

The Demise of Ugarit in the Light of its Connections with Ḫatti

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Since the discovery of Ugarit in 1929, there has been much debate concerning how the city was destroyed. Many scholars have attempted to explain the reasons for its sudden destruction and have put forward a range of interesting proposals.¹ In this paper there is no need to repeat what has already been offered. It is, however, worth pointing out that the total decline of Ugarit cannot be entirely ascribed to the Sea Peoples, as hitherto widely accepted; there were other external and internal factors that altogether contributed to the downfall of the city. This study investigates Ugarit's external relationships principally with Ḫatti and Karkamiš. These relations, which were characterized by mistrust and tension, have rarely been considered in the literature available, but in this article they will be given more weight. By tracing the tangled relationships between Ugarit and the Hittite overlords, an intense conflict, which took place mainly during the city's final days, becomes apparent. In order to illustrate this, a brief presentation of Ugarit's political situation at the end of the Late Bronze Age is necessary.

¹ For the earthquake theory see Schaeffer, 1968, 760–62, and for the drought theory see Drews, 1993, 77–84.

1 Brief outline of the political situation in Ugarit during the last phase of the Late Bronze Age

Between 1400 and 1350 B. C. Ugarit was indirectly under Egyptian rule. Ammittamru I, king of Ugarit, the father of Niqmadu II, was subordinate to Amenophis III, whose cartouche was found at Ugarit (Klengel, 1969 II, 340–343). Relations between Hatti and Ugarit were established after the campaign of the Great King of Hatti, Šuppiluliuma I (the one year campaign), around 1340 B. C. against Syria² (Mittani and its vassals) (Neu, 1995, 115), by which Ugarit, Amurru and Qadesh came under Hittite jurisdiction³ (Yon, 2006, 20). Šuppiluliuma I later concluded a treaty with Niqmadu II king of Ugarit⁴, RS 11.732 (KTU 4.74), 17.227, 17.340, 17.369 (PRU 4, 40ff.), through which the king of Ugarit became loyal to the Hittites. In order to strengthen the ties between Hatti and Ugarit, some Hittite officials were stationed at Ugarit to maintain and manage commercial relations with Egypt and with the area under Egyptian control (Canaan). After the battle of Qadesh in 1275 B. C., Hittite activities were intensified in the south, especially after the peace treaty concluded between the Hittite king Hattušili III and the Egyptian king Ramses II in 1270 B. C. (Yon, 2006, 21; cf. Klengel, 1992, 118f.). Until the end of the 12th century B. C. Ugarit continued to be part of the Hittite empire. The city was situated on a junction where the routes connecting the Mediterranean islands with the Hittite regions, Mesopotamia and inland Syria, met. Texts from the 14th–12th centuries B. C. indicate that the Ugarit economy subsisted on agriculture, raising livestock, maritime and overland trade (Yon, 1992, 113; 2006, 21). The city traded in oil with Cyprus and Crete (Neu, 1995, 116), and in wool, garment and grain with

² Šuppiluliuma I subjugated a large part of Syria. Ugarit initially refused to submit, but when it was attacked by an anti-Hittite coalition (Mukiš, Nuḥašše, and Niya), it called on Šuppiluliuma I for support, paid him homage and signed a treaty (Klengel, 1969 II, 351f.; Lackenbacher, 2000, 194). The campaign against Syria according to Šuppiluliuma I was to help Niqmadu II of Ugarit against Mukiš, Nuḥašše and Niya who rebelled against Hatti and raided on Ugarit (Klengel, 1992, 109).

³ Shortly before the Hittite intervention, Ugarit was subjected to Amurru by the treaty of 1350 B. C. which was contracted between Niqmadu II of Ugarit and Aziru of Amurru RS 19.68 (PRU 4, 284–86) and imposed Amurru's protection on Ugarit. According to this treaty, Ugarit had to pay a sum of 5000 silver shekel in exchange for military aid in return for Aziru's renunciation of his future claim on Siyannu and Zinzaru (Kühne, 1971, 369–70; cf. Singer, 1991, 156; 1999, 628).

⁴ The treaty deals also with fugitives, frontiers, alliance and a detailed tribute list of gold, garments and dyed wool, the delineation of Ugarit's northern borders with Mukiš (Klengel, 1992, 133), the payment of 500 shekel of heavy gold, and of gold and silver cups to the king, the queen of Hatti and six other Hittite high officials. For more on this treaty see Dietrich/Loretz, 1966, 206–245; Knoppers, 1993, 81–94; Beckman, 1996, 30ff., 151ff.. For Niqmadu II see Klengel, 1969 II, 343–347.

Ḫatti. Its economy was concentrated in the hands of the royalty⁵ in the second half of the 13th century B. C. On the domestic level, Ugarit suffered some internal problems at the end of the Late Bronze Age; the royal family of Ugarit became more connected with the *maryannu*, a group of leading military personnel that accumulated wealth. This resulted in some villagers moving to the city to reap the benefits, while the rest of the villagers were left to face the increase of taxes and tithes (Yon, 1992, 114), others were forced to abandon their agricultural activities (Yon, 2000a, 189). Ugarit's military was poor and its fleet was not independent or even capable of protecting the city against attack (Singer, 1999, 659). Ugarit's army⁶ and fleet were at the disposal of Ḫatti as portrayed in RS 20.230 (Ug 5, 24). The last known king of Ugarit, Ammurapi⁷, 1215–1190/1185 B. C., was a contemporary of Talmi-Tešub of Karkamiš and Šuppiluliuma II of Ḫatti. The period during which he reigned was troubled and distinguished by a shortage of food in Ḫatti and the movement of the Sea Peoples to the eastern Mediterranean.⁸

⁵ See Heltzer, 1979, 459–496.

⁶ For the military personnel of Ugarit see Rainey, 1965, 17–27.

⁷ He might have illegally ascended the throne. Two ritual texts link him to the royal ancestors of Ugarit, but do not mention his father's name (Klengel, 1992, 147). He appears to have been a relative to Niqmadu III (Yon, 1992, 114). His rule overlaps the rule of Merneptah and extends into the rule of Siptah (and his chancellor office *Beya*) and queen Tausert (Drews, 1993, 6).

⁸ Oettinger's theory (Oettinger, 2010) on the origin of the Sea Peoples says that the Sea Peoples who devastated the coasts of the Aegean Sea in about 1200 B. C. contained a significant proportion of Etruscans from Italy. This is confirmed by the names of the tribes of the Sea Peoples that have been handed down by Egyptian inscriptions: *šrdn* (Sardinians), *škl* (Sicilians), and *trš* (Tyrsenians), the Greek name for the Etruscans. The reason for this migration was that trade in the Mediterranean from the 16th–12th century was flourishing as it would never do again within the following six centuries. In Sardinia a great deal of copper was found from this period, which almost exclusively came from Cyprus. Also furniture made of ivory imported from Egypt and Mesopotamia was produced in Greece and traded up to Sardinia. Mycenaean pottery spread as luxury items in the Italian area. The culture of bronze tools, to be found in the Eastern Mediterranean, was stylistically consistent from Cyprus to Sardinia. The island of Sardinia was, in those times, an important gathering point of Cretan-Cypriot-Levantine traders of the 16th–13th century. This might have inspired the Sardinians to seek control over the flourishing trade especially with luxury goods in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas. Ships sailed by young men are likely to have followed the routes of the traders and eventually dared a surprise attack on a commercial station in Greece or Crete. When this was successful, larger groups started to move and, in time, also settled down partially in the Aegean region. Among other places, they probably settled on Crete and are possibly identical with the Pelasgians of the *Odyssey* (19.177). Given this background, the Sea Peoples were pirates, but at the same time traders. Many of them settled on the islands, one of which is Crete and the Anatolian west coast. They took advantage of these bases for carrying out raids, and a large number of them remained mobile and penetrated the

On the Hittite side this period is characterised by inner strife and conflict between the two Hittite rival kingdoms⁹ with two ruling dynasties at Ḫattuša and Tarḫuntaša. Tudḫaliya IV was at Ḫattuša and his cousin Kurunta at Tarḫuntaša. The kings of the two kingdoms bore the title Great King, shared the dominion over Anatolia and concluded a treaty (Bo 86/299¹⁰) around 1235 B. C. (Singer, 2000, 26; Giorgieri/Mora, 2010, 144). In addition, a widespread famine, the mutiny of vassals in Syria, the strong Assyrian rival in the east, Sea Peoples from the west and southwest,¹¹ and Kaska (cf. Hoffner, 1992, 51) and Mushki

southeast area. Here they were joined by so many Achaeans (Greeks), that they eventually formed the majority of their march. The Achaeans were called *ikwš* by the Egyptians in their lists of the Sea Peoples beside the *plšt*, the group of the Philistines whose origin is unknown and who later settled on the coast of Palestine. But other uprooted coastal residents besides the Achaeans joined the flow as well, such as *rk* (the Lukka people) (Oettinger, 2010, 237–239). Along with the *šrdn*, *šklš*, *ikwš* and *trš*, the Lukka people were part of the Sea Peoples who supported the Libyan prince Mariyawī in his attack on Egypt (Gander, 2010, 26). The Sea Peoples did not come to the Levant from Northwest Anatolia, but from the direction of the Greek homeland, thus further westwards. The participation of Italian people in the migration of the Sea Peoples now seems to be confirmed by the spread of hand-made pottery, which can be found in the area from Greece to the Eastern Mediterranean. These ceramics partially originated from Italy, meaning that the producers of these wares could have been Sea Peoples (Oettinger, 2010, 239). Furthermore, two archaeological indicators suggest an Aegean origin of the ships of the Sea Peoples. These are depicted in the sea battle scenes in the Mident Habu relief: 1. Feathered hats worn by the warriors of the Sea Peoples which also appear on a number of parallels on the Mycenaean ships from different sites (like Kynos, Enkomi in Cyprus). 2. The figureheads shaped like birds on the bow and stern of the ships of the Sea Peoples which are also drawn or depicted on many Aegean archaeological finds: on a sherd from LH IIIB from Ashkelon, a LH IIIC stirrup jar from Skyros, a pyxis from Tragana, a crater from Kynos, and on a crater from Bademgediḡitepe. These figureheads were explained by Yassur-Landau as sea dragons protecting the crew from the creatures of the deep sea; he assumes that the Egyptian artists during their depiction of the confrontation with the Sea Peoples had not actually seen the Sea battle but relied instead on testimonies of soldiers and army scribes and thus wrongly identified these figureheads as birds (Yassur-Landau, 2010, 399–402).

⁹ For the instability and conflict within the royal court at Ḫattuša during the reign of Šuppiluliuma II see Otten, 1963, 3–5.

¹⁰ The bronze tablet found in Bogazköy; for this treaty see Otten, 1988, 1–9; for the relationships between Ḫattuša and Tarḫuntaša see Giorgieri/Mora, 2010, 143–145.

¹¹ The text KBo 12.38 iii 2–14 is called the Battle of Alašiya and speaks of Šuppiluliuma II's confrontation with “the enemy of Alašiya” (Sea Peoples(?)) (Singer, 1999, 721f.; Güterbock, 1967, 73ff.; Otten, 1963, 13f.). Šuppiluliuma II reported that he had battled three times against “the ships of Alašiya” (cf. Lehmann, 1970, 61–63). Some scholars have interpreted “the ships of Alašiya” as belonging to the Sea Peoples who were stationed in Alašiya, or the Alašiyian fleet was actually joined by the invaders “Sea Peoples” and then went into battle with the Hittites (Wachsmann, 2000, 105; cf. Lehmann, 1979, 486).

tribes from north made the situation more instable. From Ugaritic texts we know of five generations of Great Kings in Ḫatti: Šuppiluliuma I, Muṣili II, Ḫattušili III, Tudḫaliya IV and Šuppiluliuma II (Güterbock, 1992, 54). They reigned simultaneously to four kings in Karkamiš: Šarri-Kušuh, Shakhurunuma, Ini-Tešub, and Talmi-Tešub.¹² Šuppiluliuma II of Ḫatti, corresponds to Talmi-Tešub of Karkamiš and to Ammurapi of Ugarit (Lehmann, 1979, 481). The relationship with Ḫatti was that of a lord and his vassal and was marked by economic, political and social conflict, as reflected in the following points.

1.1 The food shortage in Ḫatti and its supply from Ugarit

The drought hypothesis proposes that famished people, whether locals, raiders or migrants, caused the huge destruction of many cities at the end of the Late Bronze Age (Drews, 1993, 78). A drought in the Mediterranean area might have resulted in food shortage and, consequently, Ugarit probably did not experience a direct famine, but – particularly economically – was instead affected by the widespread famine in Ḫatti. Archaeological and textual finds have shown that the whole eastern coast of the Mediterranean suffered the same famine (Singer, 1999, 717, cf. Drews, 1993, 78–84; Klengel, 1974, 165–174). The famine might have taken place during the last years of Šuppiluliuma I, king of Ḫatti, and forced the Hittites to expand their power over north Syrian cities such as Mukiš and Ugarit in order to gain control over Syrian grain and its shipping from Syria to Anatolia (Klengel, 1974, 167). From the mid-13th century B. C., textual evidence from Ḫatti, Egypt, and Ugarit deal with food shortage and the urgent need for grain and food shipment to overcome the widespread and renowned famine in Ḫatti. Klengel (1974, 165–174) has analyzed references to the famine in Hittite literature, including mythological, juridical¹³ and historical texts. The available records pertaining to shortage of grain and food are of two kinds: those sent from Ḫatti demanding grain and those referring to the delivery of grain to Ḫatti.

A Hittite fragmentary letter, Bo 2810, was sent from Ḫattuša and addressed to a Hittite king's subordinate (Klengel, 1974, 173; cf. Otten, 1967, 59; Klengel, 1969 II, 325). The letter deals with the swift transportation of urgently needed cereals from Ugarit or Mukiš(?) and with the arrival of grain in an unknown port-town on the coast, probably between Ḫatti and Egypt, Ura or Lashti. The sender (who was probably the king of Ḫatti) (Singer, 1999, 717–718) says that the famine is over and that the shipment of grain would have been needed sooner; that the famine has now moved to Ura¹⁴ and Lashti and that the ships

¹² For the synchronism of the kings of Ḫatti and Karkamiš cf. Otten, 1983, 14. For the synchronism of the kings of Ḫatti, Karkamiš and Ugarit cf. Tsukimoto, 1984, 73.

¹³ E.g. § 172: “if anyone preserves a free man's life in a famine year, (the saved man) shall give a substitute for himself. If he is a slave, he shall pay 10 shekels of silver” (Hoffner, 1997, 138–139; cf. Güterbock, 1951, 159; Friedrich, 1959, 76–77).

¹⁴ A port on the south Anatolian coast, it was the starting point of Hittite trade output and

should make their way there.

“My son, what you have written me about the issue of ship, one (hundred²) ship(s) filled with grain have/has arrived ..., do not you know, my son, that there was a famine in my lands, now my son send (the ship) and to be unloaded in Ura or Lashti ..., these are suitable places for it to be unloaded” (Otten, 1967, 59).

The addressee is a Hittite prince stationed in Egypt, or a Hittite official running an office or mission in Syria. He was most probably in a Syrian coastal city located between the source of the grain and Cilicia. In the meantime, the famine in the country of the sender was apparently over. In the letter KUB 21, 38, sent to Ramses II, king of Egypt, by Puduḥepa,¹⁵ the wife of Ḫattušili III and queen of Ḫatti, she complains of a severe grain shortage in her land: “There is no food/grain in my lands”. She offers the addressee her dowry (horses, cattle and sheep) in return for grain (Edel, 1994 I, 216–217; 324–326; cf. Helck, 1963, 87–97). Another letter, KUB 3, 34, rev. 15ff. (cf. Goetze, 1947, 247–251), sent by Ramses II to Ḫattušili III, king of Ḫatti, shortly after the Egyptian-Hittite peace treaty in 1258 B. C., reports of a Hittite convoy under the supervision of the Hittite prince Ḫišmi-Šarruma (the son of the Hittite king) who travelled to Egypt in order to purchase grain and ship it to Ḫatti (Singer, 1983, 5; cf. Edel, 1994 I, 184–185, II, 281–282). The text deals with shipment of grain to Ḫatti, but it does not clearly mention a famine. However, the fact that the Hittite king’s son was sent to Egypt strongly suggests there was an urgency for the shipment of grain (Klengel, 1974, 167). A further text, KRI IV 5,3, sent by Merneptah, king of Egypt, dated to his first regal year mentions the sending of grain to Tudḫaliya IV, king of Ḫatti, “in order to keep this land (of Ḫatti) alive” (Klengel, 1974, 167–168). It is clear from this context that Merneptah must have delivered the grain to Ḫatti at the end of the 13th century B. C. “whom I caused to take grain in ships to keep alive that land of Kheta” (Breasted, 1906, 580).

The famine and shortage of food also had its resonance in a number of Ugaritic documents: many letters definitely express a real state of emergency in Ugarit and its surroundings and reflect the importance of Ugarit as a coastal city between Egypt and Ḫatti whose trading fleet played a dominant role in shipping food and grain from Egypt and Canaan to Ḫatti. By the time of Šuppiluliuma II, Ugarit was requested to deliver food and grain to Ḫatti increasingly often. Ugarit’s task was to deliver grain which was partially imported from Egypt. The city thus played a significant role in stabilising the economy of Ḫattuša (Neu, 1995, 121–122; Klengel, 1992, 149). In the Ugaritic letter RS 18.038 (KTU 2.39, PRU 5, 60), sent by Šuppiluliuma II to Ammurapi and probably a translation from a lost Akkadian original, the Great King ordered “his servant” to send food to Ḫatti. The letter contains an emergency demand for grain but there is no

the hub of import (Otten, 1967, 59).

¹⁵ For Puduḥepa see Gelb, 1937, 289.

mention of hunger. It is still uncertain whether the shipment of food to Ḫatti was sent on the occasion of a famine disaster or simply according to a standard agreement between Ḫatti and Ugarit (Klengel, 1974, 168; Singer, 1999, 717). A certain *pgn*¹⁶ in his letter to the king of Ugarit (Ammurapi), RS 18.147 (KTU 2.46, PRU 5, 61) (cf. Klengel, 1974, 168 note 21), made a reference to the provision of food and ships which should be taken/picked up by Ammurapi. The sender demands that the king of Ugarit – referred to as the “son” – should pick up vessels of grain which had arrived in Amurru for further transport. “Since my son has sent (writings of) petitions for food grains to me (with the contents). “(There is) a severe famine, may my son implement the following: Seagoing ships he might provide and pick up (receive?) the grain supply” (Dietrich/Loretz, 2009, 130–131; see Astour, 1965, 255).

Another letter, RS 18.148 (KTU 2.47, PRU 5, 88–89, 62), sent by a certain *ydn* (military chief / Hittite commander) to the king of Ugarit orders the latter to prepare a fleet of 150 (commercial or military) ships: “equip a hundred and fifty ships” (Astour, 1965, 256; cf. also Singer, 1999, 718–719 and note 389). The letter RS 18.31 (KTU 2.38, PRU 5, 59) sent by the king of Tyre to the king of Ugarit declares that some grain ships returning from Egypt were caught in a rain storm near the coasts of Tyre and Akko. The ships were unloaded in Tyre and the king of Tyre undertook to send the ships and their crew to Ugarit (Singer, 1999, 716, 672–673). Testimony for food shortage in the area which also fits into the historical context of the famine of the mid-13th century B. C. is found in an Akkadian letter unearthed in Tell Apehik dated to 1230 B. C. (cf. Owen, 1981, 1–17). The letter concerns a commercial deal by which the governor of Ugarit, Takuḫlinu (the sender), offers the Egyptian commissioner of Canaan *Khayya* (the addressee) an extra 100 (shekels) of blue and 10 of purple dyed wool for a prepaid shipment or, alternatively, the sending of 250 *parisu* (15 tons) of grain from Canaan to Ugarit through a certain mediator called *Adduya* of Akko (Singer, 1983, 3–4). The cereals were brought from Egypt to Canaan, then to Ugarit and Mukiš and finally to Ura. The advance payment of such a large sum of money in order to have the grain sent most definitely indicates an urgent need. An Akkadian letter RS 20.212 (Ug 5, 33) was sent by “Sun” of Ḫatti to the king of Ugarit. It refers to the transfer of a large quantity of grain¹⁷ (2000 measure or *kor*⁷ = 500 tons)¹⁸ from Mukiš to Ḫatti via Ura.¹⁹ The case is

¹⁶ A dignitary in Amurru (Dietrich/Loretz, 2009, 130). But cf. Klengel, 1974, 168–169; 1992, 149, who assumes that *Pgn* (Pukan/a), was probably a prince dignitary of the Hittite king in a city in Ḫatti – possibly in Ura. He was identified by Singer, 1999, 718 with *Pukana* as a Hittite official from Tarsus, or with the king of Alašiya (Astour, 1965, 255).

¹⁷ Requests made by the Hittite king to Ammurapi for the supply of grain are also mentioned in RS 94.2530 and 94.2523 (Ford, 2008, 286 no 26). The fragmentary letter RS 88.2011 also pertains to the demand for grain (Singer, 1999, 719).

¹⁸ See Heltzer, 1999, 441.

¹⁹ Other attestation of grain shipping to Ura is found in a fragmentary text RS 26.158

described as urgent – “a matter of life or death” –²⁰, and two Hittite messengers were sent to Ugarit to prepare the transportation (Singer, 1999, 716–717; 1983a, 5). The urgent request for a large quantity of grain in the letter from Tell Aphek and RS 20.212 (Ug 5, 33) shows the great efforts made by the Hittites to gain grain in order to overcome the food shortage in their country. A Ugaritic letter, RS 94.2002+2003, sent by Merneptah probably to Ammurapi deals with the shipment of grain from Egypt to Ugarit. It is not known whether this shipment continued on its way to Ḫatti or was only to serve the needs of Ugarit. The letter RS 34.356 (KTU 2.76) was sent by Ammurapi of Ugarit (1215–1190/1184 B. C.) to an Egyptian pharaoh: either Sethos II (1204–1198 B. C.) or Siptah/Tausert (1197–1192, 1190–1185 B. C.). The fragmented letter includes an expression of thanks from the Ugaritic king to the pharaoh for the promise of grain shipments to Ugarit. Thematically, this letter is close to letter RIH 78/3+30 (KTU 2.81), which had been sent decades before by the king Amittammru II (1260–1235 B. C.) to Ramses II (1279–1213 B. C.) and also deals with grain shipments from Egypt²¹ to Ugarit.

“[to the Sun,] to the Great [Ki]ng, to the king of kin[gs, my Lord] say: Message of Ammurapi, [your] serva[nt:] [He]re, *Amy* has arrived to [me], the messenger [of the sun,] of the Great King, my Lord. Now [I] your servant was delighted [about it], [with regard to the grain deliveries] my Lord is benevolent! and behold, the sun, my Lord has given to eat. The Sun, the Great King, my Lord is [benevolent?]. [For the sun?, the] Great [Ki]ng, king of Eg[ypt, the Lord] [of all c]ountries <of Egypt>, to the king of kings, my lord, [sa]y: Message of Ammurap[i, your servant.] [And] ‘Abdu [has sent] a petiti[on for food? ...], [... Son]ne king [...] ...” (Dietrich/Loretz, 2009, 126–127).

1.2 Ugarit’s pretence of lack of food

The continuous Hittite demand for grain and food from Ugarit must have placed an economic crisis and burden upon Ugarit. Ugarit was not eager to deliver food

(Ug 5, 171) (Klengel, 1974, 169).

²⁰ The same phrase is found in the letter of Ini-Tešub to Ibirānu RS 17.289 (PRU 4, 192) (Singer, 1999, 716 note 379).

²¹ The Egyptian granaries in the Late Bronze Age had enough resources to supply the Levantine neighbors with grain. KTU 2.76 and 2.81 are two letters that have reached us, showing that the plea for grain deliveries in Ugarit was a top priority. The kings Amittammru and Ammurapi (1260–1235 or 1215–1190/1185 B. C.) asked the pharaohs for help as demonstrated by the contemporary phrases of devotion expressed in a very humble manner. The ships for grain transport from Egypt to Ugarit stopped off in numerous sea ports. It is also attested, however, that the last sea route to Ugarit was probably carried out under the command of the Ugaritic king. He was obviously supposed to ensure that the goods reached their destination port at Ugarit (Dietrich/Loretz, 2009, 130).

and grain to Ḫatti. Its kings therefore dared to avoid shipping food to Ḫatti on the one hand and claimed that their city was also suffering from food shortages on the other. Many attestations of food and grain stored in the city of Ugarit can be deduced from the texts RS 34.152 (RSO 7, 40) and RS 9.11 (KTU 4.43, PRU 5, 114). In the Akkadian letter RS 34.152 (RSO 7, 40) unearthed in the house of Urtenu and sent by a certain *Banniya* from a town in the surroundings of Ugarit to his lord (who was probably in Ugarit), the sender complains that he has no access to the grain stores, that he is dying of hunger while the city of Ugarit is full of grain. He describes his urgent need for food and it seems he had virtually no access to the food which was stored in the city (Singer, 2000, 24). “The gates of the house are sealed, since there is famine in your house, we shall starve to death. If you do not hasten to come, we shall starve to death”. Another testimony of food sorted or gathered on threshing floors in the city is the letter of *drdn* RS 19.11 (KTU 4.43, PRU 5, 114), who sent it from a town near Ugarit to his lord (in Ugarit). He says “the city was looted, our food on the threshing floors was burnt and the vineyards were destroyed”. This letter indicates an abundance of grain placed on threshing floors in the city while its surroundings were still suffering the famine (Singer, 1999, 719, 726–727). Ugarit had enough food but pretended not to for fear that the Hittites would have taken it and left the city poor and starving. The case from the Hittite point of view was that Ugarit was enjoying wealth and prosperity, trade was good and the citizens of Ugarit were storing food inside their city while its surroundings were enduring a dreadful famine. This might have provoked the envy of the Hittites during the famine. Ammurapi of Ugarit is quoted in the text PRU 5, 60 (KTU 2,39) as having denied the possession of food, claiming instead that his city, Ugarit, was suffering from a shortage of grain compared to when his predecessor was in power (Ford, 2008, 284): “and concerning the fact that you have sent a letter about food to the Sun, your lord, to effect that there is no food in your land” (Ford, 2008, 287); Singer (1999, 717) has pointed out that Ammurapi’s denial of food and grain in his city RS 20.212 (Ug 5, 33) and RS 18.038 (KTU 2.39, PRU 5 60) was more of an excuse rather than evidence of any real shortage of food.

1.3 Economic tension

In addition to the annual tribute²² imposed on Ugarit by suzerain bonds with Ḫatti²³ and Amurru,²⁴ the Hittites were interested in Ugarit’s wealth rather than

²² Demands of Ḫatti were not limited to grain and food, but also included tributes, gifts, for the king of Ḫatti, his viceroy in Karkamiš and the Hittite princes. For the Ugaritic annual tribute sent to Ḫatti see Dietrich/Loretz, 1966, 206–245; Knoppers, 1993, 81–94.

²³ As in the treaty of Šuppiliuma I and Niqmadu II, RS 11.732 (KTU 4.74), 17.227, 17.340, 17.369 (PRU 4, 40ff.), and in the treaty of Muršili II and Niqmepa, RS 17.237 (PRU 4, 63ff.)

its military, and a request for money from Ammiṭtamru II was made by Tudḥaliya IV of Ḫatti RS 17.59 (PRU 4 150). In this text Ugarit is granted exemption from any military participation in the Hittite war against Assyria. Instead, Ammiṭtamru II is urged to donate 50 mina of gold (Klengel, 1992, 140).

“I, [My Majesty, Tudḥaliya], Great King, king of Ḫatti, released [Ammiṭtamru, ...] of Ugarit [his infantry and his chariotry. While the war with] Assyria has not come to an end, the infantry and the chariotry [of the king of the land] of Ugarit need not come [...], ... the king of the land of Ugarit has paid to My Majesty 50 mina of gold ...” (Beckman, 1996, 168).

In Ugaritic texts we find evidence of the Ugaritic tendency to have economic and commercial independence. In a letter from queen Puduḥepa to Niqmadu III, RS 17.434 (KTU 2.36+), there is a reference to a complaint made by Niqmadu III with regard to caravans passing his kingdom through inner Syria on their way from Egypt (Singer, 1987, 414–415; 1999, 694) which might have caused damage to the coastal area.

“Am I permitted to stop the passage of caravans of Egypt through the land of Ugarit²⁴ (the land) is ruined. Through the land of Nuḥašše they should pass” (Dijkstra, 1989, 142, 145).

Another economic problem was raised by the reduction of the territory of Ugarit during the time of Niqmepa of Ugarit, mainly at the southern border in favour of Siyannu-Ushnatu (Astour, 1979, 14) as well as at the city’s northern borders. In both cases Ugarit had lost a large part of its agricultural land and, consequently, less farming and production was possible. This might have affected the economy of Ugarit, although the reduction of the southern borders was accompanied by a decrease in tribute, RS 17.382+ (PRU 4, 79–83) (Klengel, 1969 II, 368; cf. Singer, 1999, 640–641).

The Hittites took advantage of Ugarit’s location as a coastal commercial city. Hittite royal commercial agents, merchants and officials settled down in Ugarit to conduct business with Egypt, Canaan, Cyprus, Crete (cf. Yon, 2000b, 192–193) and Ḫatti, or to mediate the transportation of food and goods from Egypt and Canaan to Ḫatti and vice versa. Such a situation might have challenged Ugarit merchants, who were already under the economic burden of the Hittite merchants – in particular those of Ura. The merchants of Ura, who served as middle-men in the transport of goods from Ugarit to Ḫatti, were definitely the commercial agents of the king of Ḫatti (Heltzer, 1999, 440f.; Klengel, 1992, 138). They were active in actual trading and in various real estates of the Ugaritians which caused the city both financial distress and economic dependence (Neu, 1995, 119) as well as placing more of a burden on it, since these merchants dominated trade (Rainey, 1963, 320). The letter RS.17.130 (PRU 4, 103)

²⁴ As in the treaty of Ugarit and Amurru, RS 19.68 (PRU 4, 284–286), where 5000 silver shekel fixed in this treaty for Amurru future military support (Singer, 1991, 156; 1999, 628 and note 77, 635; Kühne, 1971, 369).

sent by Ḫattušili III to Niqmepa of Ugarit in response to a previous complaint made by Niqmepa is a decree granting the trade conducted by the merchants of Ura and their investment in Ugarit during the summer (the high season).²⁵ Klengel (1992, 138) points out that such intensive commerce and investment in Ugarit could have driven the people of Ugarit into an economic crisis, affected the interest of its royalty and caused social tension and economic burden (cf. Heltzer, 1999, 441). Another business privilege granted to the merchants of Ura is illustrated in RS 17.179 (RSO 7, 1) where any Ugaritian debtor and his family could be claimed should he be unable to pay back the debt²⁶ (Rainey, 1963, 320).

The legal framework and laws of trade in Syria were issued by Ini-Tešub, the king of Karkamiš (Singer, 1999, 651), to secure overland trade. He was not interested in general regulations for punishing murderers but in precise compensation to be paid to the lord of the killed person as attested in RS 17.158, 17.42, 17.145 (PRU 4, 169–172). Both the financial dispute between Ugarit and the Hittite merchants and the lawsuits pertaining to it were always initiated by the Hittites. Texts RS 17.230, 17.146, 18.115 (PRU 4, 153–160)²⁷ are an agreement accord between Karkamiš and Ugarit setting up punishment by compensation of silver for merchants killed in each other's land (Klengel, 1980, 191), especially the declaration of Ini-Tešub RS 17.146 (PRU 4, 154), according to which compensation shall be made if someone has been killed or robbed. Should the murderers not be found, the land where the crime was committed had to compensate by paying 3 minas of silver (Heltzer, 1999, 440–441). In spite of this, the texts present many incidents of the murder or robbery of merchants and caravans in the land of Ugarit. Demands for compensation were issued and, in most cases, Ugarit had to pay. According to the records available, most of the murders were committed in the territories of Ugarit on merchants of Ura. This indicates that Ugarit attempted to block the trade in which the Hittites had the upper hand and illustrates Ugarit's desire not to be in the hands of foreign merchants (cf. Rainey, 1963, 320). Two types of texts handed down from Ugarit concerning the murder of merchants: In case the murderer is known, he himself should pay compensation of the stolen goods. In case the murderer is not known, only the community of the place where the crime was committed would have to pay

²⁵ “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” (Beckman, 1996, 162).

²⁶ “if men of Ugarit owe silver to men of Ura and not able to pay it off, the king of the land of Ugarit must turn that man, together with his wife, his sons to the men of Ura, but the men of Ura, the merchants shall not claim houses or fields of the king of the land of Ugarit” (Beckman, 1996, 162).

²⁷ It was contracted between Ini-Tešub of Karkamiš and Ammittamru II of Ugarit and deals with mutual compensation for the killing of citizens or merchants of Karkamiš in Ugarit (Neu, 1995, 119; cf. Klengel, 1969 II, 387f.).

compensation (Klengel, 1980, 193). The murder of Hittite merchants in Ugarit territories (RS 17.230, 17.146, 18.115 (PRU 4, 153–160)) and the quest for compensation during the time of Ammittamru II were common occurrences (Klengel, 1992, 143). This became the topic of many letters sent by Ini-Tešub of Karkamiš to Ammittamru II demanding compensation for the killing of his commercial agents in the land of Ugarit (cf. Klengel, 1975, 61). Other texts, RS 17.158, RS 17.42 (PRU 4, 169–172), reveal a decision made by Ini-Tešub of Karkamiš concerning the murder of the merchant agent of the king of Tarḥudaši, who was killed by the people of Ugarit. Again, Ini-Tešub intervened and imposed the compensation payment of 180 silver shekel to a certain Ari-Shimiga, the agent of the king of Tarḥudaši (Klengel, 1980, 191; 1992, 143; cf. Neu, 1995, 119) or the brother of the killed merchant (Singer, 1999, 651, 661). The text RS 17.145 (PRU 4 172f.) records the murder of a merchant named Aballa²⁸ for which the people of Ugarit had to compensate with 1200 silver shekels (Klengel, 1980, 191; 1992, 143 and note 311). Also RS 17.234 (PRU 4, 173f.) deals with a killing committed by people of Shatega and the decisions of Ini-Tešub in those cases (Klengel, 1980, 191; 1969 II, 374f.). A complaint made by a widow for the killing of her husband in a place called Arzigana, dealt with by RS 17.22 (Ug 5, 27), which was probably sent by (Ini-Tešub) to Ammittamru II (Klengel, 1980, 191 and note 17). RS 17.248 (PRU 4, 236), sent by a high official by the name of Pikhaziti from Karkamiš, accuses two men from Ugarit of the murder of a certain Mashshanaura and demands compensation from Ugarit (Singer, 1999, 653–654 and note 142). An edict issued by Ḫattušili III in RS 17.229 (PRU 4, 106) is a lawsuit dealing with the killing of the business associates of a certain Talimmu in the town of Apsuna, north of Ugarit. The inhabitants of Apsuna were condemned to pay one talent of silver as compensation to Talimmu (Klengel, 1980, 191 and note 12; Singer, 1999, 651).

Accusations of killing and robbing the Hittite caravans were not limited to the people of Ugarit, but were also aimed at its royalty. In RS 17.346 (PRU 4, 176), the king of Karkamiš, Ini-Tešub, accuses the king of Ugarit of hijacking the caravan of the royal commercial agent Mashanda, a rich Hittite merchant (Heltzer, 1999, 444), and seizing 400 asses from him. Urḫi-Tešub, a Hittite official from Karkamiš²⁹, decided the case in favour of Mashanda, and the king of Ugarit was fined one and a third talent of silver (Singer, 1999, 645–646). The king and community of Ugarit had to pay for every robbery and murder committed in their territory. All of these incidents and the compensation payments related to them placed an economic burden on the Ugarit treasury and population. Overland commerce was affected by hostilities and insecurity and led to the interruption of caravans at the end of the 13th century B. C., while maritime commerce suffered from a lack of security because of piracy (Yon, 1992, 114). This resulted in some reduction in Ugarit maritime trade and caused, of course,

²⁸ Who was a tax collector (Raine, 1963, 319 note 60).

²⁹ For the discussion on Urḫi-Tešub (see Klengel, 1969 II, 416 note 123).

further economic burden. These factors negatively affected the city's economy and should be considered as problems which contributed to its subsequent fall.

1.4 The subjection to Ḫatti and Karkamiš³⁰

One of the events which probably triggered the conflict with Ḫatti occurred when Muršili II, Great King of Ḫatti, forced Arḫalba of Ugarit, son of Niqmada II, to give up his seat in Ugarit after having reigned there for only two years and replaced him with his brother Niqmepa. This change on the throne³¹ probably took place during or after the Syrian rebel cities were defeated (Klengel, 1992, 135).³² Niqmepa, who was presumably more loyal to the Hittite overlords than his brother, signed a treaty with Muršili II of Ḫatti RS 17.349B+ (PRU 4, 84ff.).³³ According to this treaty, Ugarit, its king and his family were subjected in loyalty to the king of Ḫatti and various military obligations were imposed on Niqmepa (Altman, 2003, 754). Ugarit had to provide Ḫatti with military assistance against the Syrian rebels,³⁴ deliver tribute³⁵ (Neu, 1995, 117–118), send gifts, make Hittite diplomats and officials exempt from taxes, recognise the established borders and live peacefully with other vassals (Lackenbacher, 2000, 194), pay homage to Ḫatti, extradite fugitives, and, finally, agree not to take part in any conspiracy against the overlords (Klengel, 1992, 112). The treaty also includes the establishment of a mutual offensive and defensive alliance (cf. Beckman, 1996, 59–64).

³⁰ On Karkamiš see Güterbock, 1954, 102–114.

³¹ Hinted at in the opening lines of Muršili II – Niqmepa treaty RS 17.349B+ (PRU 4, 85ff.), “I (have joined you with) your brother, Niqmepa, and I, the king have placed you upon the throne of your father and returned the land of your father to you” (Kühne, 1975, 241f.; cf. Beckman, 1996, 59–64). Ugarit was surrounded by danger of the lands that shaped the anti-Hittite collation. Mukiš on north of Ugarit, Nuḫašše on the northeast and Niya on the southeast sharing the frontier with Amurru (cf. Astour, 1969, 386; Neu, 1995, 116), in addition to its continuous conflict with Siyannu-Ushnatu south of it. Such position probably pushed Arḫalba voluntarily or under pressure to join the anti-Hittite collation.

³² For Arḫalba see Klengel, 1969 II, 358–361; van Soldt, 1991, 4–5.

³³ Cf. Klengel, 1969 II, 362. For the treatment of the text see Kühne, 1975, 239–251.

³⁴ E.g. Ugarit was asked to attack Mukiš and Nuḫašše (Klengel, 1992, 132; cf. Beckman, 1996, 120f.), or to support Ḫatti against an external enemy as happened when Ugarit and other vassals like Halab, Nuḫašše provided troops to Ḫatti in the battle of Qadesh (Klengel, 1992, 118), or to send troops to back the Hittites in the Assyrian war RS 17.289 (PRU 4, 192), RS 20.237 (Ug 5 102–104), RS 10.14 (PRU 3, 5), or to strengthen the western Hittite defence positions RS 20.230 (Ug 5, 24).

³⁵ For the king and queen of Ḫatti, high officials and nobles of Ḫatti including different valuable items like gold, silver, blue, red purple wool, and dye cf. Beckman, 1996, 151–154, 161–162; Klengel, 1992, 112 note 260.

After the installation of Šuppiluliuma I's son, Pijašilli/Šarri-Kušuh, at Karkamiš,³⁶ Ugarit was placed under the authority of the king of Karkamiš who henceforth exercised Hittite control over Syria. Karkamiš became a leading power during the time of its king, Ini-Tešub,³⁷ who was the Hittite viceroy of northern Syria and the administrator of Hittite political and economic affairs in Syria by the end of the 14th century B. C. (Yon, 2006, 20). A letter, RS 17.289 (PRU 4 192)³⁸, was sent by Ini-Tešub of Karkamiš to Ibirānu asking for military support against the Assyrians (Klengel, 1992, 127; Singer, 1999, 686, 716 and note 379). Niqmadu II in the letter RS 17.334 (PRU 4 53ff.) was urged by the king of Karkamiš (Šarri-Kušuh) to take part in the Hittite offensive to suppress the revolt of the Nuḥašše (Altman, 2003, 754 note 82): “When the king of the land of Nuḥašše became hostile to me, I sent thus to Niqmadu: If you begin war with Tette and you, Niqmadu take the initiative and attack before I draw near the land of Nuḥašše ...” (Beckman, 1996, 120; Klengel, 1992, 134; 1969 I, 53, II, 357). Another step which escalated the conflict was the carving out of Siyannu-Ushnatu from Ugarit. The dual kingdom of Siyannu-Ushnatu, south of Ugarit, was placed under the control of Ugarit by Šuppiluliuma I, but the situation was drastically changed during the time of Muršili II who severed Siyannu-Ushnatu from Ugarit and annexed it to Karkamiš (Astour, 1979, 14): “and Muršili, Great King, transferred Abdi-Anati king of the land of Siyannu, and his sons from the king of Ugarit and gave him as a subject to the king of the land of Karkamiš” (Beckman, 1996, 161). With the annexation of these two districts – Siyannu-Ushnatu – south of Ugarit to Karkamiš (Astour, 1969, 404; Altman, 2003, 755), Karkamiš retained direct access to the Mediterranean Sea (Neu, 1995, 118) and was no longer in need of Ugaritic harbours. Karkamiš thus expanded to the Mediterranean coast at Ugarit's expense.³⁹ The reduction of Ugarit's territorial size to two thirds of its previous expansion⁴⁰ was probably imposed by the Hittite king as a kind of punishment to Ugarit's king Niqmepa for not being loyal or acting appropriately during the revolt of the Syrian cities (Klengel, 1992, 136). In the course of the conflict between Ugarit and Siyannu-Ushnatu, the Hittites

³⁶ The establishment of a Hittite dynasty ruling at Karkamiš until the early 12th century B. C. aimed to keep Hittite control over Syrian vassals – mainly those who were close to borders of Egyptian domination – by keeping watch over rebel vassals and those far away, and to stop the Assyrian expansion towards west and north (Klengel, 1992, 113, 121, 125; cf. Lackenbacher, 2000, 194).

³⁷ See also Astour, 1969, 405–409; Klengel, 1992, 124. For the activities of Ini-Tešub in Syria during the time of Ammiṭtamru II and Ibirānu of Ugarit see Klengel, 1969 I, 63–67.

³⁸ See Klengel, 1969 I, 66.

³⁹ Karkamiš and Ugarit were competing over their strategic position as trade cities. Eventually, Karkamiš was the winner of this competition, as the kingdom continued to exist until the 9th century B. C.

⁴⁰ Cf. Astour, 1969, 404; Drower, 1975, 139.

were engaged in the partition, secession and demarcation of these areas,⁴¹ even tracing and setting up the borders. Furthermore, delimitation acts were carried out only by Hittite officials (Astour, 1979, 23). Ugarit's northern territories were also gradually reduced near Mukiš (Yon, 1992, 112). The 53–54 towns, mountains and waters taken from the defeated Mukiš and rewarded to Niqmepa by Šuppiluliuma I for his loyalty were now severed from him by Muršili II (Astour, 1969, 398, 404). This act led to Ugarit's loss of a large part of its territory in favour of Karkamiš.

1.5 Humiliation of the last kings of Ugarit

The Hittite overlords were dissatisfied with Ugarit's loyalty, tribute, presents⁴² and grain delivery. Their complaints against the Ugaritic kings were always of Ugarit's failure to visit the overlords or to send sufficient tribute and gifts. It is likely that the last Ugaritic kings consciously or unconsciously neglected their vassal obligations with regard to paying homage and making regular visits to the court in Ḫattuša, as well as in terms of sending presents. They thus caused mistrust and anger in the Hittite courts which was expressed in the reprimands found in many texts written by Hittite kings or princes towards at least the last three Ugaritic kings. Since the reign of Ibirānu of Ugarit, the Hittites had a tendency to reprimand their vassals, resulting in tension and humiliation for Ugarit. With regard to disloyalty, Ibirānu received a share of the reprimands: in RS 17.247 (PRU IV 191), which was sent to him by prince Pihawalwi, Ibirānu is deliberately not addressed as king of Ugarit; he is upbraided for not appearing before the king of Ḫatti since becoming king of Ugarit; he is accused of even failing to send messengers with presents to the great king, thus angering his overlord (Klengel, 1992, 145).

“Why have you not come before his Majesty since you have assumed the kingship of the land of Ugarit[?], and why have you not sent your messengers[?]. Now his Majesty is very angry” (Beckman, 1996, 121).

Niqmadu III is reproached by Puduḫepa in the Ugaritic letter RS 17.434 (KTU 2.36+) (cf. Singer, 1987, 414–415) for not paying respect or sending messengers to the king of Ḫatti: “... now, as for you did not come to (nor) did you send your embassy” (Dijkstra, 1989, 142). The letter contains a clear reprimand for failing to send sufficient tribute or pay the obligatory visit to his overlord (Singer, 1999, 693–694; cf. van Soldt, 1991, 9–12).

By the time of Ammurapi of Ugarit, relations between Ugarit and Ḫatti had rapidly deteriorated and were burdened with conflicts. Many Ugaritic texts indi-

⁴¹ For the many secessions and demarcation between Ugarit and Siyannu-Ushnatu cf. Astour, 1979, 13–27.

⁴² Including silver, gold, precious stones, metal vessels and utensils, horses, donkeys, textiles, and garments (Heltzer, 1999, 445).

cate the pressure Ammurapi faced, and how the Hittite kings in Ḫattuša and Karkamiš had placed him in an inferior position. The Hittite king Šuppiluliuma II blames Ammurapi in PRU 5, 60 (KTU 2.39) for his disloyalty and for not appearing before the Great King for one or two years (Lehmann, 1979, 481).

“Now you (too) belong to the Sun, your lord; you are his (cherished) personal possession (and) servant ... you have not at all acknowledged (your duty towards) the Sun, to me, the Sun, your lord, why do not you come every year?” (Ford, 2008, 278).

In the second part of the letter, Ammurapi is blamed for being late in sending food to Ḫatti (Singer, 1999, 707–708). Ammurapi not having fulfilled the two demands in this letter, such as the annual visit to the overlord and the delivery of food, was probably in violation of the vassal obligations, although the supply of grain to Ḫatti was not actually stipulated in any treaty between the Hittite kings and their Syrian vassals (Ford, 2008, 285). In an Akkadian letter, RS 34.129 (RSO 7, 12),⁴³ sent by Šuppiluliuma II and addressed to the prefect of Ugarit rather than to its king (Ammurapi), Ammurapi is described as “small, young”, and is seen as a disloyal vassal towards the Hittite overlords: “The king, your lord, is young and does not know anything. And I, His Majesty had issued him an order concerning *Ibnadušu*, whom the people from Šikla who live on ships had abducted” (Hoftijzer / van Soldt, 1998, 343). The Hittite king sharply complains to his correspondent about the inability of Ammurapi that he has ignored his duties as a vassal king in delivering information about “the *Šikla* enemy”. The context of the letter reflects the distrust and the conflict between the king of Ḫatti and the king of Ugarit regarding the extradition of a certain *Ibnadušu* to Ḫatti, who was probably an official in the Ugaritic court and had been captured by the Šikla people but ransomed by Ugarit or managed to flee. The Hittite king ordered that *Ibnadušu* be sent to him for questioning about the land of *Šikla*, after which he would be sent back to Ugarit. The king of Ugarit seems to have failed to fulfil this extradition demand, which then forced the king of Ḫatti to send his own messenger, *Nirga'ili*, to ensure the extradition took place (Lehmann, 1979, 482; Wachsmann, 2000, 104). In RS 34.129 (RSO 7, 12) we find that Ammurapi was not performing his job with regard to the extradition of the fugitive, and of a further two people of Aru and Ushkani (RS 88.2013) to the king of Karkamiš (Singer, 1999, 722 note 399).

Ammurapi's disloyalty can be seen in his failure to send troops to help the Hittites. The king of Karkamiš accused Ammurapi, of being disloyal to the Hittite royal courts ever since he refused to send his troops to Mukiš to support the Hittites. Ammurapi was intentionally ignored in the correspondence RS 34.143 (RSO 7, 6), sent by the king of Karkamiš to an unnamed king of Ugarit (Ammurapi), the king of Karkamiš requests military aid and troops from Ugarit, but the king of Ugarit prefers to keep them at home. This angered the king of Karkamiš,

⁴³ For this see Dietrich/Loretz, 1978, 53–56; Lehmann, 1979, 482–483.

who accused the king of Ugarit of many things:⁴⁴ The king of Ugarit has deluded the king of Karkamiš by claiming that his army has been sent to Mukiš to confront the enemy while, according to the king of Karkamiš, the army was actually camping in Apsuna, north of Ugarit (Singer, 2000, 22). The king of Ugarit pretends that his chariots are badly equipped and his horses starving. But he is accused of keeping the best unit of troops (*maryannu*) for himself, sending instead the weak soldiers and starved horses. Ammurapi seems to have refused to take orders from the king of Karkamiš, but only from the king of Ḫatti. Ammurapi's refusal to send troops to aid Karkamiš in Mukiš is, according to the king of Karkamiš, to be regarded as a serious disloyalty and mutiny. Another issue is taken with the delay of grain delivery. This was expressed angrily in reprimands made by the Hittite kings and princes against Ammurapi, as indicated in many texts. An Akkadian letter RS 20.212 (Ug 5, 33)⁴⁵ sent by “the Sun” of Ḫatti to the king of Ugarit reminds him of his vassal obligations and reprimands him for disobeying the orders of the king of Karkamiš with regard to a grain shipment. The king of Ugarit is upbraided for being late in transporting a quantity of grain (2000 *kor*?) from Mukiš to Ḫatti via Ura. Two Hittite messengers, Ali-ziti and Kunni, were sent to ensure the transportation of the grain⁴⁶ (Singer, 1999, 716–717 and note 377).

Further issue is the insufficient tribute and unworthy gifts. Ugarit was not willing to send customary gifts and luxurious items either and the Hittites had to remind the city of its obligations (Lackenbacher, 2000, 194).

The letters RS 17.383 (PRU 4, 221) and RS 17.422 (PRU 4, 223), sent by Takuḫlinu (an Ugaritic official at Karkamiš to his king Ammittamru II), express the infuriation of Ini-Tešub of Karkamiš over receiving simple stones instead of lapis lazuli. The sender appeals to his king to send genuine stones quickly in order to avoid the hostility of Ḫatti (Singer, 1983, 7; 1999, 655). Penti-Šarruma, a Hittite prince, complains in RS 94.2523 to Ammurapi about not getting his share of lapis lazuli (Singer 2006, 245). The letter RS 34.136 (RSO 7, 7), probably sent by the Talmi-Tešub, king of Karkamiš, to Ammurapi, reproaches him for sending unsuitable presents and unworthy tribute to the Hittite dignitaries, especially to the chief scribe (*tuppalanuri*) (Singer, 1999, 694f., 708 and note 350; 2000, 22). The message also contains a reminder to Ammurapi of what happened to his father Niqmadu III's messengers when they were jailed in Ḫatti for bringing unworthy presents. It bears a clear threat to him that he will face the

⁴⁴ In spite of the sacrifice made by Ammurapi, who left his city unfortified but went far to aid the Hittites, as in RS 20.230 (Ug 5, 24), which was written by Ammurapi of Ugarit “my troops are in the Hittite country and my fleet is in Lycia”.

⁴⁵ For this text see Klengel, 1974, 170; 1969 II, 394f.; Otten, 1967, 59.

⁴⁶ The text RS 13.007B (PRU 3, 6) sent by the king of Karkamiš (Talmi-Tešub) to Ammurapi, tells of another conflict and contains similar reprimands. In this matter, the letter RS 18.038 (KTU 2.39, PRU 5, 60) refers to a conflict between the king of Ugarit and the Hittite king over the supply of food to Ḫatti (Singer, 1999, 707–708).

same fate if he does continue sending unworthy presents to Ḫatti.

“The gifts which you will send to the high officials should be few. Did I not write to you in the following manner, send your gifts to the (*tuppalanuri*). At the time of your father, the son-in-law of His Majesty, how did they treat him in Khapish and Kizzuwanta because of his gift? Did they not bind his servants? Perhaps because of me they did not do anything against your servants (but) do not do this ever again” (van Soldt, 1989, 390).

1.6 Ugarit’s tendency towards disobeying the overlords

Rebellious vassals and their attempts at conspiracy against great powers of that period were well known. Thus the offensive of the Hittites against their own vassals is also known about. Šuppiluliuma I, king of Ḫatti, marched against his vassal Mukiš in 1366 B. C. with the assistance of Niqmadu II of Ugarit.⁴⁷ During the time of Ammiṭtamru II of Ugarit, Karkamiš appointed a certain Šukur-Tešub as vassal king in Mukiš⁴⁸ (Klengel, 1992, 140 and note 294). Muršili II, king of Ḫatti, removed the rebellious king Arḫalba,⁴⁹ son of Niqmadu II of

⁴⁷ As punishment for Mukiš territories formerly belonging to were detached from it and annexed to Ugarit by Šuppiluliuma I RS 17.340 (PRU 4, 48) (Altman, 2003, 752 note 64). For the protest staged by Mukiš when part of its land was taken and given to Ugarit see Singer, 1999, 635, 639–640; Astour, 1969, 398–405; Beckman, 1996, 159–160.

⁴⁸ According to Lipiński (1981, 87ff.), there was a revolution in Mukiš and the letter of Ewri-Šarrum RS 16.402 (KTU 2.33, PRU 2, 12), which speaks of 2000 horses, is probably a request for military aid from Ugarit to be deployed against Mukiš, which was an anti-Hittite city.

⁴⁹ Arḫalba had probably joined the anti-Hittite coalition led by Tette of Nuḫašše and Aitakama of Kinza (cf. Altman, 2003, 754), which was supported by Egypt and is reported to have been defeated by Muršilli II in his 7th and 9th year. Arḫalba only reigned for 2 years between the 7th and the 9th year of Muršili (Klengel 1969 II, 169 359–360, Van Soldt, 1991, 4–5), and after the suppression of the revolt he was entirely removed from the scene. The Hittite interference in the affairs of Ugarit had repeatedly touched the members of the royal family. One generation later, we hear that Tudḫaliya IV, king of Ḫatti, and Ini-Tešub, king of Karkamiš, gave orders RS 17.352 (PRU 4, 121) for the deportation of two brothers of Ammiṭtamru II (Hišmi-Šarruma and Ir-Šarruma) to Cyprus for unknown reasons, whilst still allowing them to take their share of inheritance. All three were sons of Ahatmilku, wife of Niqmepa and a daughter of DU-Tešub king of Amurru (Klengel, 1992, 141). The offence they committed is still unknown, as is that of Arḫalba: “Hišmi-Šarruma and Ir-Šarruma have committed an offence against Ammiṭtamru, king of the land of Ugarit. Their mother Ahatmilku, queen of the land of Ugarit, has given them their inheritance portion, complete with silver and gold, ... with all of their possessions, and she sent them to the land of Alašiya”. The two brothers should not come back to Ugarit “if in the future Hišmi-Šarruma and Ir-Šarruma, their sons, their grandsons, should make a complaint against Ammiṭtamru, king of the land of Ugarit, or against his sons or his grandsons, concerning their inheritance portion, they shall trans-

Ugarit, from the throne and replaced him with Niqmepa (Altman, 2003, 754). If Arḫalba had been unfaithful in his loyalty to Ḫatti (cf. Beckman, 1996, 158) and had supported the anti-Hittite revolution, this would have caused great damage to relations with Ḫatti. After this act, very little trust was placed in Ugarit, which explains why many harsh Hittite steps were taken against its status, particularly against Arḫalba's successor, Niqmepa. Upon him more military obligations were imposed and no promises for his offspring were given by Hittites (Altman, 2003, 754 and note 82). From the reign of Ibirānu, Ugarit tried to free itself from military obligations or assistance to Karkamiš: RS 20.237 (Ug 5, 102) indicates that Ibirānu tried to avoid any involvement in the Hittite war, and did not show any interest when he was asked by the king of Karkamiš to send his army to aid the Hittites, which led the king of Karkamiš to inspect Ugarit's army as recorded in RS 17.289 (PRU 4, 192) (Yon, 1992, 114). Further confirmation of failing to offer military help to Karkamiš is found in RS 34.150 (RSO 7, 10), in which Ewir-Tešub(?) informs his lord (king of Ugarit) not to show any of his troops and chariots to the messenger of Karkamiš, who was at that time inspecting the troops of Qadesh and was expected to arrive in Ugarit with the intention of mobilizing more soldiers (Singer, 1999, 687).

In reaction to the Hittite stance and in order to free itself from the Hittite yoke, Ugarit probably attempted to form an alliance with the Assyrians or Egyptians. There are hints of the establishment of diplomatic contact in political and commercial relations between Ugarit and Assyria, the enemy of the Hittites. The king of Assyria, Shalmaneser I⁵⁰ (1263–1234 B. C.) reported in RS 34.165 (RSO 7, 46) to a Hittite vassal, the king of Ugarit Ibirānu (1235–1225 B. C.) about his victory against the Hittite king (Tudḫaliya IV) at the battle of Niḫriya in the Upper Tigris and about the conditions that led to it (Dietrich, 2003, 118; cf. also Singer, 1985, 100; 2000, 22). This letter is considered to be an Assyrian attempt to break the loyalty of the Syrian vassals to their Hittite overlords in order to gain access to the Mediterranean via Ugarit (Singer, 1985, 100, 108; 2000, 22). There are two reasons for sending this letter to the Ugaritic king: 1. On the one hand, Shalmaneser may have found it necessary to describe both the deterioration of relations between the Hittites and Assyria and his hard crack-down on Tudḫaliya IV. The latter was provoked by the recruitment against Eḫli-Šari of Ishuwa and tried to justify the enlargement of the fortress of Niḫriya and thus declare the imminent dissolution of the pax hetitica which was so important for Ugarit as an inner-hittite process. From this point on, it is conceivable that Shalmaneser also sent letters to other Ḫatti vassals, but these have not yet reached us. 2. On the other hand, Shalmaneser I could have intended to provide his colleague in Ugarit with an account of the bad character of Tudḫaliya IV, the overlord of Syria and Ugarit, bearing in mind his wish to emphasize the need for

gress the oath" (Beckman, 1996, 165).

⁵⁰ Singer (1985, 100; 1999, 689; 2000, 22) proposed Tukulti-Ninurta I as the sender of this letter reporting to either Ammiṭtamru II or Ibirānu (cf. also Otten, 1983, 19).

a reorientation of Ugarit to Assyria, so that the letter would serve as a witness of the Assyrian efforts to decompose the vassal block of Ḫatti to pave the way to the west (Dietrich, 2003, 133). If the Hittites had been aware of this, it would surely have provoked them and made the states of Ugarit more distressed.

Ammurapi – either unwilling or unable to meet the Hittite’s obligations – extensively tried to re-establish political relations and an alliance with Egypt through his request to erect a statue of the Pharaoh Merneptah (1213 B. C.) in the temple of Baal in Ugarit, as recorded in RS 88.2158, which was sent to Ammurapi by Merneptah. The sender, in response to a previous Ugaritic letter (probably received on the occasion of his coronation), refused this suggestion with the justification that his sculptors were engaged in works for the great gods of Egypt. Merneptah’s refusal to have his statue erected in Ugarit according to Ugaritic demand made it clear that the Egyptians were attempting to avoid any possible conflict with their commercial allies in Ḫatti (Singer, 1999, 709–711).⁵¹ Hoping to maintain its political ties with Egypt, Ugarit initiated an exchange of presents and valuable items.⁵² This action of a vassal neglecting his obligations and releasing his city slowly and calmly from absolute vassalage, as well as Ammurapi’s successive deeds, were seen by the Hittites as having overstepped the mark and as hostile towards them. This stood in stark contrast to his forefathers, who had enjoyed friendly relations with Ḫatti. Meanwhile, Ḫatti was suffering from famine and struggling to gain grain from Egypt through Ugarit; explaining why Ammurapi’s steps probably provoked the Hittites even more.

1.7 Social tension: royal divorce at Ugarit and dispute over properties

The royal marriage was normally used to strengthen diplomatic relations and to form alliances in the ancient Near East. In the case of Ugarit, it was unsuccessful and destroyed the ties between the city and its southern neighbour, Amurru. Relations with Ḫatti were also affected by the divorce of the Hittite princess, which may well have infuriated the Hittites since it must have been perceived as a scandal and will have caused social tension between the two sides. Texts show that Hittite control over Ugarit was strong and how the Hittites frequently intervened in the personal affairs of the royal family of Ugarit and mediated in the dissolution of the marriages of certain kings of Ugarit. The Ugaritic juridical records that deal with divorce within the royal house of Ugarit present two well

⁵¹ The rest of the letter concerns a shipment of gifts and luxury items from Egypt to Ugarit (Singer, 2000, 22). This includes various textiles, 102 items of clothing, 50 large baulks of ebony, 1000 plaques, red, white and blue stones, 800 whips, 2 *irgu*-cords and 8 large ropes with a total length of 1200 cubits (Singer, 1999, 710).

⁵² Many Ugaritic tablets and written items are of a votive nature, e.g. RS 19.186 (Ug 4 124 fig. 101), RS 5/1 226, RS 94.2002+, RS 34.356 (KTU 2.76), indicating Ugarit’s attempts to restore ties with Egypt (Singer, 1999, 711–715).

documented cases in which Hittite intervention is obvious. When Ammittamru II of Ugarit was divorced from his wife, a daughter of Benteshina, king of Amurru, it was for a “great sin” she had committed (Kühne, 1973, 183ff.). Tutkhaliya IV of Ḫatti, and Ini-Tešub of Karkamiš RS 17.159, RS 17.396 (PRU 4, 162ff.) (cf. Beckman, 1996, 165–167; Yaron, 1963, 22–31), had personally intervened in her lawsuit; the queen – according to the demand of the king of Ḫatti – was ordered to leave the city of Ugarit after taking her dowry and share of property, thus destroying cordial, brotherly and long-term good relations and causing tension between Ugarit and Amurru⁵³ (Klengel, 1992, 141–142). The king of Ugarit was not allowed to divorce or even designate his share of heir without Hittite permission (Lackenbacher, 2000, 194).⁵⁴ The second divorce was that of Ammurapi from the Hittite princess Ehli-Nikkalu.⁵⁵ Talmi-Tešub of Karkamiš issued two edicts, RS 17.226, 17.355 (PRU 4, 208ff.), to dissolve the marriage, get compensation, and to divide properties between Ammurapi and his divorced wife (Klengel, 1992, 148; 1975, 61). This was confirmed by the Hittite king and the divorced queen left Ugarit (Neu, 1995, 120).

“Ammurapi, king of the land [of Ugarit], has returned whatever women [of her ...], her female servants, her male servants, [gold, silver], oxen, copper implements, her asses, and [everything else]. In the future Ehli-Nikkalu shall not make a complaint [against] Ammurapi ...” (Beckman, 1996, 169).

2 The collapse in the surroundings of Ugarit

Although Ramses III’s inscription KRI V 39.14–40.1⁵⁶ does mention Ḫatti

⁵³ I do not see any reason to think that the Hittite intervention was intended to keep good relations between their two vassals Ugarit and Amurru (Yaron, 1963, 24). On the contrary, the Hittite interest was to have weak and divided vassals.

⁵⁴ The case of the daughter of the Great Lady. She was another wife of Ammittamru II from Amurru. She was accused of adultery and fled from the death penalty to Amurru. Tutkhaliya IV of Ḫatti intervened in the affair and instructed Shaushgamuwa according to RS 17.116 (PRU 4, 132ff.); RS 16.270 (PRU 3, 41ff.) (Klengel, 1992, 142 and note 301; 1969 II, 373, 385f.; Singer, 1999, 680–681), her brother, and the king of Amurru to deliver the woman to Ugarit (Neu, 1995, 120).

⁵⁵ Klengel, 1992, 148; Beckman, 1996, 168–170; but see Singer (1999, 707) who considers her Niqmadu III’s widow.

⁵⁶ “The countries ... the Northerners in their isles were disturbed, taken away in the (fray) at one time, no one stood before their hands, from Kheta, Kode, Caramish, Arvad, Alasa, they were wasted, they set up a camp in one place in Amuru, they desolated his people and his land like that which is not, they came with fire prepared before them toward to Egypt” (Breasted, 1906, 64). This is attested in Medinat Habu monument erected by Ramses III after he defeated the Sea Peoples in 1182 B. C. (Yon, 2006, 21; cf. Wachsmann, 2000, 105). For the depiction of the Sea Peoples in Medint Habu cf. O’Connor, 2000, 85–102. Many areas mentioned in this text seem to have been de-

alongside the land of Qd, Karkamiš, Arzawa and Alašiya as areas destroyed by the Sea Peoples, Bittel (1983, 46–47) assumed that the collapse of the Hittite empire can be ascribed to various internal Anatolian tribes such as Kaska and Mushki (cf. Singer, 1985, 123) – who had been a real and continuous threat to Ḫatti⁵⁷ from the north and north-east since the late 15th–13th century B. C. – and to internal weakness,⁵⁸ rather than to the invading Sea Peoples. Bittel (1983, 27–28) pointed out that in central Anatolia there were no archaeological foreign objects found in the destruction level at Ḫattuša. The ceramic and other small finds were typically Hittite. He takes this as an indication that the peoples who destroyed these cities were not invaders from outside Anatolia; the collapse of central Anatolia was brought about violently during different periods (Bittel, 1983, 28, 34; cf. Güterbock, 1992, 53–54). The fall of the Hittite empire would have facilitated the movement of the Sea Peoples to take the route via Cyprus and Ugarit and to sail to the mouth of the Nile (Otten, 1983, 21). Karkamiš⁵⁹ which is also listed in that inscription as having suffered the same fate as Ḫatti, did manage to survive the comprehensive fall (Güterbock, 1992, 55). Archaeological layers at Karkamiš have revealed that the site suffered neither the destruction nor the operations of the Sea Peoples; textual data demonstrates that Karkamiš continued to exist as a kingdom⁶⁰ even after the destruction of Ḫat-

stroyed, but there is no mention of Ugarit in the text.

⁵⁷ The Hittites were engaged in many difficulties. In Syria and Anatolia there was an increasing number of intrusions of semi nomadic bands, so that the king of Ḫatti, Šuppiluliuma II 1200–1182 B.C., and the king of Karkamiš, Talmi-Tešub 1220–1190 B.C., were unable or unwilling to help Ugarit at the time of the fall (Yon, 1992, 117).

⁵⁸ Cf. Giorgieri/Mora, 2010, 145.

⁵⁹ Karkamiš in this sense is not only a city and geographical region but also a political entity designating the whole Hittites (or northern) Syria as also expressed by the Egyptian inscriptions of the late 13th century B.C. (Klengel, 1992, 125), at least by the time of Ramses III, as can be seen from the text KRI V 39.14–40.1 (Singer, 1999, 730 and note 428).

⁶⁰ These inscriptions show the continuity of the royal family of Karkamiš which was originated by Šuppiluliuma I's son Šarri-Kušuh. Talmi-Tešub, a later descendant of Šarri-Kušuh, was king of Karkamiš and contemporary to Šuppiluliuma II. He was succeeded by his son Kuzi-Tešub as king of Karkamiš who became the Great King after the fall of the Hittite empire. A branch of this family conquered Malatya, where two grandsons of Kuzi-Tešub ascended the throne (Güterbock, 1992, 53). The title Great King was always ascribed to the king of Ḫatti, but it has been found in two hieroglyphic inscriptions dated to the early Iron Age and to the period after the fall of Ḫattuša. According to one text from Karahöyük in central Anatolia, the site was not caught up in the general destruction. The second text stems from a site near Karaman, where a ruler Khartapus(a) called himself 'a son of Muršili'. Two bullae were also found at Lidar on the left bank of Euphrates bearing the seal of Kuzi-Tešub king of Karkamiš son of Talmi-Tešub king of Karkamiš (Güterbock, 1992, 54; Hawkins, 1988, 104).

tuša⁶¹ or into the early Iron Age (Singer, 1999, 728). Its dynasty produced five generations of kings who ascended the throne from the period of the fall of the Hittite empire until the mid-11th century B. C. The first four of them bore the title Great King; their line began with Kuzi-Tešub, son of Talmi-Tešub, and ended with Arnuwantis II (Hawkins, 1988, 101–102, 106; cf. Drews, 1993, 15). The dynasty of Karkamiš did not only survive the destruction of Ḫattuša but also extended its dominion eastwards to Malatya with two grandsons of Kuzi-Tešub: Runtiyas and Arnuwantis (Güterbock, 1992, 54; Hawkins, 1988, 104). The Phoenician city states⁶² south of Ugarit were prosperous cities and had not been destroyed by the Sea Peoples. Based on the similarity of the cultural material in Phoenicia, Philistia and Cyprus, Bikai (1992, 132, 136–137) assumed that the Sea Peoples had an alliance with the Phoenician cities and that they both rebelled against the Egyptian dominion. Emar on the east was destroyed in 1180⁶³ (Boese, 1982, 22) by non-sedentary tribes such as the Aramaeans who were probably forced to leave due to the same famine (Singer, 1987, 419; 2000, 25). If this image is correct, then Ugarit was the only coastal city that was destroyed by the Sea Peoples.

To correlate the demise of Ugarit with the end of the Mycenaean culture, three pieces of evidence provided by Mountjoy (2004) and reflected in archaeological material found in Mycenaean representative sites, such as Miletos on the west Anatolian coast, will be used. First: the Mycenaean ceramic finds which were unearthed from the destruction levels from Ugarit and Miletos showed that the destruction of both sites took place simultaneously and dated to the transitional period LH IIB2–IIIC or early LH IIIC (1185 B. C.). This corresponds to the final phase of tombs at other sites such as Değirmentepe, Astypalaia and Kalaltepe. Second: the study of pottery vases from latest levels at Ugarit and Miletos presented a similarity of decorative motives (linear decoration such as small spirals,⁶⁴ apses with dotted fringes, straight lines, lozenges with semi circles in the corners and pictorial of fauna figures such as birds and dolphins). Further

⁶¹ The destruction of Ḫattuša was probably in 1180 B. C. (Hoffner, 1992, 51). The Sea Peoples advanced east, gaining control of Tarḫuntaša where they were attacked by Šuppiluliuma II (Singer, 2000, 27) and moved northward to attack Ḫattuša (Hoffner, 1992, 49, 51). The fall of Tarḫuntaša might have taken place after the fall of Ḫattuša, as can be induced from the fragmentary text RS 34.139 (RSO 7, 14) sent by the king of Tarḫuntaša to Ammurapi where he says “for the time I am well” (Neu, 1995, 123 and note 30).

⁶² Phoenician cities like Byblos and Tyre survived the disaster (Yon, 1992, 120). The archaeological remains from Tyre indicated that there was a cultural continuity from Late Bronze Age (Stratum XV) to the 9th century B. C. (Stratum XI) (Bikai, 1992, 133). This also supports the view of Stern (1990, 30) “neither Phoenicia nor any of the Phoenician cities like Tyre, Sidon, Byblos and Arvad was attacked or ever conquered by the Sea Peoples”.

⁶³ Yon, 1992, 117; Neu, 1995, 122 note 25 in 1187 B. C.; see Arnaud, 1975, 88f., 92.

⁶⁴ Ugarit held commercial and cultural ties with many of the Mycenaean sites, such as Kos, Miletos, Astypalaia and Kalymnos (Mountjoy 2004, 190 and note 20).

shared decorative features from Ugarit and Miletos are: 1. whorl shells with vertical or wavy lines and triangular heads, 2. double or triple stems with coiled tips, 3. double stemmed spirals, 4. ivy leaves with spiral terminals and semi circles in the tip. Third: further evidence for the contemporary collapse at both sites is the absence of typical LH IIIC pottery vessels, such as large baseless flasks, octopus style stirrup jars, strainer jugs and kalthoi with interior decoration and knob, as well as the absence of some decorative forms, such as elaborate lozenges in heavy panelled styles which became common in East Aegean after the period LH IIIC (Mountjoy, 2004, 190–200).

3 Textual and archaeological evidence of the last days of Ugarit

From Ugarit a number of letters bear indirect mentions of the Sea Peoples. All are correlated in time and content and can be dated to the final years of Ugarit since they mention Ammurapi as an addressee (Lehmann, 1979, 483). They were sent from Ḫatti and Alašiya to Ugarit.⁶⁵ The Akkadian letter RS 34.129 (RSO 7, 12) is the only document from Ugarit and Ḫatti which mentions the name of the “enemy” as the *Šikla*.⁶⁶ The *Šikla* group, who were said to live on boats, corresponds to the *Šekleš* of the Medinet Habu inscriptions (Yon, 1992, 116). “And I, His Majesty, had issued him an order concerning *Ibnadušu*, whom the people from *Šikla* who live on ships had abducted” (Hoftijzer / van Soldt, 1998, 343). The Hittite king Šuppiluliuma II, the sender, asked that *Ibnadušu* should be sent to him for questioning about the land of *Šikla*, after which he would be sent back to Ugarit. The *Šikla* appeared in this letter not as attackers on the Ugarit coast but as kidnappers of a certain *Ibnadušu* from Ugarit, who later fled from his captors (Lehmann, 1979, 482; Wachsmann, 1998, 164; 2000, 104). The letter RS 20.18 (Ug 5, 22)⁶⁷ was sent by a certain *Ešuwaru*, a high dignitary or a senior governor of the kingdom of Alašiya, to the king of Ugarit. In an attempt to provide reliable information about the enemy,⁶⁸ the sender informs

⁶⁵ The correspondence between Ugarit and Alašiya concerning the movement of “the enemy” (Sea Peoples) and their invasion, gives the impression that both kingdoms were allied (Güterbock, 1967, 80).

⁶⁶ This group took part in the coalition of the Sea Peoples against Egypt during Ramses III’s 8th regal year, but not in former attacks. Wenamun found them settled at Dor around 1075 B.C. (Wachsmann, 2000, 140 note 5). For a detailed study on the *Šikla* (see Lehmann, 1979, 481, 494), and for their cultural material (see Dothan 1989, 3–13; Gilboa, 2005, 47–78).

⁶⁷ (Cf. Berger, 1969, 217). The letter was probably sent as a response to an Ugaritic one RS 20.238 (Ug 5, 24). Based on this text, Wachsmann, 2000, 104–105, assumed a political shift in Alašiya by which the Sea Peoples had taken control of Alašiya. For Ugarit he proposed that there were locals who joined the Sea Peoples and that the Sea Peoples were gradually penetrating parts of the local social strata, and then turned against their own state or against its allies.

⁶⁸ Meanwhile, Ugarit informed its Hittite allies about the enemy activities through an

the king of Ugarit of the enemy's activities: they had attacked the people and ships of Ugarit and were now equipped with 20 ships for new attacks (Klengel, 1992, 150). In the second part of the letter he writes "but now (the) twenty enemy ships even before they would reach the mountain (shore) have not stayed around but have quickly moved on". In the first part of the letter, *Ešuwaru* denies responsibility for the destruction caused by the ships of the enemy on the Ugaritic coast and blames instead the king of Ugarit. Indeed, he accuses Ugaritic crews and ships of joining the "enemy" and participating in the offensive against Ugarit:

"as for the matter concerning those enemies (it was) the people from your country (and) your own ships (who) did this. And (it was) the people from your country (who) committed these aggressions" (Hoftijzer / van Soldt, 1998, 343; cf. Lehmann, 1996, 27 note 40).

The letter RS 20.238 (Ug 5, 24) (cf. Berger, 1969, 220–221) is sent by an unnamed king of Ugarit to the king of Alašiya who is described as "father". The king of Ugarit speaks of the arrival of hostile ships; some settlements had already been destroyed and his troops were in the land of Ḫatti (they were in the service of the overlord), while his navy was in the land of Lukka⁶⁹ (Klengel, 1992, 150).

"My father, now the enemy ships are coming (and) they burn down my towns with fire. They have done unseemly things in the land. My father is not aware of the fact that all the troops of my father's overlord are stationed in Ḫatti and that all my ships are stationed in Lukka. They still have not arrived and the country is lying like that. ... Now, seven ships that are approaching have done evil things to us, now then, if there are any enemy ships send me a report somehow, so that I will know" (Hoftijzer / van Soldt, 1998, 344; Gander, 2010, 47).

The letter describes the military action of the "enemy" which was equipped with seven ships against the town of Ugarit. The king of Ugarit complains that his kingdom is unprotected and open to the enemy because his army is in Ḫatti and his ships are in Lukka. The enemy had probably made repeated attacks on the coastal line of Ugarit (Singer, 1999, 720). Judging by his distress, it can be presumed that Ammurapi called back his ships and troops from Lukka (Lehmann,

intermediary: Karkamiš. Because of its position as coastal city, it was asked to deliver any obtained information about the movement of the enemy to the Amurru kingdom in the south, according to the Akkadian text RS 20.162 (Ug 5, 37), where a certain *paršu* invokes the king of Ugarit to transmit any information about the enemy to the king of Amurru, south of Ugarit (Lehmann, 1979, 482). The sender offers a number of boats to support Ugarit (Singer, 2006, 246; 1999, 721; see Cifola, 1994, 12).

⁶⁹ Lukka was located on the Mediterranean coast (South Anatolian coast) (Gander, 2010, 48, 64).

1979, 484 note 15). The text refers to “seven enemy boats”⁷⁰ and to the king of Alašiya’s appeal to Ammurapi to keep watching the movement of the enemy fleet. The letter RSL 1 (Ug 5, 23) was sent by the king of Alašiya to Ammurapi of Ugarit. It pertains to a warning and instructions given to the king of Ugarit:

“concerning what you wrote to me: they have spotted enemy ships at sea, if they have indeed spotted ships, make yourself as strong as possible. Now, where are your own troops (and) chariotry stationed? Are they not stationed with you? If not, who will deliver you from the enemy? Surround your towns with walls; bring troops and chariotry with you inside, (then) wait at full strength for the enemy” (Hoftijzer / van Soldt, 1998, 343).

The sender⁷¹ expects from “enemy ships” an impending offensive on the kingdom of Ugarit. Ammurapi was therefore advised to strengthen his towns with walls and to bring his soldiers and chariots inside the walls (Klengel, 1992, 150; cf. Lehmann, 1979, 483f.). The last text in this group which might contain a reference to the enemy is the letter RS 16.402 (KTU 2.33, PRU 2, 12). It mentions Mukiš, north of Ugarit, which had suffered attacks by the Sea Peoples. The sender, Irr-Šarruma (a commander), addresses his lady (probably the queen, Šarli) and in the first part of the letter he reports his position on the Amanus while the enemy approaches from Mukiš; in the second part, he invokes the queen to mediate between him and the king in order to persuade him to send 2000 horses as a reinforcement to rescue him⁷² (Singer, 1999, 724–725).

The Hittites did not offer military aid to Ugarit. According to RS 20.230 (Ug 5, 24), Ugarit was left with no protection and her troops and ships were operating in Hittite regions. Karkamiš, which survived the storm of the Sea People, did not rush to help, while Ugarit was always required to put its army and navy at the Hittites’ disposal, as many texts reveal. When Ugarit was surrounded by the enemy, it gained nothing more than instructions to defend itself and some moral support, RS 88.2009, sent by an untitled Urḫi-Tešub (probably a high official at the court of Karkamiš) and addressed to the nobles of Ugarit⁷³ rather than

⁷⁰ The text designates the aggressors as “enemies from the sea, the enemy boats”. The enemy is always unnamed in the Ugaritic texts but it could refer to the Sea Peoples (Klengel, 1992, 150).

⁷¹ Traditionally, this letter has been attributed to the king of Alašiya, even if we accept that the sender is the king of Karkamiš (cf. Singer, 1999, 720 note 394). The king of Karkamiš has done nothing other than to give some moral support and leave Ugarit standing alone to face her own fate (cf. Berger, 1969, 219).

⁷² Dijkstra (1987, 46) relates the events in this letter to the war between Ugarit and Mukiš, Nuḫašše, Niya while Singer (1999, 724–725) ascribes them to the Sea Peoples (see Cifola, 1994, 10).

⁷³ The elders of Ugarit are mentioned by the names Urtenu, Yabinina and Danana. Urtenu was a rich merchant and prominent figure around 1220 B.C. who had political ties with the royal family at Ugarit. He was a contemporary to the last two kings of Uga-

to its king. The letter informs the elders of Ugarit that the king of Karkamiš has left the land of Ḫatti and that they will have to defend their city until the arrival of Ḫatti troops (Singer, 1999, 645, 729). There is no evidence that the troops ever actually arrived, but ultimately the city was left to its own fate. In the letter of *īwr̄r* to a certain *p̄l̄sy* RS 4.475 (KTU 2.10), the sender (who bears an Anatolian name and was probably from Ugarit) reports an attack or beating carried out by the warriors of the (enemy): “the arm of the gods will be greater than the force of the warriors if we resist ...” (Singer, 1999, 726–727).

The city faced danger from the west, described as “enemies from the sea, the enemy boats”, and many texts were sent from Ḫatti and Alašiya to Ugarit RS 20.238 (Ug 5, 24) and RS 34.129 (RSO 7, 12) bearing a warning. RS 20.230 (Ug 5, 24) indicates that the city of Ugarit, or at least its western side, was not fortified. According to RSL 1 (Ug 5, 23) Ammurapi was recommended by the king of Alašiya to fortify Ugarit⁷⁴ and the archaeological data revealed that only a postern gate was built in an emergency attempt to restore the defence system (Yon, 1992, 116; 2006, 22). Archaeological evidence proves that Ugarit was destroyed and has not been repopulated since, with the exception of a few remains from the Persian period (Caubet, 1992, 123f.) and some architectural modifications and poor installations probably built by shepherds or plunderers after the abandonment of the city (Yon, 1992, 118–119). A layer of up to two meters of ash in some places serves as evidence of the destruction of the city by fire, as can be seen in the *Palais Royal*: burned plaster, heaps of ash, ceilings and terraces found collapsed and walls transformed into piles of rubble (Yon, 1992, 117). Other finds, such as a LH IIIB ware⁷⁵ and an (unused) sword bearing

rit, Niqmadu III and Ammurapi (cf. Calvet, 2000, 211). For Yabninu and his house (see Courtois, 1990, 103–142; Yon, 2006, 51–54). These figures were the addressees of many letters, such as RS 88.2009 (see Malbran-Labat, 1995, 103–111; Singer, 1999, 729 and note 426), and RS 34.129 (RSO 7, 1) (cf. Dietrich/Loretz, 1978, 53–65; Lehmann, 1979, 481–494) where the Great King Šuppiluliuma II writes to a governor of Ugarit. What explains the absence of Ammurapi as addressee in these letters? Was he not in office? Was the letter RS 88.2009 sent before Ammurapi was crowned or after, or was he removed by the Hittites and temporally replaced by these three elders? Why were such governmental documents sent and archived in the house of Urtenu? This might indicate that either Ammurapi was displaced from the throne or simply ignored; in both cases this might have angered him and encouraged him to establish an alliance with Egypt or Assyria.

⁷⁴ It is not proven that Ammurapi had fortified the city. However, whether he did or not, the defence system of Ugarit failed to prevent enemy penetration (Yon, 1992, 117), and the city was devastated by human hand.

⁷⁵ From Ugarit itself, three pottery sherds were found in the deposit on the NW-fringe of the site, and identified as Mycenaean IIIC. It is not clear whether these shards can be attributed to the period after the destruction of Ugarit or to the last phase of habitation in the city. A number of bowls decorated with horizontal spirals (which became common in Mycenaean IIIC) were also found; their fabric indicates that they belong to the last stage of Mycenaean pottery IIIB (Caubet, 2000, 49).

the name of Merneptah, were unearthed at destruction level (Drews, 1993, 13; Singer, 2000, 22). In her excavations, Yon found many arrow-heads scattered throughout the ruins. In an explored area of 1500 square meters she discovered 25 arrow-tips and 30 arrow-heads, but no storehouse of weapons was found. She concluded that violent street fighting had broken out inside the city which forced the people to flee Ugarit in a hurry, or that they had been seized in their houses (Yon, 1992, 117; cf. Drews, 1993, 42–43).

4 The flight of the people of Ugarit

Until 1220 B. C. Ugarit was still a prosperous city,⁷⁶ however, its political and social structures were affected by internal and external problems. There was no military force in Ugarit to withstand the attack. An exact date for the fall of Ugarit in 1192 B. C. was established by Dietrich and Loretz 2002, based on astronomical event which seems more convincing than other proposals.⁷⁷ Textual data, especially RS 12.061 (KTU 1.78) in which Dietrich and Loretz (2002, 53–74) made a new and attractive proposal regarding the flight of the people of Ugarit, is of particular significance. It was composed in the temple at the time of the collapse of the city and was sent by the priest to the king but never arrived in the palace and was, instead, dropped at its gate because of the panicking crowd. According to Dietrich and Loretz, the tablet refers to both a solar eclipse and danger. The text constitutes the oldest record containing evidence of a solar eclipse: a warning is cited in the inscription and the conclusion is drawn that there was a connection between the astronomers and hepatocospists. The solar eclipse took place on the day of the new moon in the month *ḫyr*, the month of death rituals in Ugarit. The inhabitants of Ugarit interpreted the solar eclipse as an impending attack or catastrophe marking their end, so they fled in a hurry. This took place against a background of political instability both within and outside Ugarit (Dietrich/Loretz, 2002, 68–69, 72).

The archaeological finds do not present any evidence of a general massacre

⁷⁶ By the end of the 13th century B. C., textual and archaeological evidence showed a rapid increase in the enlargement of houses suggests considerable population growth (Yon, 1992, 114), as does the last letter RS 34.129 (RSO 7, 12) from Šuppiluliuma II of Ḫatti instructing Ugarit to ship of food there.

⁷⁷ Yon (1992, 120; 2006, 22) and Singer (1999, 729 and note 427) based on the letter of *Beya* RS 86.2230 place the end of Ugarit after the fall of the Hittite empire 1195–1185 B. C., cf. also Lehmann, 1979, 486. Van Soldt, 1991, 519, dates it to 1175 B. C. or after the disappearance of Šuppiluliuma II from the historical scene, in 1175 or 1185 B. C. (Neu, 1995, 123 and note 27). According to the letter of *Beya* RS 86.2230, Ammurapi's rule lasted to 1190 B. C. *Beya* was an Egyptian official or the chief of the troops of the king of Egypt, who sent an Akkadian letter RS 86.2230 dated to 1197–1192 B. C. to Ammurapi. *Beya* is identified as *Bay* the “great chancellor”, a dominant figure in the late 19th dynasty of Egypt, who operated during the reign of Siptah from 1197–1192 B. C. (Singer, 2000, 24).

committed against the people of Ugarit but rather of a collective flight, which supports the view of Dietrich and Loretz. Most of the finds indicate a sudden flight of the people shortly before the city's destruction. Some Ugaritians attempted to hide their valuables before fleeing, as found in the *Villa sud*. A hiding place was located there filled with bronze and gold statuettes of El and Baal and other valuable objects to which the citizens no doubt hoped to return. In many rooms, everyday objects such as cooking utensils had simply been overturned. In the northwest part of the site, crockery was found piled into a large stone basin as though suddenly abandoned in the middle of being washed. However, in general, they seem to have fled the city very hastily.⁷⁸ The invaders mainly looted the wealthy homes, palaces and temples in the city and set fire to many areas on the site (Yon, 1992, 117–118).

5 Conclusion

The fall of Ugarit at enemy hands is indubitable, but who was that enemy? Were the destroyers of Ugarit outsiders or insiders? Did Ugarit hold alliance with the Sea Peoples, as proposed by Wachsmann, or did it take part in a conspiracy against either Egypt or Ḫatti and Karkamiš, and was then punished by destruction? From the documents of Ramses III there is no sign of any threat towards Ugarit: the city enjoyed good relations with Egypt. The Egyptians and Assyrians never reached as far north-west as Mukiš during their wars with Ḫatti (Astour, 1965, 258). Ugarit may also have realized the weakness of Ḫatti (Singer, 2000, 22) and taken the opportunity to free itself from the Hittite yoke and seek alliance with the Egyptians. As has been proven by archaeological evidence, no heavy battle can have taken place within the city, since only a few scattered arrow-heads (55 in the entire city) and no corpses were ever found. The Sea Peoples probably invaded the city,⁷⁹ but there is also no plausible explanation

⁷⁸ The same can be said of Ras Ibn Hani, where the people were evacuated in an organized way (Yon, 1992, 118). It is not clear whether they took refuge in Ugarit or fled further south (Klengel, 1992, 151).

⁷⁹ Based on textual and archaeological evidence from Ugarit and Ḫatti and Egypt, many scholars (Yon, 2006, 21f.; Gilboa, 2005, 47–78; Singer, 1999, 725–731; 2000, 21–24) believe that the Sea Peoples were responsible for the entire destruction in the Levant around 1200 B.C. Some questions arise if we presume that Ugarit was destroyed by them: why did the Sea Peoples not rebuild the city and dwell there themselves? How did the Phoenician cities south of Ugarit like Byblos and Tyre survive the attack and why did the Sea Peoples travel a long way by sea and by land from Ugarit to Egypt with their chariots, women and children as described in Ramses III's relief to face a hard defeat, finally be enslaved or involved in the Egyptian army and then settle down in the southern coastal area? How groups of Sea Peoples with poor military mobilization could have successfully destroyed the powerful Ḫatti, Emar and Ugarit but were stopped by Egypt? Why are Sea Peoples mentioned by their tribal names in the Egyptian inscriptions but texts from Alašiya and Ugarit use the word "enemy" to describe them?

for the fact that the Sea Peoples should have left the city of Ugarit abandoned and continued their raids in the direction of Egypt. If they were able to expel the Ugaritians from their city, why not take advantage of the city's infrastructure as a place to settle and use as a basis for further campaigns? Whether the destroyers of Ugarit were the Sea Peoples or some other group, no satisfactory explanation can be given for the absence of skeletons on the site – unless one presumes that the inhabitants were warned in ample time and evacuated in a very orderly way, which would mean that the enemy was well known and his offensive was anticipated. This could have happened in two cases: either Ammurapi could have carried out hostile action against the Hittites or Ugarit might have been experiencing internal unrest, during which the city's elders took power or were appointed by the Hittites instead of Ammurapi, since he had already made several diplomatic mistakes with regard to Ḫatti. Thus the Hittites freed themselves of an unfaithful vassal king in times of political instability caused by the invasion of the Sea Peoples and the famine in the region. I do not assume that the Ugarit culture came to an end at the hands of the Hittites but, in light of the revisited material, I would like to suggest that the diplomatic conflict between Ugarit, Ḫatti and Karkamiš was an important factor in accelerating the fall of Ugarit. The long conflict and the accumulated distrust between both sides weakened Ugarit and made it an easy prey. May further texts and discoveries broaden our knowledge on this issue.

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