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The Art of Brotherhood: Hittite Visual Power and Mycenaean Artistic Hybridity in the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean

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The Art of Brotherhood: Hittite Visual Power and Mycenaean Artistic

Hybridity in the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts
in Greek and Roman Studies

by

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Acknowledgements

It is still difficult to imagine myself finishing this thesis. Just two years ago, I was a pre-law, Science, Technology, and Society Major without any coursework in the Greek and Roman Studies Department. I had never thought then that I would ever research and write (for a whole year!) about an empire that flourished over three-thousand years ago. Yet, as I do finish this process, I can definitively say that I have fallen in love with learning about the ancient world and all of its fascinating craziness.

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Introduction

The Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean possessed an interconnectedness and tumultuous sociopolitical landscape of an unprecedented scale. It is not an exaggeration to say that the world of 1200 BCE had remarkable similarity to our own; never before had the world been so globalized and cosmopolitan, as smaller and larger civilizations—Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Mitanni, Hatti, Cyprus, Mycenae—all interacted with one another through militaristic conquest or mercantile commerce. The relationship between cultures was so incredibly symbiotic that the collapse in one, or the collapse in trading networks, ultimately resulted in the destruction of the entire Bronze Age Mediterranean world. Interactions between these societies have played a part in an increasingly studied field. Finds have been significant and informative, as archaeological evidence of maritime commerce and trade networks has provided insight to the economic life of the region. Such evidence has been helpful in reconstructing foreign contacts and interaction, as well as general chronologies and relationships between rulers.

The topic of this thesis primarily discusses the nature of Hittite material culture, especially regarding its connections with the complex "international" scene of the Late Bronze Age. The Hittites, ruling a large empire from Anatolia, are known primarily from their spirit of conquest; perhaps their most known conflict is against Egypt, accumulating in the famous Battle of Qadesh (c. 1275 BCE). Ramses II recorded the supposedly great victory through relief in his Temple on Abu Simbel, where he majestically rides his chariot, towering over both Egyptian and Hittite in hierarchic scale, bringing his judgement onto the foreigners. In fact, the result of the battle could be considered a little more ambiguous, as the Egyptians abandoned their aspirations in northern Syria, surrendering the land to the expanding Anatolian Empire.[1] A definitive

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[1] Joan Aruz et al., *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C.*, (New York;New Haven; Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008), 253.

conclusion was later reached in 1258 BCE, when the two cultures signed a treaty to cease their

violence. It stated:

> [The treaty which] Ramses, [Beloved] of Amon, Great King, Kung [of Egypt, Hero,
>
> concluded] on [a tablet of silver] with Hattusili, [Great King], King of Hatti, his brother,
>
> in order to establish [great] peace and great [brotherhood] between them forever.[2]

It is thus logical as to why the majority of contemporary Hittite scholarship focuses on their

political interactions with other kingdoms of the period. The culture is overtly militaristic,

expanding its borders and enforcing its will onto lesser, more vulnerable states. The

historiography of Hittite political interaction often takes priority in scholarship over material

interaction, as the majority of "international" Hittite interaction occurred in political contexts.

Such a phenomenon is certainly not surprising; there is a significant disruption in the

archaeological record between specific cultures. While Egypt, the Levant region, the Aegean,

and Mesopotamia operated within the mercantile norms, there is a lack of external objects from

Hatti. In the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean, the most preserved examples of Bronze Age

commercial trade are that of the Uluburun and Cape Gelidonya shipwrecks, discovered off the

coast of southern Anatolia. Yet there is a significant lack of Hittite orientalia when compared to

sheer amount of luxury goods of their neighboring societies. The Uluburun shipwreck, having

departed from Northern Syria and passing Cyprus, carried a large amount of luxury items and

copper ingots, but lacked Hittite artifacts in its cargo. Advancements in scientific analysis have

led scholars to use the lead isotope data from lead fishnet sinkers and pieces of silver to place the

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[2] Gary M. Beckman and Harry A. Hoffner, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts : By Gary Beckman ; Edited by Harry A. Hoffner, Jr*, Book, Whole (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1996), 91.

origins of those objects into the Taurus Mountains from Hittite-controlled southern Anatolia.[3]

Despite this new discovery, it nevertheless can neither be feasibly determined whether these

sinkers and silvers were explicitly Hittite, nor if they were even intended for trade at all.

Furthermore, the evolution of scientific analysis can locate the source of the material, but is

unable to detail the producer or the scene of manufacture. Such a detail is relatively useless as to

determining Hittite origin on shipwrecks. Indeed, the lack of Hittite presence on the Uluburun

and Cape Gelidonya shipwrecks creates a lacuna in the archaeological record; in these well-

documented examples, one of the largest empires of the period appears uninvolved with much of

its international mercantile trade network.

It may seem, therefore, that the title of this thesis is anachronistic. How can the Hittites

maintain an "Art of Brotherhood" in the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean if there is little

evidence suggesting that they participate in the same material exchanges as their

contemporaries? The answer may seem relatively straight-forward; I assert that the main export

of Hatti is not mercantile trade, but a visual culture that comes packaged in political contexts.

The specific character of Hittite diplomatic strategy lends itself to the exportation of

iconography, reliant on militaristic and political clout, over commercial interactions. Therefore,

by taking an art historical approach to Hittite "international" relations (those seen in situations

similar to the Battle of Qadesh) and in domestic affairs, one is able to blend an analysis of

materiality whilst still accounting for a historiography of politics. For the Hittites, the two are

inextricably connected. The goal for this thesis is to examine monuments and objects that

demonstrate the specific niche the Hittites played in the Late Bronze Age world of diplomacy,

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[3] Hayah Katz, "The Ship from Uluburun and the Ship from Tyre: An International Trade Network in the Ancient Near East," *Zeitschrift Des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins (1953-)* 124, no. 2 (2008): 128–42.

where militaristic and regal power could be projected in a way that either preserved systems of equality (between larger kingdoms) or domination (over lesser kingdoms and subjects).

Art and iconography have an unparalleled ability to display motivations and possess a self-consciousness deriving from an artifact's various formulae, utilizations, and histories. Therefore, Hittite political art, in both foreign, and domestic contexts, is worth studying due to its role in the globalized interaction system, though it is not carried in commercial contexts. In fact, I seek to further affirm that the frameworks that these objects operated in were *not* commercial, but diplomatic and militaristic. Such interactions have the opportunity to transmit iconography through ideology and aspiration, neither of which may leave a footprint on the archaeological record. The Late Bronze Age world lent itself well to so-called "iconographical pathways." In such a tense political landscape, aspirations and intended use of objects becomes inherently associated to form and imagery. Therefore, both motivations of human agents (kings, diplomats) and their actions within the general schema of "international" relations have consequences directly related to changes in artistic style.

It is then necessary to present a case-study to reveal the true extent of Hittite visual-political power-projection, as well as its consequences. With the influx of foreign artistic styles, a developing power certainly has the ability to either replicate projected iconography or hybridize it with indigenous traditions. For the Hittites, socio-political clout acts as a dominating force which the Hittites are able to project through visual forms (monumental architecture and exportable minute objects). Though it is not always the case that artistic influences spread out from a "dominant" epicenter, the very nature of visual-political power lends itself to critical perspectives that can illuminate intellectual endeavors creating these iconographical pathways. As a dominating culture continues to succeed in a quasi-Darwinian fashion, the techniques

utilized and projected throughout such success will inevitably be replicated by assurgent civilizations new to the geopolitics of the international scene. The Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean, due to its interconnectedness and general symbiosis, fostered a unique community in which power and prestige were valued above all else.

Though there was no term for diplomacy in this period, relationships between rulers was the very fabric with which the world operated. The need to maintain stability within the region surpassed an obligation for amicability and cordiality, instead enforcing norms of brotherhood. Familial norms thus pervaded diplomatic relations, as despite the fact that concepts of human rights did not exist at the time, kings had the ability to observe treaties and acceptable behaviors. Only after the destruction of the brotherly alliance did the realm collapse. Furthermore, acceptance into the brotherhood, a membership which could help preserve and strengthen an empire, was entirely exclusive, determined by military or monetary resources. Whilst a kingdom with "membership" into the Brotherhood could maintain a relationship of peaceful equality and reciprocity, one outside the barriers of entry was often subjected to imperial aggression from their more powerful neighbors. An "Art of Brotherhood" is then essential to project the *illusion* of power, whether or not a smaller state actually possess the means to act on an equal scale to a larger kingdom.

When looking at a smaller kingdom like Mycenae (discussed in large part during Chapter 3), one must pair an analysis of material culture (through iconography and motifs) with an analysis of historiography to observe this "Art of Brotherhood." Replication of dominant cultures permeates through artistic hybridity, paving way for a unique "international style" that is entirely characteristic of the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. Such innovation was necessary for the furtherment of a world ruled by a royal cross-cultural oligarchy. It then becomes necessary to

elaborate upon what is meant when referring to the creation of an "international style" in Mycenae, the smaller kingdom being investigated as replicator of Hittite visual power.

The concept of an "international style" was first studied in 1947 through Helene Kantor's *The Aegean and the Orient,* which primarily investigated the foreign traits in objects as a method for examining relations between two geographical areas.[4] Kantor posited that these novel styles were the result of trade routes, evidenced by the presence of Aegean pottery in the Levant and Egypt, a theory which has since been elaborated upon by the excavations of the Uluburun and Cape Gelidonya shipwrecks. As such, the syncretism suggested by Kantor has been a popular theory in the decades following the publication of her manuscript. This scholarly paradigm appears again in studies by William Stevenson Smith, who follows methodologies set by Kantor whilst still embellishing his own thoughts on the subject. Smith most generally places the rationale for the style through a decorative approach rather than an iconographic one.[5]

Perhaps most significantly of the last 50 years was Janice Crowley's 1989 publication *Aegean and the East*. Instead of examining cross-cultural relations through mercantile trade (Kantor) or gift exchange (Smith), Crowley instead focuses on specific instances of syncretized motifs between indigenous populations and "alien" influences.[6] Furthermore, Crowley is persistent through the categorization of objects to create a more cohesive group, dividing them into "ornate" and "severe."[7] Very recently, Marian Feldman, through her work *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and an "International Style" in the Ancient Near East,* has rebuked these

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[4] Helene J. Kantor, *The Aegean and the Orient in the Second Millennium B. C*, vol. 4; (Bloomington, Indiana: Principia Press, 1947).

[5] William Stevenson Smith, *Interconnections in the Ancient Near-East: A Study of the Relationships between the Arts of Egypt, the Aegean, and Western Asia*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

[6] Janice L. Crowley, *The Aegean and the East: An Investigation into the Transference of Artistic Motifs between the Aegean, Egypt, and the Near East in the Bronze Age* (Åström, 1989).

[7] Ibid, 221-229.

former classifications of a "international style" for a plethora of reasons. In addition to the stylistic designations of Smith and Crowley, Feldman also accounts for intentionality seen in objects. I believe that it is essential to utilize a combination of the scholarly perspectives seen throughout this past century because all paradigms certainly have their values and merits. It can be dangerous to fall into the unfortunate colonial perspectives of the mid-20th century, where scholars like Kantor have implemented biases that situate the Aegean (the West) against the Near East (the "orient") as polar opposites whilst neglecting the complex mosaic of politics that compromised each culture and influenced their various artistic forms. The recognition of such biases is necessary for the pursuit of this project, as our contemporary viewpoints of the "other" in the East is not reflected by the ancient material. In order to account for an accurate representation of Bronze Age cross-cultural interactions, Feldman instead uses the term "koiné" to describe the blending of cultures through artistic form. She states:

> "In the case of the international koine, it is the cumulative assemblage of several formal properties—thematic imagery, composition, idiom, object type, and material—that persuade me to accept the classification… As a classification, the international koine designates luxurious objects (vessels, furniture, weaponry, and clothing) made of high-value materials (gold, silver, ivory, alabaster, and faience)."[8]

Feldman's usage of the koiné term primarily falls under the realm of the luxury good, which, while is important to the general schema of cross-cultural relations, does not necessarily encapsulate all of artistic internationalism (as Feldman herself states).

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[8] Marian H. Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and an "International Style" in the Ancient Near East, 1400-1200 BCE*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 30.

Of course, the categorization of objects under the realm of an "international style" can vary based on different forms of interaction. Objects influenced by commercial trading contexts will have different intentionality than objects in militaristic or diplomatic contexts. Therefore, this thesis presents an excellent opportunity to explore artistic innovation through groups which have not yet been classified together in the scholarly record. Such an expansion is particularly useful for looking at the general socio-political landscape of the era, especially at Hittite-Mycenaean interactions. I argue that the dominant, overarching culture of the Hittites creates an inevitable artistic innovation in the Aegean region, where several objects can be seen with Hittite technical and iconographical influence. The Hittite "Art of Brotherhood" and ascendant Mycenaean art hybridizes together to form something similar to an "international style," where the pressure exerted by the Hittites as a larger imperial kingdom ultimately results in a desire of replication by Mycenaean palatial states. Whilst previous scholars, like Kantor, posit that iconographical pathways were due to complex trading networks (a statement that I generally support), I aim to assert that there are groups of objects in both domestic and "international" spheres which present political ideals and hierarchies through their styles, motifs, materials, and technique of manufacture. There can be an "international style" in the Late Bronze Age Aegean due to the visual projection of power at the hands of the Hittites. Indeed, the categories of objects mentioned in this paper are strengthened by an intentionality which becomes illuminated by historiography (found in letters and tablets) and a shared sense of iconography. The thematic unity of this grouping is not an *explicit* function, such as what is seen in Feldman's luxury goods designation, but a deliberate system of *implicit* functions and forceful motivations, acting to preserve status (in the case of Hatti) or elevate status (Mycenaean Greece).

The structure of this thesis follows the logical flow of Hittite visual power. We start in the domestic sphere, where Hittite kings could consolidate their authority, as well as give rationale for expansion. The group of objects analyzed is both monumental and small, yet has the potential to greatly illuminate the *taberna*'s role as both protector of the land and enforcer of the gods. The second chapter extends Hittite influence onto the international scene; how do they reinforce their power to fellow members of the "Brotherhood" like Egypt or to a vassal kingdom like Ugarit? The Hittite export of visual power would be essential to their survival in the region, and thus there is a tense dichotomy presented between exhibiting power and maintaining the reciprocal relationships necessary for their self-preservation. If Mycenaean Greece had interacted with the culture, this is likely the form (militaristic and diplomatic) in which they would have met it. Furthermore, the analysis of greeting letters as both a historical source and an art form allows for the vivid construction of a world in which prestige can be valued and projected through materiality. The third chapter details the artistic innovation that occurs as a result of Hittite domination and influence. While Feldman claims that this idea (artistic influences flowing from a "dominant" culture) can circumvent human agency entirely, I would actually say that acknowledging domination in the general socio-political landscape of the Late Bronze Age greatly improves an analysis on artistic hybridity and visual power *as a result of* human agency.[9] Art and architecture that are inherently political naturally spread as a result of domination, and so a culture like Mycenaean Greece can replicate technique and iconography seen in Hattusa through the crafting of a "Lion Gate." In order to fend off their enemies (both domestically and internationally), palatial states must create an illusion that they can do so. Art allows for both the culture the individual to command the power of an empire through innovation. It is not

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[9] Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design,* 4.

surprising, then, that a consequence of Hittite power-projection was a replication of the same

motifs and techniques by Mycenaean Greece in order to bolster its domestic and international

status.

Chapter 1: Hittite Domestic Visual Power

To understand the Hittite visual projection of political power, we must first turn inward to the domestic affairs of Hattusa, the capital of the empire. Hattusa, a city situated in the rocky steppes and deep valleys of central Anatolia, is characterized by its large palaces, monumental walls, and unique material culture. In the Empire Period (Late Bronze Age) the archaeological record supports a concerted effort by the Hittite throne to create a visual-political economy, where authoritative military strength was expressed through artistic and architectural forms. This specific material culture allowed for kings to consolidate their power and give rationale for expansion beyond the borders of Anatolia, including a conquest of Mitanni and Syria. Citadel architecture became a vessel for intimidation in addition to practical defense, religious art a tool for propaganda. It is then necessary to discuss the nature of Hittite power within Hattusa before looking at how kings project strength to an international audience, as well as before observing how smaller neighboring kingdoms like Ahhiyawa (Mycenae) replicate Hittite forms through their own projection of power.
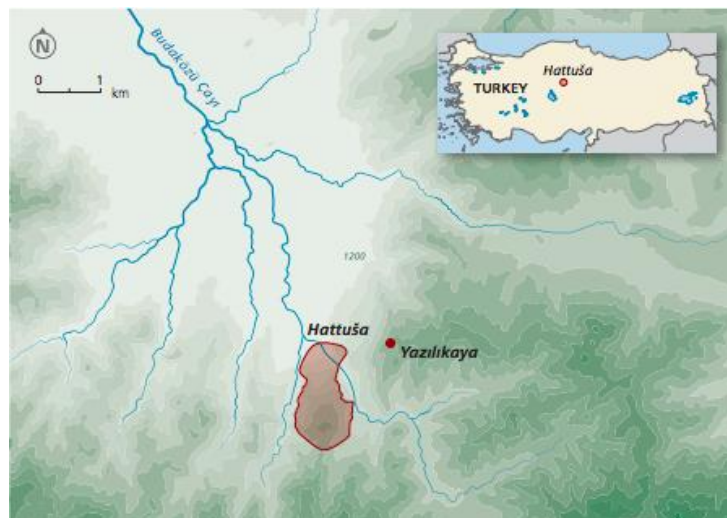
Fig. 1. Topographic map showing the location of Hattusa and Yazilikaya in central Asia Minor (© Luwian Studies).

Let us first analyze the specific character of kingship and its impact on Hittite society. While the throne was primarily passed through hereditary lineages, the Hittite king was treated as *primus inter pares*, or the first among equals. As such, he was primarily the administrator of the land and it was his divine duty to maintain its welfare, conduct its wars, and lead its religious ceremonies.[10] As it so often was in the ancient world, the sacred was inseparable from the political; Hatti followed this theocratic norm by having the king be the intermediary between the mortal world and the divine. A Hittite religious text, titled "The Kingship and Divine Law" posits the relationship between the Hittite king and the storm god: "May the Tabarna, the king, be ear to the gods! The land belongs to the storm-god alone. Heaven, earth, and people belong to the storm-god alone. He has made the Labarna, his king, his administrator and given him the entire land of Hatti."[11] The Tabarna (or Labarna in some instances) was a title used by Hittite kings for generations and throughout the Empire Period, indicating that the right to rule was entrenched in beliefs relating to divine destiny. With the title Tabarna, the king was given justification for authoritative policies, for he was the very cornerstone of the Hittite theocracy. Yet the separation between the divine and royalty was blurred and ambiguous. There is no known inscription that details the deification of a Hittite king during his lifetime; the Hittites instead preferred the deification of a deceased king, with texts often stating "He has become a god."[12] Indeed, from the beginning of royal cremation rituals, the loss of a king or queen is viewed as a catastrophe: "If a great disaster or disturbance occurs in Hattusa, in that a king or queen has become a god…" To comprehend the scale of such a disaster, the Hittite people would

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[10] Ekrem Akurgal, *The Art of the Hittites*, (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1962), 87.

[11] Piotr Taracha, "Political Religion and Religious Policy: How the Hittite King Chose His Patron Gods," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 40, no. 2 (2013): 374.

[12] Taracha, "Political Religion and Religious Policy," 374.

perform a fourteen-day ritual transferring the material corpse into the underworld, where he would forever become a farmer or livestock herder in the afterlife. [13]However, the visual culture of the period narrates a different story, where the king appears instead to amalgamate into a deity during his mortal life.

Fig. 2. *Hittite relief no. 81. Sarumma (god) and King Tudhaliya.* **13th Century BCE, Photographed: 1969. Limestone. (© Bryn Mawr College).**

As stated previously, it was the king's duty as Tabarna to insert himself upon religious ceremonies. It is then not surprising that a relief depicting the Hittite king Tudhaliya IV was found on the east wall of rock chamber B in a Yazilikaya sanctuary. This relief is normally what one would expect when observing the relationship between the royal and the divine. Two figures appear in the relief, arranged in hierarchical scale, with the god Sarumma embracing Tudhaliya. This relief reinforces the ideals of the Tabarna as the administrator; Sarumma, distinguishable by his conical hat, towers over the king, yet blesses him through association, reinforcing the

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[13] Taracha, "Political Religion and Religious Policy," 374.

established belief that "He has made the Labarna, his king, his administrator and given him the entire land of Hatti." This relief by itself is a material projection of the power that the king has the ability to wield. Tudhaliya is the *primus inter pares,* chosen by the gods to assert his authority over all spheres of life, including the religious, and is divinely guided to enact his judgment on domestic Hittite affairs. This motif also extends internationally, though that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Fig. 3. *Relief sculpture of Tudhaliya,* ca. 1350-1250 BCE, Limestone, H. 220 cm. From Archive for Research on Archetypal Symbolism.

The same shrine in Yazilikaya, however, also sports a relief depicting the Tudhaliya IV (Fig. 2). Probably sculpted during his reign, the king is distinguishable due to the hieroglyphic cartouche bearing his name that he holds in his hands. What is particularly significant about this relief is that Tudhaliya has ascended beyond his mortal kingship to take his place in the divine realm. This transformation from human to deity can be seen through the proportions found in the

stele, as Tudhaliya stands on top of mountains. Tudhaliya here is the central figure of the

sanctuary complex, as he overlooks a procession of the Hurrian pantheon and makes direct eye

contact with the chief gods on reliefs 42 and 43.[14] The relationship to death and deification is

more complex at Yazilkaya, as the site was constructed during the king's reign. Tudhaliya thus

deifies himself, asserting that he is no longer solely the administrator to the land, but also its

proprietor and conqueror.

Why is the presence of such iconography significant? The time of Tudhaliya IV (c. 1239-

1209 BCE) was tumultuous. The kingdom he inherited from his father, Hattusili III, had become

plagued with rebellious vassal states and smaller powers like Ahhiyawa (Mycenae) had begun to

consolidate power within the region. Furthermore, despite the treaty with the Egyptian pharaoh,

Tudhaliya was not completely confident in their relationship, and relations with Assyria, a new

and ambitious empire, had become dangerous. Within the borders of Hatti, the royal family

fractured due to the controversial order of succession. Heshni, half-brother to the king, as well as

other sons of Hattusili III, attempted an assassination, but failed. As a result, Tudhaliya urged for

the unconditional loyalty of his officials:

> My Sun has many brothers and there are many sons of his father. The Land of Hatti is
>
> full of the royal line: in Hatti the descendants of Suppululiuma, the descendants of
>
> Mursili, the descendants of Muwattalli, the descendants of Hattusili are numerous. With
>
> regard to kingship, you must acknowledge no other person (but me, Tudhaliya), and
>
> protect only the grandson and great grandson and descendants of Tudhaliya.[15]

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[14] Akurgal, *The Art of the Hittites,* 116.
[15] J. G. Macqueen, *The Hittites and Their Contemporaries in Asia Minor*, vol. 83., (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975), 301.

There was much for Tudhaliya to defend. He must have recognized that his throne was far from secure as his bloodline was contested and his relatives were politically ambitious. Should one be in such a controversy, it is only natural that he could have legitimized himself through other means. Therefore, the line of Tudhaliya must be presented in a method that distinguishes them from their rivals. Therefore, artistic representation becomes essential as a political maneuver, with Tudhaliya reinforcing his rule with images of the divine.

This theme became common in the Empire Period. A colossal statue also stood within Chamber B of Yazilkaya—its base found *in situ* and a pair of matching gargantuan feet discovered at the neighboring town of Yekbaz— further affirms that Yazilikaya was a location for a complex death-cult, where the king and his family would be deified and worshiped through generations after his death.[16] The inscription to the statue states:

> But this image [of my father Tudhaliya was still n[ot made]. Thus, I, Suppiluliuma, [the Great King], King of Hatti, son of Tudhaliya, the Great King, grandson of Hattusili, the Great King, and descendant of Mursili, the Great King, made it. As my father, the Great King Tudhaliya, was a veritable King, just so I drew the veritable manly deeds. (In this way) I ensured nothing was missing (and) I withheld nothing. I erected a constant/eternal rock-hekur (and) I made an image; this I brought into the constant/eternal rock-hekur, I decorated it and pacified him (the spirit of the dead King).[17]

Like his father, Suppiluliuma dedicated this statue when the empire was in crisis, especially when relating to foreign policy; he had attempted a military expedition out to Alashiya (Cyrpus) as a resort.[18] Nevertheless, both kings spent their resources and energy on the construction of

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[16] Macqueen, *The Hittites and Their Contemporaries in Asia Minor,* 301.
[17] Akurgal, *The Art of the Hittites*, 117.
[18] Ibid.

monuments in this sanctuary. Yazilikaya therefore presents a dichotomy where there is stress placed on both the lineage of the king and the king himself. A tumultuous political landscape paved the way for a new form of iconography where the king had the ability to elevate himself and his family to a divine status in life rather than after death. This change in visual culture is a projection of royal power, for the king has the ability to transcend beyond the abilities that the mortal realm could provide. The presence of this iconography at a cult site, Yazilikaya, is also significant; excavators of the site claim that it could have been used tp celebrate celestial events, such as the New Year and various equinoxes.[19] Therefore, the site was extremely likely to have been essential to Hittite religious identity, where common worship would have taken place, especially on such special occasions. The encroachment upon the religious allows the king to now emphasize the supernatural aspects of himself: his divine right to rule over the lands of Hatti and therefore also an ability to harshly punish those who do not comply to his whims.

Similar instances can be seen through the domestic use of glyptic art. In the Late Bronze Age, the standard form of seal was that of the stamp (rather than the Cylinder, which was more popular earlier in Mesopotamia, though there are certainly Hittite examples), which would take the form of a conical shape jutting out from a base for a ring. Often times these seals were geometric, but other times the artist would utilize traditional iconography to achieve a certain individuality for them. After the time of Telepinus (c. 1500) a type of seal rises in prominence often called "tarbana-seals;" these, as the name suggests, use a cuneiform inscription to invoke the title of *tabarna*.[20] Alongside the cuneiform inscription, the seals bear motifs invoking the kings divine right to rule, including the *aedicula*, or winged sun-disc and frequent depictions of

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[19]Eberhard Zangger and Rita Gautschy, "Celestial Aspects of Hittite Religion: An Investigation of the Rock Sanctuary Yazılıkaya," *Journal of Skyscape Archaeology* 5, no. 1 (May 2019): pp. 8.
[20] Macqueen, *The Hittites and Their Contemporaries in Asia Minor,* 101.

deities. One such seal depicts a "Master of Animals" alongside lions, presenting the control of the *taberna* over both the human and the beastly. A combination of these motifs on a seal therefore reinforces the story of the king: his name, titles, legend, ancestry, and divine right to rule over his subjects. Glyptic art in general allowed Hittites to amalgamate their religious and royal iconography to display power through material form, and was a medium conducive to both domestic and international power projection. Seals and the act of sealing in general carried immense weight in the Near East as a methodology to record creative power, and were inherently self-conscious through the authority of the owner-sealer.[21] As such, the uniqueness and transferability of seal stones is useful when determining the dominion of the Hittite King, and is a reoccurring theme that should be noted in the following chapters.

Through these rock reliefs and seals, the king becomes less of an administrator and more of a divine warrior. The pictorial propaganda serves as the enforcement of a desperate regime. There is an inherent political quality to these religious artworks, framed within the historical context of the period, which cannot be denied. The form of a self-portrait, or more of an idealized self-projection, especially when amalgamated with a divine figure, is the result of an increased necessity for stability within the region through processes of legitimization. A claim to power was thus tied to the divine, unable to be contradicted or challenged. The king was protected by the supernatural in his life as he was after death.

The Hittite projection of power also took architectural forms. When one conceives of Hattusa as a city, the first notion that comes into mind is that of architectural genius. Indeed, the citadel architecture at the capital city was impressive, as the Hittites were some of the most

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[21] Irene J. Winter, "Introduction: Glyptic, History, Historiography," In *Proceedings of the XLVe Recontre Assyriologique Internationale, part 2: Seals and Seal Impressions, ed. William W. Hallo and Irene J. Winter*, pp. I, 3.

skilled fortress builders of the time period. The cyclopean style of city wall, characterized by

monumental blocks of stone, is the predominant feature of the fortifications, but postern gates

and corbel vaults are also present, which served as yet another method of protection unique to

the Hittites and their sphere of influence. Yet among the most striking features of the city walls

are the large relief sculptures at the gates. Here, the sculpture is made an essential part of the

cyclopean wall instead of natural rock, therefore also remaining an inherently invaluable

characteristic of Hattusa itself. The intricate connection between sculpture, wall, and city gives

the artwork a sense of strength and liveliness. The relief sculptures at Hattusa are a particularly

severe example of this relationship, as the sculptures protrude from the walls in an illusion of

emergence. They do not superimpose on the rock, but are instead strutting towards those who

may enter the city. For the purpose of this chapter we will mainly be discussing the lion, sphinx,

and king's gates, which all exhibit the strength and power that the empire could project.

Fig. 4. *Lion gate,* 14th-13th century BCE, Photographed: 1953. (© Bryn Mawr College).

Let us begin with the lion gate (Fig. 3). Hittite lions themselves are most easily

recognized by their fleshiness; they have square-shaped head, which contains high cheekbones

and fatty cheeks, as well as a short snout and the absence of a prominent, stylized mane.

Furthermore, the ears are either heart shaped or rounded depending on if they are laid back or

cocked; the neck is thick; the chest is curved and the claws are stylized.[22] The lions

characteristically are pulsing with ferocity and power. Other Hittite art forms contain lions,

invoking power through an animalistic form. One such form of art is also present at Yazilikaya: a

large stone-sculpted sword driven into the rock. While the blade itself is not detailed in its

decorative form, the hilt consists of two lions hanging downwards, with two lion heads jutting

out of the sides and a deity (represented by the conical hat once more) facing an adjacent

chamber.[23] The presence of lions on such a sculpture indicates an intricate connection between

the beast and the divine. Lions had the potential to represent both the exoticism and fierce

aggression that a god could possess. If one were to meet a god with disrespect; they would be

punished accordingly.

The presence of lions on both the gate and the sword hilt at Yazilikaya also further

affirms a connection between the authoritative might of the Hittite king and lion sculpture. As

stated previously, the Hittite king, as *taberna*, would claim himself as administrator to the land,

chosen to enact the will of the divine. Lions on the hilt of a sword at Yazilikaya, where the

taberna further encroaches upon the realm of the gods, then also introduces lions into the

iconography of the king. The appropriation of lion imagery into the gateway is therefore as much

an act of visual propaganda as it is an artistic choice; just as the images at Yazilikaya are imbued

with force and power, so is the gate at Hattusa, certainly invoking the grandeur of the empire at

its highest peak. Should somebody wish to enter the city, they would have to go through one of

the gates. The lions in particular would evoke a feeling of intimidation from the military power

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[22] Akurgal, *The Art of the Hittites*, 114.
[23] Ibid.

of the empire, as they and the strength invoked from the Cyclopean architecture are inherently

amalgamated with one another through their emergence from stone. There is an inherent visual

connection between the divine, the king, citadel building, and lion imagery that is nearly unique

to Hattusa. The Hittite use of lion imagery was ultimately metaphorical; the lion invoked the

language of kingship, and furthermore, and the power of the lion was taken and appropriated

through its "taming" in the walls of the city.

Fig. 5. *Hittite Sphinx,* 14th-13th century BCE. From Vorderasiatisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. http://www.smb.museum/smb/home/index.php?lang=de

Fig. 6. *Hittite Sphinx,* 14ᵗʰ-13ᵗʰ century BCE. From Archaeological Museum, Istanbul; No. 7868.

Like the lion gate, the sphinx gate (Fig. 5 and 6) outside of Hattusa also invokes divine might through sculptural forms. Over eight feet tall, these sphinxes are often considered the crowning achievement of Hittite sculpture. While the head and legs are carved in the round, the curling tails, dynamic, fluttering wings, and lean bodies are carved in high relief. Furthermore, there are similarities and differences in their stylistic composition. While both have Hathor-like curls hanging over their breasts, they are adorned with different styles of headdress; the left-hand sphinx (Fig. 4) wears a tall cap and the right-hand wears a tight-fitting shorter cap.

The sphinx is a common motif in Near Eastern art, and can even be seen guarding the gates in multiple locations across temporal boundaries; two such examples are the Lammasu at the palace gates of Ashurbanipal II at Nimrud, or the large sphinx at Giza. The sphinx is then less of a Hittite iconographic invention than it is an addition into the Hittite menagerie. Nevertheless, its incorporation into the Cyclopean walls is a novel concept; whilst foreign influence (Hurrian or Babylonian) has been thought to be the inspiration for the style, there is a lack of contemporary Mesopotamian reliefs that compare to the Hittite example, therefore indicating that this artistic movement could be the result of a local school.[24] The function of a sphinx, especially one in a gateway, is relatively stagnant throughout the cultures of the time; the sphinx, in concept, was to act as guard to the spiritual and was therefore a divine protector over the city of Hattusa, and the Hittite Empire at its greatest peak.[25] This hypothesis is supported by the presence of many Hittite temples on the other side of the gate; a distinction, then, may be drawn between the leonine imagery and that of sphinx, as the sphinx has a deliberate and intricate connection to the temples in the area.

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[24] Macqueen, *The Hittites and Their Contemporaries in Asia Minor,* 141.
[25] Akurgal, *The Art of the Hittites*, 121.

Fig. 7. *King's Gate: seen from without and with drawing of warrior relief on lateral jamb of inner archway.* 14th-13th century BCE, University of California, San Diego.

Divine protection is certainly a theme on the relief sculptures at Hattusa, a tool used to ward off both evil spirits and men with destructive intentions. The reliefs could then be seen as a visual-political projection of power, inherently connected to the divine rule of the *taberna*. Not only has the king tamed and imitated lions for his fortifications, he has also defeated these bicorporate monsters, taking their power through an architectural form; his rule then extends over both the natural and supernatural, the human and the animalistic. Perhaps the greatest explanation for this theme can be seen by the presence of a war god on the "King's Gate (Fig, 7)." The god himself is more than 7 feet tall, is dressed in a kilt, and carries an axe; he walks forward, his left arm bent and his hand fisted in "salute" to those who were leaving the city: merchants, travelers, and most importantly, soldiers.[26] Due to the fact that the god's face protruded from the wall, one imagines looking into his incised eye while passing under the gates. This deity is the material manifestation of Hittite military might, its style seen throughout many other artistic forms. We would expect that Hittite soldiers would adorn themselves with similar garb: the hat would have a pointed top, flaps covering the sides of the face and a large plume which would descend down the soldier's back.[27] A bowl found at the site of Bagazkoy (Hattusa) also has a depiction of a warrior, though the style is amalgamated with Aegean styles. We will discuss the relationship between the two societies further in Chapter 3. Nevertheless, the deity at the King's Gate projects his divine power onto the Hittite peoples, further conjoining the might of Hattusa's architectural design with artistic motifs.

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[26] Ibid, 121.

[27] Macqueen, *The Hittites and Their Contemporaries in Asia Minor,* 141.

It should be stated that the relief sculptures on the gates at Hattusa also acted to enhance the power that the massive citadel masonry evoked. The Hittites were masters in defense building not due to their success at merely stopping the enemy, but also by surpassing the attackers in terms of both weaponry and mobility. The citadel walls were thus designed in a way that provided the city's inhabitants a way to quash the enemy's attempts at entering. Both the tops and bottoms of the walls would be fortified to protect the structure from the siege weapons at the time such as battering-rams; therefore, the glacis was developed so that stones dropped from a height would have unexpected bounces.[28] Another characteristic of Hittite architecture is the use of earth ramparts, which would create multiple layers of masonry filled with rubble. Furthermore, the walls wrapped the city in a circular pattern over three miles long, with occasional rectangular towers jutting from the walls. The main gateways previously talked of were flanked by these large towers, providing the bronze-covered entryways with extra protection.

The Sphinx Gate in particular is an interesting case; the rampart was 10.5m high with the two staircases imbedded into it as the pedestrian method of accessing the gate. The fact that these relief sculptures are constructed into such an architectural marvel (one that would be especially devastating for the enemy), one can imagine the figures presenting a sort of power of intimidation. The very symbols of divine royal power would watch invaders as they attempted to breach the walls in vain. Interestingly, the Sphinx Gate has two phases of construction, with the latter left incomplete due to the final destruction of the city; the replication of the same motif indicates its extreme importance, even as with its mainly decorative function. The image of

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[28] Macqueen, *The Hittites and Their Contemporaries in Asia Minor,* 65.

power was just as essential as the physical capabilities that the cyclopean masonry contained, and represented the religious and political importance of guarding the city.

Projection of power within the domestic sphere of Hittite influence was essential for the legitimization of the king and his divine right to act as *taberna* over the land. The iconography of Hittite strength could be evoked from all spheres of life, including those sacred and militaristic. It should be important to note, especially in the following chapter, that the Hittite king treated his people as his subjects. In some cases, he was given the role of protector; in others, he was a god himself. The material culture of Hattusa and Yazilkaya reflects this occurrence. How is this relationship between power and artistic form replicated, or changed, in dominant states like Egypt or vassal states like Ugarit? Such a relationship is much trickier to navigate beyond the borders of Hatti and into the interconnected and tumultuous Late Bronze Age world.

Hittite Greeting Letters and the Materiality of International Correspondence

In his *Apology*, an autobiographical account of his reign, the Hittite king Hattusili III (c. 1286-1265 BCE) details his diplomatic methodology:

> And those who were already kings before me and who were on good terms (with Hatti)
> remained on the same good terms with me. They began to send me messengers, and they
> began to send me gifts. Such gifts as they continue to send me they had by no means ever
> sent to my fathers and forefathers. The king who owed me respect, respected me. But I
> prevailed over those lands which were my enemies. I added district upon district to the
> lands of Hatti. Those who had been enemies of my fathers and forefathers concluded
> peace with me.[29]

Such was the reality of Hittite diplomacy at the time. The Hittite King would give other societies a binary choice: friendship or animosity. In the view of the Hittites, neutrality was synonymous to hostility—a choice threatening Hittite goals of self-preservation— which would ultimately result in military conquest and then subjugation. Thus, foreigners could either surrender to Hittite domination, being annexed as a vassal state, or, if they were further away and more militarily powerful, enter with the Hittite King into a brotherhood of equals.

Relations of equality and peace were not only important to the internal stability of the Hittite Empire, but also to the external stability of the general Mediterranean region. Therefore, it was of the utmost importance to keep records of correspondence between the various states; evidence for much of the studied international correspondence of the Late Bronze Age comes from the 1887 discovery of the Amarna Letters, found at the site Tell el-Amarna, the capital of Egypt under the reign of Akhenaten (ca. 1353-1336 B.C.). While these letters have been

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[29] Gary M. Beckman and Harry A. Hoffner, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 1

extensively studied by scholars, the archive at Hattusa also serves as an excellent source for diplomatic correspondence, containing over half of the treaties known from the ancient Near East.[30] Both archives at Hattusa and Tell el-Amarna form a single corpus of letters and treaties in the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean, but for the purpose of this chapter, we will focus on those explicitly detailing or bringing context to Hittite correspondence.

These letters contained information involving peace and war between societies, exchange of various luxury gifts, arranged marriages, payment of tributes, and other matters pertaining to the preservation of Hittite internal stability. Yet even in Hattusili's *Apology* they are emphasized to be essential; Hattusili III states that his "good terms" are constituted by acts of service: "they began to send me messengers, and they began to send me gifts." Because the correspondence of kings was crucial to the stability of the region, their letters are themselves indispensable to the structure of diplomacy–both in terms of power projection and maintenance. Furthermore, the *Apology* characterizes these messages themselves as luxury gifts, treasured amongst kings as a representation of both present and past writings; they are meant to be read, heard, and stored in an area which emphasizes their importance. The Hittite greeting letters illuminate the ebbs and flows of Late Bronze Age international correspondence, operating within the boundaries of diplomacy and demonstrating the essentiality of international correspondence between states through luxury goods and trade; their inscriptions, written in cuneiform, also show the methods in which ancient states maintained balance through their use of language and emphasize the importance of the tablet itself as a rare beloved commodity among kings.

Greeting letters occupy a unique space in the literary compositional canon of the Late Bronze Age. Their structure places great emphasis on their statement of address, a fact which

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[30] Gary M. Beckman and Harry A. Hoffner, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 1.

Marian Feldman of Johns Hopkins University used to term these documents "greeting letters," a

paradigm which is the core of this chapter. Greetings are dramatized depending on the intended

recipient; for example, a vassal state of Egypt would greet his king something along the lines of

"Say to the king, my lord, my Sun, my god, the Sun from the sky (EA 52)."[31] Greetings between

two kings of a similar standing (the Great Kings of Hatti, Mitanni, Egypt, Kassite Babylonia, and

sometimes Assyria and Ahhiyawa) instead referred to each other as "My Brother" as a term of

respect. These terms were expressed in a formulaic manner, as Feldman states: "to Personal

Name (PN) say, thus (says) 2nd Personal Name (PN2)."[32] This formulaic greeting is seen, for

example, in a letter between the Queen of Hatti to the king of Egypt, most likely Ramses II:

"Thus speaks Puduhepa, Great Queen, Queen of the land of Hatti: Say to Reamasesa, Great

King, King of the land of Egypt, my brother (KUB 21.38)."[33] Though this letter is written by a

queen, there is general respect between the two empires through which language of familiarity is

evoked; Puduhepa thus refers to Ramses II as her "brother," following the general pattern of state

correspondence. There are, however, instances of a reversed order between the recipient (PN)

and the sender (PN2) as can be seen in the discrepancy between Feldman's formula and the letter

between Puduhepa and Ramses. The name order ultimately depends on the status of the

recipient; if the recipient is of a superior rank (for example, a vassal king to the king of Hatti)

then their name will precede the name of the sender; if the roles are reversed, the order follows

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[31] Ellen F. Morris, "Bowing and Scraping in the Ancient Near East: An Investigation into Obsequiousness in the Amarna Letters." (*Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 65, no. 3 2006), 179.
[32] Marian H. Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and an "International Style" in the Ancient Near East, 1400-1200 BCE* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 146.
[33] Harry Angier Hoffner and Gary M. Beckman, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom* (Atlanta (Ga.): Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 281.

suit.[34] If both the recipient and sender are of equal status, as Puduhepa and Ramses II are, then the sender will most likely precede the addressee.

Consequently, the formulaic address of the greeting letter and the positions in which names are situated illuminate the power hierarchies of the Late Bronze Age Near East as much as the words themselves do. It creates an environment where the Great Kings (*sharru rabu*) are differentiated from the smaller kings (*sharru sehru*), and the former reign as independent whilst the latter act as servants to their great lords.[35] This sort of relationship concentrates power in the hands of the most powerful empires in the Mediterranean rather than in every distinct kingdom, thus stabilizing the region through an aligned centralized power system which remained incredibly important for the sustainment of the essential trading networks spanning across every sovereign state. Indeed, for the economy of one empire to function, there must have been a concrete trading network between all powers at the time. Therefore, the consolidation of power between the few *sharru rabu* was not only an essential political maneuver to express authority over vassal lords, but also the creation of an unbreakable brotherly alliance, a crucial deed to further Hittite— and universal — self-preservation.

Brotherly rhetoric was also used as an act of persuasion, as can be seen in the Tawagalawa Letter. The Tawagalawa Letter itself is concerned with the misadventures of a man by the name of Piyamaradu, who had frequently disturbed the king of Hatti and retreated to Ahhiyawa for sanctuary. Referring to this matter, the king writes "[Piyamaradu] went and destroyed the town of Attarimma. He burned it down together with the fortified royal compound.

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[34] Mojca Cajnko. "Politeness in Hittite State Correspondence: Address and Self-Presentation." (Journal of Politeness Research : Language, Behaviour, Culture 12, no. 2, 2016), 160.

[35] Joan Aruz, Kim Benzel, and Jean M. Evans, *Beyond Babylon Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008), 161

[Then] when the people of Lukka appealed to Tawagalawa, he went to those lands."[36] There is

an assumption by the king of Hatti that Piyamaradu was hiding across the borders of nearby

foreign lands, and a reason to suspect Ahhiyawa's complicity in the matter; he writes to the other

king (that of Ahhiyawa): "Does [my] brother [know] it or not?[37]" The language used by the

Hittite king in the Tawagalawa Letter shows an attempt to de-escalate tension between the two

societies by calling his neighboring king "brother."

This letter is the first instance of the Hittite king referring to the king of Ahhiyawa as his

equal, perhaps using the promotion of rank and status as a device to persuade the king of

Ahhiyawa to heed his word. There is evidence that this international brotherhood of kings was

desirable among rulers in the Late Bronze Age; As Mitanni, a former Great Kingdom, waned in

power and collapsed, Assyrian rulers attempted to utilize Mitanni's political status to seize their

own place in this international brotherhood of kings; shown in an Amarna Letter from Assyria to

Egypt, which reads, "[*Now*] I am the equal of the king of Hani[galba]t (Mittani)."[38] The Assyrian

king, Ashur-uballit, then confronts the Pharaoh when he does not concede the appropriate

amount of gold: "Is such a present that of a Great King? Gold in your country is dirt; one simply

gathers it up."[39] It can be assumed that using language of equality came with the benefits of

respect between societies. Therefore, Ahhiyawa's place among its contemporaries was a valid

concern of the king's, and Hatti welcoming Ahhiyawa into this exclusive group could most

certainly be seen as persuasive, especially when the profile and importance of Ahhiyawa and the

Greek mainland was rather miniscule compared to that of Hatti, Assyria, Mitanni, Babylonia,

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[36] Gary M. Beckman, Trevor Bryce, and Eric H. Cline, *The Ahhiyawa Texts* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 103.
[37] Beckman, Bryce, Cline, *The Ahhiyawa Texts,* 105.
[38] Moran, *The Amarna Letters,* 39
[39] Moran, *The Amarna Letters,* 39.

and Egypt. The letter's brotherly rhetoric and the advantages of becoming a *sharru rabu* could then be used to both strengthen economic ties and create peace between kings, as formula of the address could have large diplomatic implications.

Following the address are salutatory remarks, also incredibly formulaic in their structure. Such a remark can be seen in the same letter between Puduhepa and Ramses:

> Concerning the fact that you, my brother, wrote to me as follows: "At the time when your messengers came, they brought back to me gifts, and I rejoiced." When I heard that, I rejoiced like-wise. The wife of your brother enjoys full life. May the person of my brother likewise enjoy full life! Send me {indiscernible} and may they be set with lapis lazuli! Furthermore, my lands enjoy full life. [May] your lands like-wise [enjoy] full life! I have sent my greetings and my ornaments to my brother. With me all is well. May it be well with my brother likewise (KUB 21.38)![40]

The beginning salutatory remarks act as a response to the latest letter sent, a brief polite discussion of gift-giving as an act of diplomatic service between empires. The familial bond is apparent in such discussion; Ramses' joy is mirrored in Puduhepa. Furthermore, Puduhepa emphasizes their familial relationship after the initial address, calling herself the "wife of your brother." Due to this relationship, it is imperative that she take pleasure in her brother's (or brother-in-law's) happiness. Likewise, the rest of the salutatory remarks follow this mirroring formula, with a description of the sender's (in this instance Puduhepa's) welfare preceding a wish for the recipient's (Ramses') welfare. This particular letter goes as far to wish for the well-being of the Egyptian agrarian economy, therefore indicating the essentiality of external stability in addition to internal stability in the Late Bronze Age.

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[40] Hoffner and Beckman, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom,* 281.

The body of the text is less formulaic in content than the address or salutatory remarks and is where the majority of diplomatic tension can be seen, as well as Hittite efforts to maintain power balances or assert their own dominance. Discussion of issues are observed through their serial order, with complaints and requests sometimes being interrupted by stern warnings.[41] Though the letter between Puduhepa and Ramses II opens with kind and thoughtful words, Puduhepa's displeasure can very easily be seen through the body. Yet the importance of the greeting permeates the subjects discussed, highlighting the importance of the stability of the region, a paradigm which frames all letters. The body of the letters primarily focuses on matters that directly relate to the personal relationships between the recipient and the sender: gift exchange, inter-dynastic marriages, and discussions relating to status. These matters can clearly be seen in the body of the letter between Puduhepa and Ramses II, referring to the arranged marriage between a Hittite princess and the Egyptian pharaoh.

> Concerning the fact that you, my brother, wrote to me as follows: "My sister wrote to me: 'I will give a daughter to you.' But you have withheld her from me. And now you are even angry with me! Why have you not now given her to me?" I will give you both my daughter and the dowry. And you will not disapprove of it; you will approve of it. But at the moment I am not able to give her to you… To whom should I compare the daughter of heaven and earth whom I will give to my brother? Should I compare her to the daughter of Babylonia, of Zulabi, or of Assyria?[42]

Matters such as these reflect and embody the defining themes of the brotherly alliance. Whilst these relationships are inherently tumultuous, as they were ultimately based on the concept of

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[41] Marian H. Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and an "International Style" in the Ancient Near East, 1400-1200 BCE* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 147.
[42] Hoffner and Beckman, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom,* 286.

self-preservation of an ever-expanding empire, greeting letters between royalty ultimately rarely

discussed matters of war and military conflict. Past conquests, such as those against their fellow

brother-kings, were rarely mentioned, except to reiterate pacts of friendship or statements of

antagonism. For example, in one of the Amarna Letters, Tushratta, a Great King of Mitanni,

references an attack on an invading force in his lands; this maneuver is to gain more favor to

Queen Tiyi of Egypt.[43]

Yet tension resided in between the lines of the letters and in the body of the text,

especially when referring to the patterns of royal gift exchange. Tension is seen in the letter

between Puduhepa and Ramses as the Hittite queen states:

> Did my brother have no wife at all? Did my brother make them[44] [out of consideration
>
> for] his brotherhood, my sisterhood, and our dignity? And when he made them, they were
>
> indeed settled in conformity with the King of Babylonia. Did he not also take the
>
> daughter of the Great King, the King of Hatti, the mighty King, for marriage? If you
>
> should say: "The King of Babylonia is not a Great King," then my brother does not know
>
> the rank of Babylonia.[45]

The body of the letter clearly describes the attempt of an arranged marriage between a princess

of Hatti and Ramses II. Diplomatic marriage was a crucial system in which the brotherly alliance

of kings could be solidified, as it linked rulers of expanding empires to one another through

blood in addition to rhetorical devices. Thus, there is much evidence, as seen in this letter, for the

princesses of Great Kingdoms being betrothed to kings; Puduhepa already references a past

marriage, when one of her daughters was betrothed to the King of Babylonia.

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[43] Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design,* 147.
[44] Here Puduhepa refers to the marriage arrangements.
[45] Hoffner and Beckman, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom,* 286-287.

In the Late Bronze Age, the arranged marriages of women acted within the structure of material gift exchange. Like both the letters and the luxury items, women were given and received without their own autonomy; they were used to cement the political alliances currently in place and add to the royal prestige of a king. As such, they generally acted within the same boundaries of generosity and reciprocity, themes also seen in gift exchange. As can be seen in the letter of Puduhepa, Asiatic kings such as the Hittites participated in these activities, giving their daughters to foreign men to affirm the brotherly alliance of Great Powers. Whilst Egypt accepted foreign women, they would never become queens; contrary to the recurring theme in Ancient Near Eastern international correspondence—generosity and reciprocity— Egypt accepted women from different nations as a form of prestige but placed them in their harems rather than making them queens. Due to local perception, the queen had to be Egyptian.[46] In addition, Egyptian rulers were not willing to reciprocate and give their daughters into marriage. In a letter, a Pharaoh stated that "From time immemorial no daughter of the king of Egy[pt] is given to anyone.[47]" This betrayal of the international brotherhood of Great Kings—a lack of reciprocity—could have resulted in the collapse of the entire system; in a letter, a king angrily complains of this refusal, stating "Did you not seek brotherhood and amity, and so wrote me about marriage that we might come closer to each other,[48]" which serves as a staunch rebuke of Egypt's foreign policy. In order to satisfy the Great Asiatic Kings, who yearned for an Egyptian princess, Egyptian kings instead gave gold, which uneasily maintained the pleasant international correspondence.

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[46] Joan Aruz, Kim Benzel, and Jean M. Evans, *Beyond Babylon Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008), 164.

[47] William L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1992), 39.

[48] Though Ramses proclaimed the battle as a victory, a high number of casualties were sustained on both sides and it seems more likely that the battle ended in a draw; Egypt then lost the war as Hatti conquered the area.

Yet for Hatti, arranged marriages remained of the utmost priority as an opportunity for both the strengthening of alliances and the expansion of the Hittite sphere of influence. The presence of Hittite women in the various capital cities of neighboring empires created a familial network. The Hittite king was the father-in-law to the Babylonian King, the father-in-law to the Egyptian king, and the father-in-law to the Assyrian king. The royal Hittite woman was therefore a vessel for the self-preservation of the empire and a crucial topic of conversation to be held within the confines of diplomatic correspondence. The importance of marriage sometimes even surpassed that of expected gender roles for the Hittites; an event known as the "Zannanza Affair" almost collapsed the brotherhood all-together. The *Deeds of Suppiluliuma* detail a letter from Egypt which stated: "My husband is dead. I have no son. But they say that you have many sons. If you would give me one of your sons, he would become my husband."[49] After verifying that the letter was indeed truthful (such Suppiluliuma was hesitant to believe such a thing, for good reason), Zannanza, the fourth of his five sons, was sent with a party to marry the Egyptian queen.[50] Yet, after some time had passed, a messenger arrived at the Hittite royal court with news that Zannanza has been ambushed on his way to Egypt and been assassinated; not only was the Hittite prince dead, the Egyptians had also violated the terms of arranged marriage and of the international brotherhood of kings. When Suppiluliuma had heard of this tragedy, he supposedly said: "O Gods! I did no evil, yet the people of Egypt did this to me! They also attacked the frontier of my country." Arranged marriages were essential to the well-being of the Hittite kingdom, and thus the violation of these sacred bonds could be seen as an immense security

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[49] Eric H. Cline, *1177 B.C: The Year Civilization Collapsed*, 2015, 64.
[50] Ibid, 65.

threat. A greeting letter, as the recording device for this sort of interaction, therefore was integral

to the relations between kingdom.

Thus, the body of the greeting letter contains implications of extremely important

diplomatic decisions, though the majority do not appear to be militaristic or economic. Hittite

international relations relied on the content described in the body of the letter, which related

directly to the preservation of this international community. The writing of this letter comes soon

after the Battle of Kadesh, when a treaty was signed by Ramses II and Hattusili III.[51] The treaty

came after a period of aggressive Hittite expansion and the conquering of the Mittanians, another

one of the previously so-called "Great Powers," and the occupation of the Egyptian territories of

Kadesh and Amurru. Coming at the end of the conflict, the treaty attempted to stabilize the

region and reinstate the crucial brotherly alliance through the conventions of Bronze Age

diplomacy. It states:

> Ramses, Beloved of Amon, Great King, King [of Egypt], has created it [on] this [day] by
>
> means of a treaty upon a tablet of silver, with [Hattusili], Great King, King of Hatti, his
>
> brother, in order to establish good peace and good brotherhood [between them] forever.
>
> He is [my] brother and I am his brother. He is at peace with me and I am at peace with
>
> him. We will create our brotherhood and our peace, and they will be better than the
>
> former brotherhood and peace of Egypt with Hatti.[52]

 Rhetoric from this treaty is replicated in the greeting letter, though it does not mention any

conflict. Self-consciousness clearly permeates the body of the greeting letter, as discussion of

arranged marriages and the formation of royal blood-ties invokes both the Egyptian-Hittite war

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[51] Gary M. Beckman and Harry A. Hoffner, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 92.
[52] Moran, *The Amarna Letters,* 18

and the Treaty of Kadesh. Hittite diplomacy thus relies on both the consistent structure of the greeting letter—and its continual invocation of brotherly rhetoric—and the greeting letter's underlying need to preserve peace through the construction of alliances.

The structure of the Hittite greeting letter thus relies on the manipulation of two sets of goals, both of which further their mindset of self-preservation. One is, for the most part, practical; the body of the letter conveys the need to create and make alliances through the transferal of luxury goods: women, horses, chariots, jewels. These happen to correspond with treaties and thus invoke the past strife of war, though it is not explicitly mentioned; furthermore, they provide the material manifestation of both centuries-old or newly-created alliances. The second goal is that of an ideological and status-oriented equality, which can be conveyed through the address and salutatory remarks. Here brotherly rhetoric is both thankful and persuasive, and like the more practical body of the letter, acts to both preserve old alliances and create new ones.

Because the tablet was the manifestation of brotherly equality, it was essential that its materiality reflect such an occasion. In correlation to the so-called "cuneiform culture" of the time period, the letters are composed in various branches of Middle Babylonian.[53] Writing in a Mesopotamian script occurred even when neither the sender nor the recipient was from that geographical region, yet the script was influenced by the heterogeneity of the interconnected world. By its very nature, the script, termed "peripheral Akkadian" exists solely in the realm of international correspondence as a sort of *koiné*.[54] This "cuneiform culture" permeates throughout the materiality of the letters, as they utilize the various peculiarities of each prominent kingdom, creating a style that is profoundly different from a pure Babylonian text. Hittite international diplomatic letters are further classified within the northern tradition of "Hurro-Akkadian," in

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[53] Moran, *The Amarna Letters,* 18
[54] Moran, *The Amarna Letters,* 20

which various influences from the indigenous languages of the north-eastern Mediterranean region—from Assyria, Mitanni, Hatti, Ugarit, and Qatna to name a few— crafted an environment in which rulers could communicate with one another in a more convenient manner.[55] Furthermore, the script itself reinforced the structures of brotherly equality seen in both the content of the letter. Though the term "peripheral Akkadian" references an origin in Mesopotamia, the influence of indigenous idiosyncrasies made the language neither domestic nor foreign for all rulers. Instead, a letter's linguistic hybridity conveyed respect, as the "Brotherhood of Kings" could communicate with one another through a means in which they were equally proficient.

Fig. 8. *Amarna letter: Royal Letter from Ashur-uballit, the king of Assyria, to the king of Egypt***, ca. 1353–1336 B.C, Clay, H. 7.7 cm (3 1/16 in.); W. 5.5 cm (2 3/16 in.). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gallery 406.**
https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/544695

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[55] Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design,* 152.

Yet it remains important to analyze these greeting letters through their material composition in addition to their inscribed contents; as archaeological artifacts, they must be seen as luxury goods with their own art historical contexts alongside their significance in content or literary form and structure. The greeting letters take the material form of clay tablets and are rectangular with round edges; they have a slight curvature across their width and are covered with text (Fig. 8). For the most part, these tablets are small, rarely exceeding 100g in weight, as they were meant to be held and observed. As such, they were designed for viewing. Consequently, in order for the tablets to be seen as visually impressive, large amounts of effort were placed into its creation. The structure of the text itself is carefully constructed and planned, reflecting the necessity to avoid disturbing the tumultuous political landscape of Hittite international relations through the balance of friendship and animosity. Drafts at Hattusa include grammatical mistakes correlating to the Hittite practice of planning lines and a careful crafting of an elegant sounding and looking letter; all previously discussed sections of the letters, address, salutation, body, and closing address, are separated by single or double-ruled lines, seen by scholars as the equivalent to "paragraph dividers.[56]"

Awareness of the tablet's physicality permeates the greeting letters through the creation of its material form. Like the previously analyzed contents, the materiality of the greeting letter allows it to function in two ways: as a practical object, in which kings could learn about the events of the past, and as a luxury good, strengthening the brotherly alliance of Great Kings. Tablets were meant to be stored and observed at much later dates in order to provide precedent for international correspondence. Here we must look to Egypt, where the importance of greeting letters is seen in the reign of Akhenaten, the heretic pharaoh. The tablets were not only stored in

[56] Moran, *the Amarna Letters*, EA 24

the royal archives of Hattusa and Tell el-Amarna, but also meant to be fetched and observed

from a historical paradigm; with this stored information, rulers could reflect upon the history of

correspondence and act accordingly. Several letters addressed to Amenhotep III were brought to

Akhenaten's new capital Tell-el Amarna, meaning that they were brought to the new city from

an older archive, in which these past precedents were stored. The keeping of these letters would

allow for the kings to observe recent promises, requests, gifts, or tribute, and react so that the

balance between Great Kings was not damaged. In one letter addressed to Amenhotep III,

Tushratta of Mitanni urges the Pharaoh to check the records of Mitanni princesses initiated into

the harems of pharaohs: "May my brother have their tablets given to him and may he hear (the

words of) both their (tablets) (EA 24).[57]" Though Egypt and Hatti differed in both cultural and

diplomatic practices, it can be assumed that greeting letters of past kings held the same

importance, and that Hittite kings—and even queens like Puduhepa—would have observed past

precedent. A sense of organization can be detected from analyzing the letters as material objects;

it is possible that the tablets could have been colored and shaped in correspondence with

particular places or rulers.[58] As seen in an Amarna Letter from the Metropolitan Museum of Art

(Fig. 9), greeting letters from Tyre and Assyria are pigmented differently and could easily be

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[57] Elizabeth Knott, "The Amarna Letters," Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, October 2016), https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/amlet/hd_amlet.htm.
[58] Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design,* 152.

distinguished from one another, whether they were initially presented to the king upon a

messenger's arrival or through the royal archive system.

Fig. 9, *Amarna letter: Royal Letter from Abi-milku of Tyre to the king of Egypt*, **ca. 1353–1336 B.C, Clay (unfired), H. 7.7 × W. 5.2 cm., 99.234g. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gallery 122. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/544696**

Yet within the boundaries of Hittite international diplomacy, the greeting letter operated

with the same structure that gift exchange provided and was itself a prized luxury good to be

admired. At the beginning of the Hittite letters, instructions to the scribe prioritize simplicity and

efficiency: "Say to His Majesty, my Lord![59]" These instructions further suggest that these tablets

were orated in the royal court and acted as ceremonial objects, prized by the recipient court. This

assertion that letters be read verbally and listened to confirms their importance as a material

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[59] Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design,* 152.

presence, comparable to lapis lazuli or gold. And Amarna Letter from Tushratta of Mittani to Amenhotep III emphasizes the importance of this recitation: "I read and reread the tablet that he (the Egyptian messenger) brought me, and I listened to its words. Very pleasing indeed were the words of my brother. I rejoiced on that day as if I had seen my brother in person (EA 20).[60]" Partnered with the luxury goods themselves, which occupied a visual realm of international correspondence, the letters occupied the verbal realm of correspondence and were similarly beloved. A Hittite greeting letter, as a material artifact, is just as important as the body of the message itself; because the tablet is the substitute for the king, and established authenticity within the structure of international correspondence between Great Kingdoms, it was essential for the maintenance of these familial alliances between kings. Moreover, the tablet itself was its own message: the necessity to maintain a bond between brothers, rather than just an alliance. This act of reciprocation through letters of greetings and gifts generated status for its recipients, as they too would be a king of equal standing to the Hittite king, and as the tablet was read aloud, the power of the king would be acknowledged through his contacts with the international world.

Gift exchange operated as a primary diplomatic tool for maintaining the established power structures of the eastern Mediterranean. In order to preserve alliances and a mutual respect between leaders, luxurious crafts were frequently given to their powerful neighbors. On the other hand, those within the Hittite sphere of influence catered to their overlords through gift exchange. These transactions thus become an important cornerstone of Hittite cross-cultural relations, and an excellent source to determine Hittite dominion over materiality.

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[60] Hoffner and Beckman, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom,* 120.

Textual evidence found in diplomatic greeting letters suggests that luxury gift exchange was primarily conducted through royals in palatial centers. One letter, written to Hattusili III from Prince Sutahapshap of Egypt, describes an inventory of gifts given to the Hittite king:

> I have now sent a present to my father in the care of Parihanawa as a gift of greeting for my father: [One] drinking [cup] of good gold, inlaid, [with] the face of an ox whose horns are of white stone, [and whose eyes] are of black stone. [Its weight] is 93 shekels of good gold. [One] new […linen garment] of good fine thread. [One] new sided [linen spread] of good fine thread.[61]

Our most extensive knowledge from royal gift exchange occurs in these diplomatic greeting letters, as they contain descriptions of objects lost due to natural deterioration over time. The cornerstone of brotherly alliances is one based on material avarice and polite reciprocity; there remains an overwhelming fascination on quantities of luxuries, which can ultimately range from rare metals to textiles to women, as we analyzed in our last chapter. Therefore, the letters do not focus on the iconographical intricacies of the objects— we must therefore utilize a combination of inscriptions and archaeological discoveries to analyze both the political and stylistic consequences of gift exchange.

The inventories listed at the end of the greeting letters simultaneously act as both a visual and audible descriptor of the exchange, but also as a record of the gifts themselves. Gifts between Egypt and Hatti were the physical manifestation of past treaties and newly formed alliances; senders therefore often close out their letters with a list of the precious materials sent along with the letter itself.[62] Marian Feldman presents an excellent analysis of the significance of

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[61] Gary M. Beckman and Harry A. Hoffner, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts : By Gary Beckman ; Edited by Harry A. Hoffner, Jr*, Book, Whole (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1996), No. 22A.
[62] Ibid, 122.

the Akkadian word for greeting gift, *sulmanu.* The root of the word is SLM, which conveys

meanings relating to health and wellness. Such a root is also seen in the opening salutations of

the greeting letters ("For me all goes well (*sulmu*). For you may all go well (*sulmu*).") as well as

the salutatory remarks ("so that I hear of my brother's well-being (*sulmansu*) and rejoice").[63]

Gift exchange is then essential to the very fabric of diplomacy, as the objects are inextricably

connected with systems of politeness and reciprocity, indicating that a fellow brother-king

wishes that his neighbor be healthy and prosperous. An association, thus, is fabricated between

an abstract, intangible concept like wellness and a physical luxury; a golden drinking cup

becomes the symbol for a perpetual familial bond between rulers.

The *sulmanu* of the "Great Kingdoms," as discussed earlier in the chapter, primarily

operates to maintain the balance of power in the region. The vast majority of knowledge from

these objects comes from the greeting letters, as previously examined. In diplomacy between

great kingdoms, appearances were more important than the substance of the gift itself; the letter

primarily concerned itself with the measurements—height, weight, number—rather than the

elaborate artistic intricacies of the *sulmanu*. Another letter from Queen Naptera to Puduhepa

states:

> I have now sent you a present as a gift of greeting for you, my sister. And may you, my
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> sister, be informed about the present which I have sent you in the care of Parihnawa, the
>
> messenger of the King: One very colorful necklace of good gold, made up of twelve
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> strands. Its weight is 88 shekels. One dyed cloak of byssus. One dyed tunic of byssus.

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[63] Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design*, 106.

Five dyed linen garments of good fine thread. Five dyed linen tunics of good fine thread.

A grand total of twelve linen garments.[64]

We do not know the elaborate details that a gift such as the gold necklace would have contained; the decorative motifs remain secondary to the quantitative details of the goods themselves. Of course, exceptions exist, such as one description stating: "1 plaque with winged disks and Deluge monster(s) of ebony, overlaid with gold. 30 shekels of gold have been used on it."[65] Yet the descriptions of the objects remain quite vague, indicating once again that decorations were not a high priority for the rulers of the known world. Furthermore, after this short elucidation, a statement of quantity is one again emphasized: "30 shekels of gold have been used on it." Other procedures of gift giving further heighten the importance of quantity. Such an example is the "provocative gift," where a small *sulmanu* would be sent to another Great King with the expectation that they would send back a larger amount of that *sulmanu.*[66] Exchanges such as these can also been seen in the corpus of greeting letters as a king of Alashiya (Cyprus) writes to the Egyptian pharaoh: "You sent me 200 shekels of copper, and now I am sending to you 10 talents of copper."[67] This transaction was yet another foundation of brotherhood alliances, for it represented charitable generosity that could be reciprocated between two parties. Should Egypt, a kingdom with scarce copper supply, be willing to give up their copper for their ally, they were to be rewarded tenfold.

These sorts of passages between Great Kings, and an analysis of their material significance, illuminate an excellent example of how materiality and Hittite influence are

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[64] Harry A. Hoffner and Gary M. Beckman, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, vol. no. 15;no. 15.;, Book, Whole (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 123.
[65] Moran, *the Amarna Letters,* EA 22
[66] Aruz et. al, *Beyond Babylon* 167
[67] Ibid.

intrinsically connected to one another, as the increasingly developed world operated within a basis for self-preservation, upheld by the transfer of material objects and the subsequent aesthetic innovation of luxury goods across the eastern Mediterranean.

Yet for Hatti's vassal kingdoms, gift exchange operated as a vessel for the continual infliction of harsh foreign policies and images of power. A dichotomy is thus created between the artistic innovation resulting from to the customs of the "brotherhood" alliance, and artistic innovation due to an oppressive Hittite sphere of influence. The Hittite materiality of diplomacy therefore also shifts, as exchange no longer operates within the system of *sulmanu*—generosity and reciprocity—but through a system of ancient imperialism and extortion. It is through this lens that we can further analyze iconographical and visual meanings of correspondence; Our most concrete evidence of Hittite material domination over a culture is that of Ugarit, the tragically-fated city on the Syrian coast. The city has a long history of interaction with Hatti; tablets from Hattusa detail the conquests of Hattusili I and serve as an annalistic account of Hittite expansion into Syria. From these tablets we can observe that the material exchange between Hatti and lesser states was not the reciprocal *sulmanu* of Great Kings, but *mandattu,* or obligatory tribute. The conquests of Hattusili describe large amounts of furniture taken as booty, such as chairs and beds made of silver and gold.[68]

More evidence comes after Ugarit is transformed into a vassal state. At this point, Mitanni had begun to wane in power and the Hittite king, Suppiluliuma I, saw the opportunity to aggressively extend the borders of his empire. He began to bolster his own power, extending beyond the reach of "great king," instead referring to himself as "the Sun." Despite this, he was friendly with other Great Kings. He once wrote to Akhenaten, stating: "Now, my brother, you

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[68] Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design,* 110

have acceded to the throne of your father, and similarly as your father and I have sent each other gifts of friendship, I wish good friendship to exist between you and me. I have expressed a wish to your father. We certainly shall make it come true between us."[69] These letters indicate that the alliance between Egypt and Hatti was still strong, despite the turmoil of the region due to the wane in power of Mitanni. Suppiluliuma even wrote "my own request, indeed, that I made to… [Akhenaten], he never refused; he gave me absolutely everything."[70] Indeed, it was Mitanni who fell out of favor with the brotherhood; in Egypt, Tuhsratta of Mitanni had fallen out of favor with Akhenaten. His messengers were held in detention on false charges, causing Tushratta to resort to flattery: "[My love for] my [brother] is ten times greater than what we always had with Nimmureya, your father."[71] Tushratta's attempts were futile, however, and Akhenaten had virtually ceased all contact with Mitanni. Such a situation was the consequence of a decline in power; banishment from the international brotherhood was a virtual death sentence for a kingdom, and thus it remained essential to create a dichotomy, where a kingdom must maintain the power within the brotherhood as well as exhibit its power to lesser states.

Let us now talk of Ugarit. Ugarit is an excellent example, especially for the topic of this thesis, because the city preserves a plethora of objects that indicate the export of Hittite material power. If we are to look at a culture such as Mycenae, where evidence may be limited, Ugarit represents an excellent and comparable parallel as it is well within the Hittite sphere of interference. At this point in the Late Bronze Age, Tushratta and Mitanni had become desperate, and as a result, more aggressive; they began to conquer lands to the west, including an attempt to annex Ugarit on the Syrian coast. A text describes the events: "[the Mitannian forces] assembled

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[69] Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design,* 110
[70] Amanda H. Podany, *Brotherhood of Kings: How International Relations Shaped the Ancient Near East*, Book, Whole (New York;Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2010), 269.
[71] Ibid.

their troops; captured cities in the interior of the land of Ugarit; carried off the subjects of

Niqmaddu, king of the land of Ugarit, as civilian captives; and devastated the land of Ugarit."[72]

Niqmaddu, driven to act by the aggression of Mitanni, sent a messenger to Suppiluliuma: "May

Your Majesty, Great King, my lord, save me from the hand of my enemy! I am the subject of

your majesty, Great King, my lord."[73] Once Mitanni was defeated and Ugarit freed, Niqmaddu

thanked Suppiluliuma with luxury goods and continued to pay this for generations. This

relationship was not reciprocal; for the price of freedom from Mitanni, Ugarit had surrendered

itself to Hatti (groveling to Suppiluliuma as "your majesty, Great King, my lord"). At this point,

mandattu was to be extracted: gold, silver, as well as hundreds of shekels of wool and linen dyed

in the red-purple murex.

      The letters reflect this change. An edict from Mursili II of Hatti concerning the Tribute of

Ugarit dictates what the Syrian kingdom gives to their Hittite overlords: "[one silver cup, one]

linen garment, 100 shekels of red-purple wool, and 100 shekels of blue-purple [wool]… the

Great King thus imposed these gifts upon the king of the land of Ugarit."[74] This exchange was

not reciprocal like the *sulmanu* between Great Kingdoms, but *mandattu* from a kingdom lacking

its autonomy. Hatti became increasingly invested in Ugaritic affairs; one edict of Hattusili III

concerns the merchants of Ura, who were most likely working for the Hittite crown as traders.

He writes: His Majesty, Great King, has thus made a regulation concerning the men of Ura in

their relations with the men of Ugarit. The men of Ura shall carry on their mercantile activities in

the land of Ugarit during the summer, but they will be forced to leave the land of Ugarit for their

own land in the winter."[75] Here Hatti is seen as moderating the merchant's ability to buy real

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[72] Ibid, 276.
[73] Podany, *Brotherhood of Kings,* 275.
[74] Hoffner and Beckman, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom,* 161.
[75] Ibid, No. 32.

estate, for it is *his* land. Since the empire was relatively landlocked, especially with Hattusa deep inland in Anatolia, Ugarit, an immensely cosmopolitan and mercantile center, represented an opportunity to participate in commerce via proxy. It thus is logical why the crown intrudes upon the autonomy of the city, and aggressively dictates the movement of material goods and people.

How does the archaeological record support the textual evidence? How does Hittite king project his own divine power and his empire's military strength upon his vassal states? The Hittite materiality of diplomacy therefore also shifts, as exchange no longer operates within the system of *sulmanu*—generosity and reciprocity—but through a system of ancient imperialism and extortion. It is through this lens that we can further analyze iconographical and visual meanings of correspondence; the presence of seal impressions on a few of the greeting letters gives the sender visual individuality—a further enforcement of ideas relating to royal identity and autonomy—and serves as tangible evidence for past transactions. One such seal impression (Fig, 10) comes from this edict of Hattusili towards the merchants of Ura; this seal, characteristic of Hattusili III, bears the throne name in the main field below a single winged sun disc. The winged sun disk evokes the king's right to rule due to his superiority over commoners ("the Sun, my lord"), evidenced by the main cartouche where he displays these titles. By stamping this seal

on the tablet, Hattusili—and the authority he bears—are personified through this tablet, allowing

the tablet to suggest both reward and consequence if his orders are not followed.

Fig. 10. Stamp seal impression of Hattushili III & Puduhepa (Ugarit), RS 17.130 & 18.003.

Fig. 11. Stamp seal impression of Tudhaliya IV (Ugarit), RS 17.159.

Another important seal (Fig. 11) is that of Tudhaliya IV, which is incredibly important

and distinct in its usage of iconography. The sun disk on this seal is even more elaborate here,

with two disks stacked on top of one another above three figures. The figure on the left is the sun

goddess, identifiable thanks to the instruments she holds in her hands. She stares across to the

storm god and king, arranged in hierarchic scale. Both are depicted as warriors with weapons in

their hands—the storm god wielding a mace and the king a spear— and are donned with tunics

and conical hats. Like the iconography of the sun disk, the presence of two deities next to the

king invokes the king's divine right to rule over the world. A Hittite religious text, titled "The

Kingship and Divine Law" posits the relationship between the Hittite king and the storm god:

"May the Tabarna, the king, be ear to the gods! The land belongs to the storm-god alone.

Heaven, earth, and people belong to the storm-god alone. He has made the Labarna, his king, his

administrator and given him the entire land of Hatti."[76] Therefore invoking the Storm God is

essential to furthering Hittite propaganda in the visual sphere; the presence of this god reaffirms

Tudhaliya's right to rule over Hatti, and due to the deeds of Suppiluliuma, Ugarit as well. The

association increases the influence of Tudhaliya, allowing for this projection of visual-political

power for those who glance upon it: both the people of Hatti and Ugarit.

     In the 13th century, a seal impression can be observed on a tablet from Hanigalbat, the

state resulting from the collapse of Mittani. The seal, rolled twice, contains horned creatures and

other members of the Near Eastern menagerie flanking a voluted palmette.[77] Such impressions

reflect the artistic sovereignty of the letter's sender, and provide evidence for the identification of

prominent figures. Therefore we can identify the sender as a ruler of Hanigalbat, supported by

his reference to the Hittite king as "my father," perhaps indicative of the current subservient

status of Mitanni to Hatti, who had just conquered it.[78] Inversely, cylinder seals on letters could

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[76] Taracha, "Political Religion and Religious Policy," 374.
[77] Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design,* 152.
[78] Ibid.

also convey power associated with a Great King; in a domestic letter to a man named Kassu, Tudhaliya III states: "As soon as this tablet reaches you, drive quickly to My Majesty, and bring with you Marruwa, the man of Kakattuwa. Otherwise, they will proceed to blind you in that place (where you are)![79]," Blinding, reserved for crimes severe as treason, was a severe punishment. Therefore, the existence of a cylinder seal impression on this letter, as the manifestation of the king's presence and authority, further increases the possibility of this draconian penalty. The power that the seal impression evokes corresponds to the status of the Hittite empire and its military might, directly relating to the violent subjugation of its vassal states and the furtherment of this visual-political economy: the projection of divine rulership through the domination of iconography in lieu of complex trading networks.

The Hittite corpus of greeting letters provides unparalleled insights into the structure of international diplomatic correspondence. However, a further evaluation of their existence as material artifacts shows that they too operated within the realm of gift exchange and artistic fusion, for their structural, linguistic, and visual characteristics correlate to an increasingly "international" creative form. The greeting letters represent an excellent example of how materiality and Hittite influence are intrinsically connected to one another, as the increasingly developed world operated within a basis for self-preservation, upheld by the transfer of material objects and the subsequent aesthetic innovation of luxury goods across the eastern Mediterranean. A dichotomy is thus created between the artistic innovation resulting from to the customs of the "brotherhood" alliance, and artistic innovation due to an oppressive Hittite sphere of influence.

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[79] Hoffner and Beckman, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom,* 120.

Lions, Griffins, and Bulls, Oh My: Minute and Monumental Hittite Influences on Mycenaean Art

As stated in the previous chapter, Hittite visual propaganda often loomed over the empire's vassal states, as well as smaller powers in the region. It is thus only logical that the influence of an oppressive, expansive people would permeate through foreign culture. Art, in general, represents an opportunity for this influence to transfer, with iconography as a window for the absorption of foreign inspiration. The Hittites, in their spirit of constant conquest, certainly had the interaction necessary to extend their visual-political culture to many people, but this chapter in particular will use the Mycenaean world as a case study to illustrate the artistic hybridity created due to the Hittite outward projection of their own strength. We must assert that these Bronze Age cultures do not develop independently from one another, so in this chapter I shall posit that in fact much of the culture of Mainland Greece during this period is not one of organic indigenous development, but of visual replication and hybridization.

When first looking at Mycenaean art, many motifs and themes are recognizable; the most common culture of origin is certainly that of the Minoans, who were the largest and most influential power of the region. The Minoans, hailing from Crete, exerted a large amount of influence on mainland Greece during the height of their power, and certain aspects of their art persisted until the collapse of civilizations in 1200 BCE. There are many examples of this, but one of the best is the Mycenaean borrowing of the griffin from Minoan art. This can be seen in the Mycenaean shaft graves, where flimsy gold ornaments of griffins were found; similar griffins were seen in the throne room in Knossos and are further present in Pylos. Of course, there are other aspects that closely relate the two cultures, but for the purposes of this thesis, I am more interested in the elements that are explicitly *not* Minoan. For instance, what could be described

as Near Eastern, and more specifically, could even be traced back to Hittite origins? What purpose would the appropriation of Hittite technique and iconography accomplish in the current socio-political landscape of the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean?

Before we analyze the artistic similarities between the two cultures, let us first discuss the relationship between Hatti and Mycenae. Interactions between the two cultures has historically been a hotly debated topic, though now there is a scholarly consensus that the two cultures had relationships with one another. The subject, coined the "Ahhiyawa Question," after the Hittite name for the Mycenaean palatial states to their west, investigates whether the term "Ahhiyawa," found in almost thirty texts, is a reference to the Mycenaeans. Of course, there are great implications for the answers to the debate; should "Ahhiyawa" be synonymous with Mycenaeans (whether it refers to a small portion of palatial states a large conglomerate of them), significance could possibly even be linked to the Homeric Epics of later times. There is no Hittite text that mentions the modern name for the Greek mainland in the Late Bronze Age (Mycenae); yet it remains unlikely the Mycenaeans would go unmentioned by the Hittites in their texts, as there would not only be no mention of a prominent Late Bronze Age civilization (Mycenae) but also no archaeological remains for a relatively large textually attested civilization (Ahhiyawa). It is then scholarly consensus, by default, that Ahhiyawa must refer to the Mycenaeans. Furthermore, it is now thought that the term "Ahhiyawa" could not only encompass Mycenaean palatial states on islands in the Aegean or in Western Anatolia, but also on the mainland. Some scholars suggest that "Ahhiyawa" should be identified with Mycenae due to its international connections––evidenced by imports found at the site— as well as its sheer scale.[80]

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[80] Eric H. Cline, Gary M. Beckman, and Trevor Bryce, *The Ahhiyawa Texts : By Gary Beckman, Trevor Bryce, Eric Cline*, (Atlanta, Ga: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 4.

Fig. 12. *Hittite Cylinder Seal and Modern Impression,* **Late Helladic IIIB context, 13ᵗʰ century BCE, lapis lazuli, H. 3.2 cm; D. 1.9 cm. Archaeological Museum, Thebes, Greece.**

What archaeological evidence, then, is there for a connection between Bronze Age

Anatolia and Mainland Greece? As stated in the introduction, the Hittites, despite their status as

an extremely aggressive imperial power, they lack the material evidence of a well-established

trading culture especially when compared to neighboring Kassite Babylonia, Cyprus, and Egypt.

There are significantly less artifacts relating Hittite trade in numerous geographical areas of the

Mediterranean, which remains unusual for one of the "Great Powers" of the political landscape.[81]

As such, there is a large disparity between the artifacts found in Mainland Greece from the

Hittites and their contemporaries in the Near East. Of the Hittite exports found in Mycenaean

Late Bronze Age contexts, they are: a sphinx statuette from MM III-LM I Crete; stag rhyton

from LHI Mycenae; a 'Smiting god' statuette from Nezero, Thessaly; a semi-bulla from LH III

Iaslysos, Rhodes; a semi-bulla from LH IIA2 Mycenae; a cylinder seal from LHIIIC Iaslysos,

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[81] Eric H. Cline, "Hittite Objects in the Bronze Age Aegean," *Anatolian Studies* 41 (1991): pp. 133-143, https://doi.org/10.2307/3642936.

Rhodes.[82] The fact that these artifacts were found scattered throughout the Aegean world indicates that there was no place with a particularly high concentration of Hittite interaction. Such evidence pales in comparison to the rest of the region; Hittite objects occupy less than 1% of "orientalia" found in the Bronze Age Aegean.[83]

Yet there are certainly some things to be gleaned from these "traded objects." For example, the cylinder seal (Fig. 12) is an interesting case. The seal, crafted in lapis lazuli, is one of the only seals found in the Aegean region that is Hittite in origin. The design is noteworthy, consisting of four divinities adorned with horned headgear. There are many possibilities as to their identities are, but the leading suspicions are as follows: a female figure with a bare leg may represent Shaushga, a goddess of love and war; behind her, the Protective Deity of the Countryside grasps a hare; next is the Storm God accompanied by his thunderbolt and bull; the fourth god is unidentified.[84] Above Shaushga is the name Ti-la-zi, a member of the royal bodyguard (determined from the spear motif nearby). While the cylinder seal is not characteristically "Hittite" (as we spoke of in Chapter 1, they instead preferred to use the stamp seal), the figures are inarguably carved with an unmistakable Hittite style and technique. The Hittite style is here indicated by the long nose, rounded cheeks, and wide stance seen in images like the *taberna* reliefs in Yazilikaya. The fact that a member of the royal bodyguard possessed this seal, and the fact that it was found in Thebes, is an incredibly fascinating phenomenon in the general schema of Hittite-Mycenaean interactions. There is certainly an indication that there is not only Hittite presence in the Aegean (through the natural movement of peoples), but *royal*

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[82] Eric Cline, "A Possible Hittite Embargo against the Mycenaeans," *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte* 40, no. 1 (1991): 1.

[83] Cline, "A Possible Hittite Embargo against the Mycenaeans," 2.

[84] Aruz et. al, *Beyond Babylon*, 284.

Hittite presence in the Aegean. The combination between owner-sealer (a royal bodyguard) and

iconography (the sacred procession of deities) indicates a self-conscious attempt to preserve

creative power in the Aegean. Though there are no greeting letters in Thebes, as there were in

Ugarit, to determine where this seal could have been utilized, the existence of the seal and its

archaeological contexts demonstrate that the Hittite sphere of hegemony had extended into the

Aegean.

Of course, there are other objects that connect the two societies that are likely unrelated

to commercial trade. For instance, in 1991, a Mycenaean sword was uncovered in Hattusa. The

width of the blade at the guard is 7.5 cm and the tang, measuring at 6 cm, contains holes for

attaching the blade to the handle, which is very commonly seen in the type B swords of the

Aegean.[85] It is extremely likely that the sword was manufactured in the Greek Peloponnese,

where most of the swords of this type originated.[86] Perhaps most interestingly, the sword

contains an inscription in Akkadian, stating: "As Tudhaliya the Great King shattered the

Assuwa-Country he dedicated these swords to the Storm-God, his Lord."[87] Such a description

indicates a possible instance of war-booty, where the Hittites perhaps defeated Mycenaean

soldiers in a skirmish. The texts give evidence for warfare between the two, with the chronicle of

Tudhaliya II stating: "So the land of the Seha River… made war. And the King of Ahhiyawa

withdrew."[88] The Syrian campaigns spoken of in the previous chapter certainly give precedent to

the domination of the material and artistic realms from defeated peoples; if the Ahhiyawans were

to participate in the Assuwa rebellion as the inscription says they did, the Hittites would have

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[85] O. Hansen, "A Mycenaean Sword from Boğazköy-Hattusa Found in 1991," *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 89 (1994): 213–15.
[86] E. H. Cline, "Aššuwa and the Achaeans: The 'Mycenaean' Sword at Hattušas and Its Possible Implications," *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 91 (1996): 139.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Hansen, "A Mycenaean Sword from Boğazköy-Hattusa Found in 1991," 2.

ample opportunity to exert their hegemony on them, and present their power in a way that would provide much artistic inspiration for a still-developing culture overseas.

It thus appears that relations between the Hittites and the land of "Ahhiyawa" were hostile and rather inconducive to extensive trade. Eric Cline goes a step further, suggesting the presence of a possible Hittite embargo against the Mycenaeans as a result of their animosity, which he posits could be the reason for such minimal mercantile contact between the two cultures.[89] The hypothesis is certainly more than plausible. We have already seen thus far that it was the prerogative of Hittite rulers to control the trade of lesser states around them like the merchants at Ugarit. The precedence of commercial domination is especially relevant when considering the treaty signed between Tudhaliya IV and a vassal king of Amurru: "[You shall not allow 9?)] any ship [of] Ahhiyawa to go to him (that is, the king of Assyria) […]"[90] While the sanctions are mainly directed at Assyria, as the newly-emerging empire had been becoming more aggressive, threatening Hittite borders, the allegiance of Ahhiyawa to Assyria was significant enough to ban the import of goods. Cline posits that this embargo, originally a reaction to smaller Mycenaean traders, could have been continuously upheld for over two-hundred years, and the constant subversive threat to the empire on their western borders would dissuade the kings from removing such a sanction.[91] An embargo would explain why there is little material interaction between the two societies; yet it is important to note that commercial trade is not a prerequisite to the importation of iconography and artistic techniques. Ideas do not always leave a footprint in the archaeological record. Therefore, we must look to the material culture of the Greek mainland to see instances of Hittite influence in art and architecture, an

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[89] Cline, "A Possible Hittite Embargo against the Mycenaeans," 9.
[90] Cline et. al, *The Ahhiyawa Texts,* 279.
[91] Cline, "A Possible Hittite Embargo against the Mycenaeans," 9.

investigation which could provide fruitful additions to questions regarding Ahhiyawa-Hittite

interactions and the Hittite projection of visual-political power.

I desire to look at the following categories as it pertains to Hittite *influence* and projection

of visual-political power: medium and material, techniques of manufacture, form, style, and

function. There are many instances in monumental architecture where Mycenaean palatial

structures resemble Hittite manufacture due to shared techniques. Some walls in the palace at

Pylos were created with timber framework, created by pouring a mix of rubble and mortar inside

a timber frame, which was then removed and replaced with a lime mortar. A similar technique is

seen at not only other sites in the Greek mainland (Mycenae, Tiryns) but also at the Hittite sites

of Hattusa and Acemhöyük, among others.[92] Nicholas Blackwell presents an excellent study on

Mycenean replication through citadel architecture; a close examination of the Lion Gate relief

reveals the use of similar tools and techniques, linking the two societies together. One such tool

is the tubular drill and convex saw, which, when applied to masonry and sculpture on the Greek

mainland, presents a prominent connection to Late Bronze Age Anatolia.

There are a variety of usages for the tubular drill. Whilst many perforations are found on

foundations, thresholds, and doorsills; furthermore, the drill was also used for more creative

uses, such as to carve out fountains and eye-sockets for sculpture.[93] Despite the location of

usage, the drill provided both an aesthetic and practical appeal. The hollow cavities drilled into

the stone provided a path for water to escape, which, in some circumstances, would surge forth

from the eye sockets or mouths of animals or deities. One such example of this aesthetic drilling

is on the Lion Gate of Hattusa itself, as seen below (Fig. 13), where the oval-shaped eyes are

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[92] Nicholas G. Blackwell, "Making the Lion Gate Relief at Mycenae: Tool Marks and Foreign Influence," *American Journal of Archaeology* 118, no. 3 (2014): 477.
[93] Ibid, 478.

hollowed out. Yet the drill is also particularly useful for removing extra material from the mouth of the lion, which is evidenced by the slight honey-combed pattern caused by successive drillings. The latter usage is much more common in the Aegean than the former, as while the drill could be used as decorative (as seen on the Tiryns throne base), the honeycomb drilling is present on the lion relief, which allowed the silhouette of the sculpture to be highlighted, even where it could possibly be difficult to remove stone. The convex saw accomplished a similar feat. Evidence of short slice marks alongside the silhouette of the lion sculpture at Mycenae harkens back to the King's Gate at Hattusa, as described in Chapter 1, where a curved tool mark can be seen on the left side of the god's torso.[94] These shared artistic techniques indicate the movement of ideas or peoples from Anatolia into the Aegean region, neither of which may leave behind in-tact archaeological evidence. Yet, the clear inspiration that Mycenaeans gleaned from Hatti is unmistakable through these techniques of manufacture; this is especially relevant when they are utilized in similar instances, such as the carving out of relief sculptures in architectural marvels that project visual and military power.

Fig. 13. *Lion Gate at Mycenae,* **c. 1250 BCE.**

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[94] Blackwell, "Making the Lion Gate Relief at Mycenae: Tool Marks and Foreign Influence," 480.

As we spoke of in the first chapter, the Hittites are most well-known for their remarkable fortress-building techniques, and their unique masonry. However, when one first approaches Mycenae, they can see a striking similarity between the two. Pausanias, in Roman times, writes: "Other parts of the wall are still preserved as well as the gate over which the lions stand. These also they say are the work of the Cyclopes who built the wall for Proteus at Tiryns (2.16.5-6)." Like the Hittites, the Mycenaeans also utilized the cyclopean style of masonry, which is characterized my monumental blocks of stone. Here, we can already see the deviations between the mainland Greek culture and their main inspiration, the Minoans; Minoan palaces lack walls around them, which at one point in time also supported Evans' theory of a pacifistic culture. Yet it seems that the Minoans simply did not need walls due to their dominating thalassocracy, where there was not nearly enough competition to warrant walls around their palace structures.[95] On the other hand, almost all Mycenaean palaces (with the exception of Pylos) had massive fortification walls built around them with Cyclopean masonry. Whilst I have been, and will continue to point out, the importance of identifying iconography which occurs in "international" contexts (that is, styles and meanings that transcend beyond the borders established by the states of the Late Bronze Age), it is clear from the similarities in citadel architecture at Hattusa and Mycenae that building techniques can also be incorporated into a discussion of artistic and visual hybridity.

The Lion Gate at Mycenae is a particularly interesting case in this sense. Four gargantuan stone blocks, two constituting over 20 tons, make up the threshold, lintel and posts; the

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[95] Malcolm H. Wiener, "Realities of Power: The Minoan Thalassocracy in Historical Perspective," in *Amilla*, ed. Robert B. Koehl, vol. 43, The Quest for Excellence. Studies Presented to Guenter Kopcke in Celebration of His 75th Birthday (INSTAP Academic Press, 2013), 149–74.

maximum thickness of the block is approximately 0.7m.[96] On top of the threshold is a single

limestone slab adorned with a relief sculpture of two lions flanking a central column. The relief

itself measures between 3.5 and 3.6 m wide near its base and 1.13m at the top, and is between

3.0 and 3.1 m in height.[97] The iconography of the relief bears a stark similarity to the Lion Gate

in Hattusa as discussed in Chapter 1, where lions in particular would evoke a feeling of

intimidation from the military power of the empire, as they and the strength invoked from the

Cyclopean architecture are inherently amalgamated with one another through their emergence

from stone. The presence of such reliefs on the monumental gate evokes power and intimidation

for those coming and leaving the city, and displays the strength of the *wanax* to potential

invaders.

Such a vision was incredibly useful due to the sociopolitical landscape of the Argolid

region, which was incredibly populated with palatial states. The sheer number of complexes in

the area dwarfs other regions in Late Helladic Contexts; Mycenae, Tiryns, Argos, Dendra, and

Midea, among others, have all been revealed to have their own political economies. Very

interestingly, there is a larger proportion of Cyclopean masonry among this region when

compared to others as well. For example, while the Pylos region overall lacks these

fortifications, harkening back to their Minoan inspiration, even smaller palatial sites like Midea

possess the necessary fortifications to be competitive in the region.[98] There is certainly a

militaristic context to the walls here; just as Hattusa served to project their status as a Great

Kingdom, the Mycenaean palatial states in the Argolid manufactured cyclopean citadel

architecture as a form of status negotiation. Mycenae, Tiryns, and Midea, all autonomous states

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[96] Blackwell, "Making the Lion Gate Relief at Mycenae: Tool Marks and Foreign Influence," 452
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.

with goals and aspirations, appropriated Hittite masonry in their practical culture of replication.

To each other, they were impenetrable as the Hittites in Anatolia —the equivalent of an empire–

though they did not command the same number of troops or possess the same abundance of

wealth. The tumultuous time period, in both late Helladic contexts, and in the general

environment of the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean, presented challenges that indicated a

necessary projection of political-military power.

Fig. 14. *Plaque with Heraldic Lions,* Late Helladic IIIA-IIIB, 14th-13th century BCE, H. 7.4 cm., W. 4.7 cm., Ivory, Archaeological Museum, Rhodes, Greece.

Though lion iconography in the Near East is incredibly common, the Lion Gate at

Mycenae is most certainly inspired by Hittite predecessors. The characteristics of the Hittite lion

are as follows: fleshiness, a square-shaped head, containing high cheekbones and fatty cheeks,

and a short snout with the absence of a prominent, stylized mane. Yet, as the heads have

deteriorated over time, it can now be difficult to identify what style the lions at Mycenae *actually*

were, if they were lions at all. Some claim that the sculptures depict griffins or even sphinxes,

but I shall posit why, in fact, the figures are lions. The main argument that scholars present for

this theory is that there is a lack of space for a feline head, and thus a humanoid or avine head

could be a reasonable replacement to make. Furthermore, evidence for heraldic sphinxes and

griffins can be seen on seals, rings, and ivories throughout Bronze Age Mainland Greece.[99]

However, the theory becomes questionable once one evaluates the body of the sculpture, for the

torso of the beasts do not possess wings, which would surely indicate their identity as sphinxes

or griffins. Furthermore, the musculature on the body in comparison to the lack of stylization

near the heads suggests the existence of these animals as lions rather than griffins or sphinxes.

The gate at Mycenae is not the only example of heraldic lions, as there is an ivory plaque from

Rhodes (Fig. 14) that depicts two lions surrounding a column and looking backwards; there is

also an agate seal stone which shows two stylized lions flanking a column as well. These sorts of

concave altars have been in circulation for quite some time; a monumental concave altar stands

above the gateway of the arrival town in the frieze at Akrotiri.[100] Because both of these examples

(in the Mycenaean world) exist, there is an artistic precedent for the lion gate. The specific stance

of the lions as seen in the ivory plaque suggests that the animals on the lion gate actually looked

backwards towards those entering or leaving the city, thus allowing for space within the relief.

     Of course, the presence of lions within the Mycenaean menagerie does not necessarily

mean that they are of Hittite origin. There are certainly other paths of influence for lion

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[99] Reynold Alleyne Higgins, *Minoan and Mycenaean Art*, Rev., Book, Whole (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).
[100] Aruz et. al, *Beyond Babylon*, 278.

iconography to flow, as it is present in both Egyptian and Babylonian/Assyrian art. Yet the styles

of the lions in Mycenae as pictured on the gates are inarguably Hittite. While it is difficult to tell,

as the heads have deteriorated, other examples in the Mycenaean world may point us to more

evidence of artistic hybridity. The previously mentioned ivory plaque from Rhodes is an

excellent example of a traditional Mycenaean lion. There are some similarities between this

plaque and the Lion Gate at Hattusa, with both having a particularly thick neck and no elaborate,

flame-like mane. The bodies of both animals are thick, but lack the elegant musculature that the

Mesopotamian lions possess; perhaps most interestingly is the skull and neck, which blend

together into the torso, but are unmarked by a stylized mane.

The fact that these artworks are ivory is also noteworthy. The raw material originally

would have come from African or Syrian elephants, but would have made its way into the

Aegean through mercantile commerce. In Minoan Crete, ivory carvings became quite common,

with evidence of decorative products being created in the Early Minoan period (3000-2000

BCE).[101] While the ivories are less quintessential to Mycenaean art, they are present

nevertheless; in addition to plaques and figurines, there are a variety of crafts, such as the olive

tree reliefs found throughout Mainland Greece. The utilization of ivory as a medium is a further

incorporation of Near Eastern styles into Aegean art, hybridizing a traditional indigenous Greek

style (Minoan) with a foreign material (ivory). Furthermore, the carving of a lion figure into

ivory gives the illusion of something even *more* Near Eastern than a lion already is; the

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[101] Marian Feldman, ““Classification and Contextualization of 2nd Millennium Ivories: The Case of Ugarit,” in *Syrian and Phoenician Ivories of the Early First Millennium BCE: Chronology, Regional Styles and Iconographic Repertories, Patterns of Inter-Regional Distribution*, ed. Serena Maria Cecchini, Stefania Mazzoni, and Elena Scigliuzzo, Pp. 337-356.

Mycenaean lion, when carved in ivory, is thus ultra-Hittite in a way that the lions at Hattusa are not. While individually, neither the lion nor the ivory is *characteristically* Mycenaean or Hittite, combination of the two, and their incorporation into the Aegean world, is the result of artistic innovation. Furthermore, the previously-stated presence of iconography across the Aegean, and exported into other territories, indicates that this was also an image that the Mycenaeans desired to be projected outwards, thus generating significance not only through hybridized iconography (the projection of Hittite-esque strength) but also through instances of luxury exchange and international contexts.

The incorporation of the Hittite lion into the Mycenaean masonry through relief sculpture is too an act of visual hybridization. The presence of lions in this manner—carved in this technique—is unique to these two sites in the Eastern Mediterranean. As we analyze the specific subject matter in relation to its placement on entryways, we see a very interesting visual narrative as it comes to the making of the gate and its meaning. The iconography of the Hittite Empire revolved around military strength and political clout, whether that occurred in the domestic or international spheres. In Mycenae, there appears to be a similar function in place. There is no narrative here, as appears in places like New Kingdom Egypt, where blocks of masonry acted as pseudo-canvases for the portrayal of historical events. In Mycenae there is instead an avoidance of historical narrative when carving into gateways. Perhaps the starkest difference between the relief sculpture of the three cultures (Mycenae, Hatti, and New Kingdom Egypt) is that there was an effort made in Egypt to create cohesion, therefore ignoring the edge of blocks to portray a fluid picture.[102] In Hatti and Mycenae, the lions are stagnant and unmoving in their blocks,

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[102] Marian H. Feldman, "Beyond Iconography: Meaning-Making in Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean Visual and Material Culture," in *The Cambridge Prehistory of the Bronze and Iron Age Mediterranean*, Book, Section vols., 2014, 340.

interacting with the sole purpose of projecting a visual-political power to their viewers as they walk into and out of the city.

How were the same motifs replicated in non-monumental contexts? I spoke of seals when discussing the Hittite perception of power onto Ugarit; how do Mycenaean seals in the Aegean look in comparison? Seals have an unparalleled ability to provide insight into a culture through iconography, material, and technique, as they were traditionally used to trace commercial and artistic exchange. Therefore, even in a single seal, foreign, domestic, or hybridized characteristics may be present among its various qualities, giving various interpretive meanings to its existence. Though there are many seals in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, I shall specifically discuss one here which was found in the so-called New Kadmeion Palace in Boeotia, Greece (Thebes), which has since been identified as a part of a workshop or treasury, as many of the seals were sculpted from lapis lazuli. Though many of the seals were carved in the Near East itself, there are a few that are indigenous to the region. One such indigenous seal (Fig. X) depicts a "Master of Animals" alongside images of a Near Eastern menagerie:

Fig. 15. *Aegean Cylinder Seal and Modern Impression,* Late Helladic IIIB context, 13th century BCE, H. 1.8 cm., D. 1 cm., Agate, Archaeological Museum, Thebes, Greece.

Two scenes are depicted through glyptic art here: a "Master of Animals" flanked by two lions and a griffin attacking a rearing stag. Overall, this cylinder seal is the epitome of Mycenaean artistic hybridity. The "Master of Animals" is a classic Near Eastern motif, with examples replicated in Hittite, Mittanian, Babylonian, and Cypriot art, among others. A common analysis of the motif is that it represents the artist's (or if a seal, its user's) dominion over the natural. Yet while examples in the contemporary time period hold their lions upside-down in mirror image from one another, the lions in this particular seal face the same direction and remain free from the man's grasp.[103] Furthermore, the Theban "Master of Animals" also displays Aegean features, with drillings for eyes and hair and strokes for the head and jawline.[104] The same drillings can be seen on the lions, as well as on the griffin's head and joints in the adjacent scene. The Griffin represents an incredibly Minoan motif; therefore, the seal combines elements with the Near East (the "Master of Animals") and styles from the Aegean. Thus, the *meaning* of the iconography remains but the way it is presented does not.

Further evidence for this dichotomy lies in the material that the stone is fashioned: agate. Whilst the majority of the seals in the hoard are crafted in lapis lazuli, this specific seal is unique in the fact that it is made of a material that is incredibly Aegean in its usages. Lapis lazuli, hailing from Afghanistan, is much more of a foreign material, as the ivory was; agate is not as luxurious in comparison but is noteworthy due to the fact that it is used in an incredibly Near Eastern way (the creation of a cylinder seal). The usage of agate, as well as the techniques and styles used in construction for the two scenes depicted evoke a very Mycenaean identity rather than a Hittite identity. Similar to the Lion Gate of Mycenae, the meanings taken from Hittite iconography (the images of lions and "Masters of Animals") are more important than how they

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[103] Aruz et. al, *Beyond Babylon,* 287.
[104] Ibid.

are presented. Because the Lion Gate is a lion relief sculpted onto Cyclopean masonry, it projects

the power of Hattusa, though the animals are presented through heraldic form in Mycenae.

Likewise, the agate cylinder seal evokes the power of the individual through popular

iconographical references, though they are hybridized with an indigenous tradition.

Yet, if there was little trade between the two, how does such artistic hybridity (in both

minute and monumental forms) occur? As stated in the previous chapter, the Hittite visual-

political projection of power was certainly not confined in the realm of trade, but of diplomacy

as well. "Ahhiyawa" was indeed a recipient of Hittite influence, as the Hittites used their

brotherly rhetoric as an act of persuasion in the Tawagalawa Letter, writing to the other king

(that of Ahhiyawa): "Does [my] brother [know] it or not?"[105] Was Mycenae's place in the

"Brotherhood of Kings" deserved? If we look to the other members who were at one point

regarded with the title of *sharru rabu*—Hatti, Egypt, Babylonia, Mitanni, Assyria— it appears

not. Despite the letter referring to the *"king"* of Ahhiyawa, it is difficult for us to even visualize

how the Mycenaean palatial states could be considered an equal in terms of wealth and prestige,

even if there was a single *wanax* ruling over a conglomerate of palatial states. This could be

supported by a later inscription, which affirms that if Ahhiyawa were a part of the brotherhood,

that is no longer the case. Tudhaliya IV writes here "And the Kings who are equals to my rank

are the King of Egypt, the King of Babylonia, the King of Assyria, and the King of

Ahhiyawa."[106] There is very intriguingly a strikethrough across the clay tablet of Tudhaliya,

which indicates extensive consideration (and reconsideration) as to whether or not to include

Ahhiyawa in such a list. Tudhaliya IV opted not to, suggesting that whilst there could have been

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[105] Gary M. Beckman, Trevor Bryce, and Eric H. Cline, *The Ahhiyawa Texts* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 105.
[106] Cline, *1177 BCE,* 94.

a moment where Ahhiyawa was considered an equal, they were no longer in deliberation for the title of "brother."

Why did this decrease in reputation occur, and what could its consequence be in terms of iconographical representation? The "Milawata Letter" provides excellent evidence for the external view of the Mycenaeans. The letter opens with the traditional greeting of a Hittite king to his vassal state: "My Majesty, [have taken up] (you), my son, an ordinary man, [and] you have recognized [me as overlord. I gave the land of your father] to you."[107] This letter, despite its connections to Ahhiyawa and the Mycenaeans, is not explicitly about them; it instead concerns itself with the reinstallation of the Wilusan king to his throne. What is relevant to the Mycenaeans, however, is that Wilusa, which was once a large center for Mycenae, was no longer under Ahhiyawan control but now under the control of the Hittites.[108] Just as I spoke of Mitanni in the previous chapter, the loss of Mycenaean territory correlated to the loss of political clout, relegating the *wanax* to the status of *sharru sehru* rather than *sharru rabu.* We have seen the value of such titles in both the economic and political spheres thus far; Mitanni collapsed after Tushratta had fallen out of favor with Hatti and Egypt, causing its land to be seized and its messengers to be captured.

It therefore makes sense why there is a culture of replication at Mycenae, especially seen on the monumental art of the citadel walls and city gates. The iconography of power evoked from the Lion Gate at Mycenae is essential in the socio-political landscape of the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean, as it mirrors the style of their neighboring rivals while controlling the local visual narrative of the Minoans. Whilst a combination of lions on cyclopean masonry is

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[107] Gary M. Beckman, Trevor Bryce, and Eric H. Cline, *The Ahhiyawa Texts* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 125.
[108] Cline, *1177 BCE,* 94.

a Hittite method of displaying their military strength and intimidation as a method of *maintaining* their power, the same variables in a Mycenaean context are for *increasing* the perception of their power to the level of their inspiration. If invaders, foreign or domestic, were to see the cyclopean walls and the lions guarding them, one imagines a sense of dread trespassing into their thoughts, just as invaders would have done at Hattusa. It required much to obtain political clout in the tumultuous time period: either astronomical levels of military or financial wealth, or both. A replication of the walls was certainly an attempt to increase the former. Seals, on the other hand, gave the individual autonomy and allowed for them to express their own authority over both man and nature through glyptic art. Artistic innovation in the Aegean acted as consequence of over-bearing Hittite influence and ideology; similarities in technique and iconography between the two states is not coincidental, but the result of the interconnected political landscape. Like the Hittites, the Mycenaeans operated on a basis of self-preservation. That is, to project their own military and economic power (on monumental or minute visual forms) or be subjected to Hittite (or another "Great King's") dominion. Indeed, artistic hybridity is the natural result of such a situation, blending indigenous tradition with foreign influence.

Conclusion

Hittite visual power acted as a main export in a world which mainly operated through mercantile trade. Such a phenomenon can be seen domestically, as the *taberna* used artistic mediums (in both monumental and minute contexts) to project authority. Likewise, the innovation of art in international frameworks allowed for the power of the *taberna* to be projected through materiality (mainly in seals and greeting letters) which ultimately reflected the Hittites' position in the Late Bronze Age socio-political landscape. Iconography used in domestic contexts was projected to smaller kingdoms beyond Asia Minor, subjugating them to the divine authority of the king; yet a dichotomy was also created, where the Hittite king needed to participate within a system of reciprocity among his equals for the self-preservation of the realm. A consequence of these international projections can be seen in Mycenaean Greece through the appropriation of Hittite techniques and iconography. Such a phenomenon exists because the Late Bronze Age rewarded those with socio-political clout (the Hittites) while punishing those who lacked it (Mycenae, Ugarit).

The palatial states of Mycenaean Greece thus craft their own "international" art form in order to invoke the same power of their Hittite neighbors. This new innovation is ultimately the consequence of an "Art of Brotherhood" projected by the Hittite kings, exerting their sphere of influence over vassal kingdoms like Ugarit and even smaller autonomous kingdoms like "Ahhiyawa." As they introduced themselves to the incredibly connected world of the Late Bronze Age, it was necessary to display the strength necessary to survive and flourish. The inherent nature of art, as a complex visual form, certainly ensures its role as a propaganda tool for both the elite (to maintain their power) and the assurgent (to promote their status).

Over the course of this paper, I have investigated the use of materiality and artistic forms by one of the most dominant cultures of the period, which served as an effort to connect themselves to the general hierarchy of the realm. The Hittite visual projection of authority operated within the confines of diplomatic norms seen in the greeting letters, where equals would be met with respect and gifts whilst lessers would be dealt with through military pressure. The general socio-political landscape also meant that it was beneficial to enter into this "Brotherhood," seen through the rise of Assyria as a force on the international scene. Mycenaean Greece therefore also follows this norm, but employs Hittite techniques and iconography to project an illusion that they hold the same amount of power. Of course, the restriction to the so-called "Art of Brotherhood" has limited the analysis to a generally narrow corpus of objects and I certainly do not claim to have encompassed all forms of material interaction in the Late Bronze Age. But this "Art of Brotherhood" has the ability to incapsulate the very spirit of the era, where a remarkable political hierarchy linked various states together through a mosaic of negotiation and correspondence. Therefore, by examining not only the projection of Hittite power, but also its consequences (artistic hybridity in Mycenaean Greece) we can also illuminate the restructuring of such hierarchies.

The combination of historiography and artistic evidence employed throughout this project has bridged the gap between two differing scholarly fields which either analyze texts or objects. There is a general lack of intersection between the two, as text-based scholars rarely account for materiality and object-based scholars often do not account for the sociopolitical dynamics of the world. Through an analysis of artistic objects (both minute and monumental) as propagandistic tools, I have accounted for both text-based approaches and object-based approaches. Intentionality behind making must be investigated as much as the artistic form itself; visual

patterns often account for human agency and motivation. Furthermore, I have analyzed

traditionally only text-based sources (the greeting letters) as material forms which generally

operate within the realm of gift exchange and thus also the "Art of Brotherhood." Such a

methodology is particularly useful when considering the potential effects of the implementation

of visual power into both domestic and international scenes.

As I stated in Chapter 3, much scholarly debate has surrounded the "Ahhiyawa

Question." Yet, in truth, many of these scholars have only used historical or literary perspectives

to analyze the relationship of Hatti and Mycenae during the supposed time of the Trojan War.

Through the incorporation of object-based approaches, we can observe that the relationship

between the two conflicting kingdoms has the potential to be much more ambiguous. In the Late

Bronze Age, the interconnectedness of the world was epitomized in many simultaneous forms of

an artistic "international" style, which ultimately accounted for human motivation (namely, the

desire to obtain and maintain power). The "Ahhiyawa Question," as it now stands, does not

account for a potential Hittite *inspiration* for the Mycenaeans. If so, the Mycenaeans would have

depended on Hatti as a quasi-patron for these "internationalizing" trends as much as they would

have prayed for their downfall. Indeed, the existence of Hatti as a dominating force was

necessary for the world to function, as it contributed to systems of political and mercantile

interconnectedness. The "Ahhiyawa Question," due to a lack of Mycenaean political sources in

Linear B, also lacks a perspective detailing Greek interests (Homer does not suffice due to the

difference in traditions and time periods). An object-based approach to the scholarly debate, as

seen in the third chapter of this thesis, illuminates intentionality behind Mycenaean creation.

There is most certainly a desire for the mainland Greeks to earn prestige on the international

stage, as seen when the king of Ahhiyawa is called "brother" in the Tawagalawa Letter, and art

can serve as the perfect vessel to encapsulate that ambition. The inherent complexity of art lends

itself to analyses of the unstable position of Mainland Greece in the international hierarchy; it

thus serves modern scholars as an informant on the past, even when there is a lack of

comprehensive textual sources.

Yet it appears both Hittite and Mycenaean efforts were not fruitful. The "Art of

Brotherhood" collapsed with the devastation of palatial centers, including Hattusa, Mycenae,

Tiryns, and Ugarit. A combination of natural disasters, economic instability, and foreign invaders

crippled the trade routes at the heart of civilization; what followed was the definitive destruction

of both the Hittite Empire and the Mycenaean palatial state, and then, in the next few hundred

years, the so-called "dark ages" (an era characterized by further decentralization of power

hierarchies). However, because the centralization of political structures was necessary for the

"Art of Brotherhood" to function, there was no opportunity for Mycenaean Greece to bolster

their influence for an extended period of time. What persisted throughout the "dark ages" was

not the technological and literary achievements of the Bronze Age, but a distant memory of the

reality of interconnectedness and political stability centered around palatial complexes. In

Greece, these ideas resonate with the common people through oral tradition, eventually

accumulating in the Homeric epic. An "international" style would later appear again at the end of

the "dark ages" as Classical Greece began to blossom and the Neo-Assyrian Empire reached its

heights. There once again became room to display the both the frightening and exciting potential

of a new, more globalized world—a pattern of artistic hybridity firmly established hundreds of

years prior.

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