# From 'LUGAL.GAL' to 'Wanax': kingship and political organisation in the Late Bronze Age Aegean

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# ‘My brother, a Great King, my peer’. Evidence for a Mycenaean kingdom from Hittite texts

Willemijn Waal

## 1. Introduction

With the decipherment of the Hittite language in 1915, an invaluable new source of information about Late Bronze Age Greece has become available to us. Among the thousands of cuneiform tablets discovered in the archives of Ḫattuša, the capital of the Hittite Empire (ca. 1650-1180 BCE), there are some 26 texts that mention ‘Aḫḫiyawa’, a term which has long been the object of much controversy.

In 1924 Emil Forrer suggested that the Aḫḫiyawa were to be identified with the Mycenaeans, a proposal that met with strong resistance, Ferdinand Sommer being his fiercest opponent. The history of the ‘Aḫḫiyawa-controversy’ has already been much discussed elsewhere (recently Beckman et al. 2011: 1-6, Latacz 2004: 121-8; Gander 2017: 275-8) and need not be repeated here, as it can now be considered as settled. New insights and evidence since 1924 have confirmed the identification suggested by Forrer. It is clear that Aḫḫiyawa refers to an (overseas) entity west of Anatolia, which for some time was present on the Anatolian west coast. The Hittite texts indicate that the city Millawanda (Milete) was under Aḫḫiyawan control or influence during the 14th/13th century. The information is corroborated by archaeological evidence, as there is demonstrable Mycenaean material presence in Milete at that time. As Beckman, Bryce and Cline (2011: 3) accurately put it:

> Ahhiyawa must, essentially by default be a reference to the Mycenaeans. Otherwise, we would have, on the one hand, an important Late Bronze Age Culture not mentioned in the Hittite texts (the Mycenaeans) and, on the other hand, an important textually attested Late Bronze Age “state” without archaeological remains (Ahhiyawa).

In the last decades, it has become more and more clear that contacts all across the Mediterranean existed in the Late Bronze Age, and long before (for a recent overview, see Broodbank 2013). In light of this high degree of interconnectivity it is unthinkable that

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there would have been no contacts between the Aegean and Anatolia, considering the close vicinity of these regions. Needless to say, the modern dichotomy placing Greece in the 'West' and Anatolia in the 'East' did not exist in antiquity.

Though the identification with Aḫḫiyawa and the Mycenaean world is now generally accepted, there is still much debate about to which Mycenaeans exactly this term refers and whether or not this Aḫḫiyawa was a great kingdom – the very topic of this volume. In this paper, I would like to explore what the Hittite texts may tell us about the status of the Aḫḫiyawa, by comparing Hittite interactions with Aḫḫiyawa to those with contemporary great powers such as Egypt, Babylon, Assyria and Mitanni. In doing so, I will gratefully make use of the invaluable edition of the Hittite Aḫḫiyawa texts by Beckman et al. 2011.[1]

## 2. The reliability of the Aḫḫiyawa texts

Before embarking on the content of the Hittite Aḫḫiyawa texts, a brief discussion of their status and reliability seems in order. The texts are written on clay tablets in cuneiform and stem from the tablet collections of Ḫattuša, the capital of the Hittite Empire.[2] They are direct sources, which have been buried under the ground for millennia until their rediscovery at the beginning of the 20th century. The fact that they are direct sources makes them more reliable than, e.g., classical texts, which have been transmitted indirectly over many centuries, but this does of course not mean that they are unfailing. Political agendas can make them less trustworthy, and if they deal with evens in the past, or present later copies of earlier compositions, they may be inaccurate.[3]

With respect to the Aḫḫiyawa texts, we are in all cases dealing with contemporary documents and not with later copies. The texts can be dated from the early 14th to the late 12th century BCE (see Beckman et al. 2011: 268).[4] They include several letters, oracle reports, royal annals and some texts of other genres: two prayers, one treaty, one indictment, one edict, one list, one inventory, and some fragments of unknown nature.

As for the reliability of the texts discussed in this paper, the most subjective texts are probably the royal annals (AhT 1). We do not know for what precise purpose these texts were written – whether they are accounts represented to the gods or (also) had a more public propaganda function – but, though they may lack the boasting rhetoric of, e.g., Assyrian royal inscriptions, they are meant to justify and exalt the actions and deeds of the Hittite kings. In this particular case, the most important information from the annals of king Muršili II (ca. 1321-1295 BCE) relevant for this paper – namely that the Aḫḫiyawa were present in Western Anatolia – is confirmed by archaeological evidence.

The so-called Indictment of Madduwatta (AhT 3) also has a clear bias. This text recounts the misbehaviours of a Hittite vassal named Madduwatta. It is written from the perspective

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1 All translations follow those of Beckman et al. 2011 unless indicated otherwise. The abbreviation AhT (Aḫḫiyawa Texts) refers to the text numbers in Beckman et al. 2011, who provide transliterations, translations, discussion and references to earlier literature.

2 This paper will only discuss the texts mentioning Aḫḫiyawa found in Ḫattuša. Note that Beckman et al. 2011 also include two texts that do not explicitly mention Aḫḫiyawa but that are clearly related to the 'Aḫḫiyawa-dossier', as well as two texts from Ugarit and an inscription from Adana mentioning (Aḫ)ḫiyawa.

3 It was quite common for certain text genres to be copied over time; not infrequently we have an Old Hittite composition that was written down in the Late Hittite period, see, e.g., Van den Hout 2002.

4 Note that the Hittites as a rule did not date their texts, so we mostly have to have to rely on palaeographic and linguistic features in order to establish in what period they were written down.

of the Hittite king, who presents the actions of Madduwatta as immoral, whereas he (and his father) are not to blame for anything. Undoubtedly, Madduwatta would have had a different account of the events described. This document should therefore be treated with some caution.

Letters are more reliable, as they are not directed to the gods and/or the population at large, but rather represent direct communication with a concrete addressee about affairs which were in principle known to both parties. Though distortion cannot be excluded and the sender could present events according to his own view, he did not have complete liberty to invent and twist facts. The same applies to treaty texts.

The most reliable documents discussed here are the oracle reports and the inventories. Here, there is no reason to misrepresent the truth, in case of the oracle reports this is even undesirable, since the very aim of these texts is to find out precisely what had happened and what sin or evil had brought on the anger of the gods (see below §5.4). The inventories are purely administrative records devoid of any political meaning. In sum, the documents essentially have no reason to lie and there is no reason to a *priori* distrust the Aḫḫiyawa texts (cf. Latacz 2004: 169).

There is, however, an important *caveat* when dealing with these texts. Durable as clay tablets may be, they can be damaged or broken. Often, the missing parts can be restored with quite some confidence, but sometimes restorations are more speculative. In this paper, it will be clearly indicated when the restorations are uncertain.

## 3. The Great King of Aḫḫiyawa

### *3.1. 'But now my brother, a Great King, has written to me'*

During the Late Bronze Age, the ancient Near East was dominated by several large empires including Ḫatti, Egypt, Babylon, Mitanni and Assyria, which were ruled by 'Great Kings'. Between these Great Kings, who treated each other as equals, extensive diplomatic contacts existed in the form of correspondence and gift exchange. The most significant textual evidence for these international contacts are the letters found in the famous archive of Tell el'Amarna dating to reign of Akhenaten (ca. 1353-1335 BCE). Another important source are the tablet collections of Ḫattuša, in which Late Bronze Age correspondence between Hittite kings and the kings of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Mitanni, and the king of Aḫḫiyawa has been found.

The letter which has received most attention in the discussion about the status of Aḫḫiyawa is the so-called 'Tawagalawa letter' (AhT 4), a document composed by a Hittite king – probably Ḫattušili III (ca. 1267-1237) – addressed to a king of Aḫḫiyawa, whose name is unknown.[5] The preserved part of the document mostly deals with a certain Piyamaradu, a renegade subject

5 Unfortunately, the beginning of this long and intriguing document is not preserved. The colophon at the end of the tablet informs us that it is the third (and last) tablet in a series. Though the document is generally classified as a letter, this identification is not certain and not supported by, e.g., its physical features (Heinhold-Kramer 2002: 360; Hoffner 2009: 297; Waal 2016: 87). Possibly, we are dealing with a draft or briefing document for envoys (Heinhold-Kramer 2002: 360) or a document that had a function comparable to that of the Indictment of Madduwatta (AhT3, see Waal 2016: 238-9). The pXRF provenance study of Goren et al. 2011: 11 has shown that the document must have been composed in the region of Ephesus (Hittite Millawanda). Regardless of the exact status of the Tawagalawa letter, however, it is clear that the king of Aḫḫiyawa is being addressed here, and it contains references to previous correspondence with him. Note that a new edition of this document is currently being prepared by Hawkins et al.

of the Hittite king, whose rebellious actions in western Anatolia are a constant source of trouble for the Hittite Empire. This Piyamaradu appears to have enjoyed the support of the king of Aḫḫiyawa and to have used Aḫḫiyawa-controlled territory as a base for his anti-Hittite operations. In the letter, the Hittite king appeals to his colleague for help in this matter and asks him to use his influence and talk to Piyamaradu (see also below §5.6).

Throughout the letter, the Hittite king addresses the king of Aḫḫiyawan as his equal. No less than three times he explicitly addresses the king of Aḫḫiyawa as a 'Great King' (LUGAL.GAL):[6]

1. But now my Brother, **a Great King**, has written to me – should I not listen to the word of my [peer]? (KUB 14.3 obv. ii 13-4, Beckman et al. 2011: 106-7);
2. Did **the Great King**, **my peer**, [ (KUB 14.3 obv. iii 44. Beckman et al. 2011: 113-4);
3. When Tawagalawa himself, **the Great King**, crossed over to Millawanda (KUB 14.3 obv. i 71-3, Beckman et al. 2011: 106-7).

Note that in no. 2 the king of Aḫḫiyawa is not only explicitly called 'Great King' by the Hittite king, but also his 'peer' or 'equal' (Hitt. '*annawali*'- 'of the same birth/rank', obv. iii 44). In all likelihood, this term *annawali* is also to be completed in text no. 1.

In no. 3, it is unclear whether Tawagalawa – possibly the Hittite rendering of the Greek name Eteocles, which is also attested as *e-te-wo-ke-le-we* in contemporary Linear B texts – was a former king of Aḫḫiyawa or a representative of the present king.[7] Regardless of the precise interpretation, he is referred to as a 'Great King'.

Further, the Hittite king often calls the king of Aḫḫiyawa 'my brother', which was the normal way of addressing a person of equal rank, with whom one was on good terms.[8] The significance of this appellative is aptly illustrated by the letter of a Hittite king to the king of the newly rising power Assyria. The Hittite king grudgingly acknowledges that the king of Assyria, after the conquest of most of the territory of the former kingdom of Mitanni, is entitled to call himself 'Great King', but he is displeased by the latter calling him his brother:

4. For what reason should I write to you about brotherhood? Who customarily writes to someone about brotherhood? Do those who are not on good terms customarily write to one another about brotherhood? On what account should I write to you about brotherhood? Were you and I born from one mother? (translation Beckman 1999: 146-7, no. 24).

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6 Note that the fact that Aḫḫiyawa was a 'Great Power' did not necessarily mean that it was of the same might and size as Egypt – among the great powers there was a hierarchy, which Malamat (1998: 204) describes as a 'pyramid' of equal states with Ḫatti and Egypt on top.

7 The complete passage may be translated as: 'When Tawagalawa himself, the Great King, went to the side of Millawanda, Kurunta was [already?] here. The Great King drove to meet you / He drove to meet you, the Great King. Was he not a mighty king?'. The text, which refers to an incident in the past, could be taken either to mean that Tawagalawa, who is called the brother of the king of Aḫḫiyawa, was a predecessor of the present king of Aḫḫiyawa (thus Miller 2006), or that Tawagalawa here acted as representative of his brother, the Great King (thus Beckman et al. 2011:106; Hoffner 2009: 305).

8 See KUB 14.3 obv. i 27, 52, 53(?), 60, ii 9, 12, 13, 17, 19, 36, 56, 67, ii 1, 8, 11, 13, 42, 50, 57, 62, 63, iv 14, 17, 24, 25, 27, 32.

This sore reaction of the Hittite king shows that to him the appellative 'brother' was meaningful and not to be used lightly (Bryce 2003a: 74-8).

### *3.2. Further possible references to the king of Aḫḫiyawa as 'brother'*

In a second – unfortunately poorly preserved – letter (AhT 6) which has been identified as a letter of the king of Aḫḫiyawa to a Hittite king, the former refers to his colleague as 'my brother', which means that he was corresponding with the latter on equal terms.

5. In the [p]revious years, **my brother** wro[te] to me…' (KUB 26.91, obv. 5', Beckman et al. 2011: 134-5).

Lastly, in the fragmentarily preserved letter AhT 10 there may be a possible further reference to the king of Aḫḫiyawa by the Hittite king as 'my brother'.

6. to **my brother, the king of Aḫ[ḫiyawa]** (KUB 23.98, obv. 8', Beckman et al. 2011: 153).

The restoration of the name A[ḫḫiyawa] in no. 6 is likely, but not completely certain, so this example should be treated with caution. Example no. 5 is more solid, as the name Aḫḫiyawa is preserved in the opening lines. This means that, apart from the Tawagalawa letter, there is at least one, possibly two, text(s) in which the king of Aḫḫiyawa and the Hittite king correspond with each other on equal terms.

### *3.3. 'And the kings wo are my equals in rank …'*

The status of the king of Aḫḫiyawa as Great King is confirmed by another document, a treaty between Tudḫaliya IV and Šaušgamuwa of Amurru (AhT 2). This treaty is one of many examples of Hittite vassal treaties that have come down to us.[9] These treaties overall follow a similar pattern, and may include stipulations about foreign policy. Tudhaliya dictates to Šaušgamuwa that with respect to international affairs, the Hittite king's friend should be his friend and the Hittite king's enemy should be his enemy. Tudḫaliya then lists the Great Kings of those days:

7. And the Kings who are my equ[als] in rank are the King of Egypt, the King of Babylonia, the King of Assyria, ~~and the king of Aḫḫiyawa~~[10] (KUB 23.1+, rev. iv 1-3, Beckman et al. 2011: 60-1).

This sentence has been the cause of much debate, since the last entry, i.e. that of the king of Aḫḫiyawa has been erased. It is, however, still clearly visible and there is no doubt that the name was originally written there. This simultaneously raises two intriguing questions: why was this name erased and why was it written there in the first place?

It has been suggested that at the time the document was composed the power of Aḫḫiyawa was waning and had therefore lost its status as Great Kingdom (Beckman

9 For Hittite treaties, see Beckman 1999 and Kitchen and Lawrence 2014.

10 Note that the title 'Great King' is usually only employed in direct speech; in other contexts the kings of Egypt, Ḫatti etc. are simply referred to as 'king' (LUGAL). See also the epilogue of Kelder and Waal in this volume (§5).

et al. 2011: 67-8; Bryce 2005: 308-9; Kelder 2010: 32). This supposed decline in power has been linked to the loss of control over Millawanda mentioned in Hittite texts and the first destructions of Mycenaean palatial centres (Kelder 2010: 32). Possibly, the scribe copied the list from an earlier document when Aḫḫiyawa still enjoyed the status of a Great Kingdom, but since its power was disintegrating at the time the present document was written, it was deleted.[11] This explanation is attractive, but inevitably speculative.

Regardless of the exact reasons, however, the initial inclusion of Aḫḫiyawa is telling and implies that at least at some point Aḫḫiyawa was considered to have had the status of a great power, otherwise it would be an inexplicable mistake. The fact that the 'Great Kings' are so explicitly mentioned in this treaty – as well as in others – incidentally also illustrates the great importance that was attached to this rank and that it was considered to be something exclusive.

## 4. Aḫḫiyawa: A force to be reckoned with

### *4.1. The strong presence of Aḫḫiyawa in Anatolia*

Apart from the explicit references to Aḫḫiyawa as a Great Kingdom and its king as 'Great King' discussed above, the overall picture that emerges from the Aḫḫiyawa texts confirms the idea that Aḫḫiyawa was a powerful entity. For a period of almost two centuries, Aḫḫiyawan presence at the west coast of Anatolia was a source of ongoing concern for the Hittites. Aḫḫiyawa had control over Millawanda for a while, which meant that they held a substantial and sizeable stronghold on the Anatolian west coast.

Further, Hittite texts mention Aḫḫiyawan support of western Anatolian vassal states rebelling against their Hittite overlord.[12] Although we do not know what precisely this support entailed, it is clear that Aḫḫiyawa played a significant role in West-Anatolia and the Hittites could not deal with them effectively. They did not succeed to subject them and make them a vassal state, as they did with so many (smaller) opponents. As an indication for the military might of Aḫḫiyawa, attention has been drawn to an early text in which the Aḫḫiyawa (spelled as Aḫḫiya) occur, the Indictment of Madduwatta (AhT 3). In this text, an individual named Attariššiya, the man from Aḫḫiya appears, who is chasing Madduwatta in Anatolia.

8. But [later] **Attariššiya, the ruler of Aḫḫiya,** came and was plotting to kill you, Madduwatta. But when the father of My Majesty heard, he dispatched Kišnapili, infantry, and chariotry in battle against Attariššiya. And you, Madduwatta, again did not resist Attariššiya, but yielded before him. Then Kišnapili proceeded to rush [ … ] to you from Ḫatti. Kišnapili went in battle against Attariššiya. **100 ch[ariots and … thousand infantry] of Attariššya [drew up for battle].** And they fought. One officer of Attariššiya was killed, and one officer of ours, Zidanza, was killed (KUB 14.1+, ov. i 60-4, Beckman et al. 2011: 80-1).

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11 Another explanation holds that Aḫḫiyawa was included by the scribe 'out of habit' but was later deemed irrelevant for a treaty so distant from Aḫḫiyawa (e.g., Bryce: 2003b: 71; Kelder 2010: 32 with references).

12 See, e.g., AhT 1 A and B, AhT 4, AhT 11 (Beckman et al. 2011).

If Beckman's restoration – which in light of other comparable texts seems plausible – is correct, Attariššiya of Aḫḫiya came with an army of 100 ch[ariots (1 ME $^{GIŠ}$GIGIR, obv. i 63) and an additional unknown number of infantries. This would constitute a significant force, which, as has been pointed out by Kelder, would mean his military capacity would be three times as large as the capacity of, e.g., Pylos (Kelder 2005: 159, 2010: 34 see now also Beckman et al. 2011: 5).[13] However, as noted above, this document is biased. It presents the account of the Hittite king who may well have exaggerated the size of Attariššiya's army, to make the Hittite victory more glorious and to underline how grateful Madduwatta should be to his saviour.

In the above-discussed Tawagalawa letter the Hittite king is clearly anxious to gain support of the king of Aḫḫiyawa and needs his help in dealing with troublemaker Piyamaradu (see also below §5.6). This also implies that Aḫḫiyawa was no small kingdom that could be ignored, but rather was a power to be taken seriously (thus also Kelder 2010: 21-30).[14]

### *4.2. Requests for help to the king of Aḫḫiyawa by a former Hittite king?*

Possibly, there is another example of a (former) Hittite king appealing for help to the king of Aḫḫiyawa, but the context here is less clear. After Urḫi-Teššub (whose throne name was Muršili III) had been deposed from the Hittite throne by his uncle Ḫattušili III, he was looking for ways to regain his former position. He appealed for support to several foreign kings, including the kings of Babylon, Egypt and Assyria, and potentially also the king of Aḫḫiyawa (Beckman et al. 2011: 166). The fragmentary letter AhT 14 seems to mention that the king of Aḫḫiyawa, and probably another king, will or will not come to the aid of Urḫi-Teššub:

9. The king of Aḫḫiyawa [and the king of …] did [not?] come to [the aid] of [Urḫ]i-Teššub (KBo 16.22, obv. 3-4, Beckman et al. 2011: 164-5).

If one accepts Beckman's restoration, this fragment informs us that Urḫi-Teššub, a former king of Ḫatti, had asked for the help of the king of Aḫḫiyawa, which would be a further confirmation of the latter's importance. However, this interpretation is uncertain, since the text is quite damaged.

## 5. Diplomatic interactions between Aḫḫiyawa and Ḫatti

Though the interactions between Aḫḫiyawa and Ḫatti were often in the form of (indirect) military conflicts, as both powers had interests in western Anatolia, they also maintained more friendly relations. The nature of the diplomatic contacts between these two entities confirm their equal status.

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13 The Madduwatta text further informs us that the 'man of Aḫḫiya' in the company of some other men was able to regularly raid the island of Cyprus (Alašiya), which was at that time (at least nominally) under Hittite control. However, it is unclear on what scale these raids were executed. On the status of Cyprus, see the contribution of Mantzourani et al. in this volume.

14 When discussing the importance of Aḫḫiyawa, an often-used argument is a passage in the above-discussed Šaušgamuwa treaty, which supposedly refers to an embargo preventing Aḫḫiyawan ships to go to Assyria. However, this passage is heavily damaged and its interpretation is uncertain, for a recent discussion see Devecchi 2010; Beckman et al. 2011 67-8.

### *5.1. Et dona non ferentes*

As mentioned above, diplomatic contacts between the Great Kings did not only consist of exchanging letters, but also greeting gifts. This practice is well attested in the Amarna letters (including various amusing complaints about the amount and/or quality of these gifts by the receiving parties) as well as in the international correspondence found in Ḫattuša. The texts inform us that the Hittite kings exchanged gifts with the kings of Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, and also Aḫḫiyawa.[15]

In §5 of the already discussed Tawagalawa letter, the Hittite king complains that the messenger of the king of Aḫḫiyawa did not bring him any greeting gifts:

10. But when the messenger of my brother met me, he did not bring me [any greetings] or any gift. He just spoke as follows: (KUB 14.3 obv. i 53-5, Beckman et al. 2011: 105, see also no. 18 below).

The messenger of Aḫḫiyawa apparently did not bother with rules of etiquette, but merely delivered his message, which was clearly not appreciated by the Hittite king. The Hittite king reprimands the king of Aḫḫiyawa for this, which shows that he expected the latter to know that this was improper behaviour among kings of equal status. This rebuke also nicely illustrates the significance of such diplomatic customs.

### *5.2. Gift swapping*

Of particular interest is text AhT 8, a letter sent by a Hittite official to the Hittite king. This official had apparently received orders to dispatch a diplomatic gift to Aḫḫiyawa. He is not sure what to do, as he does not know whether or not the king of Aḫḫiyawa had sent any greeting gifts to the Hittite king, and, if so, what kinds of gifts they entailed. He therefore decides to take some objects that were meant to be sent to Egypt and use these as gifts for the king of Aḫḫiyawa:

11. [Concerning the diplomatic gi]ft intended for the King of Aḫḫiyawa about which you wrote to me, because I don't know about it – whether h[is messenger] brought anything or not – I have now taken a silver rhyton and a [rhyton] of gold from the diplomatic gift for Egypt, and I have sent [these to him] (KBo 2.11 obv. 11'-4', Beckman et al. 2011: 146-7).[16]

This text passage shows that the greetings gifts for Aḫḫiyawa and Egypt were discussed and treated on the same level, which may be seen as another indirect confirmation of the status of Aḫḫiyawa as a great power. The concern of the Hittite official about what kind of gift to send also reveals how important it was that the greeting gifts to be sent were equal in value and quality to those received (see also Beckman et al. 2011: 149, Bryce 2003a: esp. 94-7).

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15 Note that the practice of gift-exchange among equal kings is also attested in Mari in the 18th century, see recently Cline 2014: 18-9.

16 Previously, this passage was taken to mean that the sender had taken the objects from gifts received from Egypt, which would make this text an early example of 'regifting'. However, since he appears to ask the king to send him goods as a replacement in the following lines, it seems more likely that it concerns a gift that was still to be sent to Egypt, see Beckman et al. 2011: 276-7.

### *5.3. A vessel from Aḫḫiyawa?*

Here, we may briefly mention the reference to an 'Aḫḫiyawa vessel' which is made in an inventory of goods (AhT 19).

12. 1 iron goblet for the cupbearer; [ … 1(?)] copper …-vessel from **Aḫḫiyawa**; 1 copper vessel for pouring out; 1 copper pot from Egypt (KBo 18.181 rev. 32'-4': Beckman et al. 2011: 181).

Unfortunately, it is unclear whether concerns a vessel 'from Aḫḫiyawa' or 'in the style of Aḫḫiyawa', or how it got to Ḫattuša – by means of regular trade or as a diplomatic gift.

### *5.4. A divine visit from Aḫḫiyawa?*

Apart from letters, there are a number of oracle reports that mention Aḫḫiyawa.[17] The most fascinating is text AhT 20, a Hittite oracle report concerning the illness of the Hittite king – in all likelihood Muršili II. Like many ancient people, the Hittites saw bad events and disasters as manifestations of anger or displeasure of one or more of their gods. In order to find the cause of divine punishments, the Hittites had several divinatory techniques at their disposal, such as extispicy, augury and the intricate KIN oracle performed by Wise Women. By means of yes/no questions, they could determine which god(s) were angry and why, and what needed to be done to appease them. This long and elaborate elimination process – there were many gods and they could be annoyed for many reasons! – has been recorded on clay tablets. The reports usually include the question, and the 'result' given by the oracle investigations.

The following passage builds further on previous oracles inquiries in which it has been established that the deity of Aḫḫiyawa and the deity of Lazpa (Lesbos) and the personal deity of the king have to undergo a ritual of 'releasing'. It now needs to be established how and when precisely this ritual is to be performed:

13. Concerning the fact that the 'releasing' of the deity of Aḫḫiyawa and the deity of Lazpa and the personal deity have been determined (by oracle investigation) for his Majesty – when/how they bring the personal deity of the king, will they also bring those? And how/when [they perform] the ritual for them during three days, will they [do] it in the exact same manner as for the deity of Aḫḫiyawa and the deity of Lazpa during three days? (KUB 5.6+, obv. ii 57'-61', see also Beckman et al. 2011: 192-4).

Several things are of interest here. First, the fact that the deity of Aḫḫiyawa and Lazpa have been determined by the oracle means that these deities were included in the oracle inquiry. This implies that these deities were known at the Hittite court. Secondly, the two deities are to be brought to Ḫattuša to undergo the ritual of releasing and – though it is not entirely clear what this ritual entailed – this shows that Aḫḫiyawa and Ḫatti were apparently on such terms that their deities could be exchanged for ritual purposes. Unfortunately, we do not know why these particular gods were singled out and whether (the statues of) these deities actually travelled to Ḫattuša, but this report shows that this

17 See AhT nos. 20-4, Beckman et al. 2011: 183-243.

was not unthinkable, which confirms that good relations between Ḫatti and Aḫḫiyawa existed (see also Beckman et al. 2011: 209).

The travel of a deity to another country is also attested in a letter from the Amarna archives: in EA 23, a letter from Tušratta, the king of Mitanni, to the Egyptian pharaoh it is announced that the deity Šauška will be sent to Egypt, apparently upon her own request, and then to be returned to Mittani. This was not her first and only trip to Egypt; she had also visited this country in the time of Tušratta's predecessor:

14. Thus Šauška of Nineveh, mistress of all lands: 'I wish to go to Egypt, a country that I love, and then return.' Now I herewith send her, and she is on her way. Now, in the time, too, of my father .. went to this country, and just as earlier she dwelt there and they honoured her, may my brother now honour her 10 times more than before. May my brother honour her, (then) at (his) pleasure let her go so that she may come back (EA 23, translation Moran 1987: 61-2).

Considering the above, it seems safe to say that visits of (statues of) deities could be a normal part of diplomatic relations between befriended great powers.

### *5.5. Agreements about the extradition of refugees*

In the Aḫḫiyawa texts, there are a number of references to hostages or fugitives. In a broken passage in the Tawagalawa letter, the Hittite king informs the king of Aḫḫiyawa that a fugitive is allowed to return to Aḫḫiyawa*:*

15. Let a fugitive come [back] to my brother. Whether he is a nobleman or [a slave] – it is allowed (KUB 14.3 rev. iii 42-4, Beckman et al. 2011: 113-4).

*Vice versa,* the Hittite king also expected fugitives to Aḫḫiyawa to be extradited to him (see below text no. 18). The fact that fugitives were allowed to return was by no means self-evident and only seems to occur between states which were of equal rank. In Hittite treaties with vassal kings it was explicitly stated that fugitives were *not* allowed to return – unless they did not perform their tasks properly – see, e.g., the following passage in the treaty of the Hittite king Muwatalli with king Alakšandu of Wiluša.[18]

16. I have established the matter of fugitives under oath as follows: If a fugitive comes [in flight] from your land to Ḫatti, [he will] not [be given] back. It **is not permitted [to give] a fugitive back from Ḫatti.** [But] if [some] craftsman flees, [ . . . ] , and he does not deliver his assigned work, [he will be arrested and] turned over to you. [If some fugitive] from the land of an enemy is captured, [and he flees from Ḫatti], and [goes] away through your lands, [and you do not seize him] and send him on to me, [but] give [him] back [to] the enemy, this too shall be placed under oath (KUB 21.1+ rev. iii 61-72, translation Beckman 1999: 91, no. 13).

18 For this treaty and the possible connections with Alakšandu of Wiluša and Alexandros/Paris of Troy, see, e.g., Latacz 2004.

By contrast, in the famous peace treaty between Ramses II of Egypt and Ḫattušili III of Ḫatti, it is stipulated that fugitives are to be returned (unharmed) to their country of origin:

17. [And if] a single man flees from [Ḫatti, or] two men, [or three men, and they come to] Ramses, Beloved [of Amon, Great King, King] of Egypt, his brother, [then Ramses], Beloved of Amon, Great King, [King of Egypt, must seize them and send them] to Ḫattušili, his brother [ . . . ] – for they are brothers. But [they shall not punish them for] their offenses. They shall [not] tear out [their tongues or their eyes]. And [they shall not mutilate(?)] their ears or [their] feet. [And they shall not destroy(?) their households, together with their wives] and their sons.

    And if][a single man flees from Egypt, or] two men, or three men, [and they come to Ḫattušili, Great King], King of Ḫatti, brother shall seize them and send [them to me, Ramses, Beloved of Amon, Great King, King] of Egypt – for Ramses, Great King, King [of Egypt and Ḫattušili are brothers. But they shall not punish them for their offenses. They shall] not [tear out [their tongues] or their eyes. And [they shall not mutilate(?)] their ears or their feet. And they shall not destroy(?) their households], together with their wives and their sons (KBo 1.7+, §18-9, translation Beckman 1999: 99, no.15).

The agreements the Hittite king made regarding mutual exchange of fugitives with the king of Aḫḫiyawa are the same as those with the king of Egypt and they can be seen as typical for the relations between great powers, which were based on parity.

### *5.6. Dealing with state enemies on the run*

At times, Hittite kings explicitly called upon the existing arrangements about fugitives and asked their colleagues for the extradition of political opponents. From the already discussed Tawagalawa letter we learn that the Hittite king had in the past asked the king of Aḫḫiyawa for the extradition of troublemaker Piyamaradu. At that time Piyamaradu apparently resided in the territory of Atpa, the king of Millawanda (Milete), which was at the time under the control of Aḫḫiyawa. Upon this request the king of Aḫḫiaywa ordered his subject Atpa to hand over Piyamaradu to the Hittite king:

18. But when the messenger of my brother met me, he did not bring me [any greetings] or any gift. He just spoke as follows: 'He [i.e. the king of Aḫḫiyawa] has written to Atpa: "Turn Piy[amaradu] over to the King of Ḫatti!"' (KUB 14.3 obv. i 53-5, Beckman et al. 2011: 105)

Unfortunately for Ḫattušili, Piyamaradu manages to escape in time. The Hittite king then lowers his expectations and asks his colleague to at least help him by preventing Piyamaradu to make war against Ḫatti.[19] The king of Aḫḫiyawa is to give Piyamaradu the following two options: he can either return to Ḫatti to reconcile with the Hittite king, or he can remain in Aḫḫiyawa, but only on the condition that he will no longer attack Hittite territory:

19 See Beckman et al. 2011: 120-1.

19. My brother, write to him this one thing, if nothing (else): 'Get up and go off to Ḫatti. Your lord has reconciled with you. If not, then come over to Aḫḫiyawa, and in whatever location I settle you, [ … ] Get up [and] resettle in [another] location. So long as you are hostile to the King of Ḫatti, be hostile from another land! Do not be hostile from my land. If you(!) would rather be in Karkiya or Maša, go there. The King of Ḫatti has persuaded me about the matter of the land of Wiluša concerning which he and I were hostile to one another, and we have made peace. Now(?) hostility is not appropriate between us.' [Send that] to him (KUB 14.3, rev iii 63 – iv 10, Beckman et al. 2011: 115-116).[20]

These negotiations about Piyamaradu are very reminiscent of those between Ḫattušili III, who is in all likelihood also the author of the Tawagalawa letter, and Ramses II of Egypt with respect to his disposed nephew Urḫi-Teššub, whom we have already encountered above (§4.2). At a certain point, Urḫi-Teššub had managed to escape to Egypt. As we learn from a letter of Ḫattušili to the king of Babylon, Ḫattušili had asked Ramses for the extradition of Urḫi-Teššub, but Ramses did not comply:

20. My enemy who fled to another country went to the king of Egypt. When I wrote to him 'Bring my enemy', he did not bring my enemy. Then I and the king of Egypt became enemies of one another, and to your father (i.e. Kadašman-Turgu) I wrote: 'The king of Egypt went to help my enemy'. So your father kept the messenger of the king of Egypt at bay (KBo 1. 10 + KUB iii 72 (CTH172) obv. 67-9, translation Wouters 1989: 230, see also Bryce 2005: 265).

Later, when Urḫi-Teššub has escaped from Egypt and is on the loose in Syria, Ḫattušili apparently asks Ramses to help find him and bring him back to Egypt and to prevent him from making war against Ḫatti.

21. 'Let the Great King, the King of Egypt, have his infantry and [his chariotry] exert themselves, and let him expend his gold, his silver, his horses, his copper [and his garments] in order to take [Urḫi-Teššub to Egypt. He shall not allow him to become strong] and [to wage war against Ḫatti] (KBo 1.24+, obv. 15-19 (CTH 166), translation Beckman 1999: 130).[21]

The dealings of Ḫattušili regarding the wanted fugitive Urḫi-Teššub with the Egyptian pharaoh are very similar in tone and content to those with the king of Aḫḫiyawa about Piyamaradu.[22] First, he demands their extradition, and when this turns out to be impossible, he asks his colleagues to then at least make sure that his enemies will not wage war against Ḫatti.

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20 This passage has received a lot of attention due to the reference of a conflict between Aḫḫiyawa and the Hittites over Wiluša, which has been identified as Troy, see, e.g., Latacz 2004.

21 This passage stems from a letter of Ḫattušili to Ramses quoted by Ramses in his letter to Kupanta-Kurunta of Mira (see also below n. 31).

22 Another possible example of extradition of refugees may be found in a (damaged) passage from the annals of Muršili II (AhT 1A, KBo 3.4+: obv. iii 3-8). If Beckman's restoration is correct, an Aḫḫiyawan king delivers refugees into Hittite custody, see Beckman et al. 2011: 22-4, 48.

### *5.7. Travel and banishment to Aḫḫiyawa?*

To the examples of contacts between Aḫḫiyawa and Ḫatti, one may add two texts: one mentioning a possible banishment of a Hittite Queen to Aḫḫiyawa (AhT 12) and one possibly referring to a journey to Aḫḫiyawa (AhT 15). The contexts are very unclear and broken, but these attestations further support the idea that good contacts between the two countries existed. It has been proposed that the above discussed fragmentary letter (§3.2, example no. 5) from a king of Aḫḫiyawa to the Hittite king refers to a diplomatic marriage (Beckman et al. 2011: 138). This would be highly interesting, but the context is unfortunately quite opaque. The remainder of the texts in which Aḫḫiyawa is mentioned are too fragmentary to draw any conclusions about its political status.

## 6. Means of communication

In the above it has been shown that contacts between Aḫḫiyawa and Ḫatti existed on various levels. The possible modes in which this took place have been extensively discussed (e.g., Melchert [forthc.]; Beckman et al. 2011: 138-9; Hoffner 2009: 299; Surenhagen 2008: 260-5; Bryce 2003a: 199-200). The Late Bronze Age *lingua franca* in the ancient Near East was Akkadian. If we look at the preserved Ḫatti-Aḫḫiyawa correspondence, all documents have been written in Hittite, by a native speaker and in a typical Hittite *ductus*. This also applies to the letter that was probably written by the Aḫḫiyawan king to the Hittite king (AhT 6). This situation is not entirely unparalleled, as some of the Hittite-Egyptian correspondence unearthed in Ḫattuša is also written in Hittite.[23]

Various scenarios have been offered for the way(s) in which written interaction between Aḫḫiyawa and Ḫatti took place. Harry Hoffner (2009: 290-1) has suggested that the Hittite version of the letter from the king of Aḫḫiyawa represents a translation of a communication between bilingual messengers at the border, and that this document was brought home together with his oral recollections. Susanne Heinhold-Kramer (2007: 192) assumes that the Aḫḫiyawan king had scribes who were able to write in cuneiform. Beckman et al. 2011 argue that the letters may have been written by a Hittite or Luwian scribe residing at the Aḫḫiyawan court, who was fluent in Hittite and Greek. Melchert, taking up a suggestion made by Beckman, proposes that there were two messengers on such diplomatic missions, one from each side. This custom is, for instance, attested in the Deeds of King Šuppiluliuma II (ca. 1350-1322), where it is mentioned that an Egyptian messenger Ḫani came back from Egypt along with his own Hittite messenger. Likewise, one of the Amarna letters (EA 3) refers to a joint trip of messengers from Egypt and Alašiya.

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23 These letters could be Hittite drafts for Akkadian letters to be sent to Egypt, and/or copies for the archives to be used as reference works for future correspondence. Alternatively, the letters may have been sent to Egypt in Hittite. In the Amarna archive, two letters that were written in Hittite (as well as some in Hurrian) have been discovered. These Hittite letters concern the correspondence of the Egyptian pharaoh Amenophis III to king Tarḫadaradu of Arzawa, at a time when the Hittite kingdom appeared to be over and done with and Arzawa arose as a new power, and this may imply that no knowledge of Akkadian was present in Arzawa. This would not be surprising since Arzawa was no great power, but only promised to become one in light of the (temporary) decline of the Hittite Empire. One of the letters in Hittite contains a post script in which the scribe asks his colleague to write to him in Hittite. This means that some knowledge of Hittite was present at the Egyptian court. As pointed out by Melchert [forthc.], however, it seems likely that as a rule the correspondence between the two great powers Ḫatti and Egypt was conducted in the *lingua franca* Akkadian.

Whatever the precise mode and language of communication may have been, it seems likely that the messengers were qualified to (orally) elaborate on the (written) message (cf. Hoffner 2009: 299). The reliability of messengers is a recurring topic in international letters (see also in the Tawagalawa letter §15, Beckman 2011 et al.: 118-9) – they are often blamed for being untrustworthy, though it is unclear to what extent they were indeed unreliable, or if they conveniently served as 'scapegoats' who had to take the blame for unpleasant messages or disappointments. These practical problems, however, did not impede extensive contacts between kings speaking different languages all over the Near East.

## 7. How representative are the Aḫḫiyawa texts?

### *7.1. The intensity of contacts*

It has been pointed out that the corpus of texts (26) mentioning Aḫḫiyawa is quite meagre, and that one would expect more evidence if Aḫḫiyawa indeed was a great power. However, if we compare the attestations of Aḫḫiyawa in Hittite texts to those of other great powers, we see that this amount is certainly not alarmingly low.[24] Mitanni, the direct neighbour of Ḫatti in the south-east, has also been attested in some 26 texts, Assyria in some 40 texts, Babylon in ca. 55 and Egypt in some 75 texts (which for a substantial part consists of the elaborate correspondence between Ḫattušili and Ramses and their relatives).[25] The amount, as well as the type of texts mentioning Aḫḫiyawa within the Hittite corpus, seem to be in line with those of other contemporary foreign powers.

### *7.2. A case of* ad hoc *diplomacy?*

With respect to the fact that the king of Aḫḫiyawa is called 'Great King' by the Hittite king in the Tawagalawa letter, it has been suggested that the Hittite king merely did this to flatter him because he needed his support. Beckman et al. 2011: 122 state that 'the Aḫḫiyawan king is accorded by Ḫattušili a status that must have far exceeded his actual importance in the Near Eastern World in general' in his attempts to 'win over a man whose cooperation he was so anxious to secure'. Likewise, Bryce (2003b: 66) suggests that if the 'genuine' Near Eastern counterparts would have heard about it, this may have provoked an incredulous, if not derisory reaction. Though such a scenario can theoretically not be excluded, it is strictly hypothetical and one may question its likelihood.

First of all, the term 'Great King' was by not used lightly, nor was the appellative 'brother' (see above §3 and Beckman 2011 et al.: 122). Secondly, it is not only in the correspondence to Aḫḫiyawa that it is referred to as a Great Kingdom. The initial inclusion of Aḫḫiyawa among the list of Great Kings in a treaty with Amurru in northern Syria can hardly be explained as flattery to the king of Aḫḫiyawa. Thirdly, it is telling that the king of Ḫatti feels the need to please the king of Aḫḫiyawa and is so eager to win him over. This implies that he was not some ruler of a small kingdom, but rather a force to be reckoned with, which is also apparent from the other dealings with Aḫḫiyawa (see above §4).

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24 Reportedly, additional texts mentioning Aḫḫiyawa have been unearthed in Šapinuwa (modern Ortaköy) but they remain unpublished to this date.

25 See Del Monte and Tischler 1978, 1992.

Lastly, though the tone of the Hittite king in the Tawagalawa letter is indeed very conciliatory and pleasing, this does not exclude the fact that the king of Aḫḫiyawa also was his equal. There are various letters of king Ḫattušili III – who is, as said, the most likely author of the Tawagalawa letter – to this colleagues Ramses of Egypt, Adad-Nirari of Assyria and Kadašman-Enlil of Babylon that are equally flattering and appeasing. In a long letter to the latter Ḫattušili III tries to restore the good relations with between Ḫatti and Babylon that existed in the past, but that have now gone bad. The new king of Babylon, Kadašman-Enlil has discontinued the sending of messengers to Ḫatti. Ḫattušili III attempts to win his favour, among others by putting the blame for the distorted relations on Assyria and by addressing to the king of Babylon as a Great King:

22. Does Assyria hold back your messengers so that you, [my brother], cannot cross [to] my [land]? **My brother, you are a Great King,** and in a long life [may you be . . . ]! Look, my brother, how I keep sending [my messengers] out of love for my brother, while my brother does not send his messenger. Does [my brother] not know [this]? Every word which my brother sent me I will retain (Beckman 1999: 140, no. 23).

The approach of Hittite kings was quite different when asking for the favour or assistance of vassal states. The following fragment stems from a letter of king Šuppiliuliuma II, in which he tries to convince Niqmaddu, a vassal king of Nuḫašše in northern Syria, to stand by his side and to not join neighbouring countries that have rebelled against the Hittites. Šuppiluliuma firstly appeals to the good relations between the two countries, but then the tone changes:

23. While the land of Nuḫašše and the land of Mukiš are hostile to me, you, Niqmaddu, shall not fear them. Trust in yourself! As previously your forefathers were at peace with Ḫatti and not hostile, now you, Niqmaddu, shall thus be hostile to my enemy and at peace with my friend. And if you, Niqmaddu, hear and observe these words of the Great King, your lord, then you shall surely experience the favor which the Great King, your lord, will show to you. In the future you will see how the Great King deals with the kings of the land of Nuḫašše and the king of the land of Mukiš, who renounced the peace treaty with Ḫatti and became hostile to the Great King, their lord (Beckman 1999: 125-6, no. 19).

Here, a diplomatic approach is combined with an implicit threat: if Niqmaddu does not obey, his fate will be the same as that of the rebellious kings of Nuhašše and Mukiš. This is quite a different tune compared to that of the letters to the kings of Aḫḫiyawa, Babylon and Egypt. In other words, though the Hittite king may indeed be trying to win over the king of Aḫḫiyawa and is flattering him, there is no reason to assume that the latter was *not* also a Great King.

## *7.3. The wider Near Eastern scene*

### 7.3.1. The Amarna archive

Scholars who are sceptical of the evidence for a Great Kingdom of Aḫḫiyawa have pointed to the fact that Aḫḫiyawa is not mentioned in other archives in the ancient Near East, such

as the Amarna archive (see, e.g., Bryce 2003b: 65). It is indeed conspicuous that Aḫḫiyawa is not mentioned in the Amarna archive. However, it is good to realise that this archive – valid as it may be to us – only shows a brief and selective glimpse of the correspondence between 'brothers', and, for example, Elam is also not represented.

The letters in the archive appear to be a quite arbitrary and unbalanced selection (Bryce 2003a: 226). The two most vexing questions are why only these letters have been preserved, and what has happened to the rest. Trevor Bryce (2003a: 226) has suggested that the office archives of Akhetaton (Tell el-Amarna) were officially ransacked and some documents, that were still considered to be relevant were taken to the new capital Memphis (and are thus lost to us), whilst others were left there since they no longer had any significance – ironically the ones which have survived to this day. Bryce himself acknowledges that this is a hypothetical reconstruction, but it offers an attractive scenario.

In any case, it seems safe to say that the Amarna archive is not a representative collection of all international diplomatic activity in the Late Bronze Age, but instead offers a rather random snapshot. All international correspondence of Egypt in preceding and following periods has not been preserved, though we know from the letters of Ramses II and his family found in Ḫattuša that such documents must have existed.[26]

### 7.3.2. The Mesopotamian silence

As for the fact that Aḫḫiyawa is not mentioned in Mesopotamian texts, this may not be as significant as it at first glance appears, if we look at the available sources. The Late Bronze Age archives discovered in Mesopotamia have mainly yielded administrative and private documents, as well as religious and literary texts, but no collections of international correspondence comparable to those found in Ḫattuša and el-Amarna have been unearthed.[27]

Aḫḫiyawa does occur in correspondence from Ugarit, a Hittite vassal state in present day Lebanon that was destroyed around the same time as Ḫattuša. In two letters written by the Hittite king to his vassal in Ugarit mention is made of Ḫiyawa-men in relation to a shipment of copper ingots and there is growing consensus among scholars that Ḫiyawa is an aphaeresised form of (Aḫ)ḫiyawa (Beckman et al. 2011: 261, for a different view, see Gander 2017: 275).

## 8. Archaeological evidence for (diplomatic) contacts

Archaeological records confirm that there were well-established relations between the Aegean and western Anatolia during the 15th – 13th century BCE (see recently Beckman et al. 2011: 267-8, Cline 2014: 70-2). By contrast, there is much less evidence for Aegean contacts with inland Anatolia. Very few Mycenaean objects have been found in Ḫattuša

26 Though Aḫḫiyawa may not be represented in the royal correspondence, we do have evidence for Mycenaean contacts in the Amarna period in Egypt. A substantial amount of Mycenaean pottery has been found, which has been interpreted as diplomatic gifts (Kelder 2010). Also in previous times, during the reign of Tuthmosis III contacts with the Aegean are well attested (Cline 2014: 23-5), and they also occur in the famous Aegean list dating to the reign of Amenhotep III (Cline 2014: 46). Likewise, in the Aegean, Egyptian objects have been found (Cline 2014: 48-51).

27 For archives in the Late Bronze Age, see Pedersén 1998. With respect to the earlier Old Babylonian period, we have the Mari archives including the correspondence of Zimri-Lim which demonstrates contacts with Crete (Cline 2014: 18-9).

and *vice versa* the possible Hittite objects in the Aegean constitute only 1% of all *orientalia* discovered there (Cline 1991: 140).

For this absence several solutions have been proposed. The paucity of the archaeological material has led Eric Cline (1991) to suggest that there may have been a trade embargo against the Hittites. Though this is of course possible, there is no urgent reason to assume this, since – as Cline himself also admits – other explanations are possible as well. The objects exchanged may have been perishable (e.g., olive oil, wine, wood, textile, metals) and as pottery was not suitable for overland transport the goods may have been placed into other, unbreakable containers, such as leather bags (most recently Beckman et al. 2011: 268-9 with references).[28]

As for gift exchange, we know from the international correspondence that these gifts often consisted of perishable goods such as textiles, horses, humans (slave and experts), and precious metals, which would leave no recognizable archaeological trace. One further has to bear in mind that the limited evidence for contacts in Hittite archaeology is a general problem: in Ḫattuša, there is a comparable dearth of objects from Egypt, Babylonia and Assyria.[29] To some extent this is unsurprising, since – apart from pottery – cultural material remains that have come down to us from Ḫatti are relatively limited. No graves containing rich gifts have been discovered and the capital appears to have been evacuated before it was destroyed (Seeher 2001). It is assumed that most valuable goods may have been taken along – and/or were melted down in later times.

The scarcity of Aegean objects in the Hittite heartland is thus not exceptional and should not be seen as evidence that contacts were limited. The same applies to the scarcity of Hittite objects in the Aegean: the number of Hittite objects in Syria, Egypt and Mesopotamia is equally low.[30] Based on the archaeological evidence, there is no reason to assume that Hittite contacts with the Aegean were less intense than with Babylonia or Egypt.

Though the evidence may seem meagre, Mycenaean presence in Ḫattuša is not completely absent. Probably the best-known example is the shard with the depiction of a Mycenaean warrior found in Ḫattuša (see fig. 1). Further, there are the painted plaster remains found in Temple 9 and Temple 5 in the Upper City of Ḫattuša and in the royal palace on Büyükkale, which appear to be of Mycenaean style (Brysbaert 2008; for photos see Neve 1996: 30, Müller-Karpe 2003: 292 and Özyar 2006: 131). These plasters are fragmentarily preserved, but their iconographic presentations, which include half-rosettes, hair or feathers from animal scenes and spirals, can be linked to Mycenaean and the Amarna-paintings (Brysbaert 2008: 102; Müller-Karpe 2003: 392-3). In her study of painted plaster in the Bronze Age Mediterranean Ann Brysbaert (2008) observes that the Ḫattuša plasters (and those of Tell el-Dab'a, Qatna and Tel Kabri) seem to fall in the same category as those at later Mycenaean mainland sites and she concludes that technological transfer of both knowledge and materials must have taken place.

On the Aegean site, some dozen objects that may be identified as Hittite have been excavated (Beckman et al. 2011: 268 with references). Further, there are various architectural parallels between Ḫattuša and Mycenae (Thaler 2007) and the Lion Gate of

28 Regrettably, the textual sources are not very helpful here, as we lack basically all types of documentation about trade. Possibly, this kind of records were written on wood (Waal 2011).

29 Genz 2011: 311f. For a somewhat different view, see Cline 2014: 70-1.

30 Genz 2011: 319f.

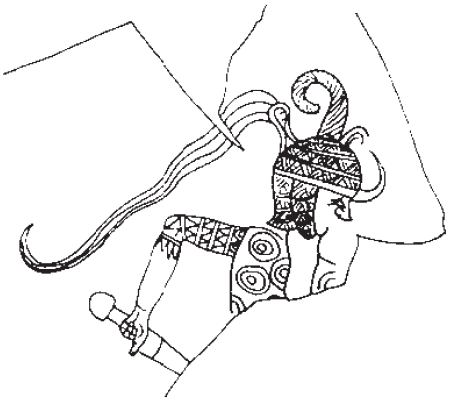

Fig.1: Sherd with the depiction of a Mycenaean warrior incised on a vessel from the Hittite capital Ḫattuša (after Kelder 2010: 41, fig. 1).

Mycenae appears to be made by Hittite tools and techniques (Blackwell 2014). This, like the frescoes found in Ḫattuša, implies exchange of knowledge and experts. The requests for doctors and sculptors from abroad in the international correspondence show that this kind of knowledge exchange was common practice (see, e.g., Bryce 2003a: 113-9).

## 9. Conclusions: The Iron Curtain has yet to fall?

The most important aspects of the above overview of the relations between Ḫatti and Aḫḫiyawa may be summarised as follows:

- The king of Aḫḫiyawa was considered to be an equal of the Hittite king. He was called 'Great King' and addressed as 'my brother' and 'my peer' on several occasions;
- The king of Aḫḫiyawa was at some point included in the list of great powers on a par with Babylon, Assyria and Egypt;
- Aḫḫiyawa had a substantial presence in the west coast of Anatolia for nearly two centuries and for some time had control over the stronghold Millawanda (Milete);
- The Hittites were not able to conquer or submit Aḫḫiyawa;
- The relations with Aḫḫiyawa appear to be similar to those with other Great Powers with respect to:
  - gift exchange;
  - extradition of fugitives;
  - contact frequency;
  - exchange of deities;
  - mode, manner and tone of communication.

The lack of archaeological evidence for contacts between Aḫḫiyawa and Ḫatti is in line with the general dearth of foreign objects in Ḫattuša and Hittite objects elsewhere in the ancient Near East.

From the above, it seems safe to conclude that Hittite dealings with Aḫḫiyawa were comparable to those with the great powers of Assyria, Babylon, Mitanni and Egypt.

However, there is an important *caveat* here. When discussing Hittite contacts with Aḫḫiyawa, the only point of comparison we have are either contacts with kings of equal

status or vassal kings.[31] We do not have any evidence for contacts of Hittite kings with rulers of smaller, independent kingdoms. This is hardly surprising, as in the Late Bronze Age the Near East was dominated by a small group of Great Powers, who each controlled several smaller vassal states. Indeed, from an ancient Near Eastern perspective the existence of small, independent kingdoms in the Aegean would be an extraordinary situation. Though such a scenario can of course not be excluded – a possible exception may be Cyprus – the Hittite textual evidence forces us to re-examine the current paradigm and raises the question to what extent the present reconstruction of Late Bronze Age Greece is not the result of an (unconscious) *polis*-based Hellenocentric view of history.

With the growing awareness that the Aegean was part of the same cultural continuum as the ancient Near East, which is, e.g., also apparent from the many similarities in Greek and ancient Near Eastern literature (Burkert 1984; West 1996, recently Haubold 2015; Bachharova 2016), it may be time to also consider Greece with respect to its political structures as – in the words of Martin West – 'part of Asia'.[32]

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31 As a rule, there were no contacts between vassal kings and foreign Great Kings. An exceptional case is the letter of the Egyptian pharaoh Ramses II to the king of Mira, who was a Hittite vassal at that time (see text no. 21 above). The letter was found in Ḫattuša, which leads Beckman (1999: 130) to conclude that this letter was sent via the Hittite capital, since it was inappropriate for a vassal of one Great King to directly communicate with another.

32 West 1966.

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