

THE CAPITAL HATTUŠA AND OTHER RESIDENTIAL CITIES OF HITTITE GREAT KINGS

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Admittedly, the capital Hattuša was not the only place of royal residence throughout the history of the Hittite kingdom. Given its climate, and especially weather conditions in winter, we should not be surprised if some (or even most) of the kings preferred to live, at least temporarily, somewhere else. Yet the evidence for this is scarce.¹ It is a well-known fact that Šamuha in the Upper Land (for its concise history see Lebrun 1976: 11-14) was a residential city of Tudhaliya III during the turbulent period when the Gašgaeans invaded the land of Hatti and Hattuša itself was devastated by fire (cf. Schuler 1965: 33-34). Thus it was the Gašga threat which forced the king to find refuge in Šamuha. Moreover, prior to the transfer of the headquarters of the royal family to the Upper Land, Tudhaliya (Tašmišarri) was probably residing at Šapinuwa,² where he had been living already as the heir presumptive of Arnuwanda I while the latter was still alive. However, as soon as Hattuša had been liberated by his son Šuppiluliuma and eventually by Tudhaliya himself who fought the Gašga enemies at nearby Zithara, he restored his residence to the traditional capital (DŠ frgs. 10-11).

Another royal residential city was Katapa chosen by Muršili II as his headquarters in the later phase of his long reign (Popko 2001: 151; on Katapa see in general Polit 1999). I am quite in agreement with H.G. Güterbock's argumentation (cf. Houwink ten Cate 1986: 108-109 with ref.) that the main recension of the *nuntarriyašḫaš* festival outline KUB 9.16++ with

duplicates (Nakamura 2002: 15-33) most likely dates to the time of Muršili's residence in Katapa, seeing that the first three days of the festival are celebrated there.

Muwattalli II's decision to transfer the capital from Hattuša to Tarhuntašša in the Lower Land was unique of its kind. None of the previous and later kings ever ventured a permanent dislocation of the capital, even in the most critical situations.³ In this connection I. Singer states:

"Capital cities looking back at a long history, tradition, and sanctity are rarely abandoned for reasons of military strategy. Throughout the ages, and especially in antiquity, the transfer of the capital was usually associated with fundamental religious, ideological, or political motivations, a deliberate break with the past in order to start anew in a new location. (...) I think that the move to Tarhuntašša was no exception to the rule" (Singer 1996a: 192).

Hittite sources prove that the transfer of the capital was intended to be permanent. Hattušili III says in his *Apology* ii 52-53 (Otten 1981: 14-15) that his brother Muwattalli "went down to the Lower Land, leaving the city of Hattuša; he picked up [the gods] and the *manes* from Hattuša... and he carried them down [to the city of Tarhuntašša] and made it his place of residence".⁴ Besides, in his well-known account (KBo 6.29+ i 30-31) Hattušili states precisely that Muwattalli took to the Lower Land all the gods, including the gods of Hatti, the gods of Arinna, and the Cedar Gods.

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¹ According to the Bronze Tablet iv 50-51, two other copies of the treaty of Tudhaliya IV with Kurunta were deposited in the royal palace in Zithara and in the house of Kurunta (in Tarhuntašša) respectively, which strongly suggests Tudhaliya's (temporary?) residence in the former city.

² On the evidence of the cuneiform documents from Ortaköy/Šapinuwa Süel – Soysal 2003: 349 (cf. also Süel 1998) consider this city "a second capital of the Hittites" in that period. Cf. now A. Stiel's lecture "Another Capital City of Hittite State: Šapinuwa" presented at a workshop session held at Florence University in February 2007. Note also a list of witness gods in the Bronze Tablet iii 85, where the Storm-Gods of Šamuha, Šapinuwa and Katapa (DU NIR.GÁL) follow each other, thus suggesting the three centres to have served in Hittite history as temporary royal headquarters. However, unlike Šamuha and Katapa, Šapinuwa seems to have declined in later times. Significantly it is missing in the Long List of cult centres in the Muwattalli prayer CTH 381 (Singer 1996a).

³ See, however, *infra* for my comments on the role of Šamuha as a temporary imperial seat.

⁴ On these events see Bryce 1998: 251-253, and Klengel 1999: 210.

Muwattalli's decision certainly did not meet with general acceptance. Many years later Hattušili stressed in his prayer to the Sun-Goddess of Arinna CTH 383 that he had no part in the wholesale removal of the state deities to the new site and was afraid for that decision: "[Wh]ether [the transfer of the gods was] in accordance with [your] wishes [or whether it] wa[s not] in accordance with your wishes, you, [my mistress,] are the one who knew [that in your divine soul, but I] was [not involved] in the order to trans[fer] the gods. [For me it was a matter] of coercion, (while) he was my master, but [the transfer] of gods was not in accordance with [my] wishes [and] I was afraid for that [order]. And the silver (and) gold of all the gods, to which god he gave the silver (and) gold of each of them, in that decision, [too], I was not in any way involved" (KUB 14.7 i 3'-15', translation after Houwink ten Cate 1974: 125-126; see also Singer 1998: 538).

In fact, Tarhuntašša's role as the new capital did not survive Muwattalli's reign. Soon after his father's death Muršili III (Urhi-Tešub) moved the capital back to its traditional location. This important initiative taken by Muršili III is known from the brief statement in KUB 21.15 i 11'-12': "He [picked] u[p] the gods from Tarhuntašša and [brought] them back to Hattuša" (Houwink ten Cate 1974: 125; cf. also id. 1994: 234; Košak 1996). None the less, the changes in the geo-political structure of the Hittite Kingdom resulting from the episode of the capital's transfer were far-reaching. The appanage kingdom of Tarhuntašša kept its separate status and competed with Hattuša over political supremacy, which weakened the Hittite state and was probably one of the efficient causes of its final collapse (cf. Singer 1996b: 64; 1998: 541).

It is the purpose of this concise article to consider how to define the capital city, or rather – how was it defined by the Hittites themselves, and what does it have in common with the other places of royal residence.

In my opinion, Hattušili's accounts quoted above are key to the problem. Regarding the shift of the capital to Tarhuntašša by his brother Muwattalli and the later reinstatement of Hattuša as the Hittite royal capital that followed under his nephew Muršili III, he always thinks in terms of the transfer of the state gods, thus considering the capital city first and foremost their chief seat. That also shows how revolutionary Muwattalli's decision was in the eyes of his contemporaries.

We can only speculate about his motivations "to abandon the centuries-old hub of the Hittite state and religion and build a new capital" (Singer 1996a: 192). According to I. Singer, the transfer of the capital to Tarhuntašša should be viewed in the larger context of Muwattalli's religious reforms, "a deliberate change in the traditional northern (Hatti land) and northeastern (Upper Land) orientation of Hittite cult" that led to the expansion of the southern element in the Hittite state cult. Further, Singer has drawn a parallel between the religious reforms of Akhenaton and Muwattalli and argued that the adoption of the Storm-God of Lightning (*piḫaššašši*) by the latter as his patron god was "intimately connected" with the shift of the capital (Singer 1998: 539-540). At this point, however, Singer's argumentation should be evaluated anew.

There is nothing in the texts to prove that Muwattalli introduced any religious reform comparable with Akhenaton's. Despite his Luwian epithet, the Storm-God of Lightning must be regarded as an allomorph of Tešub of Halab of Hattuša, the divine patron of the new dynasty⁵ (Singer 1996a: 185-189; see also Popko 1998: 121-124; 2005: 85, and Taracha 2005: 96-97; in contrast to Hutter 1995: 79-87; 2003: 223, who still considers this deity a Luwian god), although his name in the Luwian milieu was no doubt Tarhunta⁶ (Singer 1996a: 189; cf. also Taracha 2004: 454), from which derives the name of the city of Tarhuntašša. Muwattalli "created" this god in the wake of his father Muršili

II whose patron god was the Mighty Storm-God (^{PU}*muwattalli*/NIR.GÁL), another manifestation of Anatolian Tešub with a Luwian epithet (Popko 2001; 2005: 85). Moreover, like the Mighty Storm-God for Muršili II, the Storm-God of Lightning was "invented" already in the early phase of Muwattalli's career. Thus I disagree with Singer's assumption that the adoption of this god by Muwattalli as his patron god was anyhow connected with the transfer of the capital.

The Muwattalli prayer CTH 381 was certainly composed early in his reign, before the shift of the capital to Tarhuntašša, since Tarhuntašša itself does not appear in the Long List of cult centres included in this prayer (cf. Singer 1996a: 191).⁷ Nevertheless, the Storm-God of Lightning is manifestly the dominant protagonist among the addressed gods (Singer 1996a: 185). At the time, his main cult centre appears to have been the city of Šamuha which occupies the prominent second position in the Long List (KUB 6.45++ i 40-45), after Arinna, the traditional seat of the Sun-Goddess, and before Katapa and Hatti/Hattuša. As I have argued elsewhere (Taracha 2005: 98, 103, 105), the order of this list, which corresponds also to the arrangement of witness Storm-Gods of the treaty with Alakšandu of Wiluša CTH 76 (Beckman 1996: 86-87), is likely to reflect the situation in the early phase of Muwattalli's reign, when Šamuha and Katapa, the place of residence of his father Muršili II, were probably more important than the capital Hattuša itself.⁸ Was Muwattalli living in Šamuha then?

These early (turbulent ?) years during the reign of Muwattalli are poorly documented (cf. Taracha 2001: 419); still, the prominent position of the Storm-God of Lightning as the king's patron god and his consort

Hebat in the then pantheon of Šamuha (KUB 6.45++ i 40) seems to imply the temporary residence of Muwattalli in this city (see *infra*). And if so, it can be assumed that Hattuša had lost its function of the royal headquarters long before Muwattalli eventually decided to transfer the capital to Tarhuntašša.⁹

As stated above, the capital city was first of all the seat of the state gods. The king as the high priest was responsible for their worship and had to participate in both daily cult rituals and the great festivals celebrated according to the scheme of the state and dynastic cult.¹⁰ For practical reasons, therefore, it was convenient for him living near, or even together with the gods.¹¹ When residing out of Hattusa, he most likely came there to perform his priestly duties, for instance, during the state cult festivals of the AN.TAḪ.ŠUM plant and of Haste (*nuntarriyašhaš*), each of them lasting for more than a month in spring and autumn respectively. None the less, the establishment of the cult of supreme deities, and Tešub of Halab of Hattuša as the patron god of the dynasty in particular, in a new place of royal residence was indispensable to their daily worship.¹² That accounts for the cult of the allomorphs of the latter god – Tešub *muwattalli* in Katapa under Muršili II and Tešub *piḫaššašši* in Šamuha and then in Tarhuntašša during the reign of Muwattalli.

Based on the structure of the pantheon of Šamuha (see in general Lebrun 1976: 15-37) as attested in the Long List of CTH 381, another important conclusion regarding the role of the city may be reached. Text A (KUB 6.45++) i 40-45 reads: "Storm-God *piḫaššašši* (ḪI. ḪI), Hebat of Šamuha, male gods, female gods, mountains (and) rivers of Šamuha (B: Tiwa).¹³ / Storm-God *piḫaššašši*, Sun-Goddess of Arinna, Hebat, queen of

⁵ On the epigraphic and iconographic evidence of Hittite royal seals, Tešub of Halab of Hattuša may be considered a manifestation of the heavenly Tešub (of Halab) of Kummani and, consequently, Kummani can be claimed as the most likely place of origin of the dynasty of the Hittite New Kingdom. See Taracha, forthcoming.

⁶ There are good reasons to assume that Tešub was generally called Tarhunta by the Luwian-speaking population of Anatolia in the late Hittite Empire period. Note, for instance, the well-known Ugarit seal impression of Tudhaliya IV, with several duplicates from Nišantepe (Otten 1993: 35-37 figs. 29-31), where the Storm-God embracing the king certainly represents Tešub as the supreme god of the Hittite state pantheon, although his epigraph describes him as Tarhunta (DEUS.TONITRUS.TA).

⁷ A similar list of local gods in a later prayer KBo 9.98++ (Singer 1996a: 165-167) was "updated" after the transfer of the capital to Tarhuntašša. The separate entry for the gods of the land of Tarhuntašša, including the Storm-God of Lightning and his consort Hebat of Tarhuntašša, follows there the gods of Arinna and the gods of Hatti/Hattuša. Significantly, Šamuha and Katapa have lost their prominent position.

⁸ For a previous discussion of the order in which the cities occur in the Long List see Singer 1996a: 171-173 with ref.

⁹ I. Singer (2001: 396) argued that the well-known account of Hattušili III (KBo 4.12 obv. 13ff.), according to which Hattuša was put by Muwattalli under the authority of the Chief Scribe Mittannamuwa, should be referred to the period of Tarhuntašša's supremacy. However, nothing in the text excludes the possibility that Mittannamuwa was established as governor of Hattuša before the transfer of the capital to Tarhuntašša.

¹⁰ For two different pantheons in Hittite state and dynastic cult see Taracha 2005.

¹¹ For temples in the palatial complex on Büyükkale, including those of the supreme deities of the Hittite empire, the Sun-Goddess of Arinna and Tešub of Halab of Hattuša, see Popko 2002: 2003a; 2003b.

¹² For the mechanism of "dividing" a deity in order to establish her cult in a new place see Beal 2002 and Popko 2005.

¹³ Why text B (=KUB 6.46) ii 7 has here ^{URU}Tiwa, a toponym otherwise unattested, instead of ^{URU}Šamuha (cf. Singer 1995: 1996a: 187) is still obscure to me.

Heaven, Storm-God of the Ruin, gods of the palace of ancestors. / Storm-God of Halab, Hebat of Halab, *IŠTAR*-of-the-field of Šamuha, “Lady of the *ayakku*”, Abara of Šamuha, male gods, female gods, mountains (and) rivers of Šamuha.” (translation after Singer 1996a: 33).

The repetition here of the formula “male gods, female gods, mountains (and) rivers of GN” recurring as the basic unit of a local cult in all the entries of the Long List suggests a twofold division of the pantheon of Šamuha, although the division into three paragraphs appears more adequate. The first paragraph, which is dedicated to the Storm-God of Lightning and his consort Hebat, seems to reflect the innovation during the reign of Muwattalli who established there the cult of his patron god as part of the dynastic cult. Next comes a paragraph referring to the state cult, in which the topmost position is occupied by the two supreme deities of the Hittite state pantheon, (heavenly) Tešub, who was given here the epithet *piḫaššašši* after Muwattalli’s patron god, and the Sun-Goddess of Arinna, followed by Tešub’s consort Hebat, queen of Heaven. The division line between the second and the third paragraph probably indicates where the list of local gods of Šamuha starts, introduced by Tešub of Halab, Hebat of Halab and Šaoška (*IŠTAR*).

The entry of Šamuha shows that apart from the dynastic cult of the Storm-God of Lightning the state cults were established there too, which allows us to conceive that early in the reign of Muwattalli the city in fact played a role of the second capital.

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The next entry (KUB 6.45++ i 46-49) yields evidence of a similar structure of the pantheon of Katapa. I quote after I. Singer’s translation: “Valiant Storm-God, Hebat, Storm-God of Šahpina, male gods, female gods, mountains (and) rivers of Katapa. / [Storm]-God of Help, Queen of Katapa, male gods, female gods, mountains (and) rivers of Katapa, Storm-God of Thunder, all the Storm-Gods.” (Singer 1996a: 33).

The first paragraph, which is introduced by the Mighty Storm-God and his consort Hebat, refers to the dynastic cult established at the time of Muršili’s residence in this city, whereas the second has local gods. Significantly, the supreme deities of the state pantheon do not appear here.

In accordance with our expectations, the entry of Hatti/Hattuša that follows (KUB 6.45++ i 50-56) lists in the first place the deities worshipped in the state and dynastic cult – the main triad: (heavenly) Storm-God of Hatti, Sun-Goddess (of Arinna) of Hatti and Protective-God of Hatti, as well as the Storm-God of Halab as the patron god of the dynasty together with his consort Hebat of Halab of Hatti. There is no doubt, therefore, that by the time this text was composed Hattuša still served as the capital of the Hittite empire.

This article is offered to Ali and Belkis Dinçol who, in their recent publications, discussed the borders of the appanage kingdom of Tarhuntašša (Dinçol A. – Yakar – B. Dinçol – Taffet 2000; 2001a; 2001b). I hope that it may make a small contribution to our knowledge of the history of the Hittite empire and our understanding of the religious consciousness of the Hittites.

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