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"An Archaeology of Forced Migration. Crisis-induced mobility and the Collapse of the 13th c. BCE Eastern Mediterranean"

Driessen, Jan

ABSTRACT

This collection of papers explores whether a meaningful distinction can be made in the archaeological record between migrations in general and conflict-induced migration in particular.

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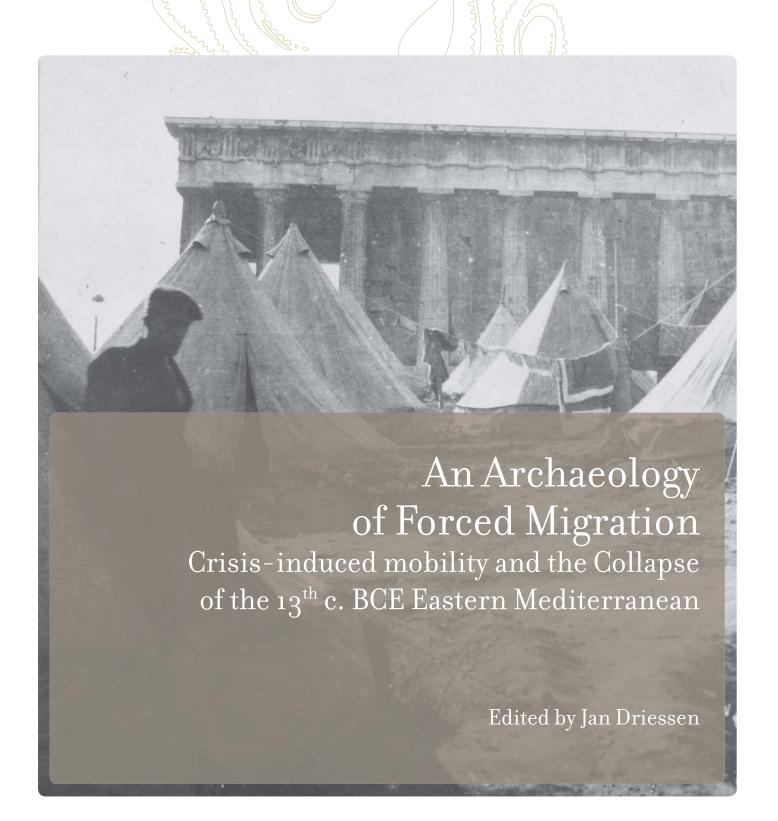
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An Archaeology of Forced Migration.

Crisis-induced mobility and the Collapse

of the 13th c. BCE Eastern Mediterranean

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Crisis-induced mobility and the Collapse

of the 13th c. BCE Eastern Mediterranean

Edited by Jan Driessen





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http://pul.uclouvain.be

Dépôt légal : D/2018/9964/41 ISBN : 978-2-87558-734-3

ISBN pour la version numérique (pdf) : 978-2-87558-735-0 Imprimé en Belgique par CIACO scrl – n° d'imprimeur : 97672

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Graphic design: Marie-Hélène Grégoire Cover image: Tent village in the shadows of the Temple of Theseus, Athens, where Greek refugees make their homes (1922). American National Red Cross photograph collection, held by the Library of Congress (LC-USZ62-139254) Volume set in Adobe InDesign CS6 by Nicolas Kress

Distribution: www.i6doc.com, on-line university publishers Available on order from bookshops or at Diffusion universitaire CIACO (University Distributors) Grand-Rue, 2/14 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

Tel: +32 10 47 33 78 Fax: +32 10 45 73 50 duc@ciaco.com

Distributor in France: Librairie Wallonie-Bruxelles 46 rue Quincampoix 75004 Paris, France Tel: +33 1 42 71 58 03

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7. The Kurustama Treaty

An Example of Early Forced Migration?

Johanne Garny Jan Tavernier

Introduction: the Kurustama Treaty

Forced migration was not an uncommon practice in the history of the Ancient Near East (*cf.* Beckman 2013: 210) and is logically amply attested in the textual material stemming from this region. Without doubt, the most known examples of forced migration in the Ancient Near East are the large-scale deportations effectuated by the Neo-Assyrian Empire (*cf.* Oded 1979) and the deportation of many Jews, better known as the Jewish Captivity, by the Neo-Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II. In Hittite history too, forced migration can be detected. The earliest known example dates from the reign of Tudhaliya I/II, who deported from the lands of Western Anatolia large number of military (Bryce 2005: 124). Many other examples of deportation of military staff would follow this first example, especially during the reign of Suppiluliuma I (*ca.* 1350-1322 BCE).

In the Ancient Near East, forced migrations were usually the result of the annexation of territories by a victorious conqueror (*e.g.* the Neo-Assyrian deportations) or of a punitive expedition by a sovereign ruler against one of his vassals (*e.g.* the Jewish Captivity). On the other hand, it does not often occur as a clause in a treaty, a type of document that is well attested, however.

The case study conducted here could therefore be quite interesting, if it can be proven that forced migration is dealt with of course. The treaty discussed here is the so-called Kurustama Treaty, the oldest known Egypto-Hittite treaty, much less famous, however, than its later colleague, the Peace treaty between Hattusili III and Ramses II. One of the reasons for this is the fragmentary and indirect state in which the Kurustama Treaty has come to us.

In fact, the Kurustama Treaty is referred to three times in other Hittite texts, all dating to the reign of Mursili II (*ca.* 1321-1295 BCE):

- The Deeds of Suppiluliuma I (CTH 40 E₃ iv 25-39): in this text, Suppiluliuma allegedly asked for documents concerning past relations between the two Empires, *i.e.* Egypt and Hatti:

Then my father asked for the tablet of the treaty (in which it was told) how formerly the Storm-God took the man of Kurustama, a son of Hatti, and carried him to the land of Egypt, and made them men of Egypt; and how the Storm-god concluded a treaty between the lands of Egypt and Hatti, and how they were continuously friendly with each other. And when they had read aloud the tablet before them, then my father addressed them as following: "Of old, Hattusa and Egypt were friendly with each other, and now, this too has taken place between us. Henceforth Hatti and Egypt will continuously be friendly with each other" (Translation: Güterbock 1956: 98; Singer 2004: 594).

-Mursili's 'Second' Plague Prayer to the Storm God of Hatti (CTH 378.II § 4):

The second tablet dealt with the town of Kurustama: how the Storm-god of Hatti carried the men of Kurustama to the land of Egypt; and how the Storm-god of Hatti made for them a treaty with the men of Hatti, so that they were put under oath by the Storm-god of Hatti. Since the men of Hatti and the men of Egypt were bound by the oath of the Storm-god of Hatti, and the men of Hatti proceeded to get the upper hand, the men of Hatti thereby transgressed the oath of the gods at once. My father sent infantry and chariotry, and they attacked the borderland of Egypt, the land of Amqa. And again he sent, and again they attacked [...]. When I found the aforementioned tablet dealing with Egypt, I inquired about it to the god through an oracle saying: "Has this matter been brought about by the Storm-god of Hatti because the men of Egypt and the men of Hatti had been put under oath by the Storm-god of Hatti?" (Translation: Singer 2002: 58-59; 2004: 595).

- Mursili's 'Fifth' Plague Prayer to the Assembly of Gods (CTH 379 ii 6-24)1:

[It was a tablet about] Egypt. To this tablet, I did not add any word, nor did I remove [any]. O gods, my lords, take notice! I do not know whether any of those who were kings before me added [any word] to it or removed any. I do not know anything, and I have not heard a word of it since. I did not concern myself with those borders, which were set for us by the Storm-god. Those borders that my father left me, those borders [I kept]. I did [not] desire from him [anything]. Neither [did I take anything(?)] from his borderland (Translation: Singer 2002: 67; 2004: 596).

These three testimonies already give us some information on the Kurustama Treaty. In sum, one can retrieve the following data from the three texts:

According to an Egypto-Hittite treaty consulted by Suppiluliuma, a group of people from Kurustama were transferred from Hatti to Egypt, thus becoming Egyptian subjects. This agreement was supervised by the Storm-God (testimony one and two).

Good diplomatic relations continued under Suppiluliuma, who also had the intention to keep it that way (testimony one).

When the Hittites were getting more powerful, under Suppiluliuma, they transgressed the oath and the peace treaty by twice attacking Egyptian territory, in particular the land of Amqa (testimony two). This transgression appears as one of the causes of the plague epidemic, which Mursili had to face during his reign (Bryce 2005: 206).

The text of the treaty contained some stipulations concerning the borders between the two empires (testimony three).

Mursili II states that he was very respectful to the Kurustama Treaty (testimony three). Even if this text fragment does not explicitly mention the name of Kurustama, it is very likely that this treaty is meant here. The fragment cited here is part of a larger section on the relations with Egypt, more particularly on the dossier of Zannanza. It seems therefore reasonable that, when a tablet on both the frontiers of the Hittite Empire and the Hittite-Egyptian relations is mentioned, it is this treaty that is referred to.

Besides those three sources on the Treaty, there are some fragments mentioning Kurustama, the Storm-God, Hatti and Egypt (regrouped under CTH 134; edited by Singer 2004: 597-602 and by Breyer 2010: 142-145). Although the text is unfortunately very fragmentary, various clauses can be discerned:

There is a non-aggression pact between Hatti and Egypt.

Hatti and Egypt should become helpers of each other and they should defend each other.

The men of Kurustama should be 'sons of Egypt' (admittedly, the text is not very clear here).

Most scholars believe that CTH 134 belongs to the Treaty of Kurustama because of the matters mentioned in the fragments (Rosenkranz 1957: 234; Kühne 1972: 252-254; Carruba 1976: 302; Singer 2004: 602-603; Groddek 2008: 37; Devecchi 2015: 264). Due to its implausible and even farfetched character, the alternative hypothesis of Sürenhagen (1985: 31-37) that CTH 134 is a separate treaty ('Entlassungsvertrag') between Kurustama and the Hittite state mentioning obligations towards the two Empires, and accordingly not the Treaty of Kurustama itself, can safely be discarded. Concerning one of the fragments (KBo 8.37), some authors believe that it is a fragment of a letter (Kammenhuber 1970: 62; Kühne 1972: 254, n. 97).

Date of the Treaty

The date of this treaty has been an issue of debate for several decades². At first, scholars thought that the Treaty of Kurustama was written during the reign of Suppiluliuma I. Forrer (1937: 111-112) dates it to 1352 BCE which is the year of the death of pharaoh Amenhotep IV. Malamat (1955: 5-6; also Kitchen 1962: 22 and n. 1 and von Schuler 1965: 38 and n.224) pleads for a date not too late in the reign of Suppiluliuma, because later on this king violated the treaty by attacking Amqa, an Egyptian territory in Syria. On the other hand, according to him, the date

¹ The fragmentary character of this text has led Sürenhagen (1985: esp. 104-107) to believe that it is a purification oath. Nevertheless, most authors agree on the fact that it is one of Mursili's Plague Prayers (Lebrun 1980: 240; Houwink ten Cate 1987: 19-20; Singer 2002: 66).

² The uncertainty of the date is nicely illustrated by Devecchi (2015: 265), who gives as Hittite candidates Tudhaliya I/II, Arnuwanda I or Suppiluliuma I, whereas her Egyptian candidates are Thutmose III, Amenhotep II or Amenhotep III.

cannot be put before the reign of Suppiluliuma neither, because a pact between the two empires concluded at an earlier date is improbable, and because some Amarna letters reflect good relationships between Suppiluliuma and Amenhotep IV (see for example EA 41).

An argument allegedly supporting a date in the time of Suppiluliuma I is an extract of the peace treaty established between Hattusili III and Ramses II after the Battle of Qadesh (argument supported by Güterbock 1960: 58). The text says: "As for the standing treaty which had been current in the time of Suppiluliu(ma), the Great Ruler of Hatti, and likewise the standing treaty which existed in the time of Mutalli (*sic*), the Great Ruler of Hatti, my father – I hold firm to it" (Edition in Edel 1997: 27-29; translation: Kitchen 1996: 81).

The text has "Mutalli, the Great Ruler of Hatti, my father" (line 24f: *Mwtl p3-wr-'3 n(y) Ḥt p3y.i it*) which is doubtlessly a mistake and can be emended in two ways: either "Mursili my father" (Spalinger 1981: 322; Obsomer 2012: 198-199), or "Muwatalli my brother" (Sürenhagen 1985: 86 n. 131; Kitchen 1996: 81; Edel 1997: 29). Historically seen, the first option is the most probable one (Obsomer 2016: 138-139).

Nonetheless, the text does not mention a treaty concluded by Suppiluliuma I or Mursili II, but simply about the existence of such a treaty during the reigns of these two kings. The remark by Obsomer (2012: 199 and 2016: 139) that the treaties mentioned in the Peace Treaty concerned border agreements and that one cannot know whether the Kurustama Treaty is referred to, does not pose a problem for the assumption that the Kurustama Treaty is referred to here. The Kurustama Treaty, albeit incomplete, must also have contained clauses on the Egypto-Hittite borders.

There is also the fact that Mursili II claims not to know whether former kings have modified the wording of the treaty. This implies that between the conclusion of the treaty and its mentioning by Mursili II, more than one king must have governed over the Hittite lands (Singer 2004: 596; Breyer 2010: 142). Knowing that the reign of Arnuwanda II (1322-1321 BCE), who occupied the throne between Suppiluliuma I and Mursili II, was too short (max. 18 months; *cf.* Bryce 2005: 191) to have modified the treaty, thereby affecting the diplomatic relations between the two Empires, the treaty should have been modified by Suppiluliuma himself or one of his predecessors.

Objecting a date in the reign of Suppiluliuma I, various scholars believe that the treaty must be dated before the reign of this king. Houwink ten Cate (1963: 274) simply states that the treaty was concluded "some time prior to the resurgence of Mitannian power that marked the reign of Tushratta". Goetze (1965: 11; 1975: 9) argues that the conclusion of the treaty took place in the reign of a pharaoh who still controlled Syria and a Hittite king who was still in possession of the Taurus frontier, meaning a king reigning before the rebellion against Tudhaliya III, Suppiluliuma's father. This also implies a date before the growing role of Mitanni on the international scene. According to Helck (1971: 166), the kings implied could be Thutmose III or Amenhotep II on the Egyptian side, or even Thutmose I. Also Kühne (1972: 254, n. 98; 1973: 90-91, n. 456) believes in a date before Suppiluliuma I. The presence of archaic forms such as *estu*, *natta*, *uddanda* and *paittani* lead Carruba (1976: 302-303) to believe in an ancient date, more precisely the reign of Tudhaliya I/II, a king who has made conquests in Syria and has been in contact with the Egyptians, who ruled a great part of the region at that time (Bryce 2005: 140-141).

Hittite lexicology also might support an earlier date. In fact, the lexemes *annaz* and *karuiliyaza*, occurring in testimony one, rather point to a further distance in time⁴ (Kühne 1973: 90-91, n. 456), and therefore to a date before Suppiluliuma I. Moreover, in testimony one, Suppiluliuma explicitly says that "Of old, Hattusa and Egypt were friendly with each other, and now, this too has taken place between us", using the word *karuiliyaza*. Contrary, however, to what Breyer (2010: 143) assumes, Suppiluliuma did not utter these words to an Egyptian envoy, but to the scribes who read to him the tablet of the Kurustama Treaty.

Another indication towards an earlier date might possibly be found in an Egyptian testimony of the time of Amenhotep II (Singer 2004: 606). After his return from his year 9 Asiatic campaign (*ca.* 1417 BCE), the pharaoh Amenhotep II received envoys of kings of other states asking the pharaoh for peace, and he described this event on stelae (in Memphis and Karnak):

³ Even if this emendation were true, it would also be an argument in favour of an earlier date for the Kurustama Treaty, as Muwatalli II, who had a conflictual relationship with Egypt, would probably not have concluded a treaty with the Egyptian empire (Sürenhagen 1985: 28).

⁴ Friedrich (1952: 2, 104 resp.) has "einst, früher" for *annaz* and "seit alters" for *karuiliyaza*. Friedrich & Kammenhuber (1975: 81) have "früher" for *annaz*. Tischler (1977: 29; 1980: 528; 2008: 17, 82 resp.) has "einst, früher" for *annaz* and "von alters her" for *karuiliyaza*. Kloekhorst (2008: 173) derives *annaz* from a stem *anna*- and translates "formerly, once upon a time". The same scholar (2008: 458) derives the word *karuiliyaza* from a stem *karūili*- "formerly, ancient".

Now the chieftain of Naharin, the chieftain of Hatti and the chieftain of Babylon heard of the great victory which I had achieved, everyone vying with his fellow with all the gifts of all the foreign lands. They decided on behalf of the fathers of their fathers to plead for peace from his Majesty that they might be given the breath of life. "We bear our dues to your palace, O son of Rê, Amenhotep, the-divine-ruler-of-Heliopolis, ruler of rulers, panther that rages in all foreign lands and in this land forever" (Edition: Helck 1955: 1309; translation: Cumming 1982: 32).

In conclusion, diplomatic relations between Egypt and different great powers including Hatti were probably instigated under Amenhotep II, after his Asiatic campaigns. As 'the Deeds of Suppiluliuma' (testimony one) seem to indicate that a peace treaty was concluded before the reign of this ruler, the Kurustama treaty must probably be dated to the time of Amenhotep II in Egypt (1427-1401 BCE) and Tudhaliya I/II in Hatti (*ca.* 1430-1400 BCE). This Hittite king extended his power over Syria and consequently reigned in continuous rivalry with the Egyptians and their interests in the region (Singer 2004: 605; Groddek 2008: 37). To avoid an open war, a treaty between the two Empires may have been useful. Nevertheless, Breyer (2010: 147) still believes that Thutmose III was the Egyptian pharaoh concluding the treaty, because he had, at that time, a sufficiently strong position in Syria to be considered worthy of a treaty by the Hittites.

Is there forced migration in the Kurustama Treaty?

The extant fragments of the Kurustama Treaty (CTH 134) stipulate that the Hittites and Egyptians should be allies (*sartes*; *cf.* Groddek 2008: 40) and mentions 'Men of Kurustama' (Lú^{meš uru}Ku-ru-uš-t[a-ma]; KBo 8.37 obv. 7'5) as well as "Citizens of Kurustama" (DUMU^{meš uru}Ku-ru-uš-[ta-ma]; Bo 35086). According to Beal (1992: 117-127), Singer (2004: 602) and Breyer (2010: 146), these 'men' are *sartes*-troops, a kind of military support troops, not levied from the local population, but real soldiers sent by a vassal? Nevertheless, the very fragmentary text never explicitly states that the Kurustama-men themselves are soldiers, it just says that the Hittites must be *sartes* to the Egyptians and vice versa (*cf.* Breyer 2010: 146). In fact, we do not know who they were precisely. It is possible that they were soldiers, but they might equally be civilians that were deported to the Egyptian territory in the framework of the treaty. As a matter of fact, such deportations of civilians are attested elsewhere in Hittite texts. A good example is the vow text KUB 56.23 where Puduhepa promises the Mother Goddess of Saḥḥaniya to settle 300 deportees in the town of Siyatta. In another text (KBo 12.53+KUB 48.105), mention is made of an institution (£ *duppaš*) being responsible for transferring deportees to the temple of Pirwa.

Such deportees, called *armwala* in Hittite and $^{\text{lú}}$ NAM.RA in Sumerian, were most likely civilian prisoners captured by the Hittite army and put to various kinds of work (*cf.* Hoffner 2002). Although they were not free, they had a higher status than ordinary slaves did. Nevertheless, they were some kind of prisoners of war, albeit not necessarily soldiers themselves.

In addition, there are some aspects, which may cause doubt on the exclusively military character of the Kurustama-men. First, the Hittite texts CTH 40 and CTH 378 mention that it was the Storm-God who led the Kurustama-men to Egyptian territory. Secondly, they are called Lú^{meš} uruKurustama and DUMU^{meš} uruKurustama (the term DUMU already pointing to a more civil character), without any indication of their military character (*e.g.* ERÍN^{meš}). Thirdly, soldiers are not mentioned with their geographical provenance. Finally, movements of troops are in general not explicitly mentioned in Hittite treaties. Only two treaties mention Hittite garrisons in Anatolia: that between Mursili and Targasnalli of Hapalla (Beckman 1996: 64-69; Kitchen & Lawrence 2012: 494-503) and that between Mursili II and Kupanta-Kurunta of Mira-Kuwaliya (Beckman 1996: 69-77). In both treaties, the wording is quite different from the wording used in the Kurustama Treaty. Here the movement is not mentioned. The text simply states that the vassal king has to support the Hittite garrison sent to him by Mursili II. Moreover, the lexeme used for 'garrison' is not *sartes* or something similar, but the Sumerogram ÉRIN^{meš}, which represents Hittite *tuzzi*-(Tischler 2008: 248)⁸.

⁵ Cf. Singer (2004: 597).

⁶ Cf. Kühne (1972: 253) and Singer (2004: 598).

⁷ Singer (2004: 604) is convinced that these men must be auxiliary troops that are to be attached to the Egyptian army, because that was a frequent practice in Egyptian history. One example is the demand of men from Kaska by Amenhotep III in the Amarna Correspondence.

⁸ The Chicago Hittite Dictionary translates sardiya- with "ally, supporter, helper" (CHD Š/2: 292-294), without any military connotation.

In conclusion, this article does not give explicit answers to the question asked in its title. It remains best to be prudent, as was done by Ünal (1980-1983: 373), who argues that the professional background (deportees, slaves, nomads, military, prisoners) as well as the ethnic origin (Hittite, Kaska or Hattian) of these people are unknown. The specific reason why these people had to be moved also remains obscure, unless they had a military function. Again, we must admit that we cannot give a clear answer to the question whether the Kurustama Treaty is an early example of forced migration in Hittite history. However, the military character of the men of Kurustama, as postulated by various scholars, is far from sure either.

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