

The Storm-God and Hittite Great King

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The Storm-God and the Sun-Goddess of Arinna, supreme deities of the Hittite state pantheon, played a special role in the ideology of kingship throughout the history of the Hittite kingdom. However, after a coup of Muwattalli I and the following seizure of the throne by Tudhaliya I, son of Kantuzzili, a new dynasty of Hurrian origin was installed in Hattuša¹. Together with this dynastic change, Tešub replaced the Anatolian Storm-God both as the supreme god in the state cult and as a divine patron of kingship. It is the purpose of this paper to consider the iconographic evidence for special reverence of the king for Tešub in the times of the Hittite New Kingdom. Besides, I shall comment on the prominent role of Tešub of Halab in the dynastic cult.

A particular attitude of the king to the supreme deities of the state pantheon finds expression in his titles *NARĀM* ^DU "beloved of the Storm-God" and *NARĀM* ^DU ^{URU} *Arinna* "beloved of the Storm-God and the Sun-Goddess of Arinna". These titles occur, first of all, in cuneiform legends of royal seals of the so called *Umarmung* type². Princes were "beloved of the Storm-God", too, as attested by impressions (Bo 78/56) of a seal of Kantuzzili MAGNUS.HASTARIUS (= GAL *MEŠEDI*) and Tudhaliya MAGNUS.LITUUS from the Upper City in Hattuša³. Admittedly, this title may be associated with the iconography of the royal *Umarmung* seals⁴, with a central scene showing a figure of the king embraced by the god in the iconic type characteristic of Tešub, as we see it, for instance, in the main scene of the gods' procession in Yazılıkaya. Tešub, bearded and with a long curled pigtail, wears his usual

¹ Cf. P. Taracha, "On the Dynasty of the Hittite Empire", *Šarnikzel. Hethitologische Studien zum Gedenken an Emil Orgetorix Forrer (19.02.1894-10.01.1986)*. (DBH 10). D. Groddek – S. Röfle edd. Dresden 2004, pp. 631-638, with ref.

² Cf. H. Otten, *Zu einigen Neufunden hethitischer Königssiegel*. Stuttgart 1993, pp. 22-27.

³ A.M. Dinçol, "Ein interessanter Siegelabdruck aus Boğazköy und die damit verknüpften historischen Fragen", *Akten des IV. Internationalen Kongresses für Hethitologie. Würzburg, 4.-8. Oktober 1999*. (StBoT 45). G. Wilhelm ed. Wiesbaden 2001, pp. 89-97. Dinçol, p. 96, identified the seal owners with later king Tudhaliya III, Šuppiluliuma's father, and his brother Kantuzzili. However, I would rather agree with S. Herboldt, AA 2003, p. 24, who considers the seal much earlier. Consequently, it may be ascribed to Kantuzzili and his son and later king Tudhaliya I, the founder of the new dynasty, four generations before Tudhaliya III.

⁴ On this type of composition, see now H. Klengel, "An der Hand der Gottheit. Bemerkungen zur 'Umarmungsszene' in der hethitischen Tradition", *Silva Anatolica. Anatolian Studies Presented to M. Popko*. P. Taracha ed. Warsaw 2002, pp. 205-210; S. Herboldt, "The Hittite Royal Cylinder Seal of Tudhaliya IV with *Umarmungsszene*", *The Iconography of Cylinder Seals*. (Warburg Institute Colloquia 9). P. Taylor ed. London – Turin 2006, pp. 85-87. I owe my thanks to Dr. Suzanne Herboldt who sent me her manuscript before publication.

accouterments of horned pointed helmet, short belted tunic with crescent-pomelled sword at waist, and boots with upturned toes⁵.

The earliest *Umarmung* seals come from the reign of Muwattalli II. They were also used by his son Muršili III/Urhi-Tešub and, with a more elaborate scene, by Tudhaliya IV. Significantly, on all the seals the Storm-God looks as if he put his left hand outstretched in a protective gesture on the royal aedicula, or the king's name or the MAGNUS.REX sign placed under it.

Two *Umarmung* seals of Muwattalli II⁶, of which several impressions were found in Hattuša, show Tešub bearing a mace against his shoulder (Fig. 1).

The epigraph over the god's outstretched left hand identifies him as the Storm-God of Heaven (MAGNUS.TONITRUS.CAELUM). He embraces the king clad in the ceremonial priestly clothes and with a lituus in his hand. The Muršili III/Urhi-Tešub seal from the Nišantepe archive resembles those of his father (Fig. 2)⁷.

The only difference is that the Storm-God here does not hold a mace, and his epigraph calls him "Great King of Heaven" (MAGNUS.TONITRUS.MAGNUS. REX.CAELUM)⁸.

No impression of an *Umarmung* seal of Hattušili III has been found to date, but the Egyptian hieroglyphic version of his peace treaty with Ramesses II describes it as follows: "A figurative scene with a representation of Seth (i.e. Storm-God) who embraces [a representation of] the great [duke of Hatti]"⁹. Since the other seal impression on the same silver tablet is said to have depicted Puduhepa in the embrace of the Sun-Goddess of Arinna, we can identify the Storm-God Hattušili's embracer, too, with Tešub.

The well-known Ugarit seal impression of Tudhaliya IV, with several duplicates found at Nišantepe, depicts the Storm-God in the same iconic type characteristic of Tešub, but due to the

⁵ YAZILIKAYA no. 42, cf. R.L. Alexander, "The Storm-god at Yazılıkaya", *Aspects of Art and Iconography: Anatolia and its Neighbors. Studies in Honor of Nimet Özgüç*. M. Mellink, E. Porada, T. Özgüç edd. Ankara 1993, pp. 1-13, with ref.

⁶ SBo I, pp. 19 ff. nos. 38A-40A; Th. Beran, *Die hethitische Glyptik von Boğazköy, I: Die Siegel und Siegelabdrücke der vor- und althethitischen Perioden und die Siegel der hethitischen Großkönige*. (WVDOG 76). Berlin 1967, pp. 79 f. no. 250a. Cf. also S.P. Lumsden, *Symbols of Power: Hittite Royal Iconography in Seals*. Diss. University of California, Berkeley 1990, pp. 43-46 nos. 52-53; P. Neve, AA 1991, p. 327 fig. 28a (= ders., *Hattuša. Stadt der Götter und Tempel*. Mainz² 1996, p. 57 fig. 149) and p. 329 fig. 30a.

⁷ P. Neve, AA 1991, p. 329 fig. 29b; Otten, *Zu einigen Neufunden*, pp. 22-27 figs. 16-20.

⁸ According to J.D. Hawkins, who was able to study the original bullae, two signs following DEUS.TONITRUS, in the Storm-God's epigraph, should be read MAGNUS.REX, despite the fact that the latter sign is flanked by two laps, which in other circumstances would have suggested its identification as TONITRUS (cf. the drawings of the sealed bullae Bo 90/266, Bo 90/492 and Bo 91/852 apud Otten, *Zu einigen Neufunden*, figs. 17, 19 and 20). J.D. Hawkins considers it a kind of epigraphic play. My thanks go to Professor J.D. Hawkins for drawing my attention to this case.

⁹ E. Edel, *Der Vertrag zwischen Ramses II. von Ägypten und Hattušili III. von Hatti*. (WVDOG 95). Berlin 1997, pp. 82f. Cf. also Klengel, *Studies Popko*, pp. 205f.

scene composition the god steps left, and his epigraph is placed behind his back (Fig. 3)¹⁰. Although the Storm-God embracing the king is called here with his Luwian name Tarhunta (DEUS.TONITRUS.TA), he certainly represents the same supreme god of the Hittite state pantheon as depicted on the other royal *Umarmung* seals¹¹. This conclusion is supported by the fact that his female counterpart on the left side of the central royal aedicula is the Sun-Goddess of Arinna.

The aforementioned elaborate scene may have reflected new developments in the seal-cutter's art as the dynasty progresses, but it had undoubtedly the same symbolic meaning as the earlier *Umarmung* seals. The scenes were all sheer political and religious propaganda, showing the king in the legitimizing and protective embrace of Tešub of Heaven, the supreme god of the state pantheon. Thus they should not be associated with the idea of a personal patron god¹², despite the fact that Muršili II and then his son Muwattalli II chose allomorphs of Tešub with Luwian epithets *muwattalla/i* and *pihaššašši* respectively as their patron gods. I shall argue below that these gods were rather allomorphs of Tešub of Halab of Hattuša, the divine patron of the dynasty worshiped in the royal citadel. As mentioned above, the *Umarmung* seal of Hattušili III on the silver tablet of the peace treaty with Ramesses II apparently showed him in the embrace of Tešub; still, on his aedicula seals from Hattuša, which might be considered more "personal" than those of the *Umarmung* type, Hattušili calls himself "beloved of the Storm-God of Nerik, beloved of Šauška of Šamuha", referring to his patron deities¹³. Furthermore, he declares the Storm-God of Nerik and Šauška of Šamuha his divine patrons e.g. in KUB 21.11 rev. 5f., the prayers CTH 383 (rev. III 11'ff.) and CTH 384 (I 33'ff.), and the *Apology* (II 64-66).

Noteworthy here are also two unique *Umarmung* seals, represented by a number of impressions from Nišantepe, of which the owner is not designated, as usually, "Great King". They belonged to Urhi-Tešub as *tuhkanti* and on both, the crown prince's embracer is Šarruma, not Tešub (Fig. 4)¹⁴. These seals show that Urhi-Tešub was duly installed and recognized as his father's heir presumptive while the latter was still alive. Consequently, as a crown prince, he could be associated by official propaganda with the god Šarruma who in the Hurrian pantheon in Anatolia became the 'Calf of Tešub'. Admittedly, that is not an adequate explanation of another

¹⁰ C.F.-A. Schaeffer, *Ugaritica III*. (Mission de Ras Shamra VIII). Paris 1956, pp. 19ff. figs. 24-26; Lumsden, *Symbols of Power*, pp. 46f. no. 54; Otten, *Zu einigen Neufunden*, pp. 35-37 figs. 29-31.

¹¹ Cf. P. Taracha, "Fremde Gottheiten und ihre anatolischen Namen. Betrachtungen zur hethitischen Religion der Großreichszeit", *Offizielle Religion, lokale Kulte und individuelle Religiosität. Akten des religionsgeschichtlichen Symposiums „Kleinasien und angrenzende Gebiete vom Beginn des 2. bis zur Mitte des 1. Jahrtausends v.Chr.“* (Bonn, 20.-22. Februar 2003). (AOAT 318). M. Hutter, S. Hutter-Braunsar edd. Münster 2004, pp. 453f.

¹² For a different opinion, see e.g. Klengel, *Studies Popko*, pp. 205ff. Herbordt, *The Iconography*, p. 86, states "that a special relationship with one chosen deity is conveyed (not necessarily the patron deity)"; however, she cannot explain the reasons of the choice of a particular deity on a royal *Umarmung* seal (cf. p. 86 n. 17).

¹³ Otten, *Zu einigen Neufunden*, pp. 28-34, with ref.

¹⁴ J.D. Hawkins, „Urhi-Tešub, *tuhkanti*“, *Akten des IV. Internationalen Kongresses für Hethitologie. Würzburg, 4.-8. Oktober 1999*. (StBoT 45). G. Wilhelm ed. Wiesbaden 2001, pp. 167-179.

Umarmung scene on the well-known rock relief YAZILIKAYA no. 81 with Šarruma embracing king Tudhaliya IV¹⁵. As we know, Šarruma was Tudhaliya's patron god. Thus the relief YAZILIKAYA no. 81 must be given a different interpretation although it represents the same royal *Umarmung* type as the seals mentioned above.

Another royal scene that deserves careful study here is the Muršili III/Urhi-Tešub seal impression from Nišantepe, showing the Storm-God in his eagle-chariot drawn by bulls (Fig. 5)¹⁶. A comparable scene occurs, among others, on the rock relief İMAMKULU¹⁷. On the evidence of the Storm-God epigraphs in both representations, J.D. Hawkins pointed out that the iconic type of the Storm-God mounting his chariot specifically represented the Storm-God of Aleppo¹⁸. The question is why Muršili III decided to offer (on the discussed seal) the image of the Halabean Storm-God, when he already had another seal of the royal *Umarmung* type, on which the king appears in the embrace of Tešub, Great King of Heaven? Was it the result of his theological promiscuity? I think that is not the case.

There is a general agreement that the West Hurrian Tešub took after the Storm-God of Aleppo already in the first half of the second millennium B.C., at the time when the city of Halab became the main Hurrian center in northern Syria. Both Storm-Gods have since had much in common. Their accouterments and other qualities largely intermingled. They also shared the company of Tašmišu who in Anatolia appears under the name of Šuwaliyatt¹⁹. Owing to the naming-equation in Hurrian milieu the Storm-God of Aleppo was worshiped in Anatolia under the name of Tešub, although on the same principle of naming-equations, Hittite texts frequently call him also Tarhuna after Anatolian Storm-Gods²⁰.

It was Tešub of Halab who, with the advent of the new Hurrian dynasty, replaced the Anatolian Storm-God in his temple at Büyükkale²¹. The temple appears to have been essential to the dynastic cult in the royal family and, consequently, the Halabean Tešub is to be considered the patron god of the new dynasty. There is a group of Hittite texts, brought together in CTH 660 under a heading entitled "Offerings to Royal Images", which describe rituals taking place in the

¹⁵ K. Bittel, *Yaz*², pl. VII. Cf. Lumsden, *Symbols of Power*, p. 101. Note also another fragmentary *Umarmungsszene* on a limestone block from Yalburt, which also might be connected with king Tudhaliya IV: C. Karasu, M. Poetto, S.Ö. Savaş, *Archivum Anatolicum* 4 (2000), pp. 99-101 pl. I.1.

¹⁶ J.D. Hawkins, „The Storm-God Seal of Mursili III”, *Hittite Studies in Honor of Harry A. Hoffner Jr. on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. G. Beckman, R. Beal, G. McMahon edd. Winona Lake 2003, pp. 169-175.

¹⁷ See K. Kohlmeyer, *Acta Praehistorica et Archaeologica* 15 (1983), pp. 80-86, 141f. pl. 29-30, with ref.; J. Hazenbos, „Zum İmamkulu-Relief”, *Silva Anatolica. Anatolian Studies Presented to Maciej Popko on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. P. Taracha ed. Warsaw 2002, pp. 147-161.

¹⁸ J.D. Hawkins' reading of the Storm-God epigraph as DEUS.TONITRUS.GENUFLECTERE.MI finds corroboration in a relief from the Storm-God temple in Aleppo, where the Storm-God is identified by the same epigraph. See J. Gonnella, W. Khayyata, K. Kohlmeyer, *Die Zitadelle von Aleppo und der Tempel des Wettergottes*. Münster 2005, p. 92 fig. 124.

¹⁹ H.G. Güterbock, *RHA* XIX/68 (1961), pp. 1-18.

²⁰ See n. 11.

²¹ M. Popko, *AoF* 29 (2002), pp. 73-80.

cella of the Storm-God. Concerning the god's cult image, the latter probably belonged, at least in the 13th century BC, to the iconic type which was identified by J.D. Hawkins as representing the Storm-god of Aleppo, on the assumption that a cart (^{GI5}MAR.GÍD.DA) and the sacred bulls Šeri and Hurri, which are mentioned in the relevant New Hittite texts of CTH 660²², were parts of it. In KUB 20.65 r. col. 3'-10', the bulls Šeri and Hurri, the sacred mountains Namni and Hazzi, and a cart (^{GI5}MAR.GÍD.DA) are associated with the Storm-God *muwattalla*ī, the patron god of Muršili II²³. Thus the god, for whom Muršili was creating a duplicate cult in Katapa, may be regarded as an allomorph of Tešub of Halab of Hattuša, the divine patron of the dynasty.

How to explain, therefore, the appearance of the Storm-God seal of Muršili III/Urhi-Tešub? In my opinion, it must be viewed against the background of historical events in the reigns of Muwattalli II and Muršili III/Urhi-Tešub. Hattušili III says in his *Apology* that his brother Muwattalli “went down to the Lower Land, leaving the city of Hattuša, he picked up [the gods] and ancestors from Hattuša... and he carried them down [to the city of Tarhuntašša] and made it his place of residence”²⁴. It stands to reason that Tešub of Halab of Hattuša, too, must have been among the gods transferred, considering his prominent position in the dynastic cult.

There were, for sure, those who were afraid for the wholesale removal of the state deities to the new site. Many years later Hattušili III stressed in his prayer to the Sun-Goddess of Arinna CTH 383 (KUB 14.7 I 3'-15') that he had no part in it²⁵. And he was certainly not alone in contesting the king's action. One of the most important initiatives taken by Urhi-Tešub soon after his father's death was reinstatement of Hattuša as the Hittite royal capital²⁶. Most members of the royal family seem to have approved of this action, as we can conclude from the later remarks of Hattušili. Indeed, Urhi-Tešub may have decided to move back to Hattuša partly in order to fortify his position on the throne.

“He picked up the gods from Tarhuntašša and brought them back to Hattuša.” This brief statement in KUB 21.15 I 11'f.²⁷ shows the essence of the matter. Urhi-Tešub reinstated the state and dynastic deities either in their old temples in Hattuša which were abandoned for a dozen years or so, or he had to build new temples. It seems probable that architectural changes in Hattuša, especially in the royal citadel, started already during his brief reign.

Might it be that the Muršili III/Urhi-Tešub seal, showing Tešub of Halab, was made to commemorate restitution of the Storm-God's temple at Büyükkale? This seal, on which the name

²² KUB 10.11+ obv. III 13ff., rev. IV 17'f. (with dupl.), KBo 2.30 obv. 6ff., KBo 30.53, 11'f., KBo 39.86 obv. II 8' and KBo 39.88 obv. II 4'f.

²³ Cf. M. Popko, *AoF* 28 (2001), p. 150.

²⁴ *Apology* II 52f.: H. Otten, *Die Apologie Hattušilis III. Das Bild der Überlieferung*. (StBoT 24). Wiesbaden 1981, pp. 14f. On these events, see now T. Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites*. Oxford 1998, pp. 251-253; H. Klengel, *Geschichte des hethitischen Reiches*. Leiden – Boston – Köln 1999, p. 210.

²⁵ Trans. Ph.H.J. Houwink ten Cate, “The Early and Late Phases of Urhi-Tesub's Career”, *Anatolian Studies Presented to Hans Gustav Güterbock on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. K. Bittel, Ph.H.J. Houwink ten Cate, E. Reiner edd. Istanbul 1974, pp. 125f. See also D. Sörenhagen, *AoF* 8 (1981), pp. 88ff.

²⁶ Cf. Bryce, *The Kingdom*, p. 277; Klengel, *Geschichte*, pp. 226f.

²⁷ Trans. Houwink ten Cate, *Studies Güterbock*, p. 125.

of Muṣili (III) inside the usual royal aedicula is associated with the image of the supreme god of the dynastic pantheon worshiped in the old capital Hattuša, was perhaps an implicit statement of Urhi-Tešub's right to sit upon the throne of his predecessors, and might help enhance his status in the eyes of his subjects. This may have been particularly required from Urhi-Tešub who was only the second-rank son of Muwattalli.

I would like to conclude by posing a question about the Storm-Gods depicted on the royal seals which we have been considering. Can Tešub of Heaven of the *Umarmung* seals be identified with the Halabean Tešub of the Muṣili III seal? In fact, it is unthinkable that the supreme god of the state pantheon and the patron god of the dynasty could be two different gods. And if they were identical, how to explain their iconic and epigraphic differentiation on the royal seals in question?

A unique *Umarmung* cylinder seal of Tudhaliya IV, whose cuneiform legend identifies the Storm-God embracing the king with Tešub of Kumm[ani], King of Heaven, seems to offer now a plausible explanation (Fig. 6)²⁸. It proves that the Storm-God of Heaven on the other royal *Umarmung* seals is most likely Tešub of Kummani, too. Noteworthy is also another Tudhaliya IV seal, on which the king calls himself "flesh (UZU) of Kummani"²⁹.

There are further important implications of this statement both for religion and for history of the Hittite New Kingdom. 1) Tešub of Kummani, Kizzuwatnan hypostasis of the Storm-God of Halab, is to be considered now the supreme god of the Hittite state pantheon and the divine patron of the dynasty. 2) Given the iconography of the Storm-God seal of Muṣili III, together with the evidence of the relevant texts of CTH 660, it can be assumed that Tešub of Halab of Hattuša, who had been installed in the old Storm-God temple in the royal citadel as the patron god of the new dynasty, actually was an allomorph of the heavenly Tešub (of Halab) of Kummani. 3) Consequently, Kummani can be claimed as the most likely place of origin of the dynasty of the Hittite New Kingdom.

²⁸ Herbordt, *The Iconography*, pp. 82-85, 88-91, 207-208 figs. 130, 131 and 133. See also S. Herbordt in this volume.

²⁹ I am extremely grateful to Dr. Suzanne Herbordt for her comment upon J.D. Hawkins' reconstruction of this seal: "Es handelt sich um zwei verschiedene rechteckige Siegelungen Tuthaliyas IV., das eine mit MONS.TU, das andere mit Berggott.TU in der zentralen Kartusche, die auf der Unterseite zahlreicher Bullen erscheinen. Auf den Seiten dieser Bullen (genannt ‚Mantel‘) befinden sich häufig auch die Abdrücke einer drei- bzw. vierzeiligen Keilschrift-Inschrift (eine davon trägt als letzte Zeile „Fleisch von Kummani“), die mit dem einen oder anderem rechteckigen Siegel zusammen vorkommen. In den meisten Fällen befinden sich die verschiedenen Rechtecktypen nicht auf einer gemeinsamen Bulle. Hawkins hat alle Abdrücke (die zwei verschiedenen Rechtecktypen, die zwei verschiedenen Keilschrift-Inschriften) zu einem prismaförmigen Siegel rekonstruiert. Es könnte sich aber möglicherweise auch um zwei verschiedene Siegel handeln." (letter of September 15, 2005).



Figs. 1-6: Muwattalli, Muršili III/Urhi-Tešub, Tudḫaliya IV seals.