Classical Cilicia and Pamphylia. It incorporated the territory called the Hulaya River Land, and bordered the country of Kizzuwadna to its east. Almost certainly, the strategically important port-city of Ura, probably located at or near mod. Silifke, or further west at Gilindere, lay within

its eastern boundary (de Martino 1999). Its western boundary was marked by a river called the Kastaraya, just to the west of which lay a city called Parha. These have been equated with the Classical Cestrus river and the city of Perge. If the equations are correct, they give us a specific location for Tarhuntassa's western boundary – i.e. at the western end of Classical Pamphylia.

This provides a useful starting point for further localizations – of regions along the southwestern and Aegean coasts of Anatolia. Parha and other names in the boundary description are juxtaposed in KUB 21.6a with the Lukka Lands. By a process of association, the bronze tablet has helped establish a location for Lukka – now believed to extend from the western end of Pamphylia into the regions which the Classical Greeks called Lycia, Pisidia and Lycaonia (see e.g. Bryce 1992). Continuing excavations at Miletus have virtually confirmed, from the site's Late Bronze Age remains, the long assumed though sometimes disputed identification of Miletus with Late Bronze Age Millawanda/Milawata (Niemeier B. and W.-D. 1997). There is now a general consensus that the city of Apasa, capital of the kingdom of 'Arzawa Minor', is to be located near the site of Classical Ephesus, and incorporating the acropolis of Ayasuluk where Late Bronze Age remains have been found, including what appears to have been a fortification wall. After Arzawa Minor's apparent dismemberment by Mursili II c. 1320, much if not all of its territory was probably reassigned to the adjacent country of Mira. J. D. Hawkins' decipherment of the inscription on the Karabel monument 28 km east of Izmir indicated that its subject was a king of Mira called Tarkasnawa (Hawkins 1998: 2-10). Hawkins concluded that the monument was probably a boundary marker on the frontier between Mira and the Arzawan country called

* Em. Prof. Dr. Trevor R. Bryce, University of Queensland, Brisbane Qld 4072 AUSTRALIA.

Seha River Land. The identification of Lazpa, a dependency of Seha River Land, with the island of Lesbos added support to the proposal to locate Seha River Land immediately north of Mira and extending to the coast (Houwink ten Cate 1983-84: 48 n. 38, Starke 1997: 451, nn. 40, 41, Hawkins 1998: 23-4, Niemeier 1999: 142). From the so-called Manapa-Tarhunda letter (KUB 19.5 + KBo 19.79), we also learn that a Hittite army proceeding into Wilusa passed first through Seha River Land. The only space left for Wilusa in coastal Anatolia is the northwest corner, i.e. the region of the Troad. Thus we appear to have geographical corroboration for the identification of Wilusa with Troy/(W)ilios, as first suggested by the Swiss scholar Emil Forrer in the 1920s, and much debated since his time.

This summarizes, briefly, current thinking about the political geography of the Anatolian coastlands, particularly as presented by F. Starke (1997) and J. D. Hawkins (1998), who independently reached similar conclusions. In most cases, these conclusions were essentially confirmations of long-held – though far from universally held – views, apparently taking some of the guesswork out of what the archaeologist James Mellaart once described as ‘the guessing game known as Hittite geography’. But it must be stressed that, plausible as many of the above localizations may appear to be, they derive almost entirely from a series of inferences based on information contained in tablets unearthed in the Hittite capital. The total absence of tablet records from contemporary southern or western Anatolian sites means that we have almost no *in situ* material to confirm the locations of Late Bronze Age cities and kingdoms in these regions – in contrast to the tablet finds at Maşat, Kuşaklı, and Ortaköy which enable categorical identifications to be made with the ancient sites located there (Tapikka, Sarissa, and Sapinuwa respectively). The only *tangible* indicators we have for the above geopolitical scheme is the Karabel monument, which may or may not have been a boundary marker but must certainly have been located within Mira's territory, and the site of Millawanda/Milawata, now firmly identified with Miletus. Less certain, if only marginally so, is the identification of the meagre Late Bronze Age material found at Ayasuluk with the remains of Apasa, the Late Bronze Age forerunner of Ephesus (Büyükkolancı 2000).

Otherwise, the evidence for the locations referred to above is no more than circumstantial. To go back to Tarhuntassa, we should stress that its localization along Anatolia's southern coast in the regions of Classical Cilicia and Pamphylia is purely inferential, based solely on deductions made from text data supplied by tablets found in Hattusa. There is no hard evidence for the localization, no *in situ* cuneiform texts, no hieroglyphic inscriptions, no other tangible forms of identification. Indeed, we have yet to find a site in this coastal region or its hinterland which could seriously qualify as the capital of one of the Hittite empire's most important and most prestigious sub-kingdoms.

We have noted that a generally accepted indicator of Tarhuntassa's location is provided by the correlations in names between the cities Parha and Perge, and the rivers Kastaraya and Cestrus. Correspondences of this kind involve the assumption that a Bronze Age toponym can be linked to a Classical site, region, or topographical feature which has a similar-sounding name. Methodologically, this assumption is very questionable, and the validity of the linking process clearly varies from one case to another. Even if a Bronze Age and a Classical name are clearly linked etymologically, we have to remember that there are many instances of two or more contemporary sites or regions having the same name. In some of these instances, this duplication was probably due to population movements – groups of peoples shifting from one region to another and naming their new settlements after their old.

Obviously, a single, isolated name-correlation is not a sufficient basis for locating a Bronze Age city on or near the site of a Classical namesake. However, two such correlations within the same context increase the probability of a valid place-link, especially when these correlations involve a city associated with a physical feature (e.g. a river or mountain), like Bronze Age Parha and the Kastaraya river on the one hand, corresponding to Classical Perge and the Cestrus river on the other. The probability is further increased when a group of Classical cities located close to each other have names which correspond to a group of similarly-named Bronze Age cities which also appear to have been located close to each other. In such a case, it is quite likely that the Bronze Age cities were located on or near their Classical namesakes. Thus the Lycian

city-names Arinna (Greek Xanthus), Oenoanda, Pinara, Pittara (Greek Patara), Tlawa (Greek Tlos), and Kandyba correspond to Bronze Age Awarna, Wiyanawanda, Patara, Pina(li), T/Dalawa, and (perhaps) Hinduwa. All of the Bronze Age places so named probably lay in or near Lukka territory, which we know from textual evidence lay adjacent to Tarhuntassa. We have concluded that Tarhuntassa's western boundary lay at the western end of Classical Pamphylia, to the southwest of which lay Classical Lycia. It would seem to follow that the Bronze Age cities to which we have referred lay in the region of Classical Lycia, on or close to the sites of the cities which bore equivalent names in the Classical period.

But again it must be emphasized that in the absence of archaeological underpinning, none of this can be regarded as any more than hypothesis. While almost certainly Lycia formed part of the Lukka Lands, Bronze Age remains in the country are very meagre, and no evidence has yet been found of any Bronze Age settlement on or near the sites of any Lycian cities, or indeed anywhere else in the Lycian region. Conceivably, this could be due to the lifestyle of what may have been a largely nomadic or semi-nomadic population whose settlements were transitory and unlikely to leave lasting traces in the archaeological record. But it does highlight the need for acknowledging that any geopolitical scheme we construct within Late Bronze Age Anatolia remains suppositious, until it can be shown to have a firm archaeological basis. Starke's and Hawkins' reconstruction of the Anatolian coastlands depends to a very large extent on a series of hypotheses which have yet to be proved.

That applies to the current localizations of Wilusa and Ahhiyawa. In both cases, our information about them is drawn entirely from text references. Wilusa was initially located in the Troad by Forrer, because he was looking for references to (Wi)lios/Troia in the Hittite texts, and found attractive name-correlations between Hittite Wilusa and Taruisa on the one hand, and Homeric (W)ilios and Troia on the other. More recently, Wilusa has been localized in the Troad because the geopolitical scheme as presented by Hawkins and Starke seemed to leave nowhere else for it to be put. Similarly, the name Ahhiyawa *may* be linguistically connected with Homeric Achaioi and Achaiis,

and may have been the Hittite way of referring to the Greek world, or part of that world, because all other possibilities seem to be ruled out. Wilusa and Ahhiyawa have been localized essentially by default. In both cases, there is not one piece of archaeological evidence to support the localizations. We should probably not give up hope that some such evidence will one day turn up at Troy, perhaps in the form of tablets that put the city's identity beyond doubt. The inscriptions on the recently discovered bronze seal discovered in level VIIB1 unfortunately contribute nothing to the question of the city's Bronze Age name. With regard to Ahhiyawa, we may need to find something like a cache of cuneiform tablets in the archives of a Mycenaean palace before we can settle conclusively the question of the Ahhiyawa-Mycenaean equation. Of course, the chances of such a find are extremely remote. The practice of preserving, copying, and archiving important documents for future reference, well established in the palace bureaucracies of the Near Eastern world, was quite alien to the bureaucracies of Mycenaean Greece. The Linear B tablets probably had a shelf-life of no more than twelve months, after which they were discarded, or their fabric recycled. The only tablets that have survived belong to the very end of their respective palaces' existence. There is no reason to believe that any tablets dispatched from Hatti were not destroyed once they ceased to have any relevance. And their relevance would have ceased some years before the final collapse of the palace-centres.

Further research on the Ahhiyawa tablets from the Hattusa archives may prove instructive. Recently, Starke claimed to have identified one of these (KUB 26.91) as a letter from an Ahhiyawan king, whose name he read in the text as Kadmus, whose city was allegedly identified as Thebes. Starke has still to publish his arguments in support of his claims. They were, however, given an airing at a workshop recently held in Concordia University in Montreal (January, 2006), where Starke was the keynote speaker. Scholars attending the workshop believed that he had made a good case for identifying the author of the letter as an Ahhiyawan king. But they did not believe that he had established the author's name as Kadmus and his kingdom as Thebes. On its own, the identification of the letter-writer as a king of Ahhiyawa does not tell us any more about where Ahhiyawa was located.

Within the context of attempting to determine the locations of cities or regions on the basis of *in situ* archaeological evidence, we should stress the significance of the hieroglyphic inscription found at Hatip (near Konya) naming Kurunta (Dinçol, A. 1998), and the hieroglyphic texts discovered on the sites of Kızıldağ, Karadağ, and Burunkaya lying further to the east (Alp 1974, Hawkins 2000: 433-42). The inscriptions almost certainly date to the last decades of the 13th century, and may be an important guide to Tarhuntassa's northern frontier. But the name Tarhuntassa does not appear in any of them. Their generally accepted attribution to Tarhuntassa depends on a chain of inferences: (1) The inscriptions at Kızıldağ, Karadağ, and Burunkaya which proclaim a 'Great King' called Hartapu who is the son of a 'Great King' called Mursili belong to the last decades of the Bronze Age (see Singer 1996: 68-71). (2) Mursili is the Hittite king Urhi-Teshub (c. 1272-67), who we know called himself Mursili on his accession. (3) This identification links the Mursili of the inscriptions with Kurunta, who was Urhi-Teshub's (half-?)brother. (4) In the Hatip rock inscription, Kurunta is proclaimed 'Great King', and son of the 'Great King' Muwattalli. The fact that he was king of Tarhuntassa suggests that the Hatip monument lay in Tarhuntassa and marked part of the kingdom's northern boundary. (5) Kurunta's inferred family link with the 'Great King' Hartapu, who was perhaps his nephew, or at least another member of his family, suggests dynastic succession in Tarhuntassa. (6) If so, the fact that Hartapu's inscriptions proclaiming him 'Great King' were located at Kızıldağ, Karadağ, and Burunkaya suggests that these places too lay within, perhaps on or near, Tarhuntassa's northern frontier.

Of course, this whole line of reasoning comes apart if hard evidence turns up which disproves any of the inferences. But for the moment, we may accept as a working hypothesis that a ruling family, a collateral branch of the Hattusa-based royal dynasty, was established in Tarhuntassa in the last decades of the Bronze Age. We then have the question of the use of the title 'Great King' in the inscriptions of the Tarhuntassa rulers, as also in seal impressions discovered in Hattusa, which bear the legend *Kurunta, Great King, Labarna, My Sun* (Neve 1987: 401-8, Abb 20a,b). The question arises because in the Hittite world, the right to be called 'Great King' seems to have been limited exclusively to the occupant of the throne of Hattusa. The

assumption of this titulature by Kurunta and at least two other persons who were members of his family (according to the above chain of inferences) may well have constituted a challenge to the Hattusa regime, indicating a reassertion by Kurunta's family of its right to the Hittite throne, taken from it by Hattusili III when he overthrew Urhi-Teshub. We know from the so-called Südburg inscription at Hattusa (Hawkins 1995) that Tarhuntassa became hostile to the Hattusa regime in the kingdom's final years. And I have suggested elsewhere that under Kurunta, Tarhuntassa did in fact establish itself as an independent kingdom, and that Tarhuntassa's secession from Hattusa was possibly but the first step in a campaign whose ultimate intention was to reunite the Hittite world under kings from Muwattalli's direct family line. In accordance with the wishes of Muwattalli, they would rule the empire from Tarhuntassa (Bryce: forthcoming article).

Various explanations have been offered for the appearance of Kurunta's 'Great King' seal impressions in Hattusa, along with an attempt to relate them to the contemporary archaeological context in the Hittite capital. According to Peter Neve, a former director of excavations at Hattusa, parts of the capital, particularly the walls and temple quarter, may have been destroyed during Tudhaliya's reign. Their destruction may have been caused by armed conflict in the city between the forces of Kurunta and those loyal to Tudhaliya (Neve 1987: 403-5, with table, 404). But the archaeological evidence for a conflict of this kind is far from secure, and there is certainly nothing to indicate it in the written record. I am less inclined to believe now, as I did previously, that the sealings belong within the context of a coup staged by Kurunta in the capital (Bryce 2005: 319-21). My more recent thinking is that the sealings may belong within a diplomatic context, reflecting perhaps secret negotiations which envoys from Kurunta conducted with his supporters in Hattusa. The seals which they carried might have served as validation of their authority to act on Kurunta's behalf.

In attempting to reconstruct a political scenario for Tarhuntassa in the last years of the Hittite kingdom, we could use two known facts, referred to above, as a basis for another set of inferences. The facts are these: (1) Both Kurunta and Hartapu adopted the title 'Great King'. (2) By the beginning of the reign of Suppiluliuma II at the latest, Tarhuntassa had become hostile to the regime in Hattusa, since we know from

the Südburg inscription that it was among the 'enemy lands' conquered by Suppiluliuma. Possible inferences to be drawn from these facts are: (1) As already suggested, the assumption of the title 'Great King' by Kurunta and Hartapu was a statement of independence from the Hattusa-regime. (2) There is a direct link between this statement and Tarhuntassa's listing among Hattusa's enemies in the Südburg inscription. (3) The statement and the listing may reflect Tarhuntassa's secession from Hattusa and an attempt to establish it as the 'legitimate' royal seat of the kingdom of Hatti, under Muwattalli II's direct descendants, as it had been when Muwattalli himself occupied the throne. Again, this is pure speculation. But if it can be substantiated, the suggested rupture between the two major branches of the royal family, and the loss for a time of one of Hatti's most strategically important sub-kingdoms, may well have contributed significantly to the collapse of the empire and the abandonment of Hattusa.

Historical reconstructions of Hattusa's history have depended to a significant degree on the interpretation by archaeologists of the various phases of the city's development up to the time of its abandonment. Peter Neve's picture of a dramatic expansion of the capital with the development of the 'Upper City' during Tudhaliya IV's reign (e.g. Neve 1989-90), and his predecessor Kurt Bittel's scenario of a sudden violent end to the city when the throne was occupied by Suppiluliuma II (e.g. Bittel 1976), have greatly influenced historical accounts of the last century of the Hittite kingdom and its capital (e.g. Klengel 1999: 312-3, Bryce 2002: 230-56). More recently, a re-evaluation of much the same archaeological data by Peter Neve's successor Jürgen Seeher, produced findings considerably at variance with those of Neve and Bittel. Seeher concluded that the construction of the Upper City had in fact begun already in the late 16th or early 15th century. He also concluded that the evidence relating to the city's end indicate not a single violent destruction, but rather a systematic evacuation of the city by its administrative elite, and a decline into oblivion after this – a process which may have lasted weeks or months (e.g. Seeher 2001). This more recent scenario alters significantly the questions a historian is likely to ask about the end of the Hittite empire. Did the Hittite royal court re-establish itself elsewhere, and if so where? Have we yet to find in a different location the

last remnants of the Bronze Age kingdom of Hatti? What was it that actually prompted the abandonment of the capital, if it did not fall to a sudden, violent, enemy attack? Did Tarhuntassa play a role in the capital's decline and demise?

Seeher's reinterpretation of Hattusa's archaeological data is now becoming increasingly widely reflected in Hittite scholarly literature, as well as in more popular literature and media outlets. But it does raise once more the fundamental question of where established fact ends and inference and interpretation begin. How much of what is now being written is based on solid, incontrovertible material evidence, how much on the most recent *interpretation* of this evidence, which may eventually be superseded by fresh interpretations as much at variance with those of Seeher as Seeher's are with those of Neve and Bittel? In using archaeological material as part of the basis for historical reconstruction, we need to be constantly aware of the distinction between the material itself and an archaeologist's interpretation of it. Yet scholars who do not have direct access to the original archaeological data, or the expertise to deal with it, may well find it very difficult to do other than accept the findings and interpretations of a site's most recent excavator. This is not intended as a reflection on the validity of Seeher's conclusions about Hattusa, though these conclusions will undoubtedly need to be modified as new material comes to light during future excavations.

Similarly, there is at present no reason to question the overall validity of what Starke and Hawkins have proposed for the geopolitical configuration of the Late Bronze Age cities and kingdoms ranged along Anatolia's coastland regions and their hinterlands. None the less, it should be emphasized that what we currently have is a series of hypothetical reconstructions, only very occasionally supported by hard evidence. As more such evidence comes to light, adjustments will need to be made to these reconstructions, some probably quite major. Yet there is no doubt that our understanding of the geopolitical layout of Late Bronze Age Anatolia is significantly greater now than it was two decades ago, before the discovery of the bronze tablet at Hattusa. We can but hope that further discoveries of this kind will come to light, particularly in western Anatolia.

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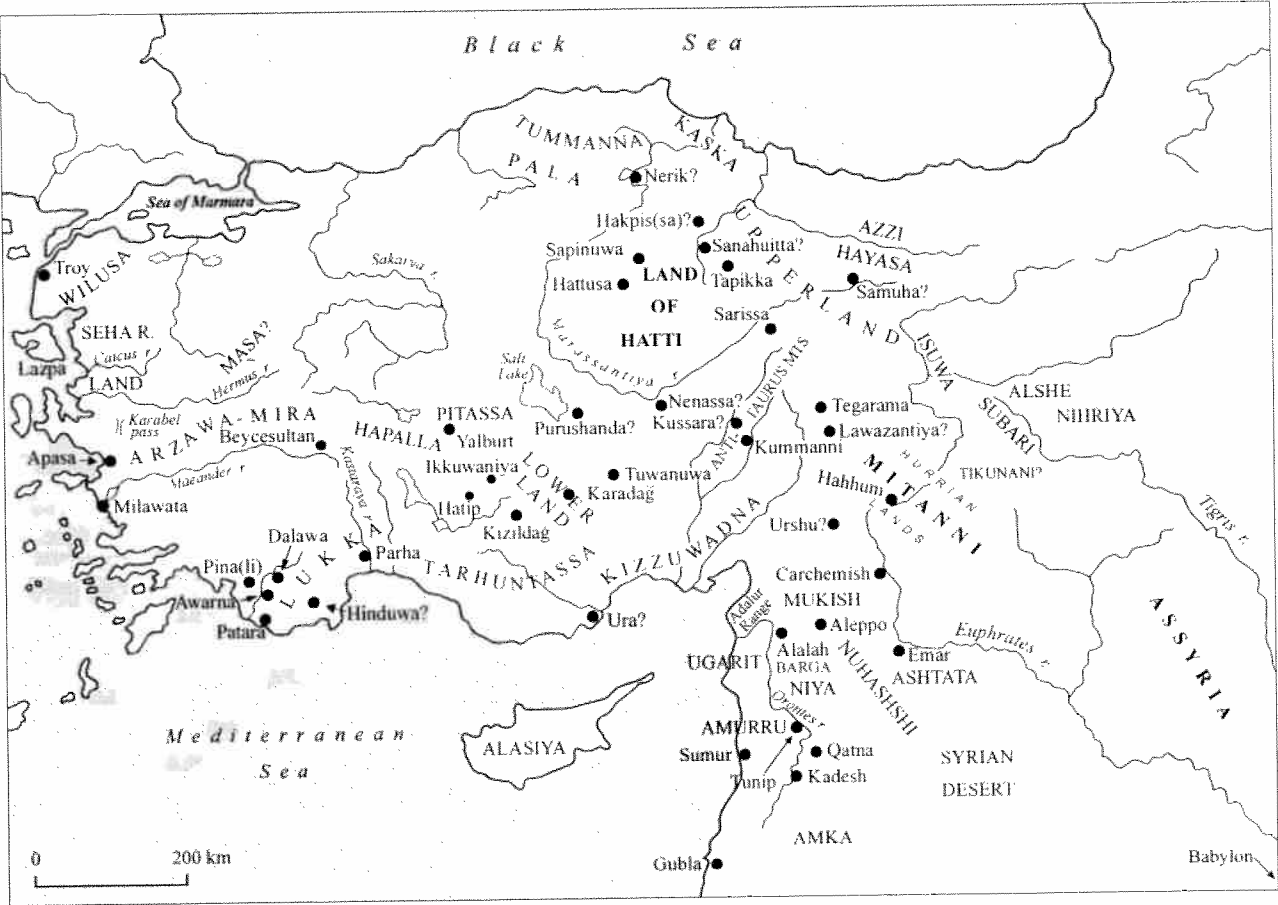
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