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Of Kings, Princesses, and Messengers: Babylonia's International Relations during the 13th Century BC

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(Article begins on next page)

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4 Of Kings, Princesses, and Messengers: Babylonia's International Relations during the 13th Century BC

1 Introductory remarks

In the 13th century BCE the relations among the various Near Eastern Great Powers follow basically the same channels established already during the previous century and continue to be based on the so-called exchange system (exchange of messages, royal wives, specialists and goods). There are, however, some substantial differences with respect to the 14th century. One, which is particularly significant, especially if one focuses on Babylon, is the type of sources at our disposal. Documentation comparable to the Amarna Archive is lacking, and even though various sources refer to Babylonia following the Amarna Age, only very rarely does one “hear the voice” of the Kassite kings on international affairs. Only a small percentage of the relevant sources comes from Babylonia, and they are usually of little help for the reconstruction of international relations in the 13th century.¹ Much more useful in this regard are literary-historical texts, such as chronicles, royal inscriptions, and epic poems, but it is well known that the content of such sources – mostly of Assyrian origin – is to some degree distorted by their propagandistic and celebrative nature. Their accounts can be checked at least in some cases against the evidence provided by other types of documents, such as dossiers of international (Babylonia – Ḫatti, Assyria – Ḫatti, Egypt – Ḫatti) and more local correspondence (e.g., the Middle Assyrian archives of Dūr-Katlimmu and Ḫarbe and the Syrian archives of Ugarit and Emar), administrative texts and even religious compositions, which all contribute to broaden the picture in other directions. Altogether the evidence for the 13th century is much more varied with regard to genre, geographical provenience and chronological distribution than that available for the 14th century, allowing one in some cases to achieve a more multi-faceted reconstruction of international relations, but often not as detailed as for the Amarna Age.

On the political and historical level, the main difference with respect to the previous century is the central role definitively attained by Assyria on the international scene. The expansionistic policies inaugurated by Aššur-uballiṭ I and pursued by Adad-nārārī I, Shalmaneser I and Tukulti-Ninurta I not only had direct and immediate consequences for the neighbouring kingdoms (Babylonia and Ḫatti), but also influenced the dynamics of interaction among all the Near Eastern powers of the time.

The intensity of the relations and therefore the amount of available sources unavoidably reflects the physical proximity of the respective countries; thus one can recognize three main areas of interaction: between Babylonia and Assyria (and Elam) in the east (Mesopotamia); between Ḫatti and Assyria in the centre (north-eastern Syria, south-eastern Turkey); and between Ḫatti and Egypt in the west (the Levant and north-western Syria). Of course, the physical distance, though considerable, did not prevent the establishing of diplomatic relations between Babylon and Ḫatti and between Babylon and Egypt.

This presentation will first provide an outline of the relations maintained by the Kassites with Assyria, Ḫatti and Egypt and then address the problems related to two specific moments of the common histories of these Great Powers: the chronological setting of the interdynastic marriages

¹ Beside the sources discussed here, see the recent excursus by Sassmannshausen (2001a, 130–151), on the presence of different groups of foreigners in Kassite Babylonia, mainly attested as labourers in administrative texts and letters.

between Babylon and Ḫatti (Excursus 1) and the struggle for the throne of Babylon that followed the end of the Assyrian interregnum (Excursus 2).

2 Assyria

As effectively summarized by Brinkman, the dynamics of Assyro-Babylonian relations during the 13th century follow a stable pattern of minor raids on both sides and slight territorial adjustments, with no significant shift of power to one side or the other, with the exception of Tukulti-Ninurta's victory over Kaštiliašu IV (Brinkman 1970, 312). For the first part of the 13th century the reconstruction of these relations relies almost exclusively on Assyrian sources: the Synchronistic Chronicle (Glassner 2004, 178–179) and two inscriptions of Adad-nārārī I (RIMA 1, A.O.76.1 and A.O.76.21) relate that Nazi-Maruttaš suffered a defeat by Adad-nārārī in the Battle of Kār-Ištar, followed by the conclusion of a treaty that served to define the Assyro-Babylonian border, following a tradition of territorial agreements initiated by the 15th century at the latest.² The conflict with Nazi-Maruttaš is also the topic of the so-called Epic of Adad-nārārī, where much space is given to the account of a letter exchange between the two kings, which has been interpreted as a preliminary stage to the war (Weidner 1963, 114). Nonetheless, the relations between Babylonia and Assyria were not always hostile, as shown, e.g., by an administrative text dated to year 6 of Nazi-Maruttaš, which records the delivery of various goods to merchants travelling to Assyria.³

To these better known pieces of information one should add VAT 14440 and VAT 15420.⁴ VAT 14440 is a tiny fragment of a clay tablet in which the name of Adad-nārārī occurs together with the mention of a king of Karduniaš, whose name is regrettably lost. Frahm hypothesized that this fragment might belong to the same composition, or even to the same tablet, as VAT 15420, where Adad-nārārī and Kadašman-Turgu are repeatedly referred to (Frahm 2009, 127). The poor state of preservation of the text(s) does not allow the reconstruction of its historical background, but it is interesting to recall the mention of a certain [x-]najē, perhaps a son of Kadašman-Turgu, in relation to some “sins” that have been purified (VAT 15420, side a, 4'–5'), the occurrence of the high-ranking Assyrian official [Bab]u-aḫa-iddina (VAT 15420, side a, 19') and of the otherwise unknown towns Kišleḫu and Siria (VAT 15420, side a, 6'. 18'). It has been proposed that VAT 15420 hands down the text of a treaty between Adad-nārārī and Kadašman-Turgu,⁵ but one cannot exclude the possibility that it belonged to an epic composition celebrating the reign of Adad-nārārī I (Frahm 2009, 128) or to some chronicle. In any case, VAT 15420 (and perhaps also VAT 14440) represents a precious addition to the sparse information on Babylonian-Assyrian relations during the first half of the 13th century recorded by the Synchronistic Chronicle.

Neither the chronicles nor the royal inscriptions refer to any common event in the history of the two kingdoms during the reign of Shalmaneser I (Baker 2006–2008), Adad-nārārī's successor and a contemporary of Kadašman-Enlil II, Kudur-Enlil and Šagarakti-Šuriaš, but this of course does not necessarily mean that at this time Assyria and Babylonia had no diplomatic contacts. In fact, a letter recovered in Dūr-Kurigalzu from a certain Zikir-ilišu, probably a Babylonian ambassador in Assyria, might go back to this period (Gurney 1949, 139–141, no. 10): Zikir-ilišu informs his lord about the movements of some Assyrian messengers who had come back from Ḫatti after having

² The treaty between Adad-nārārī and Nazi-Maruttaš is the only one between Babylonia and Assyria known for the 13th century, but the chronicles attest also the existence of other earlier and later agreements (see the overview by Brinkman 1990).

³ See Sassmannshausen (2001a, 397, no. 343) and Faist (2001, 128).

⁴ See Frahm (2009, 127–128, 250) for the edition of VAT 14440 and discussion of VAT 15420 with previous literature.

⁵ See, e.g., Grayson (1972, 78).

been detained there for some years⁶ as well as military actions undertaken by the Assyrians against groups of warriors of the ʕirana and ʕasmu tribes. The letter can be roughly dated thanks to the mention in it of a certain Qibi-Aššur, who was in charge of leading the Assyrian counteroffensive and is likely to be identified with the homonymous individual acting as *sukkallu rabi'u* and king of ʕanigalbat under Shalmaneser I.⁷

While Zikir-ilīšu recorded the movements of the other Great Kings' messengers, those of his own master might not have been completely free in their movements. This is at least the impression one gets from a passage of ʕattušili III's letter to Kadašman-Enlil II: the Hittite king complains that Kadašman-Enlil II had stopped sending messengers to ʕattuša and among the possible reasons for this mentions the hostility of the Assyrians:

And if my brother (i.e. Kadašman-Enlil II) should say [as follows]: 'The King of Assyria will not allow my messenger [to enter] his land' – in infantry and chariotry the King of Assyria does not measure up to [the forces] of your land. Indeed, your messenger by force [...] What is the King of Assyria who holds back your messenger [while my messengers] cross repeatedly? What is the King of Assyria who holds back your messengers, so that you, [my brother], cannot cross to my country?
(KBo. 1.10+ obv. 44–49)⁸

Was this alleged Assyrian blockade really in force or was it just an excuse for cutting the diplomatic contacts with ʕatti, as ʕattušili seems to suspect? Considering that the Kassites and the Hittites had been cultivating friendly relations since at least the generation prior to ʕattušili III and Kadašman-Enlil II (see below) and that this alliance was surely not only a matter of prestige, but also (if not mainly) an anti-Assyrian coalition, it would not come as a surprise if the Assyrian king would have tried to hamper the diplomatic contacts between ʕatti and Babylonia.

Certainly the events a few decades after ʕattušili's letter do not speak for the supposed overwhelming superiority of the Babylonian army celebrated in KBo. 1.10+, which could not stop Tukulti-Ninurta I from invading and conquering Babylonia. This central event in the history of Babylonia is documented by a whole array of sources, mainly Assyrian, the most extensive narrations of the conflict being the epic poem and the royal inscriptions of Tukulti-Ninurta.⁹ A *terminus ante quem* for the capture of Kaštiliašu is provided by one of these texts (A.0.78.6), dated to the eponym year of Ina-Aššur-šuma-ašbat, which has been variously dated to year 18, 19 or 21 of Tukulti-Ninurta.¹⁰

Texts from the periphery of the Middle Assyrian kingdom allow a glance behind the scenes of the official accounts of Tukulti-Ninurta's conquest of Babylon. An interesting piece of information on the events which followed is provided by a letter from Dūr-Katlimmu, where a visit of the Assyrian and the Kassite kings together with their retinues is announced: the Babylonian king is not mentioned by name, but it is reasonable to identify him with Kaštiliašu IV (see Cancik-Kirschbaum 1996, 16–18). Further, as Jakob (2003b; 2009, 9–10) suggested on the basis of some letters from ʕarbe, messengers of ʕatti, Amurru and Sidon (the latter probably as a representative of the pharaoh) all might have been travelling to Aššur in the eponym of Ninuāyu to inquire about this major historical event that had so upset the international order and was surely followed with great interest by the other Near Eastern kings, who did not hesitate in trying to exploit the unstable situation in Babylonia as soon as they could (see below Excursus 2). It is likely that two texts from Hittite-controlled

⁶ This, as already noticed by Gurney (1949, 141), reminds one of the diplomatic issue recorded by the letter KBo. 1.14, in which a Hittite king (possibly ʕattušili III, or perhaps Tutḫaliya IV) admits that Assyrian messengers had had some "sad experiences" at the time of Urḫi-Teššub (see recently Mora/Giorgieri 2004, 57–75).

⁷ On the career of Qibi-Aššur see Cancik-Kirschbaum (1996, 20) and Jakob (2003a, 59). See also Faist (2001, 235, n. 151) and Freu (2003, 111).

⁸ Translation after Beckman (1999, 140).

⁹ See the inscriptions A.0.78.5, A.0.78.6, A.0.78.23, A.0.78.24, A.0.78.25 in Grayson (1987).

¹⁰ See Bloch (2010a) for a recent discussion of the problem and references to previous literature.

Syria also reflect the hectic atmosphere of the days that followed the Assyrian capture of Babylonia. It has been suggested that the letter RS 23.025, in which a certain Ili-ḥamādi from Dūr-Adad informs the “Overseer of the Land” that “the King of Karduniaš is not dead” (RS 23.025: 12’–13’), might refer to this episode,¹¹ and one could perhaps connect to it also the text Emar 262, a letter of the “Overseer of the Land” who urges his correspondent to take good care of the “messenger of Karduniaš”, who is expected to arrive at Emar and probably would have continued towards Ḥattuša or Karkemiš.

3 Ḥatti

Despite the geographical distance and the admittedly scanty sources, the contacts between Babylonia and Ḥatti in the 13th century seem to have been quite intense and in general not hostile. The most important historical document is the copy or draft of a long letter of Ḥattušili III to Kadašman-Enlil II (KBo. 1.10+), in which the Hittite king recalls a number of episodes in the common history of the two kingdoms from the time of Kadašman-Turgu and Muwattalli II up to the moment when the letter was written. According to this document, the Babylonian-Hittite relations at the time of Kadašman-Turgu were friendly and peaceful, while those from the first years of the reign of Kadašman-Enlil had been troubled by the hostility towards Ḥatti shown by the vizier Itti-Marduk-balātu, who hindered any contact between the two courts.¹² The worsening of Babylonian-Hittite relations at the beginning of Kadašman-Enlil’s reign could have been the background for Muršili III/Urḫi-Teššub’s attempt to flee to Babylon while he was exiled in Syria, a fact that is recorded in the Apology of Ḥattušili III (see Bányai 2010).

Much less informative, but nonetheless important, witnesses of the contacts between the two kingdoms are a fragmentary letter of Kadašman-Turgu to Ḥattušili III (KUB 3, 71) recovered in the archives of the Hittite capital and a greeting letter of a Hittite king to a Babylonian queen recovered at Dūr-Kurigalzu.¹³

The “good brotherhood” between the two dynasties was strengthened by diplomatic marriages (see below, Excursus 1) and probably also by the ratification of a peace treaty between Kadašman-Turgu and Ḥattušili III: this is suggested by some passages of the letter KBo. 1.10+ in which the Hittite king repeatedly recalls that he and Kadašman-Turgu “established friendly relations” (*atterūta nīpuš*, obv. 7. 8. 57) and by others that recall the clauses of Hittite treaties concerning the reciprocal protection of the legitimate heir to the throne (“We are mortal. The survivor shall protect the children of the one who goes first to his fate”, obv. 9–10) and military alliance (“We are broth-

¹¹ The letter is edited and discussed by Arnaud (2003, 7–12). On the “Overseer of the Land” (LÚ UGULA KALAM.MA), a Hittite high official, see Beckman (1992, 45). RGTC 5 (= Nashef 1982, 87) localizes Dūr-Adad in northern Babylonia, in the vicinity of Nippur.

¹² Because of this, it is likely that the letter should date to the second part of Kadašman-Enlil’s reign, when the two kingdoms were again on good terms.

¹³ IM 50966 = DK₄-57, see Baqir (1946a, 89–90 with fig. 13, pl. XVIII). Baqir writes that “the address shows clearly that it was sent to the Great King of Ḥa-at-ti, and apparently to the great (lady), wife of the king of Karduniaš”, but the first lines of the tablet are more likely to be restored as follows: (1) [*um-ma* ³UTU-š]i LUGAL.GAL LUGAL KUR ⁴Ḥa-at-ti (2) [*a-na* MUNUS.LUGAL.G]AL MUNUS.LUGAL KUR *Kar-^dDu-ni-ia-aš* (3) [...] *qí-bi-ma* “[Thus His Maje]sty, the Great King, King of the Land of Ḥatti: [to the Gr]eat [Queen], Queen of the land of Karduniaš [...] say” (cf. Hagenbuchner 1989, 300). The names of both sender and addressee are unknown, but one cannot exclude that this queen was the daughter of Ḥattušili III who married a Babylonian king. It is possible that also another very fragmentary letter from Dūr-Kurigalzu addressed to Kadašman-Enlil II by a foreign ruler of equal status might have belonged to the Hittite-Babylonian correspondence (see text no. 12 in Gurney 1949, 149; cf. Brinkman 1976, 136).

ers. To the enemy of one another [we will be hostile, and with] the friend of one another we will be friendly”, obv. 58–59).¹⁴

The friendly relations between Ḫatti and Babylon are also attested by the presence of Babylonian specialists (such as doctors, incantation priests and scribes)¹⁵ and goods (such as garments, jewels and gold) at Ḫattuša,¹⁶ and this rapport encouraged the establishing of trade activities between Babylonia and the Hittite vassals in Syria, despite the security problems that seem to have often troubled the trade routes. The above-mentioned letter KBo. 1.10+ contains the oft-cited reply of Ḫattušili III to Kadašman-Enlil’s complaints about the murder of Babylonian merchants in Amurru and Ugarit, in which the Hittite king objects that he finds highly unlikely that such a crime would have occurred in Hittite territory, where killing a person is regarded as such a gruesome act that death is avoided even as punishment for murderers, and he rhetorically asks “Would those who do not kill a malefactor kill a merchant?” (KBo. 1.10+ rev. 23). Similar issues are also the topic of a later document, an unpublished letter of Ini-Teššub, king of Karkemiš, to Šagarakt[i-Šuriaš] recovered at Ugarit in the Urtenu archive (Singer 1999, 652 with previous literature). The commercial relations with Syria were complicated also by other kinds of problems; from the same letter KBo. 1.10+ one learns that Bentešina, king of Amurru, had to respond to the accusation of having cursed the land of Karduniaš, an act that he justifies by accusing the Babylonians of owing him three talents of silver. Despite all these difficulties, the trade between Babylon and Syria continued also in later times, as shown by the presence of a group of Babylonian merchants in Emar, whose activities date to the first decades of the 12th century.¹⁷

The overall picture gained from the few available sources suggests that, with the exception of the first years of Kadašman-Enlil II, the relations between the Kassites and the Hittites during the 13th century were generally friendly. This does not come as a surprise, since the two kingdoms did not have a common border that might have become a reason for conflict and at the same time they shared an interest in joining forces against Assyria, which was threatening both Kassite and Hittite territories (Klengel 1979, 87–88).

4 Egypt

The Hittite-Babylonian alliance seems to have been aimed not only against Assyria, but also against Egypt, Ḫatti’s sworn enemy before Ḫattušili III and Ramses II signed the famous peace treaty. In fact, the above-mentioned letter KBo. 1.10+ reports that Kadašman-Turgu allegedly promised to send his troops against Egypt if there was a conflict with Ḫatti. This, however, did not prevent the Kassite kings from cultivating friendly diplomatic relations with the pharaohs of the 19th dynasty, as is demonstrated by a diplomatic marriage between a Babylonian princess and Ramses II, in

¹⁴ Cf., e.g., the peace treaty between Ḫattušili III and Ramses II (KBo. 1.7++ obv. 27–39 and 40–43) and the subjugation treaty between Muršili II and Tuppi-Teššub of Amurru (KBo. 5.9+ i 24’–28’).

¹⁵ See Beckman (1983). One could perhaps relate to the presence of some Babylonian artisans the diffusion in Ḫattuša of a special material called “Babylon stone” (NA₄.KÁ.DINGIR.RA), probably some kind of glass. Archaeologists recently recovered at Boğazköy a small sandstone mould for manufacturing figurines of Hittite deities bearing the hieroglyphic signs for “Babylon” incised beside the matrix, which might indicate that the moulded items were to be cast in this type of material (see Genz 2011, 316 and Hawkins 2011, 91).

¹⁶ The main textual sources for the presence of foreign goods in Ḫattuša are the so-called inventory texts (Kořak 1982), which do not allow one to establish whether those goods arrived in Ḫattuša as diplomatic gifts or as the result of commercial exchanges. The only object of certain Kassite origin found in Anatolia is a seal dating towards the end of the 14th century (Genz 2011, 316 with previous literature).

¹⁷ See Cohen/Singer (2006) for the reconstruction of a dossier of texts from Emar and Ugarit relating to the activities of a Babylonian group of merchants. One of the texts (Emar 26) is dated to the 2nd year of Meli-Šipak, and the authors suggest that the chronological horizon of the whole dossier should not have been much different.

accordance with the tradition inaugurated by Kadašman-Enlil I and Burna-Buriaš II during the Amarna Age. The little that is known about this marriage is recorded in the Hittite-Egyptian correspondence from the time of Ḫattušili III and Ramses II. In particular, a letter addressed by the Hittite queen Puduḫepa to the pharaoh offers some interesting insights on Ramses' seemingly not very high opinion of Babylonia. In the most instructive passage Puduḫepa speculates “if you (i.e. Ramses) should say: ‘The King of Babylonia is not a Great King’, then my brother does not know the rank of Babylonia” (KUB 21, 38 obv. 55'–56'; Beckman ²1999, 134). Ramses' alleged contempt towards Babylon might perhaps explain why the Babylonian princess that he married was not enjoying the treatment deserved by such a high-ranking spouse; in fact, in the same letter Puduḫepa quotes what the Babylonian messenger at the Hittite court, Ellil-bēl-nišē, reported to her, namely that when messengers traveled to visit the daughter of Babylonia who had been given to Egypt, they were left standing outside (KUB 21, 38 rev. 7–8).¹⁸ A fragmentary letter of the Hittite-Egyptian dossier (KUB 26, 89) probably represents the Hittite translation of the pharaoh's offended reply to this accusation, in which Ramses firmly denies that the “daughter of Karduniaš” would be kept secluded and forbidden to meet the envoys who came to visit her (Edel 1994a, 214–215). Granted, Ramses' Babylonian marriage finds no echo in the contemporary hieroglyphic sources, while his wedding with the two Hittite princesses was celebrated with great pomp and duly “advertised” throughout the kingdom by the pharaonic propaganda (Klengel 2002, 132–139), which could be seen as further confirmation of the scant importance enjoyed by Babylonia in the eyes of the pharaoh.

Excursus 1

The diplomatic marriages between Babylonia and Ḫatti

In the complicated process of synchronizing the various Near Eastern dynasties of the Late Bronze Age, it might be of some use to try to date the diplomatic marriages between Babylonia and Ḫatti, which are among the few certain points of contacts in the history of these Great Powers during the 13th century.

The starting point should be the draft of a letter from Puduḫepa to Ramses II (KUB 21.38)¹⁹ concerned with the preparation of the marriage between the daughter of Puduḫepa and the pharaoh. Here (obv. 47'–52') the Hittite queen emphasizes the importance of interdynastic marriages by recalling that she had taken as daughters-in-law a Babylonian and an Amorite princess not because there were no other women available in Ḫatti, but because such marriages were a source of praise for a king and its kingdom. Puduḫepa continues by mentioning also the example of the king of Babylon, who had married a Hittite princess for the same reason (obv. 53'–55').²⁰

¹⁸ Beckman 1999, 135. This episode recalls a similar one recorded by the Amarna Letter EA 1, addressed by Amenophis III to Kadašman-Enlil I, in which the pharaoh quotes Kadašman-Enlil, who wrote to him complaining that “Here you are asking for my daughter in marriage, but my sister, whom my father gave you was (already) there with you, and no one has seen her (so as to know) if now she is alive or if she is dead” (after Moran 1992, 1). Because of this precedent De Martino/Imparati (1995, 106) lend little credibility to the above-mentioned lines of KUB 21, 38, suggesting rather that “Puduḫepa was reusing an episode from the past, which must have been well known in Near Eastern court circles”.

¹⁹ This is the generally accepted identification, but see Beckman (²1999, 131–132) for an overview of the different hypotheses concerning the identities of the sender and of the addressee of this letter.

²⁰ These lines are usually understood as follows: “Did my brother have no wife at all? Did not my brother make them (i.e., the marriage arrangements) <out of consideration for> his(!) brotherhood, my sisterhood and (our²) dignity? And when he made them, they were indeed settled in conformity with (the arrangements of²) the King of Babylonia. Did he not also take the daughter of the Great King, King of Ḫatti, the mighty King, for marriage?” (Hoffner 2009, 286, similarly Edel 1994a, 221 and Beckman ²1999, 134). Alternatively the following translation could be suggested: “Do

Puduḫepa's letter was written before the marriage between the Hittite princess and Ramses II took place, an event which dates to the 34th year of Ramses II. Thus on the basis of KUB 21, 38 Ramses 34 is the *terminus ante quem* for these two interdynastic marriages between Babylon and Ḫatti.

Two other sources provide a *terminus post quem* for the celebration of these diplomatic marriages. In KBo. 1.10+, the letter from Ḫattušili III to Kadašman-Enlil II, a lengthy excursus of the peaceful relations that Ḫattušili and his predecessor Muwattalli II had entertained with Kadašman-Turgu contains no mention of any interdynastic marriage between the two courts. Considering that Ḫattušili recalls the presence at the Hittite court of even an incantation priest and a physician sent by Kadašman-Turgu to his brother, it seems highly unlikely that he would neglect to mention that a Babylonian princess was married to his son or that his own daughter was married to a Kassite king. This suggests that when KBo. 1.10+ was written, probably towards the end of the reign of Kadašman-Enlil II,²¹ the marriages had not yet taken place.

This is confirmed by the last source relevant to this issue, namely the draft letter KUB 26, 88, which is likely to be part of the correspondence between Ḫatti and Babylonia.²² From this text it can be inferred that the marriage negotiations were not yet concluded by the time of Kadašman-Turgu, so that his death (1264) would represent a *terminus post quem* for the celebration of the Babylonian-Hittite marriages. This provides a further confirmation of what has been suggested above on the basis of Ḫattušili III's letter to Kadašman-Enlil II (KBo. 1.10+), namely that the Hittite king does not mention the double interdynastic marriages in his excursus on the friendly relations at the time of Kadašman-Turgu because they had not yet taken place.

How do the *terminus ante quem* of Ramses 34 and the *terminus post quem* of Kadašman-Turgu's death fit into the current chronological schemes? According to one recent hypothesis put forward about Late Bronze Age chronology and the synchronisms between Babylonian, Egyptian and Hittite kings (Fig. 4.01), Ramses 34 would fall at the very beginning of the reign of Kadašman-Enlil II (1263–1255).²³ This would leave only the first years of Kadašman-Enlil II as a possible time frame for the conclusion of the marriage agreements. However, on the basis of KBo. 1.10+ one can exclude this possibility, because the letter shows that at the beginning of Kadašman-Enlil's reign Hittites and Kassites were on strained terms and the circumstances were surely not favourable for the conclusion of marriage agreements.

you, my brother, really have no woman? Did you, my brother, not do it (viz., asking my daughter for marriage) for the sake of the brother-sister relation with me? And when he (i.e. the King of Babylonia) did it too, it was indeed settled according to (the wishes of?) the King of Babylonia. Did he not take the daughter of the Great King, King of Ḫatti, the mighty King, for marriage?" For the translation of obv. 53'–54' and the reading *ḫa-an-da-an* instead of *ḫa-an-da-an-z[a]* at the beginning of obv. 55' see CHD L–N, *mān* 7d, 155. For the interpretation of this passage as evidence for a marriage between a Babylonian king and a Hittite princess see e.g. Beckman (1983, 109, n. 56); Singer (1991, 331); Edel (1994b, 325); Houwink ten Cate (1996, 43–45); Bryce (2005, 297).

21 See above, fn. 12.

22 Even though the names of the sender and the addressee of the letter are not preserved, the content of this poorly preserved message (in particular the mention of marriage negotiations in both directions that started in the time of the addressee's father) makes this hypothesis quite likely. As for the identity of the sender and the addressee, Houwink ten Cate proposed identifying them with Ḫattušili III and Kadašman-Enlil II respectively (Houwink ten Cate 1996, 44), but one should not exclude the possibility that the Babylonian king was Kudur-Enlil, who – as has been suggested (Brinkman 1976, 203–204; Boese 2009, 93–95) – might have been a brother rather than a son of Kadašman-Enlil II, i.e. another son of Kadašman-Turgu, who in turn is likely to be equated with the father of the addressee of KUB 26, 88.

23 Cf. Devecchi/Miller (2011, 167, fig. 5), where it is suggested that the accession year of Kadašman-Enlil II would fall approximately at Ramses 32.

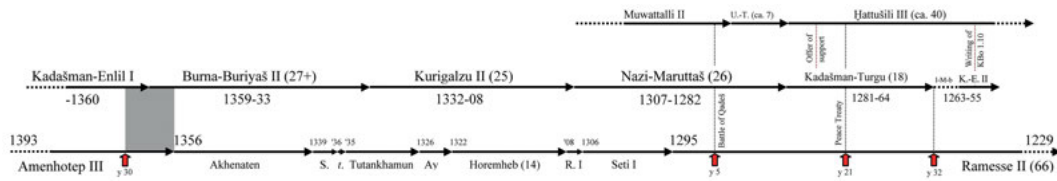


Fig. 4.01: Babylonian *vis-à-vis* Egyptian chronology proposed by Devecchi/Miller (2011, fig. 5).

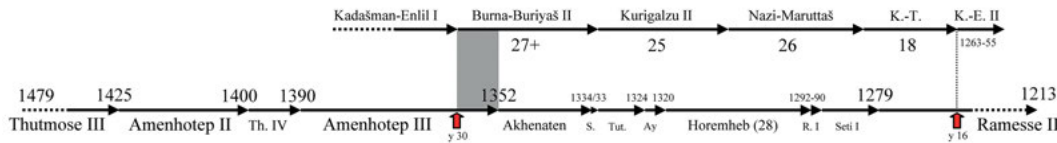


Fig. 4.02: Traditional chronology (= Devecchi/Miller 2011, fig. 1).

If one returns to the traditional chronology (Fig. 4.02), which assumes Ramses II year 16 = Kadašman-Enlil II year 1, the *terminus ante quem* represented by Ramses 34 would fall at the end of the reign of Kudur-Enlil (1254–1246). This would allow at least ten years between Ḫattušili's letter to Kadašman-Enlil (where there is no mention of the Hittite-Babylonian marriages) and Puduḫepa's letter to Ramses (which looks back on the marriages as having already taken place) for the celebration of the interdynastic marriages, which then would have been celebrated either towards the end of Kadašman-Enlil II's reign or, perhaps more likely, some time during the reign of his successor, Kudur-Enlil.²⁴

This is not to say that one should return to the traditional chronology *tout court*, which in fact needs to be corrected somehow to account for the shortening of Haremhab's reign; but if the above-mentioned considerations on the dating of the interdynastic marriages are accepted, it follows that the revisions that have been proposed until now require further adjustments. The possibilities discussed by Jared Miller in his contribution to this volume would provide a good alternative that might bring together the corrections required by the new data as well as the proposed dating for the Hittite-Babylonian marriages.

Very little is known about the fate of the Babylonian princess after her arrival at the Hittite court, where she likely married the prince who then ascended the throne of Ḫatti with the name of Tutḫaliya IV after the death of his father Ḫattušili III.²⁵ This means that after the death of Puduḫepa another Babylonian princess would have become *tawannanna* three generations after the Babylonian *tawannanna*, spouse of Šuppiluliuma I. If Singer is correct in identifying the anonymous DUMU.MUNUS GAL mentioned in the oracle inquiry KUB 22, 70 with the Babylonian princess who married Tutḫaliya IV,²⁶ it seems that at a certain point a struggle ensued between the Hittite queen (Puduḫepa) and her Babylonian daughter-in-law. Singer has also put forward the interesting hypothesis that a woman named Pattiya, mentioned in the same text, was perhaps the mother of the Babylonian princess and thus the mother-in-law of Tutḫaliya IV (Singer 1991, 332). This hypothesis seems less convincing, because:

1. it relies mainly on a passage of the same oracle inquiry (KUB 22, 70 obv. 85), where it is said that the queen (i.e. Puduḫepa) married (lit. “gave in good will”, *aššuli pai-*) a daughter of Pattiya to the king (i.e. Tutḫaliya IV), but nothing in the text indicates that the daughter of this Pattiya should be identified with the DUMU.MUNUS GAL (i.e. the Babylonian princess);

²⁴ For a date in the reign of Kudur-Enlil see also Houwink ten Cate (1996).

²⁵ Singer (1991; 2008); Houwink ten Cate (1996); Klengel (1999a, 288–289); Bryce (2005, 297).

²⁶ Singer (1991, 330). In this article Singer argues that the title DUMU.MUNUS GAL is reserved in the Hittite sources for daughters of Great Kings, of Ḫatti or of the other Great Powers. See also Houwink ten Cate (1996) and de Roos (2005).

2. if Pattiya had been the mother of the Babylonian princess, she would have been a Babylonian queen: why would a Babylonian queen reside – seemingly for a long time – at the Hittite court?
3. Pattiya is banned from the Hittite court and put into the service of the god of Arušna (KUB 22, 70 obv. 85), and it seems quite unlikely that a Babylonian queen could have been so easily dismissed and disposed of;
4. Pattiya is not a Babylonian name, but likely a Hurrian one.²⁷

Excursus 2

The struggle over the throne of Babylon

The events which followed the Assyrian conquest of Babylon and the death of Tukulti-Ninurta I have received considerable attention in recent years, and it seems worthwhile to outline and discuss here the most promising hypotheses and results that have been put forward.

While the chronicles depict a scenario where Babylonians, Assyrians and Elamites fought for control over Babylon, it is possible that also the Hittites tried to mingle in Babylonian affairs at this time.²⁸ The most important, though very badly preserved, source on this topic is the letter KBo. 28.61–64, which belongs to the Hittite-Assyrian correspondence.²⁹ As is too often the case, the names of sender and addressee are not preserved, but scholars usually agree in identifying them with Tukulti-Ninurta I and Šuppiluliuma II, respectively.³⁰ There is also general agreement in understanding the letter as an attempt by Tukulti-Ninurta to justify his own conquest of Babylon by decrying a usurpation of its throne by someone who did not belong to the legitimate Babylonian succession,³¹ while opinions diverge on the identity of the usurper and the moment when this usurpation would have taken place.

The identity of two individuals mentioned in the letter as the “servant of the Land of Suḫu” and the “non-son of Kudur-Enlil” have attracted most of the attention. Durand and Marti proposed that both these labels refer to Kaštiliašu, who would have been a usurper stemming not from the Kassite royal family, but from Suḫu; it would have been he who dethroned Šagarakti-Šuriaš, the act that provided Tukulti-Ninurta the justification he needed for his invasion and conquest of Babylonia (Durand/Marti 2005, 127–128). This interpretation clashes not only with the fact that Kaštiliašu IV is indicated as son of Šagarakti-Šuriaš in the Babylonian King List A and in a royal inscription of his,³² but also with the lack of any mention of such an illegitimate takeover of Babylon by Kaštiliašu in Tukulti-Ninurta’s epic, where one would surely expect such a transgression to be mentioned together with all the other sins of Kaštiliašu that are used to justify the Assyrian invasion and conquest. Not only is this not the case, in Tukulti-Ninurta’s epic Kaštiliašu is referred to as “king of the Kassites”, and in the passages that are supposed to render his own speeches he refers to the previous Kassite kings as “my fathers”.

Another hypothesis has been put forward by Singer, who focuses mainly on the identity of the “servant of the Land of Suḫu”, suggesting instead to equate him with Adad-šuma-ušur, who

²⁷ The name would be a hypocoristic of Pattiyanni (De Martino 2011, 79–80).

²⁸ See most recently the reconstruction proposed by Bloch (2010b, 70–74).

²⁹ See Mora/Giorgieri (2004, 113–127) for the latest edition of the letter and previous literature.

³⁰ Just to mention the most recent studies where this view is expressed: Mora/Giorgieri (2004, 113); Durand/Marti (2005, 127); Freu (2007, 285); Singer (2008, 224); Bányai (2011, 227). The mention of (the eponym year of?) Ili-padā at the end of the letter dates it to the last decade of Tukulti-Ninurta’s reign.

³¹ See Durand/Marti (2005, 128); Freu (2007, 285) and Singer (2008, 225), but cf. Bányai (2011, 227), who understands it as a list of the treaties concluded between Babylonians and Hittites.

³² Admittedly, this “may reflect nothing but the propaganda of Kaštiliaš IV that had been absorbed by the later Babylonian historical tradition”, as noted by Bloch (2010a, 13, n. 43).

ascended the throne of Babylon at the end of the Assyrian interregnum.³³ Singer's identification is based on a passage of the so-called Berlin Letter³⁴ where it is said that Adad-šuma-ušur came "from the bank of the Euphrates" (VAT 17020 rev. 30), a geographical indication that would fit with the localisation of Suḫu on the Middle Euphrates (Singer 2008, 239). Singer (2008, 226–227) also stresses that the tone of some passages of KBo. 28.61–64 might indicate that Tukulti-Ninurta feared for his own life, and he therefore suggests that the letter was written in the final years of his reign, after he had already lost Babylonia.

Yet another scenario has been reconstructed by Bányai (2011, 226–230), who proposes that:

1. the "non-son of Kudur-Enlil" mentioned in KBo. 28.61–64 was the offspring of the marriage between Ḫattušili III's daughter and a Babylonian king, whom he tentatively identifies with Kadašman-Turgu.
2. At some point this half-Hittite prince might have been sent to Ḫattuša, as he might have been regarded as a threat to the legitimate Babylonian heir to the throne.
3. A Hittite general named Kaššu, known from the documents of Tuḫaliya IV, could be regarded as evidence for the presence of a Kassite prince at the Hittite court.
4. This "non-son of Kudur-Enlil" and Hittite protégé might be equated with a certain "Nabû-apla-iddina, son of a Hittite woman, an abomination for Babylon, a Hittite" mentioned in the so-called Berlin Letter (VAT 17020 rev. 33–34).

When considering these points, however, the following should be kept in mind:

1. The chronological setting proposed above for the Hittite-Babylonian marriages led to the conclusion that the Hittite princess was married to Kudur-Enlil, in which case it is very unlikely that the offspring of the marriage would have been referred to as a "non-son of Kudur-Enlil".
2. The Hittite kings attached great importance to the fact that the offspring of Hittite princesses married to foreign rulers should become kings in those countries, and there is no reason to assume that the marriage agreement with Babylon would have been different.³⁵ And even assuming that the Babylonians had regarded the son of the Hittite princess as an illegitimate heir, sending him to Ḫattuša would surely not have been the best way to solve the problem: first, it is difficult to imagine that the Hittites would have quietly accepted such a decision; and second, he would have been, as Bányai himself admits, a trump card in the hand of the Hittite king, who obviously would have done everything possible in order to put him on the throne of Babylon.
3. Several individuals named Kaššu are attested in the Hittite sources at least from the Middle Hittite Period, and there is no evidence supporting a connection between them and Babylonia or the Kassites.³⁶

³³ See Chronicle P (Glassner 2004, 280–281) and Babylonian King List A (Grayson 1980–1983, 91–92). See also Bloch (2010b, 72–73, n. 45–46) for convincing considerations supporting the identification of the period of Tukulti-Ninurta's domination over Babylonia as described in Chronicle P with the reigns of the three kings listed between Kaštiliašu and Adad-šuma-ušur according to Babylonian King List A.

³⁴ A late copy of a letter supposedly written by an Elamite king (identified either with Kutir-Nahhunte or with Šutruk-Nahhunte) to the great ones of Babylon. Text edition: van Dijk (1986). See also more recently Vallat (2006) and Roaf (in this volume).

³⁵ See the relevant clauses in the treaties between Šuppiluliuma I and Šattiwaza of Mittani (CTH 51.I) and Ḫattušili III and Bentešina of Amurru (CTH 92). One could object that these are subjugation treaties and that the vassals could not rebel against this decision, but the evidence provided by the letters of the Hittite-Egyptian correspondence dealing with the pregnancy of the first Hittite princess married to Ramses II suggests that the same policy was followed also with the other Great Powers. In fact, the potential birth of a male heir was welcomed as the crowning of the "unification" process between the two kingdoms, symbolically initiated with the ratification of the peace treaty and the interdynastic wedding (cf., e.g., Edel 1994a, no. 87 obv. 22' and no. 52 obv. 6'–7').

³⁶ See Marizza (2007, 93–111) for the older attestations and van den Hout (1995, 226–232) for the more recent ones.

4. The very existence of Nabû-apla-iddina is otherwise unattested, and the reliability of the Berlin Letter as a historical source should be taken *cum grano salis*. However, even if one does choose to grant credibility to this source,³⁷ one must also reckon with the fact that the author of the Berlin Letter places Nabû-apla-iddina's episode *after* the events surrounding Adad-šuma-ušur. It thus seems difficult to reconcile the “non-son of Kudur-Enlil” with the episode of Nabû-apla-iddina, because the first one belongs to the final years of Tukulti-Ninurta's reign, when KBo. 28.61–64 was probably written, while the second took place some twenty years later, after Adad-šuma-ušur's reign.

As one can see, the fragmentary state of KBo. 28.61–64 readily invites speculation concerning the interpretation of its contents and its *Sitz im Leben*. Presently, Singer's reconstruction seems to be the most convincing one in its explanation of the identity of the “servant of the Land of Suḫu”, whom he equates with Adad-šuma-ušur, but the identity of the “non-son of Kudur-Enlil” remains to be clarified. One wonders if he might correspond to Kadašman-Ḫarbe,³⁸ the only king with a Kassite name listed in Babylonian King List A during the Assyrian interregnum between Enlil-nādin-šumi and Adad-šuma-iddina. This would fit with Bloch's hypothesis that Kadašman-Ḫarbe could have been placed on the throne of Babylon by the Elamites, who according to Chronicle P invaded the country and dethroned Enlil-nādin-šumi, presumably a puppet king of Tukulti-Ninurta. Bloch also explains the evidence for a further campaign led by Tukulti-Ninurta against Babylonia three years after the final victory over Kaštiliašu as a military reaction aimed at suppressing this pro-Elamite regime, eliminating Kadašman-Ḫarbe and putting Adad-šuma-iddina on the throne of Babylon (Bloch 2010b, 71–73). The need to undertake a further campaign against this Elamite protégé would fit quite well the context of KBo. 28.61–64 and its function of legitimising Tukulti-Ninurta's (re)conquest of Babylon by decrying other usurpers. The events that might have led Kadašman-Ḫarbe to the throne of Babylon and his obscure origin³⁹ make him a potential candidate for being depicted as a “non-son of Kudur-Enlil” in KBo. 28.61–64.

If Singer's suggested identification of the “servant of the Land of Suḫu” with Adad-šuma-ušur and the equation of the “non-son of Kudur-Enlil” with Kadašman-Ḫarbe are correct, it follows that two different episodes of usurpation are recalled in KBo. 28.61–64: one involving Kadašman-Ḫarbe soon after Tukulti-Ninurta conquered Babylonia and defeated Kaštiliašu and the other involving Adad-šuma-ušur, which marked the end of Assyrian domination over Babylonia.

³⁷ Bányai is not the only supporter of the idea that Nabû-apla-iddina stemmed from the Hittite-Babylonian marriage, and it is indeed tempting to identify him with “a half-Babylonian, half-Hittite prince vying for the throne of Babylon” (Singer 2008, 238).

³⁸ This king is usually numbered as Kadašman-Ḫarbe II (see, e.g., Brinkman 1976, 148–152; Grayson 1980–1983, 91; Kuhrt 1995, 336), but it has been suggested that he should be numbered as Kadašman-Ḫarbe III (Sassmannshausen 2004b, 61, followed by Bloch 2010b, 71 with n. 42).

³⁹ His genealogy is nowhere attested, see Brinkman (1976, 146).