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WHO WERE THE KAŠKA?

During the 500 years of their history the Hittites fought many formidable enemies, but none of them was as as persistent and evasive as the Kaška tribes of the Pontic ranges. All efforts of the superior and well-organized Hittite armies to keep them at bay and to efficiently protect the vulnerable northern frontier of their kingdom repeatedly failed, and the Kaška perennially invaded Hittite-dominated territories and laid waste to border cities and cult-places. It was probably the Kaška who eventually gave the final blow to the weakening Hittite capital of Hattusha. This is of course the "colonial" perspective as portrayed in Hittite sources and in Hittitological studies, in which the Kaška appear as the "aggressive" and "barbarian" nemesis from the north. In a more recent "post-colonial" perspective, as now in vogue in frontier studies, the Kaška might be conceived as the abused victims of Hittite aggression and occupation of their traditional habitat (Glatz/Matthews 2005: 49). We always have to remember that *all* the textual evidence comes from the Hittite side and the voice of the other side in this strained relationship is not heard.

The Hittite sources on the Kaška were first assembled and discussed in the monograph of Einar von Schuler *Die Kaškäer* published in 1965. In this seminal study (and in his summary in *RIA* 1976-80) the illustrious German scholar provided translations of the main sources, including treaties, administrative lists, prayers, rituals, oracles, and of course historical references. This data base was then processed into chapters on the history, the political organization, the economy, the religion, and the onomastics of the Kaška.

Von Schuler's monumental work remains the basic tool for any further studies on the Kaška, but of course, forty years of research have adduced plenty of new data and a reevaluation of some of his conclusions is necessary.

One of the most spectacular new discoveries were the texts from Maşat Höyük, published by the Turkish scholar Sedat Alp in 1991. These documents, mostly letters but also some administrative lists, provide a vivid picture of everyday life in a Hittite border town and its continuous struggle with the threat posed by the Kaška tribes. Thousands of tablets were also unearthed at Ortaköy/Şapinuwa east of Maşat, which probably contain similar information, but only a handful of documents have been published so far. Archaeological surveys conducted in the area in the 1970ties (Dinçol/Yakar 1974; Yakar/Dinçol 1974) have greatly improved our understanding of the settlement history in these remote regions and the same applies to the current survey of Paphlagonia, ancient Pala-Tumanna (Glatz/Matthews 2005). However, without full excavations at sites of various sizes, the archaeological evidence remains insufficient. One hopes that the recently launched archaeological exploration of Oymaağaç/Vezirköprü, probably ancient Nerik, will provide valuable new evidence. But again, we are dealing with a large site which was probably occupied by the Hittites most of the time and its contribution to the Kaška problem will probably be limited to the dating of the destruction levels.

Until recently, conventional wisdom saw the Kaška as inhabitants of northern Anatolia already in the Old Hittite period. This view is based on 13th century historical references to the loss of the north, notably the cities of Tiliura and Nerik, already in the days of the Hittite king Hantili.

The town of Tiliura was empty from the days of Hantili and my father Muršili resettled it (KUB 21.29 I 11-13).

And from there they (i.e. the Kaška) began to commit hostilities and Hantili built an outpost against them. Earlier, Labarna and Hattušili did not let them over the Kumešmaha River (ib., ii 2 f.).

The reference to the first great kings, Labarna and Hattušili, makes it very likely that Hantili in this and in the following passages must be the first king bearing this name, i.e. the son-in-law and murderer of Muršili I.

The city of Nerik, which was in ruins from the days of Hantili, I have rebuilt (Hatt. iii 46'-48').

The city of Nerik was ru[ined] by the Kaška]-men in the days of Hantili. In the past [the city] lay empty for four hundred years (KUB 25.21 iii 2-5; von Schuler 1965: 186).

It seems that Hattušili III and his son Tuthaliya IV, who invested plenty of energy in the restitution of Nerik into a major cult center, maintained a firm view about the time of the city's fall to the Kaška, even though the stereotyped number of four (or possibly five) hundred years falls far off the mark.

This Late Hittite historiographic tradition has already been questioned by von Schuler himself (1976-80: 461 f.) and was recently fully refuted by Jörg Klinger (2002) who serves as the philologist of the Nerik expedition. Both of them pointed out that in the Old Hittite sources of the 17th-16th centuries B.C. there is no mention at all of the Kaška, even though several Hittite kings, notably Hattušili I, operated as far as the Black Sea.

Only from the second half of the 15th century we begin to receive contemporary reports on Kaška intrusions into Hittite territory. In the annals of a Tuthaliya (CTH 142), probably Tuthaliya I the founder of the New Kingdom (Klinger 2002: 446 ff.), we hear that the "Kaška enemy" attacked Hatti taking advantage of the absence of the king who was campaigning in Aššuwa in western Anatolia. On his way home Tuthaliya still managed to drive out the enemy from Hittite land, but his successor Arnuwanda I suffered serious territorial losses to the Kaška, as lamented in his famous prayer to the Sun-goddess (CTH 375; Singer 2002: 40 ff.). The royal couple Arnuwanda and Ašmunikal deplore in particular the ravages imposed by the Kaška to Hittite temples and cult places, and in particular to the sacred city of Nerik. The correspondence from Mašat, probably dated to the next generation (Tuthaliya II/III), describes in detail the enormous difficulties encountered by local Hittite commanders in securing this frontier and the Hittite border towns along it. We hear about the defensive measures taken to protect the population of Hittite held towns and villages from Kaškan onslaughts, but at the same time there is growing evidence about the massive capture and surrender of Kaška fighters, many of whom are blinded and set to hard labour in mills (Hoffner 2002). In contemporary Amarna letters we hear for the first time about Kaška-men transported to Egypt, probably to be recruited in its armies, a phenomenon which only increased after the successful northern campaigns of Šuppiluliuma I and his able successors. Finally, the most important Hittite victory on the Kaška front was the liberation of the sacred city of Nerik, for which Hattušili III took credit for himself.

This brief characterization of Hittite-Kaškan relations raises intriguing questions regarding the nature of the Kaška tribes and their first appearance on the Anatolian orbit. If indeed their emergence in the days of Hantili I and even before is based on fictive historical constructs of the Late Hittite Empire, this would mean that they must have been newcomers who first penetrated into northern Anatolia in the second half of the second millennium (Klinger 2002: 451). This would of course be squarely opposed to the view that conceives of the Kaška as an autochthonic population of Anatolia (cf. the hesitation of von Schuler 1976-80: 463). We shall return to the crucial question of Kaškan origins later on, after briefly surveying some socio-economic and cultural aspects of the Kaška presence in Anatolia.

Not much can be said on the socio-economic organization of the Kaška without adequate archaeological investigation (for which see Yakar 2000: 295 ff.). The general impression is of sedentary pastoral communities practicing transhumance. That would mean that they lived in lower elevation settlements in winter, moving with their herds to mountain campsites in the summer (ib.: 300 f.). These were usually difficult to access for the Hittite army which operated as a rule in the summer months. The tribal organization of the Kaška, lacking a central authority, posed an additional difficulty for the Hittite attempts towards an effective control. They would sign elaborate treaties of vassalage with one group of tribes, but at the same time they were exposed to attacks from other groups. This exactly is the situation deployed in the Arnuwanda-Ašmunikal prayer, where the "uncivilized" behaviour of the treacherous Kaška is condemned before the gods.

From a passing comment in the annals of Muṣšili II we may learn a lot about the political organization of the Kaška, at least as seen through the eyes of the Hittites. In his 7th year Muṣšili led a campaign against a certain Kaška ruler named Pihhuniya, who, from the days of his father, had constantly attacked the Upper Land of the Hittites.

"This Pihhuniya", Muṣšili says, "did not rule in the Kaškan manner. Whereas among the Kaška the government was not in the hand of a single man, this Pihhuniya surprisingly ruled as a king. I, My Majesty, went and sent him a messenger and wrote to him: "Give me back my subjects that you have captured and led to the Kaška(-Land)." But Pihhuniya sent back to me and wrote me as following: "I will return to you nothing. And if you will attack me, I will not fight against you in my *territory*. Rather, I will fight you in your *territory*!" (AM 88 ff.; del Monte 1993: 69 f.).

In the following Muṣšili defeats Pihhuniya and carries him back to Hattuša as a prisoner. Thereafter he sets out towards the Land of Azzi-Hayaša, east of the Kaškan territories. This remarkable passage shows that some of the Kaška communities at least were on the verge of statehood formation under the rule of a "king" who was able to correspond with the Hittite Great King.

Another passing Hittite comment provides us some valuable information on Kaškan household economy. In his prayer to the Sun-goddess of Arinna Muṣšili II characterizes the Kaška as "swineherds and (linen-) weavers" (Singer 2002: 52). Does this exceptional comment contain any pejorative intent? Hittite texts do not as a rule use insults or foul language in their description of other ethnic elements, including enemies. If there is any common denominator to both occupations is that both were performed by women (Collins 2006: 157). Since Hittite rituals are much concerned, indeed

obsessed, with the preservation of masculinity, this might indeed be a rare degradation of the enemy through a feminine portrayal.

Women's role in weaving and the preparation of textiles is almost universal and must have been the rule for ancient Anatolia as well. The flax (*linum*) plant may be put to other uses as well, such as the extraction of linseed oil for cooking, lighting and lubrication of chariots (Glatz/Matthews 2005: 58). Flax has been found at Ikiztepe on the Black Sea coast from the Chalcolithic through the Middle Bronze Age.

Pigs are not easily mobile animals and are usually tended in the village by women, while the men drive the herds of sheep and cattle to high summer pastures. This may be another indication for the basically sedentary character of the Kaška population, not unlike the *yayla* pattern typical for the Pontic region throughout history (Glatz/Matthews 2005: 57). In Hittite society the consumption of pigs was very limited, and was usually restricted for special ritualistic purposes (Collins 2006). This observation derived from the texts seems to be supported by an analysis of the faunal remains from Boğazköy/Hattuša (von den Driesch/Pöllath 2003). The proportion of pig in the faunal assemblage at Büyükkaya more than doubled from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age (from 2.4% to 5.4%). Now, assuming that the Kaška tribes played an active role in the fall of Hattuša and its partial resettlement in the Early Iron Age (a conclusion which seems to be supported also by the typical handmade crude pottery), the increase in the representation of pigs and the reduction of cattle and sheep may indeed support this conclusion.

From this brief overview on the material and social aspects of the Kaška problem, let us now move to more spiritual domains. In view of the total absence of Kaškan written sources, the only type of evidence available to us are private names – place names, personal names and divine names. Indeed, this was the method applied by Gregor Giorgadze as early as 1961, recently reiterated in his monograph of 2000. He noted certain suffixes typical for northern toponyms which may conceivably belong to Kaška settlements (2000: 34 f.). Whereas the endings *-iya* and *-uwa* are not sufficiently idiosyncratic, the suffix *-ška* seems to be of more linguistic value: e.g. Tatiška, Duduška, Muniška, Karikuriška, Zianteška, and of course, the name Kaška itself. Another recurring element in northern place-names is *ura* (Gazziura, Tiliura, Urauna, etc.), which probably means "spring, fountain" in Hattian (*HW* 318; Ünal 2005: 726; cf. Soysal 2004: 863 ff.; Girbal 2007: 57 f.). Other features of northern names is the lack of the thema vowel *-a* attached to the consonantal endings of names such as Nerik, Hakm/piš, Zikmar, Kakšat, etc. (Forlanini 1984: 259, n. 62), and the frequency of complex names some of which include reduplicated elements – Hašhatatta,

Tahantatipa, Kapagapa (mountain), Kadudupa, Tarittara, Taštarešša, etc. (von Schuler 1965: 94 ff.).

As for personal names, we must of course be fully aware of the multiple risks in extracting a meaningful list. First, who is "a Kaška"? Only few texts explicitly identify certain persons as belonging to the Kaška. And second, personal names are notoriously mobile, very susceptible to changes towards more "desirable" or "fashionable" names. One also finds various hybrid names composed of different linguistic elements. Besides Kaškaili (Laroche 1966: no. 535) with the typical *-ili* suffix, we also find a person named Kaškailu (ib.: no. 536), which has the appearance of an Akkadianized name, and a Kaškamuwa (ib.: no. 537) with a typical Luwian suffix. Were all of these persons Kaškans, and if not, who was and who was not? Despite these inherent difficulties, one can observe a high percentage of names ending on *-ili* and *-alli* (von Schuler 1965: 91 ff.), which we would normally categorize as Proto-Hittian. In fact, the same conclusion may apply in the case of the toponyms, or in other words, as already observed by Giorgadze (2000: 60), there is a considerable overlap between Kaškan and Hattic onomastics. It remains to be seen whether this observation also applies to Kaškan theonyms, provided that we can identify some.

A most remarkable ritual text shows that the gods of the Kaška were considered as a separate entity, indeed as a hostile cohort competing against the gods of the Hatti Land. The text KUB 4.1 (von Schuler 1985: 168 ff.; Klinger 2005: 350 ff.) begins with the statement: "When they perform a ritual on the border of the enemy land" (i 1). Later on the actual reason for the performance of the ritual is presented in detail: "The Kaška have occupied the lands of the Hittite gods – Zithariya, the Sun-goddess of Arinna, the Storm-god of Nerik, the Storm-god, the Protective-god and Telipinu (i 24-27) – and now they boast about their power and force, thereby denigrating the gods" (i 16-18). The god Zithariya, who was considered the chief god of the lands occupied by the Kaška, is summoned to present the charges against the gods of the Kaška in a heavenly lawsuit. Incidentally, this deity originating from the northern city of Zithara, was worshiped in the form of a ^{KUS}*kurša* made of sheepskins, an obscure object which has been compared to the "golden fleece" of the Greeks. Zithariya's indictment is unique in Hittite literature and deserves to be fully quoted (ii 1-24; *ANET* 354 f.; von Schuler 1965: 171 ff.):

Gods of the Kaška Land, we have summoned you to (this) assembly. You must eat and drink and you must listen to the charges we raise against you. The gods of the Hatti Land did not take anything from you, from the gods of the Kaška Land, and neither did they harm you.

But you gods of the Kaška Land have raised quarrel and you have driven out the gods of Hatti from the land and you have taken their land for yourselves.

And the Kaška-men have also raised quarrel and you have taken away from the men of Hatti their towns and you have driven them out from their fields and meadows and from their vineyards.

The gods and the men of the Hatti Land call for bloody vengeance. [The vengeance] of the gods of Hatti and the vengeance of the men [of Hatti will be wrought(?)] on you, the gods and the men [of Kaška.]

The continuation is broken. When the text resumes the speech of the priest representing the god Zithariya has ended. He returns to the gods of Hatti and gives them fat and bread offerings and libations. Then he takes the cultic vessels that served in the ritual and everybody returns to the army camp. All is set now for the ensuing battle.

This unique ritual text provides an excellent example of the perfectly symmetrical perception of the heavenly and the earthly worlds. Every injustice committed among humans has its mirror-image among the gods in heaven, who may rectify it if they choose to do so. The natural sequel of this worldview finds its expression in the elaborate Hittite system of state treaties in which the gods of the opposite parties serve together as witnesses to the agreement reached between the mortals.

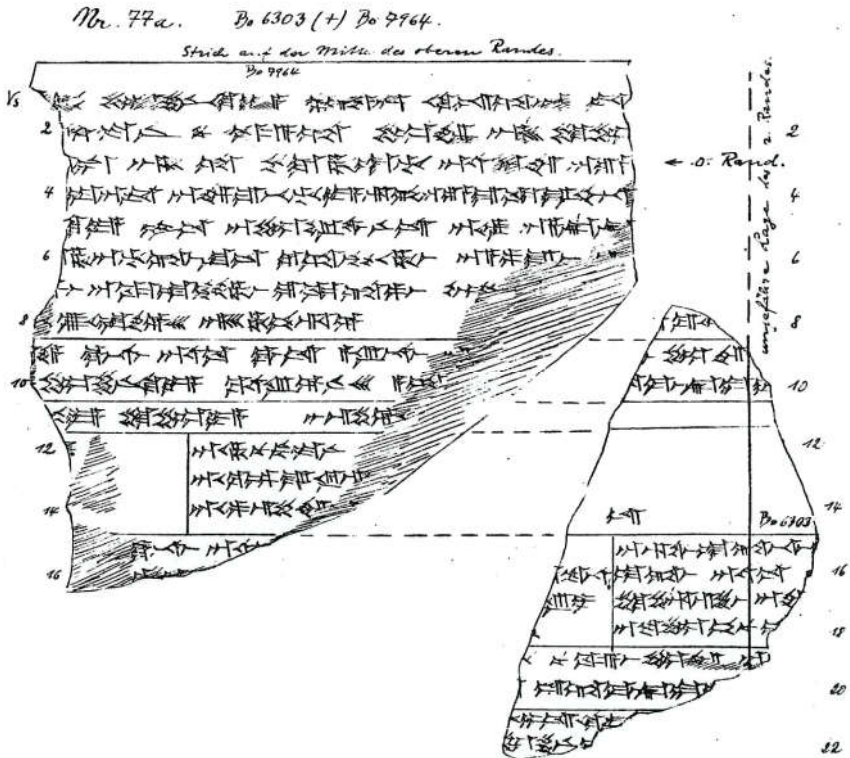
The corpus of the Kaška treaties (CTH 137-140; von Schuler 1965: 109 ff.; Neu 1983; Klinger 2005: 355 ff.), mostly dated to the late 15th century, differs from the regular Hittite treaties in form and contents. The protagonist on the Kaška side is not a king as in the regular Syrian or Anatolian monarchies, but rather a group of tribal leaders or even a full tribal assembly. In this respect the Kaška treaties exhibit parallels with the treaties concluded with eastern Anatolian political entities in a similar stage of socio-political development: Pahhuwa, Išmeriga and especially Azzi-Hayaša (Schwemer 2006: 246).

Some of the Kaška treaties are in a poor state of preservation, whereas in others the gods of the Hatti Land and the gods of the Kaška Land are listed collectively. One such list, KBo 8.35 ii 8-13 (von Schuler 1965:110) has the appearance of a regular Hittite divine list, with the notable exception that the War-god ZABABA is promoted to the beginning of the list, immediately after the Sun-goddess and the Storm-god (l. 9). The same god figures in a frightful curse formula directed against the treaty protagonists who might betray their oath and attack the Hatti Land:

If you come to attack the Hatti Land, let ZABABA turn around your weapons and devour your own flesh! Let him turn around your arrows to pierce your own hearts! (KBo 8.35 ii 19-21; von Schuler 1965: 111).

It appears that the War-god played a central role in the religion of the Kaška (von Schuler 1965: 79). What stands behind the logographic writing ZABABA is difficult to say, but my guess is the Hattian god Wurunkatte.

There is only one text which provides a detailed list of Kaškan gods, but regrettably it is only partially preserved (CTH 138.1; von Schuler 1965: 117 ff.). After the stereotyped list of the gods of the Hatti Land (i 1-10) we read the following list of the Kaškan side (KUB 23.77a+ obv. 11-20):



11 [DINGIR.MEŠ ŠA KUR^{URU} *Ga-aš-g/a-ya tu-li-ya ḫal-zi-ša-u[-en]*]

12 | ^DU ḫa-nu-up-te-ni [

13 | ^DU ku-tup-pur-ru-z[i []

14 | ^DU pa-zi-im-x[[-iš

]

15] tak-na-aš^DUTU-u[š] | ^Dḫu-wa-at-ta-aš-ši-i[š

16]x x []x-te-na | at-ta-aš^DUTU-uš [

17 -]ru-i | tu-uz-zi-aš^D[M-aš

18]x | ^DTe-li-pi-nu-u[š

19]x nu ka-a-aš LI-IM DINGIR.[MEŠ

20]x iš-ta-ma-aš-kán-du-y[a]

11 We have also summoned to the assembly [the gods of the Kaška].

12 | the Storm-god ḫanupteni [

13 | the Storm-god kutuppuruzi [

14 | the Storm-god pazim[]iš

15] the Sun-goddess of the Earth | Ḫuwattašši

16 -]tena | father Sun-deity

17 -]rui | Storm-god of the Army

18] | Telipinu

19 | Behold, the thousand gods

20 [we have summoned to assembly and they shall be witnesses] and they shall listen.

This unique list of Kaškan gods has received surprisingly little attention, perhaps due to its fragmentary nature. Von Schuler (1965: 127) assumed that only the three Storm-gods in ll. 12-14 represent Kaškan deities, whereupon the list returns to the Hittite gods in ll. 15-18, as some kind of appendix or afterthought. This assumption, which has been followed by most commentators, ignores the structural difficulties entailed in it (see Singer 1981: 123, n. 3; 1994: 96, n. 68). I am not aware of any parallel in Hittite

treaties for a similar switching back and forth between the Hittite and the foreign lists of deities. Not only that, but according to this interpretation the Sun-goddess of the Earth would appear twice among the Hittite deities (ll. 9, 15), allegedly by mistake (von Schuler 1965: 127). I see absolutely no ground for such an interpretation of this "third" list of deities, which allegedly included more Hittite gods (Yoshida 1996: 38). Why not assume that the Kaška too venerated the Sun-goddess of the Earth and Telipinu who were deities of Hattic origin? In my opinion, both paragraphs in lines 12-18 belong to the divine list of the Kaškan side and they are enclosed as usual between the stereotyped phrases calling upon "the thousand gods" to come and testify in the assembly (ll. 11, 19 f.). Another exceptional feature shared by both paragraphs are the inner divisions marked with a vertical divider. Unfortunately, in the first paragraph all is lost left of this vertical divider, whereas in the second only one name (the Sun-goddess of the Earth) and remnants of two other remain.

Obviously, this basic change in the comprehension of this unique list bears far-reaching consequences for Kaškan religion. The three Storm-god epithets in ll. 12-14 (*hanupteni*, *kutuppurruzi*, *pazim[]is*) remain as before unknown. Could they represent some Kaškan names or attributes? Perhaps the lost left side of the paragraph contained some more conventional names of these gods.

On the other hand, the following paragraph includes several well-known or clearly transparent names, all belonging to the Hattian cultic sphere. The Sun-goddess of the Earth was a well-known deity of the Underworld, later assimilated with the Sun-goddess of Arinna (Haas 1994: 421 ff.; Popko 1995: 89).

^DHuwattašši bears a seemingly Luwian ending (Starke 1990, 374, n. 1349), probably derived from Hittite *huwant-*, "wind" (HEG 2, 328: "der zum Wind gehörige Gott"), but actually the theonym is only found in the Hattian cultic sphere, probably associated with the cult of Nerik.

The name ending on *-tena* in l. 16 has been restored by von Schuler (1965: 117) as Hu]tena(?), but the pair of destiny goddesses Hudena-Hudellurra is Hurrian (Haas 1994: 372) and has nothing to do here. There are other deities whose name ends on *-tena*, e.g. Gatena and Hewaptena.

Equally rare is "the father Sun-god" (*attaš* ^DUTU-*uš*; Laroche 1946-47: 106; Yoshida 1996: 39). I do not think he has anything to do with the Hurrian "father deities" (*enna attani=we=na*; for which see Haas 1994: 111).

The Storm-god of the Army (l. 17) is also rare (is it the same as ^DU BEL KARASŠ ?), but his appearance alongside ZABABA would not be surprising.

Finally, Telipinu (l. 18) is a typical Hattian vegetation god who is "at home" in northern Anatolia. His consort Hatipuna, "the Daughter of the Sea"

(Laroche 1946-47: 24), was apparently also venerated among the Kaška, according to an interesting passage in the annals of Muršili II. In his 25th year he occupied several northern localities, burnt them to the ground and deported the population. However, in the township Kapperi he did not damage the temple of Hatepuna, neither did he touch her servants (*AM* 176 f., iii 35-40). The same docile treatment he accorded to the temple of the Storm-god of Hurna immediately thereafter (*ib.*, iii 41-45). Obviously, Muršili was showing off his pious attitude towards the Kaškan gods in contrast with the barbaric attitude of the Kaškans towards the gods of Hatti and their temples.

To sum up, our information on Kaškan cult and religion is still very limited, but the reinterpretation of the divine oath list in the treaty KUB 23.77+ considerably improves our perspective on one aspect, their pantheon. With all due caution it may be stated that the Kaškan pantheon did not differ much from the Hattian and could possibly be regarded as a provincial offshoot thereof. This conclusion is hardly surprising for those who have already suspected a considerable overlap between the Hattian and the Kaškan cultural spheres, as also emerging from the study of their toponyms and onomastics. In short, I can only reiterate the conclusions reached by Gregor Giorgadze already in 1961, and by myself some time later, when I wrote: "... it seems to me very plausible that the Kaška can be one of the ethnical remnants of the indigenous Hattian population which was pushed northward by the Hittites" (1981: 123; already indicated in 1973). There are numerous historical examples of indigenous populations pressed by new intruders to the margins of their habitat, usually in hardly accessible mountainous regions. Quite often in such cases the more central and influential elements of the original population become assimilated with the newcomers forming a new hybrid culture, whereas the peripheral elements preserve their distinctive cultural identity much longer: e.g. the Copts in Egypt, the Berbers in north Africa, the Basques in Spain, to name but a few, and I am sure you can add many more examples from the Caucasus (see Schmitt-Brandt 2002: 122 f.). Perhaps we have to conceive of the connection between the Hattians and the Kaškans in a similar way, i.e., the Hattians in the fertile valleys and in the main urban centers, such as Hattuš and Zalpa, became assimilated with the Hittite (Nešite) occupiers, whereas the tribal elements in more remote areas kept to their age-old traditions and came to be known as the Kaška.

Needless to say, this tentative historical reconstruction completely overturns the more common interpretation of Hittite-Kaškan relations. Instead of considering them as newcomers who pushed the Hittites southwards in the first half of the second millennium (e.g. von Schuler 1976-80: 461; Klinger 2002), the Kaškans were rather the autochthonic population of northern Anatolia whose original habitat was gradually limited to the Pontic ranges by

the intrusive Hittites. To the justified question why were these Kaška not mentioned at all in the earliest Hittite sources, one can only respond by pointing to the numerous historical examples for local population groups who "lurk in the darkness" so to say for very long periods, only to suddenly rise on the historical horizon when the opportunity presents itself. What do we know, for instance, about the Gutians before they contributed to the fall of the mighty Akkadian Empire? Or the Arameans before they swept over the entire Syro-Mesopotamian realm? Yet, few would claim that these peoples were complete strangers in the areas that they invaded at a certain point in history.

A last intriguing question which I would like to briefly raise is how far east did the Kaška communities extend? Can one detect any possible "genetic" connections with other ethnic elements along the southeastern littoral of the Black Sea and beyond?

Moving east from the central Pontic area, we first confront the question of the interface between the Hattian and the Hurrian cultural zones, with a possible overlap and cross-cultural influences between the two. In fact, some of the main Hattian and Hurrian deities appear to be suspiciously similar to each other: the moon-gods Kašku and Kušuh and the Sun-gods Šimešu and Šimegi, respectively. Where should we draw the cultural borderline between the two zones? East of the Kaškan territories lay the kingdom of Azzi/Hayaša, whose king Hukkana was subjected by Šuppiluliuma I. The main god of this land is indicated by the logogram ^DU.GUR, which may conceivably represent the Hattian deity Šulinkate (Forrer 1931: 6 ff.). Another deity of the region bears the name Tarumu, which is very similar to Taru, the Hattian Storm-god. If the kingdom of Azzi-Hayaša turns out to be predominantly Hattian in character, the resulting ethnic map may indicate a continuous Hattian belt along the southern coastline of the Black Sea, at least in the second millennium B.C. It is not without interest to recall in this connection the Chalybes (or Chaldei) of the classical sources, the eponymous iron smelters of the Pontic region (Strabo XII, 3, 19; Lordkipanidze 1996: 164-178; Kavtaradze 1996: 214 ff.; 2002), whose name may very well derive metathetically from the Hattic word for iron, *hapalki-*, which was also adopted by the Hittites, the Hurrians (*hapalkinnu* in the Mittanni letter from Amarna) and perhaps by the Greeks (cf. Gr. *chalups*, gen. *chalubos*, "steel"; Laroche 1957: 9-15; 1973: xix; Puhvel, HED 3: 118). This linguistic indication for an early iron-smelting technology in the Pontic region must of course be related to the rich archaeological vestiges of an advanced metallurgical industry in Colchis (see Braund 1994: 90 ff.; Bertram 2003, with refs.).

The Kaška not only survived the cataclysm which caused the fall of the Hittite Empire, but they even profited from the new situation. In the Assyrian

sources we encounter the Kaška, whose southeastwardly drive was no longer blocked by a powerful state, as far as the region between Kayseri and Malatya (von Schuler 1976-1980: 462, with refs.). They now bordered on Urartu in the east and on Tabal in the south. After Sargon II in the late 8th century B.C. they finally disappear from the contemporary sources.

Here ends my paper, but perhaps I should add a brief epilogue on the postulated genetic connections between the language of the Kaška and some Caucasian languages. I am treading here on thin ice in a domain which is unfamiliar to me, so I will merely cite here the views expressed by Gregor Giorgadze in his 1999 and 2000 articles "On the Ethnic Origin of Kashkean Tribes according to Hittite Cuneiform Sources."

One hypothesis that has been put forward was to relate the Kaška to the North-West Caucasian language group, namely, to the Abkhazo-Adyghean. The main argument for this suggestion was the very name of the Circassians in their own language, "Kashag". Giorgadze refuted this theory, regarding the similarity between the names as simply fortuitous or at least insufficient to prove the connection. Far more attractive in his view is a postulated genetical connection between the Kaška and a South-Colchian language, such as Megrelian or Laz (Zan language). If so, there is a hardly inconsequential overlapping with the Hattian language, for which a Western Caucasian connection is postulated by various scholars, such as Dunajevskaja, Ardzinba, Gamkrelidze, Ivanov and Diakonoff (1990: 63).

Needless to say, I cannot judge these proposals myself, but perhaps I am aloud to observe that a linguistic and cultural continuum stretching along the entire southeastern Pontic coastline, from Sinop to the Caucasus range, seems quite plausible to me. Also, there are too many accounts of population movements from Anatolia to the Caucasus and vice versa in Classical and later sources to simply ignore this *longue durée* phenomenon (Kavtaradze 1996 with refs.). The fine details of this general observation must be worked out by specialists in the relevant domains.

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