Organization, Representation, and Symbols of Power in the Ancient Near East

Proceedings of the 54th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale
at Würzburg
20–25 July 2008

edited by

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The (City-)Gate and the Projection
of Royal Power in Ḫatti

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Recently, while preparing the entry 'Stadttor bei den Hethitern' for the *Real-lexikon der Assyriologie*, I was struck by the fact that the Hittite texts mention the city-gate only rarely in connection with what modern researchers would consider to be its primary function, military defence, but rather much more often in connection with rituals, festivals and above all with what one might term the projection of royal authority and power. In fact, even many of the attestations in the ritual and especially the festival texts introduce the city-gate in this connection. This paper aims to do no more than to present the relevant material concerning the gate or city-gate and the projection of royal power from the Hittite sources, and will propose new readings and interpretations for a couple of key passages.

Contexts mentioning the city-gate in its defensive function are surprisingly rare, and even in these the emphasis is on the subjugation of the city by the Hittite king, either due to the inhabitants' opening the gates or to the attacker's waging a successful battle in or at the gates. In Ḫattusili I's Annals, e.g., we read,[1] "I marched into the city of Parmanna. . . . And when they saw me before them, they opened the gates. In that affair the sun-deity of heaven took me by the hand." And further,[2] "Then I marched into the city of Ḫaḫḫa, and at Ḫaḫḫa I waged battle within the gates three times, and I destroyed Ḫaḫḫa." In similarly cursory fashion Mursili II in approximately the 27th year of his annals relates, in Götze's translation,[3] "Weiter zog ich nach Lakku, und Lakku war eine befestigte Stadt. Und er (Aparru) brachte (seine) Truppen aus der Stadt herab, und es entstand ein Kampf ums Tor."

Probably the most widely known function of the gate, in this case most likely the gate to the royal palace complex rather than a city-gate, is as the royal court. In §§197–198 of the Laws, e.g., we read,[4]

> If a man seizes a woman in the mountain(s), it is the man's offence, and he shall be put to death, but if he seizes her at home, it is the woman's offence: the woman shall be put to death. If the man finds them and kills them, he has committed no offence. If he brings them to the palace gate and says: "Let my wife not be put to death," and spares his wife, he must also spare the lover. Then he may veil her.

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1. KBo 10.2 ii 2, 6–8; see most recent translation by Beckman (2006: 220).
2. KBo 10.2 iii 6–8; see ibid. 221.
3. KBo 2.5 iii 53–56; Götze (1933: 190–1).
4. Based on Hoffner (1997: 155–7).

But if he says, "Let both of them be put to death", and they "roll the wheel", the king may have them killed or he may spare them.

In §187 one finds,[5] "If a man sins with a cow, it is a sexual sin, and he shall die. They shall conduct him to the king's gate. Whether the king orders him killed or spares his life, he shall not approach the king." Paragraph 199 is essentially the same law, but dealing with a pig or a dog.

Also from the Old Hittite Period comes the passage from the so-called Edict of Ḫattusili I, in which speaking the name of the banished queen mother or the names of her descendents is forbidden:[6] "If anyone among my servants speaks their names, he is not my servant. They shall slit his throat and hang him at his gate." The gate here would appear to be not the palace gate or a city-gate, but rather the gate of the estate of the executed servant, but still it fits into the pattern of the gate being chosen by the king for the display of his authority, which again is also to serve as a deterrent.

Similarly, from the last paragraph of Telipinu's Edict we read,[7] "(Regarding cases) of sorcery in Hattusa: you must keep cleaning up (all) instances (thereof). Whoever among the members of the royal family is proficient in sorcery, you seize him from the family, and bring him to the palace gate. But [who]ever does not bring him, for that man a frightful end will come."

By the Middle Hittite period at the latest one's status at the king's gate could be understood as a blessing, or a curse, symbolic of one's standing in the community, as seen in Kantuzzili's Prayer to the Sun-Deity:[8] "Now I cry for mercy in the presence of my god. Hear me, my god! Do not make me one who is unwelcome at the king's gate. Do not denigrate my reputation in the presence of other humans."

A further Middle Hittite reference to the king's gate is found in Tudḫaliya I/II's Edict or Instructions Concerning Legal Reform, where we read,[9] "But he who does open it (i.e. the king's granary), you, the men of the city, shall seize him and bring him to the king's gate. But if you do not bring [him], the men of the city shall make reparation for the granary, and they will track down the one who forced it open."

The projection of royal power as exercised in the king's role as chief justice, to use our modern terms, is thus seen to have been carried out at the gate. Curiously, all attestations of this usage for the king's gate, as far as my search through the texts has revealed, come from Old and Middle Hittite texts.[10] The only seeming exception to this rule is found in two snake oracles, both Late Hittite creations, where KÁ.LUGAL, "the king's gate" appears.[11] Its precise meaning, however, is obscured by the fact that it functions there merely as one symbol or token among many. Whether this symbol refers to the king's gate as a contemporary law court may be

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5. Ibid. 148.

6. KBo 3.27 obv. 10′-12′; based on de Martino (1991: 55–6).

7. §50; Goedegebuure (2006: 234).

8. KUB 30.10 rev. 22–24; Singer (2002: 33).

9. KUB 13.9+40.62 iii 8–11; based on Westbrook & Woodard (1990: 643). For discussion of the dating of the text, see de Martino & Imparati 1998: 395–400 and n. 19.

10. The only other attestations of the "king's gate" that I'm aware of are in the Laws, "If anyone finds a (stray) ox, a horse, a mule (or) a donkey, he shall drive it to the king's gate" (§71; Hoffner 1997: 79–80), and in Zuwi's ritual, "Catch[(pl.)] a wolf by the paw, catch[(pl.)] a lion by the knee, [. . .] a river, *zuwalwala*-[(pl.)] a snake, and bring[(pl.)] it to the king's gate" (KUB 12.63 obv. 26–27; see Giorgieri 1988/89: 131, 136; Puhvel 1986: 151).

11. IBoT 1.33, 18, 52, 66, 70, 82, 93, 104, 113 and KUB 49.1 obv.ˀ i 24′.

doubted. It therefore seems quite possible that the king's gate ceased to function as a judicial institution as such with the outgoing Middle Hittite Period, the reference from Tudḫaliya I/II's Edict or Instructions Concerning Legal Reform being the last attestation.

It is probably this judicial aspect of the projection of royal power at the gate which led to the use of this space in ritual, for not only did the king pass judgment on those cases brought to him in the gate, those persons condemned to death were also executed at the gate, mentioned in passing in Iriya's ritual, which reads as follows:[12] "Then they bring the ram and the *surasura*-bird out from within the city, and you bring them to the city-gate next to which they bring people to execute (them); you bring them to the spot where the people died." In this fascinating passage is revealed not only that the doomed were executed at the city-gate, but also, as might be expected, that the populace – i.e. in this case those responsible for the composition at hand – took careful note of the fact, which obviously would have been a principal reason for such a public display, that is, as a deterrent to further crimes. The gate area's significance as a place of death was presumably also what lent it its mystical relevance as a place where the efficacy of ritual might be enhanced.

Before leaving the religious sphere, I would like to read just one passage from the *nuntarriyasḫa*-festival, the Festival of Haste, which may be viewed as representative of dozens of such passages in the vast corpus of festival texts: The passage reads, in Nakamura's translation:[13] "Der König fährt mit der Kutsche nach Taḫurpa hinein. Wenn er in der Stadt zum Tor gelangt, ruft der "Spaßmacher" vor dem Tor *aḫā*. Auch der *kīta*-Mann ruft. Dann fährt er (der König) mit der Kutsche zum Torbau hinauf. Die Leute der Kulthandlung laufen voran. Der König geht ins *ḫalentuwa*-Haus hinein." Here we see how the king's entry through the gate into the town in which he is to fulfil his cultic duties is made a focal point of the ceremonies, again emphasizing royal presence and gravity. This observation should not obscure, of course, the other symbolic elements in the passage, such as the transition from the wild to the civilized or from the foreign to the familiar, another theme repeatedly associated with the city-gate, an interesting topic which must be left for another time.[14]

Before discussing two further passages somewhat more extensively, I would like to raise the possibility that there may have existed in Ḫatti a tradition of exchanging or consigning prisoners of war at the gate as well. This supposition is based on two passages that are either somewhat obscure or so fragmentary that any conclusion based upon them must be very tentative indeed. The first is found in the Annals of Tudḫaliya I, in which one finds,[15] "[Als] ich in Hattusa ankam, gab ich den Pija-Kuruntija und den Ma-[. . .] im Torge[bäude] dem Wettergott des Torgebäudes, den Kukkuli [aber . . .] (seinen Sohn), nahm ich in [Untertanen]schaft und entliess ihn." In this passage Tudḫaliya seems to consign Piya-Kuruntiya, who he had taken captive in his western campaign, to the service of the Storm-god at the gate of the temple. The second passage, from the Deeds of Suppiluliuma I, is unfortunately so

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12. KUB 30.34 iv 19–24.

13. KBo 11.73+44.128 // KUB 58.22++ ii 1′ff.; Nakamura (2002: 153).

14. It is presumably these aspects of the gate that make its use in the form of hastily constructed models such a popular element in so many rituals, concerning which see Del Monte (1973) and Miller 2011.

15. KUB 23.27 iii 1ff.; Carruba (1977: 160f.).

poorly preserved that only isolated words can been recovered:[16] "[. . . of Ḫa]tti he took away and [. . .] their father(s), their mother(s) (and) their brothers [. . .] to his own father, mother and gatehouse/in the gatehouse [. . .] who [had gone] over to [. . .] (he) led (away) the population, cattle and sheep, [and] brought [them to. . .]".

Curiously enough, the only example, to my knowledge, from the Hittite texts of a proclamation being made at the gate comes from the so-called Anitta text, which stems from a ruler who reigned not in Ḫattusa, but in Kaneš, and perhaps also Ankuwa, if Kryszat's (2004; 2008: 196–200) recent attractive suggestion is to be followed; and the text, largely annalistic or narrative in nature, reflects a time many decades before the beginnings of the Hittite Old Kingdom period as it is normally understood.[17] I indeed assume that the text passage is to be interpreted as such, rather than how this damaged passage is sometimes understood, i.e. as Anitta transferring his message from a tablet onto the stones of the gate or copying onto a tablet an inscription found on the stones of the gate. The key verb is mostly broken away, only traces of its first sign remaining, traces which allow, according to Neu's collation of the original, *a*[*r*- or *š*[*i*- (1974: 25–6). This led Neu to suggest *a*[*rtari*, *a*[*rtaru* or *a*[*rnunun*, "diese Worte stehen/werden stehen/sollen stehen auf einer Tafel in meinem Tor", or *š*[*iyanun* or *š*[*iyenun*, "diese Worte habe ich auf einer Tafel in meinem Tor eingedrückt/gesiegelt." The difficulties with these suggestions are numerous, including the unlikely translation of the ablative *tuppiyaz* as "auf einer Tafel" and the fact that, to my knowledge, apart from graffiti such as Luwian hieroglyphic graffito on the neck of the lion of the Lion's Gate at Ḫattusa (Neve 1976) and the Phrygian graffito on that of the lion at Alaca (Brixhe and Lejeune 1984: 240–1), no gate inscriptions are known from Anatolia.

Carruba more recently opted for *w*[*atarnaḫten*, translating "Diese Worte sollt ihr aus der Tafel an meinem Tor verkünden" (2003: 30–1), which, though perhaps preferable to Neu's options, also must be rejected. First, one might have expected to be able to see something of a second wedge of WA. Second, the usage of *tuppi*- together with *watarnaḫḫ*-, "befehlen, beauftragen", is, as far as I have been able to ascertain, not attested; the usage "read (out)" or "read from something" does not occur. Carruba (2003: 112) does mention in his commentary that *watarnaḫḫ*- can also mean "mitteilen (mit Dat. der Pers.)", adding that "hier wird es offensichtlich allgemein ohne Objekt verwendet," thereby recognizing a primary difficulty with his suggestion.

More convincing, though often ignored in the secondary literature, is Steiner's (1984: 67–68) suggestion of reading an Akkadogram from *šasû*, that is, the Gtn imperative sg. or pl. *Š*[*I-TA-AS-SI/SA*], which allows him to translate, "Diese Worte von der/einer Tontafel [lies]/l[est] in meinem Tor [immer wieder vor]!" The passage would thus read,[18] "These w[or]ds [*you shall*] r[*ead out*] from a [(tablet)] at my city-gate: In the future let [no] one defa[ce] th[is tablet]! Whoever defac[es] it [shall b]e an enemy of [. . .]!" The Gtn stem of *šasû* would be a rather exact translation of the normal Hittite locution for reading from a tablet, *peran ḫalzai*-, which is also attested several times in the iterative, *ḫalzessa*-. One must admit, however, that the

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16. KUB 34.23 i 8′; Güterbock (1956: 83).

17. I am unaware of any Old Assyrian attestation from Kültepe for a proclamation being made at a city-gate.

18. KBo 3.22 obv. 33–35 // KUB 36.98a++ obv. 4′–5′; see Hoffner (2003: 183); Klinger (2005: 140).

Akkadian verb *šasû* is otherwise unattested as a logogram in the Hittite texts, so that Steiner's attractive suggestion must also be viewed with caution.

Despite these difficulties, it is certain that Anitta chose the city-gate as the forum in which to convey his authority to his people on this occasion, most likely by reading out an edict or pseudo-annalistic composition for all to hear, or, if one wishes to follow Neu's interpretation, by engraving his message in his city-gate.

In light of the fact that Anitta was king at Kaneš, and that the tradition of the king's gate at Ḫattusa seems to have been current only in the Old and Middle Hittite periods, it is intriguing to refer to a comment by Veenhof concerning Kaneš:[19] ". . .there are references to . . . a "gate entrance", as a public meeting place, where people were "taken hold of" . . . in order to ask for payments or public statements, where witnesses were appointed . . ., merchandise was consigned . . . and people could be put to shame. It may have been the gate of the *k(ārum)*." These observations might initially cause one to wonder if some elements in the Hittite tradition with respect to the city-gate, namely the city-gate as a place for public meeting and perhaps also for the royal court, might possibly be indebted to Mesopotamian precursors that might have been taken over from Kaneš. On the other hand, the meaning 'market' and 'market price' for the Sumerogram KI.LAM, which the Hittites chose to represent their word for gatehouse, *ḫilammar*,[20] is nowhere attested in the Hittite texts, which could be taken to suggest exactly the opposite, i.e. that Hittite traditions remained free from Mesopotamian influence. Caution thus seems to be called for in regard to the question of any hypothetical Mesopotamian tradition. As far as I can see, nothing in the Hittite texts would unambiguously point to Mesopotamian precursors.

Perhaps the most interesting and dramatic passage for the question of the royal projection of power at the city-gate is from one of the most well-known of the Hittite texts, the *šar tamḫari*, or King of Battle legend of Sargon of Akkad. In the section in question, Sargon's warriors encourage him to plunder the primary target of his Anatolian campaign, the city of Puruṣḫanda. In Güterbock's translation it reads,[21] "Den Tamariskenbaum, der dir bei seiner Vorhalle steht, soll man dir abhauen und daraus Waffen . . . machen," and so forth. Since his preliminary treatment of the text it has become clear that *ḫilammar* is to be understood as gatehouse rather than "Vorhalle, Pfeilerhalle; courtyard." And I would like to suggest that the dative-locative should be understood simply as 'in' rather than 'by,' yielding the following translation:[22] "Let them! cut out the tamarisk-(beam) that stands before you in his gatehouse and make it into [wea]pons of Ištar of Akkade. Let them cut out! the *ḫikkarza*-(beam) that *stands* in the gatehouse, and let them make it! into tables, and let our heroes feast upon it. Let! them! cut out! the *ḫalassar*-wood that *stands* before! you! in his gatehouse, but let them make (it) into a battering ram, and it shall [ra]m the walls!"

Of course, those who have read this text know that it is full of scribal errors that can be attributed for the most part to a late Hittite scribe copying from an older tablet containing forms with which a scribe of his generation would not have been familiar, as shown recently in detail by Elisabeth Rieken (2001). Moreover,

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19. Veenhof (1976–80: 371a).

20. See Singer (1975: 91–5), as well as my recent entry on *ḫilammar* in HW².

21. Güterbock (1969: 23).

22. KBo 22.6 iv 14′–22′.

Sedat Alp (1983: 330) in his studies on the Hittite temple based his interpretation of *ḫilammar* as "Vorhalle" or "Pfeilerhalle" in no small part on this very passage, writing,

> Dass *ḫilammar* eine "Pfeilerhalle" war, kann man auch aus einem hethitischen Bruchstück der Sargon-Erzählung "König der Schlacht", das über den Zug dieses Königs nach Anatolien berichtet, schließen. Unter den Holzarten *paini-*, *ḫiqqarza* und *ḫalaššar*, die nach diesem Text beim *ḫilammar* in *Purušḫanda* standen, ist besonders die Holzart *ḫalaššar* von großem Interesse. Man benutzte *ḫalaššar*, das ein sehr langer und harter Balken gewesen sein muss, als Mauerbrecher. Besonders die Erwähnung des letzteren Baumes im Zusammenhang mit *ḫilammar* macht wahrscheinlich, dass dieser Baum zu den Pfeilern des *ḫilammar*, der "Vorhalle" gehörte. Denn nach den Plänen der Torbauten im hethitischen Anatolien würde man keine allzu langen harten Balken bei den massiven steinernen Torbauten erwarten. Es könnten hier kaum Holzbalken in Frage kommen, die als Holzeinlagen zur Verstärkung der Torbaumauern oder bei der Überdachung benutzt worden sind. Diese Interpretation verbietet auch das in diesem Zusammenhang benutzte Verbum *karš-* "abhauen, fällen." Diese Erwägung lässt keinen Zweifel darüber, dass *ḫilammar* eine Pfeilerhalle war.

I would therefore like to explain why, in spite of the difficulties inherent in the text and the arguments expressed by Alp, I think my translation of these lines is defensible.

14′ ^{GIŠ}*pāini=w[a=t]a kuit* ^{É}*ḫilamni=sit*[23] *arta*
15′ *nu=war=ast[a]*[24] *kar-ša-<an>-du*[25] *nu=war=at* ^{URU}*AKKADE* ^{d}*IŠTAR-as*
16′ [^{GIŠ}TUKUL]$^{ᴴᴵ.ᴬ}$⸢*-es*⸣ *iyandu* ^{GIŠ}*ḫikkarza=ma=wa=ta*
17′ *kuit* ^{É}*ḫilamni *arta* nu=war=as*ᴵ*ta*[26] *karsandu*
18′ *n=at*ᴵ*=apa*[27] ^{GIŠ}BANŠUR^{MEŠ} *iyandu ta={as}=za=kan* $^{LÚ.MEŠ}$UR.SAG*=summis*
19′ *azzikkandu*
20′ [^{GI}]^{Š}*ḫalassar=ma=wa*ᴵ*=ta*ᴵ[28] *kuit* ^{É}*ḫilamni=set*[23] *arta*
21′ [*nu=w*]*ar=asta kar-ša-an-<du> ta=san*[29] ^{GIŠ}GUD.SI.AŠ *iyandu ta* BÀD-*essar*
22′ [*wa*]*lḫiskeddu*

In lines 15′ and 21′ we have *-asta* used correctly,[30] which surely allows us to emend the comparably constructed line 17′ to the same.[31] One would of course like to see a resumptive accusative pronoun in the enclitic chain, but this is not strictly necessary, and the two properly constructed passages do not include it either. In line 20 the scribe again had difficulty with the same local particle, introducing it here where none would be expected, and where one can only suspect none stood in the original, and this despite the fact that he had not employed *-asta* in the parallel clauses in ll. 14′ and 16′. As is well known, the precise function of the local particles in Hittite, including *-asta*, have long been a stumbling block. As far as the present state

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23. NH for d.l. *-si*.

24. Hoffner & Melchert 2008: 41 have *nu=war=a(t)=sta*.

25. Cf. l. 17′.

26. Text *=wa-ra-at-ta*. Hoffner & Melchert 2008: 381 have *nu=war=at=<s>ta*, apparently thinking of an assimilation.

27. Text *na-aš-ša-pa*. Hoffner & Melchert 2008: 381 has *n=at*ᴵ*=apa*.

28. Text *=wa-ra-aš-ta*.

29. Text *kar-ša-an-ta-ša-an*.

30. See also in ll. 27′, 28′ and 29′ in parallel usage.

31. Note, however, that the intentions of the copying scribe would seem to be quite reasonable, if he was intending to emend to *nu=war=at=ta*, i.e. 'let them cut it (=*at*=) for you (=*ta*).'

of knowledge allows a determination, *-asta* appears rather often in clauses with a separative or divergent function and/or in connection with transitions (Hoffner & Melchert 2008: §28.110; cf. Neu 1993: 144). This would fit well with the picture of cutting or wrenching the beams out of the gatehouse, though it probably would not exclude the felling of trees.

I am also unable to agree with Alp's further claim that the verb *kars-* would exclude the interpretation of *ḫilammar* as a gatehouse. This verb, the most basic meaning of which is "to cut", is attested not only with the meanings "abhauen, fällen", as implied by Alp. It is also found in a sentence such as, "If you ever extract (*-asta . . . karᵃsteni*) a selection (*karsattar*) . . .",[32] also with the local particle *-asta*, just as in our case. In this passage it is a matter of "cutting out", "selecting" or "extracting" a selection of sheep or cattle from the herd, and is therefore of interest for present purposes. In both cases it is a matter of extracting a part from the whole. Also for the removal of an illness from a sick person *kars-* can be used, in this case without a local particle:[33] "Remove (*karᵃs*) the illness from the child!"

Neither do Alp's considerations regarding the types of wood withstand scrutiny, and seem to perhaps over-interpret the text. Out of the three wood types, *paini-*, *ḫalassar* and *ḫikkarza*, only the first, *paini-*, is attested apart from this passage, and it can with some confidence be identified as tamarisk (CHD, sub *paini-*). This type of wood, though, is generally not used, as is the case in our text, to create weapons, and it almost certainly would not have been used for a pillar in a pillared hall, which Alp's interpretation would require. Tamarisk appears in the Hittite texts apart from this passage exclusively as a magical substance in rituals, never as a building material or even for smaller utensils. Tamarisk's (Akk. *bīnu*) usage as found in the Mesopotamian texts is similar, even if it is occasionally attested as constituting spoons, bowls or model tools such as an axe or a knife in the *namburbi*-rituals (CAD B, sub *bīnu* A). Therefore one can hardly conclude from this passage that whatever type of wood *ḫalassar* was could in fact be made into a battering ram, or that it could have functioned as a pillar in a pillared hall.

Moreover, Alp's further claim, according to which large wooden beams would not have been used in the construction of the gatehouse, cannot be considered correct. Alp refers to Rudolf Naumann's chapter on gates, but already in the 1960s the excavator at Ḫattusa, Peter Neve, had concluded, as succinctly summarized by Dirk Mielke (2006: 27), that, "in den Balkenlücken, d.h. dem zwischen zwei Lehmziegelblöcken vorhandenen Raum, ein Holzfachwerk aus vertikal verbauten Kanthölzern, sowie einigen Querverstrebungen konstruiert war und der verbliebene Zwischenraum mit Erde und kleineren Steinen verfüllt worden ist." Further excavations, such as those in Kuşaklı/Sarissa, have since shown even more clearly that Hittite gatehouses certainly did include large wooden beams, both as structural elements and for the ceiling and/or roof construction (Mielke 2004: 119; 2006: 27–8).

Of course, a further element in the passage in question also gives one pause, namely the usage of *ar-*, "to stand". I was unable to find any other attestations for *ar-* in similar context, i.e. in connection with parts of a structure. One possible solution for this potential difficulty might be found in the fact that at least the latter two cases of *arta* were erased by the copying scribe. It may be that no *arta* stood in the original text, which would have been constructed as nominal sentences. The copying

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32. KUB 13.4 iv 56.
33. KUB 7.1 i 8 und 16.

scribe may have initially failed to understand the gist of the sentences, "correcting" the situation by adding the archaic *arta*. After finishing the passage, he seems to have realized that the clauses were actually just fine without *arta*, and proceeded to erase his "corrections".[34]

So, if my suggested translation turns out to be correct, despite the many difficulties, the passage would seem to be relating the following. Sargon's warriors would seem to be demanding that he take a few trophies representing his victory over and destruction of the city of Puruṣḫanda and its city-gate, a most striking display of royal power indeed. That they thought thereby precisely of taking parts of the city-gate as their trophies emphasises dramatically how the city-gate could function as a quintessential symbol of power and authority.

Incidentally, the text continues with Sargon's warriors demanding further of him, "Let them topple the walls and the gatehouse of Puruṣḫanda separately! Then you can fashion their [represent]ation[?] and set them on the gatehouse. Nurdaḫḫi, though, shall stand before your [represent]ation[?] and aggrandize you!" Although the context is not entirely clear, and although *essari*, "representation", is only half preserved in both cases, demanding caution, I wonder if the intent here is that the conqueror is being urged to have images of the city-gates and walls of Puruṣḫanda sculptured on the gate of his own city, before which the conquered ruler is to stand in awe and to recognize the power of his conqueror. If so, one might suggest a parallel with such well-known representations as the destruction of Lachish pictured on the palace walls of the neo-Assyrian king Sennacherib. As far as I am aware, however, such visual representations are not known from Anatolia, and how far back into the history of Mesopotamia the display of victory and siege on the walls of city-gates and palaces goes, is a question that I will leave to other occasions and to more qualified persons.

One must ask, in light of these observations, who would have composed this version of *šar tamḫāri*, for what purposes, and for what audience? Ilya Yakubovitch (2008: 305f.) has recently suggested that this version,

> represents a creative adaptation of an earlier tale about Sargon's expedition against the Hurrians, whose setting was transposed to central Anatolia for reasons of political expediency. I believe that the hostility of the Hittites to the kingdom of Purushanda explains the innovative setting of *CTH* 310. The deeds of Sargon I described in this epic represent a mythical backward projection of the historical deeds of Anitta, whose military campaigns likewise resulted in the submission of Purushanda. These conclusions, however, make sense only on the assumption that the Hittites perceived Anitta's conquests as deeds of epic proportions long after the respective events had taken place.

He suggests that this conflict between Sargon and Hurrians located across the Tigris in the Zagros mountains was later transposed by the Hittites onto the conflict between them and Puruṣḫanda in or following the late colony period. In such a scenario, this shift of power would have been portrayed in a most picturesque way in the *šar tamḫāri* text, whereby the ruling power of the time, Puruṣḫanda, was destroyed, its city-gate torn down and its structural beams carted off to Ḫatti to be worked into trophies. And in fact, a similar power shift is claimed to have been evinced by Anitta

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34. Rieken (2001: 579) suggests alternatively that it may have been the older form *arta* in the original that would not have been familiar to the late scribe, leading to the erasure.

in his pseudo-annalistic text, in which he claims,[35] "Als ich gegen Purusḫanda zur Kampagne trat, kam der Mann von Purusḫanda zu mir zur Huldigung, und er brachte mir einen Thron aus Eisen und ein Zepter aus Eisen als Geschenk. Als ich aber zurück nach Kaneš kam, brachte ich den Mann aus Purusḫanda mit mir." The only difficulty I see with Yakubovitch's otherwise enticing explanation is the so-called Ur Letter of Sargon, which is presumably to be dated to roughly the same time as, perhaps even earlier than, Anitta himself, i.e. to the early Old Babylonian Period.[36] Already in this fictional letter, Purusḫanda appears as the goal of Sargon's campaign, and that in the writing *Pu-ru-uš-ḫa-an-da*, i.e. akin to the Anatolian and Amarna writings as opposed to the Old Assyrian writing Purušḫattum, and similar. It thus seems that the legend of Sargon's campaign against Purusḫanda, whether it was ultimately fictional or not, was no invention of the Hittites of Anitta's age, or that of his successors, designed to explain the power shift from Purusḫanda to central Anatolia. At least it does not seem likely that apprentice scribes of southern Babylonia would have attributed a roughly contemporaneous capture of a western Anatolian city by another local Anatolian ruler to the legendary Sargon. Thus, if Yakubovitch's suggestion can be considered correct, then only as far as the Hittites adapted an already existing tradition about Sargon's campaign to Purusḫanda for their own ideological purposes.

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35. Anitta Text §19; Carruba (2003: 50f.).

36. Wilcke (1982: 51, n. 67); Westenholz (1997: 142). I would like to thank Amir Gilan for pointing out to me the occurrence of Purusḫanda in this letter.

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