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A NOTE ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM OF THE OLD HITTITE KINGDOM

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From the 17th to the 12th Century B.C. the Hittite Kingdom was one of the most notable powers in the Near East. It ranged over a vast geographical area dominating the surrounding cities and smaller states. Throughout this time the Hittites consistently developed their political system thereby ascending to the level of an empire. From sources pertaining to this era, it can be ascertained that already in the early stages, when the borders were not as extended, the Hittite Kingdom adopted the tradition of sending the king's sons and princes to the newly conquered regions and significant cities.¹ Although some examples indicate that the tradition was continued in the later phases of the development of the kingdom, change was inevitable in the Hittite Administrative System as borders were extended and authority over the regions increased. In order to link the conquered regions to the Hittite Kingdom as vassal states, the preferred method was to designate people closely related to the royal family to particular regions as administrators, or simply to leave the local administrators of the newly conquered region in power.

In general, when studying the Hittite administrative system two types of structures can be distinguished. The first is to tie the territory to the kingdom as a vassal state and arrange the region's administrative structure accordingly. The second consists of regions ruled directly by the central administration. Regions linked to the central administration included the upper regions of the river Halys (Kızılırmak) known as the Upper Country (KUR UGUTI) covering the east and north-east district of the Hittite central administration region, and the Lower Country (KUR ŠAPLITI) covering the southern region of the extensive curve drawn by the river Halys in Central Anatolia. In addition, there are also other administrative districts. The central administration designated princes or senior officials as the administrators of these governmental regions which can be defined as 'states'. Yet, knowledge about the exact boundaries of authority and duty of these officials is limited.² The Hittites clearly possessed a well organized administrative organization and well-educated human resources within this

¹ KBo III 1 I 8-12, 18-23; KUB I 16 II 63-64; KBo III 38 obv. 21-23.

² For these officials see F. P. DADDI, *Mestieri, Professioni e Dignità Nell' Anatolia Ittita*, Roma (Edizioni dell'Ateneo) 1982, p. 435-457.

organization. However, the documents are inadequate both in quantity and content in terms of describing the administrative organization and its process, and there is even less evidence for earlier periods. Although we are, thus, faced with difficulties to obtain detailed information, some of the officials that took part in the administrative organization are, nevertheless, described in the records of a palace chronicle³ dating to the Old Hittite Period.

This chronicle contains various events witnessed in the Hittite Palace or in the higher-ranking administrative environment. The description relates to some malpractices and negligence of duty pertaining at the time of the tablet and mentions matters such as the punishment of a commander accused of malpractice⁴, a probable negligence of duty of an official known as Šanda and his punishment⁵. We encounter the same name with a senior official in another text pertaining to that era⁶, and the punishment of people who were royal officials for negligence of duty⁷.

Another event, again stated in this text, is about an impropriety committed by an official known as Nunnu⁸, who was situated in Arzawa⁹. Having once obtained information on the details, it can be determined how this event occurred. In addition, the important point is the official being at Arzawa. This man probably was an administrative official, who was responsible either for collecting taxes or conveying the collected tax to the Hittite capital and the Royal palace. The person probably executed his duty directly under the Hittite king. He could not have been a local official¹⁰. Nunnu had pocketed the taxes

³ KBo III 34 (2BoTU 12A) (CTH 8). Together with this text, which was used on the grounds that it has survived more intact, the following parallel texts also exist: KBo III 35 (2BoTU 12B), KBo III 36 (2BoTU 12C), KUB XXXVI 104, KUB XXXI 38, KBo XIII 44+KBo XIII 44a+?KBo XII 10, KBo XII 11, KBo XIII 45, KBo XLVIII 77, KUB XXVI 105, VBoT 33. On account of being stated in various other texts, the events and mentions of names of certain individuals as recorded in this chronicle dating to the Old Hittite period are accepted to have occurred in the age of Hattuşili I. It is a known fact that the expression of "A-BI LUGAL" "the father of the king" mentioned within this text was generally used by Muṣṣili I for the predecessor Hattuşili I. Accordingly, the chronicle was written during the era of Muṣṣili I. (See H. A. HOFFNER, "Historics and Historians of the Ancient Near East: The Hittites," *Or* 49 (1980), p. 291, 303).

⁴ KBo III 34 I 5-10

⁵ KBo III 34 I 24-25

⁶ KBo I 11 obv. I-4, 21, rev. 10

⁷ KBo III 34 I 26-30, II 1-7

⁸ KBo III 34 I 11-18

⁹ Arzawa is generally located in the south-west of Anatolia; see: G. F. del MONTE-J. TISCHLER, *Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cunéiformes Bd 6, Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der hethitischen Texte*, Wiesbaden (Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag) 1978, p. 42-45.

¹⁰ He is called "Nunnu of Hurma" in the text. The location of Hurma is unknown, though (see n. 14). It is generally thought to have been in a region different from Arzawa (see n. 9). Arzawa could not have been an administrative region bound directly to the central government in earlier phase of the Hittite Kingdom. However, a campaign was launched on Arzawa by Hattuşili I. (KBo X 2 I 22-24; KBo III 46 I 42; KUB XXI 5 I 2-4).

collected instead of conveying them to the palace¹¹, hence the king called for him. He was questioned at Hattusa and subsequently punished. The king wanted to send another official, Šarmaššu, to replace Nunnu. We hear that the king himself made the appointment¹².

The reference to the same person who took part in two different events stated in the text provides sufficient evidence to reveal the Old Hittite administrative system. The part relating to Aškaliya¹³, the lord of the Hurma¹⁴, is as follows¹⁵:

8 mA-aš-ga-li-ya-aš^{URU} Hu-ur-mi EN-aš e-eš-ta a-pa-aš-ša

9 ku-wa-at-ta ku-wa-at-ta LÚ^{MEŠ} e-eš-ta ša-na-aš-ta at-ti-mi

10 pa-ak-nu-ir ša-an ar-nu-ut ša-an^{URU} An-ku-i IR-DI

11 ša-an^{URU} An-ku-i-pát LÚ^{AGRIG} an i-e-it šar-ku-uš LÚ^{MEŠ} e-eš-ta

12 a-ki-iš-ma-aš te-ip-ša-u-wa-an-ni^{URUK} u-zu-ru-ú-i

13 ka-aq-qa-pu-uš ma-ra-ak-ta^{URU} An-ku-wa ka-aq-qa-pi-iš

14 ma-ak-la-an-te-eš

8 Aškaliya was the lord in Hurma. He

9 was a man in every way. To my father

10 he was spoken ill of (slandered). He asked for him and banished him to Ankuwa.

11 He made him^{LÚ} AGRIG of Ankuwa. He was a strong man,

12 but he died in poverty. In Kuzuruwa

¹¹ KBo III 34 I 11-12:

"(11) KUR Ar-za-u-i-ya^{URU} Nu-un-nu LÚ^{URU} Hu-u-ur-ma e-eš-[ta] KÚ.BABBAR-y[a] KÚ.SI[G]₁₇

(12) na-at-ta ú-da-i ku-it ú-e-mi-ez-zi a-pa-aš-ša [páfr-naš-ša pi-it-ta-iz-zi

(11) The man Nunnu of Hurma was at Arzawa. The gold and silver found (collected)

(12) he did not bring. He took it home"

¹² It is quite evident from line 14 that instead of Nunnu the king wanted to send Šarmaššu, but he did not want to go. However, the lines 22-23 show that Šarmaššu was ordered to go.

¹³ In this text Aškaliya is given as a senior official, an administrator of the Hittite Kingdom; the name is also to be encountered in other sources. The name of a Prince Aškaliya is one of the witnesses of a grant document known as the Inandik Tablet pertaining to the Old Hittite Period. (Subsequent to the witness list, Aškaliya is given as the author of the document) (See K. BALKAN, *Inandik'ta 1966 Yılında Bulunan Eski Hittit Çağına Ait Bir Bağış Belgesi*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1973, 3-4) Prince Aškaliya of the grant document, who is known to have had an association with the royal family, is the same person as the Aškaliya named in the palace chronicles. For K. BALKAN in *Inandik*, 33-34, puts forth that the names of certain senior officials mentioned in the grant document are the names of the officials mentioned in the chronicle in question. Balkan's approach to the matter indicates that this resemblance is probable, but it must also be taken into account that the name of the document's author, Aškaliya, was common throughout the Hittite Kingdom during this period.

¹⁴ The present location of the city of Hurma is unknown, but it is generally accepted that the region is located between Malatya, Elbistan, and Gürün; see del MONTE-TISCHLER, *op. cit.*, p. 124-126; M. FORLANINI - M. MARAZZI, "Anatolia: L'impero Hittita," in: *Atlante storico del Vicinio Orientale antico*, Fascicolo 4.3, Roma 1986, map XVI.

¹⁵ KBo III 34 II 8-14

- 13 he divided partridges. The partridges in Ankuwa
14 are lean.

From this text it can be learned that, while Aškaliya was the administrator of the city of Hurma, he was falsely accused by an unknown person and was exiled to Ankuwa¹⁶ by the king. There he was made AGRIG¹⁷. The text also mentions that he died there. The crucial point here is the fall of an administrator of a city as the result of the slander he had received, and as a result he was exiled to another city with a lower rank.

The following section of this chapter of the chronicle describes another event that again mentions the name Aškaliya¹⁸:

- 15 ^{URU}İš-pu-da-aš-i-na-ra-aš ^{LÚ}hu-up-ra-la-aš e-eš-ta ša-an ^{MA}A-aš-ka-li-ya-aš ^{LÚ}URU
Hu-ur-ma
16 da-a-aš ša-an l-NA ^{URU}U-dah-zu-mi 19 ^{LÚ}ma-ni-ah-ha-tal-la-an i-e-it
17 ma-na-an-kán ^{MA}A-aš-ka-li-ya-aš ku-i-en-zi ša-an A-NA É.EN.NU.UN da-iš
18 ^{MA}A-aš-ka-li-ma ud-da-a-ar a-ra-a-iš ^{MA}İš-pu-ta-aš-i-na-ri-ma pi-i-ir
19 ša-na-aš-ta İŠ-TU É.EN.NU.UN tar-ni-ir ša-aš ^{MA}A-aš-ki-li-pát ti-e-it
20 mar-ša-an-za-wa zi-ik
21 LUGAL-un-wa-az me-ik-ki ha-li-ih-la-at-ti ^{Dİ}İš-pu-da-aš-i-na-ar-an LUGAL-
uš da-a-aš
15 Ispudašinara was a potter. Aškaliya of Hurma
16 took him and made him the administrator²⁰ in Udahzumi.
17 Aškaliya was going to kill him and imprisoned him,
18 but a problem had risen against Aškaliya. He dispatched to
Ispudašinara

¹⁶ The exact location of the city of Ankuwa is unknown, but it is generally thought to be on the Alishar; for opinions see del MONTE-TISCHLER, *op. cit.*, p. 19-23. A. ÜNAL, "Hitit Kenti Ankuwa'nın Tarihçesi ve Lokalizasyonu Hakkında," *Belleten* 45 (1981), p. 455 emphasizes that a definite localization can not be given, but states that it maybe found in the area of Yerköy, the valley of Deliceirmak-Bağazlıyan Suyu on its east or Kanak Su valley in the Alishar region.

¹⁷ In: J. FRIEDRICH, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch*, Heidelberg (Carl Winter) 1952, p. 264 and also relating to this: DADDI, *Mestieri*, p. 438-442 translates 'administrator', while I. SINGER, "The AGRIG in the Hittite Texts," *An.St.* 34 (1984), p. 97-127 defines it as 'the keeper of the royal storehouse', and emphasizes that they do not possess as high a social status as other officials (*An.St.* 34 (1984), p. 105). According to ÜNAL, *Belleten* 45 (1981), p. 443 an AGRIG exists in Ankuwa, which was discovered in an KI.LAM text (KBo X 31 II 8; KBo X 24 IV 22) again dating from the Old Hittite period, an *MELQET* list (KBo XVI 82 obv. 8), and two pieces of texts (KBo XX 4 I 3, Bo 5005=H.Otten, KBo XX, VI n.2); see DADDI, *Mestieri*, p. 439.

¹⁸ KBo III 34 II 15-23

¹⁹ KBo III 36 I 22: Ul-lam-ma

²⁰ For ^{LÚ}maniyahatalla see FRIEDRICH, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch*, p. 135, and relating to this: DADDI, *Mestieri*, p. 435-436 translates 'administrator.'

- 19 and discharged him from prison. And he said to Aškaliya:
20 You are wrong.
21 You are disrespecting the king. The king took Ispudašinara...

The event cited above must have happened before the events explained in the previous paragraph, for Aškaliya is alive and definitely in possession of certain authority. Aškaliya of Hurma, that is the lord of Hurma, makes Ispudašinara the administrator of the city of Udahzumi²¹. Probably, he intended that he would be executed and imprisoned him. However, there must have been certain events developing against Aškaliya, for as Aškaliya's situation worsened, Ispudašinara was released from prison. It must have been the king himself who had Ispudašinara released and discovered the wrong doings of Aškaliya. Hence, in the subsequent line Aškaliya was accused of disrespecting the king and this was followed by the king appointing Ispudašinara. The king then set him free and later gave him protection against Aškaliya. The later chapter of the text explains Ispudašinara's new appointment after being rescued.

The point to be emphasized of the Old Hittite administrative structure, though its details are still unknown, is that an administrator of a city and individual with intact authority possesses the power to designate an administrator of a smaller settlement or any other official. Aškaliya designated an administrator of a smaller city or an official bound to the administrative city where he himself was lord. Thus, the link of some other smaller settlements to a city (from the administrative point of view) is in question here. Since all the territory came under the control and influence of the king, the designated administrator or official, who had been imprisoned by Aškaliya, could only be saved by the intervention of the king. As a result of the aspersions cast on Aškaliya (perhaps including the events mentioned together with other unchronicled occurrences), Aškaliya, probably an administrator of a larger city, was then designated as AGRIG to a smaller city after having his rank reduced.

²¹ Instead of Udahzumi in KBo III 34 (which is only mentioned here in the Hittite cuneiform texts) Ulama stated in the parallel document KBo III 36 that it was believed to be near Aksaray; see del MONTE-TISCHLER, *op. cit.*, p. 452; according to the document pertaining to the Assyrian Colonies Period, E. BILGİC, "Anadolu'nun İlk Yazılı Kaynaklarındaki Yer Adlarının Yerlerinin Tayini Üzerine İncelemeler," *Belleten* 39 (1946), p. 389 n. 19 and 413. It must be taken into consideration that Hurma was located in a region not far from there.