

## RELATIONS BETWEEN ḪATTI AND ALAŠIYA

ACCORDING TO TEXTUAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE<sup>1</sup>

Stefano de Martino, Trieste

1. The aim of this paper is to present Hittite textual sources and archaeological evidence about the subject of the relations between the kingdom of Ḫatti and Alašiya. The starting point is the conviction that this name indicates the island of Cyprus, or part of it, as already held by the majority of scholars.<sup>2</sup>

First of all, it has to be pointed out that Alašiya is not mentioned in texts from the Old Hittite Kingdom. For the first time this geographical name appears in documents from the Middle Kingdom.<sup>3</sup>

I will present, at this point, a brief overview of Hittite documents which refer to Alašiya,<sup>4</sup> beginning with those texts that show a subordination of this country to Ḫatti.

a) In the text known as the “Indictment of Madduwatta” (KUB XIV 1 + KBo XIX 38 §30)<sup>5</sup> the Hittite king Arnuwanda I accuses Madduwatta of having broken the clauses of the vassal treaty that his predecessor Tuthaliya I/II had stipulated with him. Madduwatta is accused of having undertaken a series of military expeditions against the territories under Hittite control. In this context raids by Madduwatta, with Attaršiya from Ahhiya as well as a certain Piggaya, against Alašiya (a country which is reported to belong to the king of Ḫatti) are also mentioned. Madduwatta justifies himself by stating that neither Tuthaliya I/II (in the text: “the father of His Majesty”), nor Ar-

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<sup>2</sup> See lastly Hellbing 1979: 65-78; Charpin 1990: 125; P. Keswani 1993: 74; Liverani 1999: 414; Steel 2004: 184, all with previous literature.

<sup>3</sup> In Hittite texts Alašiya is preceded either by the KUR “land” or by the URU “city” determinative; see del Monte 1978: 6; 1992: 2; see also Goren *et alii* 2003: 248.

<sup>4</sup> See the texts quoted by Beckman 1996: 31-35; here KBo I 26 is to be added.

<sup>5</sup> See lastly Beckman 1996: 144-151; see also de Martino 1996: 47-62; Parker 1996: 7-27; Hawkins 1998: 25.

nuwanda II had ever said that Alašiya belonged to Ḫatti. We do not have other proofs of Hittite control on the island for the Middle Kingdom.

V. Karageorghis<sup>6</sup> has suggested that a connection be established between the destruction of Enkomi in the period LC IB and the raids that Madduwatta and his allies supposedly made on the island, on the basis of the Hittite text under examination. This hypothesis is not shared, however, by all the scholars whereas more scholars agree that the destruction horizons (that can be seen on various places on the island at the end of LC I) may be attributed to the competition between local political elites who were trying to get control of economic resources.<sup>7</sup>

It has to be stressed that the “Indictment of Madduwatta”, a text which refers to events that can be placed in the first half of the fourteenth century BC, is the oldest mention of Alašiya in Hittite texts.

In Hittite sources we do not find any other explicit affirmation of Hittite sovereignty over Cyprus until the late Imperial Age, at the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the twelfth century BC at the time of kings Tuthaliya IV and Šuppiluliuma II.

b) The tablet KBo XII 38 that was drawn up by Šuppiluliuma II contains two different texts. According to the interpretation shared by most scholars (with the exception of G. Steiner<sup>8</sup>, N. Bolatti Guzzo and M. Marazzi<sup>9</sup>) the first text tells of a military expedition led by Tuthaliya IV against Cyprus while the second text refers to a new campaign against the island, led this time by Šuppiluliuma II.<sup>10</sup> This latter Hittite military action against Cyprus corresponds to the one that is presented in the badly preserved Hieroglyphic inscription of Nišantaš.<sup>11</sup>

In the first text the Hittite sovereign states that he has defeated the “king” (LUGAL) of Alašiya, captured the royal family, imposed a tribute to be given by the Alašiyān king and by one dignitary designated as <sup>LÜ</sup>*pidduri*. This tribute includes gold, copper and another Cypriot product called *GAYATU*<sup>12</sup>. In the second text Šuppiluliuma II states that he has confronted the Alašiya

fleet in naval battle which preceded a Hittite landing on Cypriot soil as well a battle which resulted in a Hittite victory.

c) The only treaty we have between Ḫatti and Alašiya, KBo XII 39,<sup>13</sup> can be dated to the late Imperial Age. This is a very fragmentary text and the name of the Hittite king who stipulated the treaty is not preserved. On the basis of comparison with the text KBo XII 38 and on the basis of its content it can be dated either to Tuthaliya IV<sup>14</sup> or more likely to Šuppiluliuma II.<sup>15</sup>

The content of the surviving part of this treaty is as follows: military alliance (obv. 2'-5'); Alašiya's restitution of Hittite fugitives (obv. 6'-9'); custody of people sent into exile in Alašiya (obv. 10'-14'); obligation to inform the Hittite king of every piece of news regarding him (obv. 15'-20'); blessing formulas for Alašiya (rev. 3'-11'). The “king” (LUGAL) is mentioned in this context, even if in a fragmentary line,<sup>16</sup> as well as the high dignitary designated <sup>LÜ</sup>*pidduri* (rev. 3'-11'); both appear, as we have already said, also in KBo XII 38 I 10'. The text closes by mentioning the place where the tablet of the treaty has to be kept (rev. 19'-22').<sup>17</sup>

The military campaigns led by Tuthaliya IV and Šuppiluliuma II against Alašiya might be placed within the plan made by these two kings and aimed at consolidating and broadening Hittite domination in southern Anatolia. A part of this plan involved both the expedition led by Tuthaliya IV in southwestern Anatolia attested by the Yalburt inscription<sup>18</sup> and the expedition against Tarḫuntašša led by Šuppiluliuma II as documented by the inscription of the Sacred Pool complex (Südburg).<sup>19</sup>

As some scholars have already pointed out, these expeditions contrast with the image of weakness and of crisis that comes from some Hittite sources.<sup>20</sup> It would appear difficult to say, however, whether with these expeditions the Hittite kings wanted to neutralize the political influence that the kingdom of Tarḫuntašša had acquired in the region, while at the same time ensuring control over the southern Anatolian coast<sup>21</sup> or, more likely, they wanted to face the situation of instability that the “Sea Peoples” were bringing about in the

<sup>6</sup> Karageorghis 2002: 27.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Knapp 1997: 67-68; Steel 2004: 153-154.

<sup>8</sup> Steiner 1962: 130-134.

<sup>9</sup> Bolatti-Guzzo – Marazzi 2004: 155-185.

<sup>10</sup> See Güterbock 1967: 73-81; Singer 1985: 122; Hawkins 1995: 58-59; Hoffner 1997: 192-193; Hawkins 1998: 72; Klengel 1999: 285, 302; Singer 2000: 27; van den Hout 2002: 77; Woudhuizen 2004: 73.

<sup>11</sup> See lastly Hawkins 1995: 59.

<sup>12</sup> See Otten 1963: 15.

<sup>13</sup> See now de Martino, in print.

<sup>14</sup> See Güterbock 1967: 80-81, Beckman 1996: 32.

<sup>15</sup> See Otten 1963: 13; Klengel 1999: 285: 301.

<sup>16</sup> See de Martino, in print.

<sup>17</sup> On this see Beckman 1996: 32.

<sup>18</sup> See Poetto 1993.

<sup>19</sup> See Hawkins: 1995; for a different interpretation of this text see Melchert 2002: 137-143.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, Giorgieri – Mora 1996: 65.

<sup>21</sup> See Hoffner 1989: 46-52.

eastern Mediterranean.<sup>22</sup> The Hittites might have tried to react to a new economic situation, a kind of free trade operated by “Sea-People” communities or, as S. Sherrat has argued,<sup>23</sup> “a type of aggressive open economy which was highly subversive to the centrally controlled, formal, élite exchange system which constituted an important part of the political basis of established powers”.

d) The text KBo I 26, a fragment of a letter in Akkadian,<sup>24</sup> may also be dated to the late Imperial Age. Only a few lines survive. It contains neither the name of the sender nor that of the receiver. The sender asks the receiver for the following goods: gold objects, *rhyta*, belt, horses, gold.

B. Knapp maintains that it is the copy of a letter sent by Ḫatti to Alašiya. If this letter may be included within the political context of the last years of the Hittite Kingdom, that is after the conquest of Alašiya, Knapp’s hypothesis seems to be most likely. If, on the other hand, this letter is datable to a previous age (for example to the time of Ḫattušili III), it might also have been sent by Alašiya to Ḫatti. As a matter of fact, as happened in diplomatic exchanges between Cyprus and Egypt in the Amarna Age, it is also possible that Alašiya puts forwards requests in return for copper or other goods.

e) For the period between the kingdom of Arnuwanda I, when the “Indictment of Madduwatta” was composed, and the kingdom of Tuthaliya IV, we possess few pieces of information on Alašiya. We know however, that on two different moments, members of the Hittite aristocracy who had fallen into disgrace were sent to Alašiya into exile.

In Muršili’s “First” Plague Prayer to the Assembly of Gods and Goddesses (KUB XIV 14 obv. 16-22)<sup>25</sup> those who sided with Tuthaliya the Younger (the Hittite prince killed by Šuppiluliuma in order to ascend to the throne) were exiled to Alašiya.

In the Edict of Ḫattušili III, also known as the “Apology of Ḫattušili” (§ 10a),<sup>26</sup> this king remembers an episode that had happened during the times of his predecessor, Muwattalli II. It was the conflict between Ḫattušili, not yet on the throne, and Arma-Tarḫunta and Šippa-ziti, who were his political opponents. Following Ḫattušili’s victory over the latter, Arma-Tarḫunta’s wife and son were sent into exile in Alašiya.

<sup>22</sup> See Singer 2000: 21-33; de Martino, in print.

<sup>23</sup> Sherrat: 1998: 292-313, see particularly p. 301.

<sup>24</sup> See B. Knapp 1980: 43-47; Hagenbuchner 1989: 316.

<sup>25</sup> See now Singer 2002: 62.

<sup>26</sup> See Otten 1981: 18-19.

The very fact that these people were sent into exile to Cyprus shows that there were diplomatic relations between Ḫatti and Alašiya. It does not, however, imply that the island was under Hittite domination. As a matter of fact, the text KUB XIV 2 IV 3-6,<sup>27</sup> a prayer fragment, mentions the exile of a Hittite queen at Ahhiyawa, a country that was never under Ḫatti’s control.

Another set of Hittite texts gives us some information on the types of goods that were imported to Ḫatti from Alašiya.

f) Alašiya appears in two Inventory texts; in KBo XVIII 175 I 5’ five linen “shirts” from Alašiya are mentioned (5 GÚ GAD<sup>URU</sup> Alašiya);<sup>28</sup> also in IBoT I 31 I 4 thirty-seven pieces of Cypriot linen (GAD) are mentioned.<sup>29</sup>

In KBo IV 1 (and duplicates), a magic ritual for the foundation of a new building, some materials are placed in the deposit foundation; the places of origin of these materials are also specified. On lines 39-40 of the first column (KUB II 2 I 48-49; KUB IX 33 obv. 16’) “copper and bronze from Alašiya, from the mountain Taggata” are mentioned.<sup>30</sup>

It has to be stated that this text contains elements of a literary nature that do not necessarily refer to historical reality. Furthermore, it is not possible to build a clear map of the places where the quoted minerals and precious stones came from. Gold from Piruntumiya, lapis-lazuli from the mountain of Takniyara, alabaster from Kaneš, iron from the sky (AN.BAR GE<sub>6</sub> *nepišaš nepišaz*) are also mentioned in the same passage that refers to Alašiya. Locating these places is not easy. Incidentally, the place name Piruntumiya only appears in this text; Takniyara too is only quoted here and in a fragmentary Hurrian text, both in connection with lapis-lazuli.<sup>31</sup>

However, it seems interesting to me that an actual mountain is indicated as the place from which Cypriot copper and bronze came. As is well-known, the metal-producing region of Cyprus is in the region of the Troodos mountains.<sup>32</sup>

We must remember, at this point, that copper, along with other goods, is also part of the tribute that Alašiya had to give to the Hittites as documented by the text KBo XII 38, as has been said before.

h) The Hittites were not only interested in Cypriot copper but also in derivatives of copper as a medical text shows, KUB VIII 38 + XLIV 63 III

<sup>27</sup> See Klengel 1999: 219 with previous literature.

<sup>28</sup> See Košak 1982: 10, 13; Siegelová 1986: 410-411.

<sup>29</sup> See Košak 1982: 4, 6; Siegelová 1986: 80-81.

<sup>30</sup> On these text see Boysan Dietrich 1987: 43-59.

<sup>31</sup> See Haas 1984: 127.

<sup>32</sup> See Knapp 1997: 33-36; Steel 2004: 166-18.

10-17.<sup>33</sup> Here, a substance is mentioned whose name is *maruwašḫa*, imported from Cyprus and used as a medicine for eye disease: “they b[rin]g up from Alašiya the *maruwašḫa*-mineral as a woolen *ḫandala*- for his eye”.<sup>34</sup> We do not know exactly what type of illness it is since the text is fragmentary. This type of illness concerns the lack<sup>35</sup>, or over-abundance of tears<sup>36</sup>.

This term *maruwašḫa* is a deverbative noun formed on Luvian *mar(r)uwa(i)*- “become dark”; C. Burde<sup>37</sup> has suggested that the term *maruwašḫa* might indicate a copper-bearing substance. Following this suggestion and in light of the meaning of the verb *mar(r)uwa(i)*-, G. Beckman<sup>38</sup> suggested translating the word as “azurite”. Lastly A.M. Polvani<sup>39</sup> maintains that it indicates a copper hydrate silicate on the basis of a comparison with a passage by Plinius, which mentions this as a medicine for the eyes.<sup>40</sup>

i) Apart from the texts already mentioned two incantations have to be mentioned, KUB XV 34 I 58 and KUB XV 35 + KBo II 9 I 33.<sup>41</sup> Here, Alašiya appears together with a long series of countries with which Ḫatti has relations or with which it joins geographically. In the first of the texts quoted, Cyprus is quoted together with the great powers of the time: Assyria, Babylonia and Egypt.<sup>42</sup>

Alašiya is also mentioned in two oracles KUB XXIV 30 obv. 24' and KBo XXXII 226 obv. 2.<sup>43</sup> Both are very fragmentary and do not give any useful indication of a historical or economic nature.

2. It has already been emphasized by some scholars<sup>44</sup> that the hypothesis of Hittite control over the island of Cyprus or over part of it is not supported by an adequate number of archaeological findings. We must say, however, that the absence of Hittite materials in Cyprus and the impossibility of recognizing any form of Hittite cultural influence over the island are not elements which may question the validity of this hypothesis.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, as I. Singer notes, for example, concerning Ugarit, “a century and a half of close

<sup>33</sup> See Burde 1974: 30-34.

<sup>34</sup> See *CHD*, L-N, 202.

<sup>35</sup> See *CHD* loc. cit.

<sup>36</sup> See Haas 2003: 117.

<sup>37</sup> Burde 1974: 34.

<sup>38</sup> Beckman 1996: 35.

<sup>39</sup> Polvani 1988: 66.

<sup>40</sup> For a different point of view see *CHD*, loc. cit.

<sup>41</sup> For this text see Collins 1997: 164-165.

<sup>42</sup> See Forlanini 2000: 10-14.

<sup>43</sup> On this text see Soysal 2000: 87.

<sup>44</sup> See for example Bunimowitz 1998: 104; Cadogan 1998: 12; Todd 2001: 205.

<sup>45</sup> Relations between Cyprus and Egypt are better witnessed, see Karageorghis 1998: 25-27.

political and economical ties have yielded surprisingly little evidence for Hittite influence upon the cultural life of the people of Ugarit”.<sup>46</sup>

Returning to the subject of the Hittite materials found in Cyprus it has to be admitted that they are very few.<sup>47</sup> Some objects that may have claimed Hittite origin have already been mentioned by P. Åstrom<sup>48</sup> and by E. Kozal<sup>49</sup>: a golden seal from Tamassos, which might be an original Hittite object<sup>50</sup> and two more seals, both from Hala Sultan Tekke, which seem to be products, respectively, one of local and the other of Syrian imitation.<sup>51</sup>

Four further interesting objects have to be added to these few pieces of evidence. They are objects that may have arrived in Cyprus only as diplomatic gifts considering the fact that they are cult images, the production and circulation of which was limited to official circuits.

A Hittite terracotta bull's head had been found in 1884-5 by Max Ohnefalsch Richter in a late Bronze Age necropolis of Agia Paraskevi, near Nicosia. This piece is now preserved at the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin. As V. Karageorghis<sup>52</sup> has observed in a recent study, this bull's head bears considerable similarities, for example, to a similar piece which comes from the Hittite capital and is now to be found at the Louvre.<sup>53</sup> We do not know if the latter is part of a statue or of a *rython*. We share the same amount of uncertainty about the bull's head from Cyprus. We should mention, however, that among the contents of the tomb of Agia Paraskevi (from which the bull's head came) there was also a Mycenaean krater decorated with bulls. One must presume that the bull had a symbolic value for the owner of the tomb. According to E. Kozal this piece might be dated to the thirteenth century B.C.<sup>54</sup>

K.O. Eriksson<sup>55</sup> hypothesizes that two more bull figures, one from Myrtou-Pighadhes and the other from Enkomi, might be of Anatolian origin or inspiration.

A silver figure has been found at the site of Kalavassos-Agios Dhimitrios from a thirteenth century BC tomb.<sup>56</sup> It was found in the tomb of three infants

<sup>46</sup> Singer 1999: 650.

<sup>47</sup> See now Cadogan 1998: 12, 13; Bunimowitz 1998: 104; Steel 2004: 184, 241 n. 122.

<sup>48</sup> Åstrom 1989: 15-17.

<sup>49</sup> Kozal 2002: 651-661.

<sup>50</sup> See Kozal 2002: 651, 655 with previous literature.

<sup>51</sup> See Kozal 2002: 652, 655 with previous literature.

<sup>52</sup> Karageorghis 1999: 147-150; see also Todd 2001: 206; Kozal 2002: 653, 658.

<sup>53</sup> See now Demange 2002: 139; see also Alaura 2001: 1 and n. 4.

<sup>54</sup> Kozal 2002: 658.

<sup>55</sup> Eriksson 1993: 152.

and one child<sup>57</sup>. It represents a deity standing on a stag. The statuette, which is preserved in Nicosia, lies on a flat base but may also be hung by using a hook applied upon the deity's back. The male figure wears Hittite dress and his hat is decorated with horns. We can recognize in this figure the well-documented Hittite iconography of the "Protective Deity of the Field" (<sup>D</sup>LAMMA.LÍL) standing on a stag.<sup>58</sup>

Lastly we have to mention a bronze statuette representing a standing god and a terracotta head of a god.<sup>59</sup>

Therefore, despite the fact that the number of Hittite objects found in Cyprus is very low these pieces document exchanges between members of the dominant Hittite class and people from the Alašiya political and economic elites.

Moving on to see what may have come from Cyprus, as far as Hittite archaeological findings are concerned, we have to mention the discovery in the 1979 excavations in the Hittite capital of a fragment of a copper ox-hide ingot weighing seven kilos. This finding was published for the first time by A. Müller-Karpe<sup>60</sup> who identified it as typical of the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC. Following this it was the subject of other studies which reinforced the hypothesis of a Cypriot origin.<sup>61</sup>

This finding agrees with what the written sources say about the importation of copper from Alašiya to Ḫatti.

Concerning Late Bronze Age trade relations between Cyprus and the Hittite kingdom the finding in Anatolia of red lustrous wheel-made ware cannot be ignored. The finding concerns, for the most part, arm-shaped vessels and spindle bottles. The distribution of the red lustrous ware shows a certain concentration in south-eastern Anatolia and in the heart of the Hittite kingdom.

K.O. Eriksson<sup>62</sup> suggested that the red lustrous wheel-made ware is of Cypriot origin. I. Todd<sup>63</sup> believes that this type of pottery from Cyprus (the

<sup>56</sup> See Todd 2001: 203-213; Karageorghis 2002: 34; Kozal 2002: 653, 657; Steel 2004: 241 n. 122.

<sup>57</sup> See South 1997: 163 (Tomb 12).

<sup>58</sup> On this deity see von der Osten-Sacken 1988: 63-81; Collins 2003: 75-76; Mazoyer 2003: 176-178.

<sup>59</sup> See Kozal 2002: 653, 657.

<sup>60</sup> Müller-Karpe 1980: 303-304.

<sup>61</sup> See Lo Schiavo 1999: 501, with more literature.

<sup>62</sup> Eriksson 1993. On this topic see also Steel 2004: 184.

<sup>63</sup> See Eriksson 1999: 129-134.

major concentrations are along the northern coast of the island) might have reached Cilicia and, from there, the main Hittite centres.<sup>64</sup>

Recently the problem of production contexts of red lustrous wheel-made ware has been posed again by some scholars, mostly after the discovery of a lot of spindle bottles and arm-shaped vessels in the excavations of Ḫattuša, in the area of the "Südteiche". At the moment Cypriot origin of this pottery has been questioned and an Anatolian origin, possibly from Cilicia, cannot be excluded.<sup>65</sup>

3. Now we can proceed to see what Hittite sources say about the political and administrative situation in Alašiya. First of all, only two texts from the late Imperial Age offer any information regarding the subject. The text KBo XII 38 explicitly mentions a king of Alašiya (I 10': LUGAL <sup>KUR</sup>Alašiya). Next to the king, as has already been said, a dignitary, <sup>LU</sup>pidduri (I 10'), is mentioned. For both of them the Hittite king establishes the tribute that has to be given to Ḫatti. Also in the treaty with Alašiya KBo XII 39 rev. 3'-11', in the blessing formulas, the <sup>LU</sup>pidduri appears immediately after the king (mentioned in a fragmentary passage).

As is known, a king of Alašiya is well documented in the letters exchanged with the Egyptian court and found in the Tell-el Amarna archive. A king of Alašiya also appears in the correspondence exchanged between this island and Ugarit. Two letters that were found in Ugarit during the excavation campaign of 1994 also mention the name of the king of Alašiya who was the sender of the letter: Kušmešuša.<sup>66</sup>

It is helpful to notice that both in the documentation regarding Amarna and in the documentation of Ugarit the dignitary <sup>LU</sup>MAŠKIM (GAL) also appears along with the king of Alašiya. This dignitary is the sender of the Amarna letter number 40. A person called Ešuwara, bearing this title, is the sender of the letter found at Ugarit RS 20.18.<sup>67</sup> It has been suggested that the title <sup>LU</sup>MAŠKIM (GAL) is the same as the <sup>LU</sup>pidduri in the aforementioned Hittite sources.<sup>68</sup>

If we accept such a hypothesis we have to accept the fact that at different moments of the Late Bronze Age during diplomatic and economic relations between Alašiya, on one hand, and Egypt, Ḫatti and Ugarit on the other, one

<sup>64</sup> Todd 2001: 212-213.

<sup>65</sup> See Knappet 2000; Mielke, in print. I thank Dr. Mielke for having sent me the manuscript of his article.

<sup>66</sup> See Bordreuil – Malbran Labat 1995: 445; Malbran Labat 1999: 122; Freu 2006: 212-213.

<sup>67</sup> See now Malbran Labat 1999: 122.

<sup>68</sup> See Steiner 1962: 135; Kühne 1973: 85-86 n. 421; Moran 1992: 113 n. 1.

important role was undertaken by a high-ranking dignitary who interacted very closely with the king.

It seems to me that the mention of a high-ranking dignitary <sup>LU</sup>MAŠKIM (GAL)/<sup>LU</sup>*pidduri* next to the king of Alašiya in texts of different origin and different period is not a coincidence. Indeed it could be an element in favour of the hypothesis that the Cypriot partner of, respectively, Egypt, Ḫatti and Ugarit was the same political entity, which existed between the second half of the fourteenth century and the end of the thirteenth.

The hypothesis that Alašiya/Cyprus was a kingdom with the capital at Enkomi has been suggested by some scholars and recently supported, for example, by B. Knapp.<sup>69</sup> This scholar, however, is aware of the archaeological situation of the island and writes: “the preeminence of Enkomi in Proto-historic Bronze Age 1 contrasts markedly with proliferation of other wealthy urban sites during Protohistoric Bronze Age 2 (=LC II)”.<sup>70</sup>

However, independently of the problem regarding Cyprus’ political structure (which will be mentioned later) some scholars, like P. Keswani, have observed that although Enkomi occupies a relatively vast area (smaller, though, than other sites of the same time) architectural structures that might have had the role of “centre of an administrative control hierarchy or a palace”<sup>71</sup> are not clearly recognizable.

Furthermore, something which cannot be ignored has come from the studies on the provenance of the Amarna tablets, through mineralogical and chemical analyses that were carried out by the team led by Yuval Goren. The result of the analyses on the Cypriot letters of Amarna, as well as on other Cypriot materials, has located the region in the south-eastern margins of the Troodos mountains as the place of origin of the clay in these documents. This would lead us to exclude the hypothesis of recognizing Enkomi as the place from which the letters to Egypt were sent and, therefore, as the capital of Alašiya. On the other hand the sites of Alassa or of Kalavassos are indicated by the Israeli team as possible places of origin of the Cypriot letters of Amarna.<sup>72</sup>

The archaeological investigations undertaken at Cyprus show that there was a widespread occupation of most of the island in the Late Bronze Age, when there were a higher number of settlements than in the previous era: Enkomi, Morphou-Toumba tou Skourou, Kourion, Hala Sultan Tekke and

Kition, along the coast, as well as Alassa, Kalavassos-Agios Dhimitrios, Maroni in the area south of the Troodos mountains.

Apparently, there is not a hierarchical relationship between the aforementioned Cypriot centres. In fact, the closeness of some centres to each other like Hala Sultan Tekke and Kition, or Kalavassos and Maroni, is an element which does not allow us to recognize a clear hierarchical settlement. Furthermore, it would appear difficult to recognize in one of these centres the very signs of a governing centre. It is true, for example, that Kalavassos presents imposing structures that were destined to the centralized storage of large quantities of olive oil.<sup>73</sup> However, clear evidence is lacking here, as in other sites on the island, of the presence of an administrative apparatus that was able to manage a centralized state economy as well as the relations between primary and secondary centres. Many seals have been found, but impressions have not been found and there is no evidence of true sealings.<sup>74</sup> In the same way, the use of writing would appear limited. Cypro-Minoan texts are very few and come from few sites like Enkomi and Kalavassos. Styli which were used for writing also come from these two centres.<sup>75</sup>

The scarcity of written documentation contrasts with what the Amarna texts state. Therefore, it contrasts with the idea of the presence of a scribal school able to write in Akkadian as well as being expert in the art of ceremony in the Late Bronze Age courts. In order to solve this incongruence it has also been hypothesized that they used perishable materials to write with which have not survived to our times like wooden tablets.<sup>76</sup> However, the absence of sealings, which are normally attached to this type of document, might appear to contradict such a hypothesis.

On the basis of these as well as other observations many scholars have countered the hypothesis of a single kingdom in Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age. As an example I would like to quote, at this point, the recent contributions made by P. Keswani (1993, 73-83; 1996, 238-239); Shl. Bunimowitz (1998, 104); A. South (2002, 59-72); L. Steel (2004, 150, 186). Therefore, many scholars have argued in favour of the hypothesis that Cyprus was organized into small regional polities.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>73</sup> See for example Keswani 1999: 230-232.

<sup>74</sup> See Webb 1992: 113-120.

<sup>75</sup> See Papasavvas 2004: 79-94.

<sup>76</sup> See Papasavvas 2004, loc. cit.

<sup>77</sup> See Keswani 1993: 75; Steel 2004: 186. According to South 2002: 68, there were a number of “chiefdoms” of approximately equal size and complexity.

<sup>69</sup> Knapp 1994: 424-429; 1997: 64-68.

<sup>70</sup> Knapp 1997: 65.

<sup>71</sup> Keswani 1996: 224, 234.

<sup>72</sup> Goren – Finkelstein – Na’aman 2004: 48-75, with previous literature.

4. In conclusion, the relations between Ḫatti and Alašiya are documented in Hittite sources from the fourteenth century BC: The mention of Alašiya in Hittite texts is limited to few documents. They bear witness to the existence of commercial exchanges within which Ḫatti imported copper, copper-derivates and textiles from Cyprus. Cypriot copper is only quoted in very few texts, however. Unlike in the Amarna documentation, Cyprus does not appear as an important economic partner in Hittite sources.<sup>78</sup>

The continuing existence of diplomatic relations between the Hittite kingdom and Cyprus in the course of the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC is shown by the fact that the island was chosen as a place of exile for undesired political people at the time of Šuppiluliuma I and of Ḫattušili III.

Hittite domination over Alašiya during the Middle Kingdom is demonstrated only by the "Indictment of Madduwatta" and is not supported by other sources.

Only in the Late Imperial Age Alašiya was conquered by the Hittites, first by Tuthaliya IV and then by Šuppiluliuma II. A treaty which linked Alašiya to the Hittite kingdom was also stipulated and this is the convincing element in favour of the hypothesis of a political subordination of Alašiya to Ḫatti, even if for a short period.

Hittite documentation, much like Egyptian and Ugarit documentation, would lead us to believe that Alašiya was a kingdom, which Near Eastern powers considered similar to their own political organization. The archaeological evidence would seem to show, however, that Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age was not a unitary kingdom, but was divided into a series of regional polities. We do not know for sure which of these polities was the kingdom of Alašiya mentioned in Near Eastern sources and if it was always the same polity that related to Egypt and Ḫatti, as I have suggested. It is not even clear what the socio-political and economic dynamics were,<sup>79</sup> that caused only one of these polities to interact directly with the great powers of the time.

<sup>78</sup> May be because copper was available also in Anatolia, see for example Dercksen 1996: 27-28.

<sup>79</sup> See, for example, Keswani 1993: 73-83; Keswani 1996: 211-250; Goren – Finkelstein – Na'aman 2004: 73-75; Steel 2004: 185-186.

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