

A New Deciphering and a Prosopographical Study Regarding the Hittite Seals 191BG, 192BG and T3.1 Along with Some Considerations*

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Abstract

The article concerns the seals 191BG, 192BG, T3.1 and the related speculative implications. The topics covered in this article are: a. an analysis of the seal impressions 191BG (BOEHMER-GÜTERBOCK 1987, n.191), 192BG (BOEHMER-GÜTERBOCK 1987, n.192), T3.1 (DINÇOL-DINÇOL 2003) having the same or similar legends; b. prosopographical study of the supposed owner Kanisatu (or Ka-x-satu); c. a discussion about the title/expression MAGNUS.VIR-pi (Güterbock's transliteration); d. some consideration about the new transliteration proposed here, i.e. MAGNUS.VIR.PI and some possible implications regarding the vernacular language at the end of the late imperial period of Hatti.

Keywords

Hittites, Seals, Epigraphy, Boğazköy-Ḫattuša.

In this article we deal with the decipherment of the inscriptions of some seal impressions coming from Boğazköy, where laid the ancient capital of the Hittite kingdom, i.e. Ḫattuša. The following is a brief introduction to the city and the material analyzed in this paper.

The first excavation in Boğazköy was undertaken by Ernst Chantre in the 1894 in the area of Büyükkale and the Great Temple. Since 1906, the German Oriental Society has been excavating at Ḫattuša (with breaks during the two World Wars and the Depression, 1913–31 and 1940–51). Archaeological work is still carried out by the German Archaeological Institute (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut). Hugo Winckler and Theodore Makridi Bey conducted the first excavations in 1906, 1907, and 1911–13, which were resumed in 1931 under Kurt Bittel, followed by Peter Neve until 1994. In recent years the directors of the excavations have been Jürgen Seeher (until 2005) and Andreas Schachner.

The ruins that have been brought to light by archaeologists, and which are now visible, correspond to the final stage of life of the Hittite capital, largely rebuilt at the time of the rulers Ḫattušili III, Tuthaliya IV and Šuppiliuluma II. At its peak the city covered approximately 165 hectares and comprised two large areas within its monumental and massive enclosure wall: a Lower City and an Upper City. Outside the walls were cemeteries, most of which contain cremation burials, and it is possible there were some

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villages. Modern estimates put the population of the city between 20,000 and 50,000 at the peak.

The Lower City was occupied by a densely inhabited city district whose foundations and arrangement can still be seen in the area north to a well-preserved ruin of a large Hittite temple, known as Great Temple or Temple I. The Lower City comprises (includes) a citadel too. This acropolis was built on a high ridge now known as Büyükkale (Great Fortress) and consists in a palatial and religious complex (administrative and religious buildings), included the royal residence.

To the south lay the Upper City, with elaborate gateways decorated with reliefs showing warriors, lions, and sphinxes. This district was the latest built in Hattusa and doubled its area. It is the result of an urban project wanted by Tuthaliya IV, who probably wanted to build here a large worship/religious complex. In fact, the Upper City (at least so it appears) mostly consisted of a temple city for the gods and goddesses of the Hittite and Hurrian pantheon, although later under the reign of Suppiliuluma II there were also dwellings and craft workshops, indication of a change of function throughout the area.

In the Upper City we find the site of Nişantepe, a rocky outcrop where in 1990 and 1991 excavations uncovered a 'seal archive' consisting of several thousand items located in three basement rooms in the so-called Westbau. The great majority of these are on bullae, but they also appear on a small number of land-grant documents. This material is of remarkable importance also for this article which deals with some (sealings) bullae engraved with hieroglyphic signs.

Seals are a notable source of information from many points of view (linguistic, prosopographic, social, etc.). The use of seals is well known throughout the ancient near east and dates back to remote times. The Hittite seals are mostly mould seals (stamp seals) and engraved in the hieroglyphic script. The hieroglyphic inscription of the seals (usually) record the name and titles of the king or the name and title/titles of the official or dignitary. "Seals were used as a form of personal signature, both on clay bullae as well as on a range of documents, including land-grants, other royal gifts, record of goods purchased, and treaties. Some of the bullae were affixed to important documents, other served to seal access to buildings or rooms within them and sometimes to chests or boxes" (BRYCE 2005: 389).

The earliest Hittite seals known to us, date to the late sixteenth and early fifteenth centuries. And they became widespread in the Hittite society during the late imperial period. It is important to note that from about 1400 BC onwards, royal seals (and few other private seals) featured both hieroglyphic and cuneiform inscriptions. Anyway, only in rare cases have the original seals been preserved, while more frequently their footprints have survived on bullae, sealings or clay tablets. Until recently, only a few hundred Hittite sealings were known, this number has now increased dramatically thanks to the excavations at Nişantepe. "The seals are engraved in Anatolian hieroglyphic script, a particular pictographic writing which was perhaps initially inspired by the monumental script of Egypt. (...) More recent work on the language of the inscriptions has established its virtual identity with that of the Luwian cuneiform texts" (BRYCE 2005: 388).

The earliest known example of the hieroglyphic script appears on seal impressions of the sixteenth century but the majority of hieroglyphic texts date to the thirteenth century, or (by far the larger category) to the period from about 1100 to 700 BC, i.e. the period of the neo-Hittite kingdoms.

This article has as its main objective the deciphering of the hieroglyphic inscription of some bullae found at Ḫattuša, which could have derived from seals belonged to a one single owner. By a comparative analysis and by exploiting the cuneiform documentation we will identify the possible profession/function of this owner/dignitary. In fact (usually) the hieroglyphic inscriptions of the bullae provide useful supplementary information about their owners in addition to what we know of them from other sources. The prosopographical study of this seal owner leads us to establish a correspondence between a hieroglyphic expression (on the bullae) and an equivalent cuneiform expression attested in the clay tablets. The analysis of the language by which to read that hieroglyphic expression, that refers to a specific profession / title, allows us to make some brief considerations on the true vernacular language in use in the Hittite kingdom during the late empire period. A long-debated and still open question. From my point of view, paradoxically, the Hittite reading of this hieroglyphic expression is a proof that the vernacular language at the end of the Hittite empire was the Luwian one. But these final considerations are far from being a definitive proof and have the only claim to be one of the many pieces that scholars could take into consideration to address the socio-linguistic aspects of the Hittite society at the end of the Bronze Age. Anyway, the main objective of this paper is to provide a new reading (a re-reading) of some sealings coming from Temple I (the Great Temple located in the Lower City) as well as from Temple III (located in the Upper City).

1. Introduction to the seals 191BG, 192BG

This article is an extract from my Ph.D. dissertation (MASSI 2007). The hieroglyphic signs are denoted by the letter “L” followed by a number, as given in Hawkins and Herbordt’s list of hieroglyphic signs (HERBORDT 2005) obviously based on Laroche’s list of hieroglyphic signs (LAROUCHE 1960). Furthermore, the seals are indicated with specific phrases in accordance with the publications from which they have been taken. This is also to avoid confusion among the different seal collections.

191BG (see Fig. 1, left) is a concave partial imprint of a seal located at the base of a conical bulla (MASSI 2007: 298-314), containing impressions of another seal on the cloak (BOEHMER – GÜTERBOCK 1987: n.247). The conical bulla was found in warehouse n.32 of the Temple I, in Ḫattuša, and it is dated to the late empire period. This seal was first published by Güterbock (GÜTERBOCK 1975). The legend has the following signs (BOEHMER – GÜTERBOCK 1987, n.191): L363(!), L312, L66, L434, x/L55, L415, L89, L363(!), L312, L66. The sign transcribed here as L363(!) was initially transcribed by Güterbock as L367. That reading was certainly an error, as it is evident that the sign has to be rendered as L363 (BOEHMER – GÜTERBOCK 1987: 66). The edge of the seal was not impressed with hieroglyphic signs or iconographic motifs. For stylistic reasons the seal can be dated back to the late empire period, mainly because the legend is delimited by two engraved circles with no sign between them.

We can compare this seal with another seal found in the area k/15 of Ḫattuša, that is the 192BG (BOEHMER – GÜTERBOCK 1987, n.192) (see Fig. 1, right). As a matter of fact, both seal impressions have the same hieroglyphic signs in the legend, and are arranged in the same order. Nevertheless, because of the positions of the hieroglyphic signs in the legend, the two impressions refer to two different seals. In particular, one should note the

position of L66 (pi): in 192BG this sign is much closer to the central column, whereas in 191BG the sign is aligned to the left side column.

There is another slight difference between 191BG and 192BG. As pointed out by Güterbock, the difference is in the central column of the legend, where the proper name of the owner of seal is likely to be given: in 191BG there is the sign L434 (ka) while in 192BG there is the sign L56 (ká) (BOEHMER – GÜTERBOCK, 1987: 66). “Aber die weitgehende Übereinstimmung mit Nr. 191 in allen anderen Zeichen führt dazu, es zu ka₃ (L56) als graphische Variante zu dem ka(L434) von Nr. 191 zu ergänzen, was nach dem erhaltenen Teil durchaus möglich ist” (BOEHMER – GÜTERBOCK 1987: 67).

Moreover, both L56 and L434 have the same phonetic value “ka”. Boehmer and Güterbock also recognized the sign L55 (ni) that in my opinion is not so evident. The proper name should therefore be either Kanisatu or another name based on the structure of Ka-x-satu, where “x” stands for a grapheme yet to be found.

2. Comparison with the seal T3.1

In their article in the *Fs Hoffner*, Ali and Belkis Dinçol deal with an imprint of a seal found during the excavation campaign of 1986 in room 8 of Temple III, in *Ḫattuša* (DINÇOL – DINÇOL 2003: 93-100). We are going to name this seal imprint, which is particularly interesting for our topic, as T3.1 (see Fig. 3) as it is the first seal impression of Temple III analyzed here. The Dinçols deal with this seal only to give a confirmation of the dating of the other seal impressions left on the same piece of clay. It dates to the thirteenth century BC. The dating will therefore be the same as for the two seal impressions analyzed here. The similarity among T3.1, 191BG and 192BG is obvious (see fig.3 and fig.1). T3.1 imprint is neither a result of the seal of 191BG, nor of 192BG. Each one of them is the result of a different seal. T3.1 has two interesting differences when compared to 191BG and 192BG: one difference is the birth given name, and the other one regards to the title, where a sign is replaced by another one with the filling function as we shall see further on.

3. Deciphering of the birth given name of the seal owner

The proper name is located in the middle column of the legend and is made up of four signs. It is almost identical both in T3.1 and 191BG as well as in 192BG. The deciphering proposed by the Dinçols differs from that proposed by Güterbock. According to the Dinçols these four marks are L434, L39, L415 and L278; from them the proper name K/Ga-ta-sa-li proposed by the Dinçols is derived. I prefer the transliteration formerly given by Güterbock, Ka-ni-sa-tu. As for the second sign, we have already seen that there are some doubts; however, I think it is much more likely to be referred to L55 than L39. With regards to the fourth sign, it is true that there is a little difference from the “canonic” “tu” (L88), although the difference is not so marked as to exclude this possibility. Moreover, it is even less likely to refer to “li” (L278) as Ali and Belkis Dinçol believe. Anyway the Dinçols interpret the name as K/Ga-ta-sa-li, owing to its similarity to the names of *Ḫurrian* women with the final in –sal(l)i, as for example *Amissal(l)i*, *Qanzussalli*, *Sinis(s)al(l)i*, *Tehupsal(l)i* (GELB 1963: 250), even if they also point out that the cuneiform texts document the existence of male names of *Ḫurrian* origin too, as for example *Tahisalli* (LAROCHE 1966, NH1203: 169). This last point is relevant for them

because in the title of the seal T3.1 the sign VIR appears, clearly indicative of a man's name (or profession). Even if we assume that this reading is correct, it would not be very useful to us since the name Ka-ta-sa-li does not appear on the cuneiform texts. I believe on the contrary it is also misleading, as the fourth sign is hardly a "li" but it is much more likely to be a "tu".

The main problem is that no Kanisatu or Katasali or Ka-x-satu, the latter being understood as a pattern of name, appears on the cuneiform documents. No cuneiform document mentions any of these names. Therefore, the cuneiform documents do not help us to decipher the seal owner's name. We can base the deciphering only on the analysis of the hieroglyphic signs, and from this point of view Güterbock's proposal seems to me more correct.

Since the mere identification/transcription of the proper name of the seal owner has not given us any results, we proceed with a prosopographical study, obviously starting from the title.

4. Deciphering of the title / profession

In this section we will deal with the deciphering and the interpretation of the title/profession of the seals 191BG, 192BG and T3.1. For the seals 191BG and 192BG the signs in question are L363, L312 and L66 or L270. This title in Güterbock's opinion is to be transliterated with MAGNUS.VIR-pi, recognizing the third sign as L66; in Hawkins' opinion the title/profession is to be transliterated with MAGNUS.VIR.SUPER, giving to the third sign the interpretation of L270, which he clearly differentiates from L66. In my opinion Güterbock's reading is to be preferred since the third sign can be assimilated to L66 more easily than L270. Moreover, as far as I know, VIR.SUPER has no corresponding title in cuneiform writing and no clear explanation; on the contrary VIR-pi could have some corresponding options. We are going to discuss the reasons as to why the second transliteration (MAGNUS.VIR-pi) is to be preferred, together with their implications.

Let us reconsider the seal imprint T3.1. We already know that this seal has the same proper name as the owner of the seals 191BG and 192BG, as illustrated before. Now we have to consider its title/profession. Although the signs indicating the profession are very similar in all of the three seal imprints, the Dinçols have given a very different transliteration for T3.1, which is very different from the transliteration obtained by the same signs in 191BG-192BG. My analysis deviates from the Dinçols' point of view. With reference to the identification of signs indicating the title/profession of the seal imprint T3.1 (see Fig. 3), the Dinçols do recognize the signs L312 and L66 but with the reversed order as compared to the corresponding signs (marks) that are in 191BG-192BG. In addition, the Dinçols identify a third sign to complete the title, but this sign is not listed in any hieroglyphic lexicons, it is an unknown sign. Therefore, the title, according to their interpretation, would be: "*Pi-ZITI-x*" or "*Pi-x-ZITI*" (DINÇOL – DINÇOL 2003: 99).

What is this mysterious sign? Has it ever been found in other seals? The sign is not associated with any of those catalogued. Its morphology resembles that of a stylized daisy. This sign also appears in other seals of the same period as those we are examining here, and according to the Dinçols it dates from to the 13th century (late empire period). In this period the mentioned sign appears quite often and it always serves as a filling sign (or as an embellishment sign) without any phonetic value. Because of its function, it

should be excluded from the rendering of the title. Then again (on the other hand) it is not the first time that there is a filling sign (or an embellishment sign) among the signs which indicate the profession / title, as, for example, in the title GAL.GEŠTIN as it is given in the seals from Nişantepe (HERBORDT 2005; MASSI 2007, 2010). At this stage the title is reduced to a *Pi-ZITI*, at least if we follow the Dinçols' reconstruction.

The sign L312 is an ideogram usually transliterated with the Latin VIR, however the Dinçols read this sign in the Luwian language, that is "ziti". It could be plausible because very often in the hieroglyphs we have L312 followed by L376 (zi/a) that specifies the Luwian reading. But in this case we do not have any evidence of a L376, so it would be inappropriate to take for granted a Luwian reading of the ideographic sign L312. Therefore, the most correct transliteration should be *Pi-VIR*.

Another two considerations are necessary and appropriate. Firstly, if we read the left column from left to right, as indeed would be normal, the order of the signs would be opposed to that averred by the Dinçols, so the proper order would be *VIR-pi*. This order would be more appropriate, as a syllable that follows the ideogram could be its phonetic indicator or the phonetic complement. Secondly the positions of L66 and L312 in T3.1 are identical to those occupied by the same signs in the seal imprints 192BG and 191BG. Also because of this, it was said that the two seals should be attributed to the same character (person). Moreover, these two signs are authoritatively read by Güterbock as *VIR-pi*. The order is more likely to be *VIR-pi*.

Until now I have always dealt with this expression (*VIR-pi*; *MAGNUS.VIR-pi*) as an expression referring to the profession/title and not to the sex of the seal owner. Yet the sign VIR specifically indicates the male sex (in the T3.1 it appears alone with only the phonetic complement). The reason is clear, supported by a lot of evidence. First of all, when VIR indicates the male sex its phonetic complement is *-zi/a*, the phonetic complement for the Luwian reading *ziti* (man). In these cases, the phonetic value *-pi* is never associated with VIR; where (when) VIR has a phonetic complement, it is always *-zi/a* giving the Luwian interpretation. Moreover, in the seals 191BG and 192BG (seals that have the same name, the same iconographical morphology, and as we have already seen, the same expression in the lateral column of signs) there is the sign MAGNUS too, and this sign can be associated with a profession or a proper name. There is no other possibility in the legends of these two seals. Considering that here MAGNUS can not be associated with the proper name, without any doubt it is to be associated with the title/profession. So *VIR-pi* and *MAGNUS.VIR-pi*, most certainly, express the title/profession. In conclusion *VIR-zi* used in glyptics it indicates the sex (male) of the owner of the seal, but when we have *MAGNUS.VIR-pi* or *VIR-pi* used in glyptics it indicates a title/profession.

The main difference between the seal T3.1 and the seals 191BG and 192BG is that the title/profession in T3.1 is made up of two signs (*VIR-pi*), while in 191BG and 192BG the title/profession is given by three signs (*MAGNUS.VIR-pi*). We know that MAGNUS, the equivalent of cuneiform GAL, does not change the meaning of the title /profession, but elevates it to a higher position within the same profession. GAL plus *KARTAPPU* does not indicate another profession but "only" the GAL *KARTAPPU* in the sense of "the big (sometimes understood as the head, the chief) of *KARTAPPU*", so it is the connection between GEŠTIN and GAL ^{LÚ}GEŠTIN, between ^{LÚ}.MEŠDUB.SAR and the GAL ^{LÚ}.MEŠDUB.SAR, and so on. Hence, among the seals imprints examined here, there would

not be a difference in the profession, but only in the degree of the position within the same profession, one being the simple one (T3.1) and the other one (191BG and 192BG) being “the great” or the leader in the same profession.

Therefore, these expressions MAGNUS.VIR-pi and VIR-pi undoubtedly express a title/profession. We will now investigate this title/profession.

5. The title/profession VIR-pi, MAGNUS.VIR-pi

In all the seals analyzed here VIR-*pi* and MAGNUS.VIR-*pi* refer to the profession. In order to interpret the title/profession in a proper way we consider all those professions / titles (that) have been well documented in cuneiform, which have a final syllable in -pi or a final syllable in -p-, in order not to reject any of the possibilities. The professions concerned are:

- 1) LÚ^{halipi-} (PECCHIOLI DADDI 1982: 110)
- 2) LÚ^{huphup-} (PECCHIOLI DADDI 1982: 236)
- 3) LÚ^{kantikipi-} (PECCHIOLI DADDI 1982: 238-239)
- 4) LÚ^{damnassara-dampupi-} (PECCHIOLI DADDI 1982: 53)
- 5) LÚ^{hapiya-} (PECCHIOLI DADDI 1982: 227-233)

None of them seem to have a close connection with the hieroglyphic expression MAGNUS.VIR-*pi*. Maybe the only possibility that could have a degree of relevance would be number 5, LÚ^{hapiya-}.

In hieroglyph, sometimes the names do not indicate (are not indicated with) the final -*ya* so we are justified in considering (we can consider) -*pi* as the final phonetic complement. The phenomenon we refer to is the regular and frequent contraction of -*iya*- > -*i*- in Luwian, i.e. stems ending °*i*- are regular by-forms of stems ending in °*iya*-. Moreover number 5 indicates a profession for which the GAL has been documented. For possibility n.1 and n.2 the GAL has not yet been attested to cuneiform, but since the UGULA is documented for these same professions, we could think that the GAL did not survive only for a matter of case. Regarding the possibility n.5 there is also the fact that it is an office of cultic scope and therefore perfect for identifying the owner of our VIR-*pi* which was attested only in Temple I and Temple 3. But still the problems of identifying this profession (i.e. *hapiya*-) with VIR-*pi* remain problematic because we do not have other hieroglyphic inscriptions in which VIR could be read as *hapiya*- or in which VIR could be associated to the syllable -*ha*-. On the other hand, this argumentation could not be a big problem since -*pi* as a phonetic indicator may indicate that VIR should in this case be read as *hapiya*-. Thus, there is no argument against reading VIR-*pi* as *hapiya*- is missing, and the identification of VIR-*pi* with the title/profession *hapiya*- is probable and plausible. All in all if we do not have a stronger interpretation, this possibility could be the most likely. Yet I believe, we can proceed differently and this will lead us to an even more provable result.

We will try and transliterate the hieroglyphic ideograms MAGNUS.VIR(-*pi*) into cuneiform ideograms, and see if there is a title/profession that could match. And, indeed, there is a cuneiform title that fits perfectly with that hieroglyphic expression: that is GAL.LÚ. MAGNUS.VIR-*pi* is the hieroglyphic equivalent (of) GAL.LÚ, and, it could therefore identify a great dignitary, a “grandee” (that is what in cuneiform GAL.LÚ refers to). This is highly probable since the cuneiform ideogram LÚ, meaning “man”, can be

phonetically rendered (indicated) with the Hittite word *pešn-/pišen-*, a word well attested in the cuneiform documents; this would explain why in hieroglyph the ideogram sign for man (VIR) is accompanied by the syllable <pi> (L66). We can consider the hieroglyphic sign L66 (pi) (as) a phonetic indicator (similarly to <mi> in its function), since it indicates the beginning of the word and not the ending (as a phonetic complement). L66 could be the phonetic indicator for the Hittite reading of L312 (VIR), that is *pešn-/pišen-*. Consequently, the correct transcription for the title/profession we are talking about would be VIR.PI or (VIR)Pi (type (IUDEX)La) and not VIR-pi. In conclusion the title/profession is MAGNUS.VIR.PI and VIR.PI.

There is also another possibility considered by Hawkins. As we have seen before, Hawkins considers the title/profession to be rendered (transcribed) as MAGNUS.VIR.SUPER (L363-L312-L270), as opposed to Güterbock in that he preferred MAGNUS.VIR-pi (with the final L66). But despite the different transliteration (despite the different identification of the sign L66), Hawkins suggests the same translation. Referring to the transliteration of MAGNUS.VIR.SUPER he claims: “[Referring to MAGNUS.VIR.SUPER] Here must be the logogram SUPER, Hitt. sarezzi-//Luw. sarli-. A literal rendering of the groups as “upper grandee” would be intelligible but finds no Cun. correspondence among the LÚ.MEŠ GAL, unless it could represent the LÚ.MEŠ GAL. GAL” (HAWKINS 2005: 310)

I think that this profession/title could be more easily explained if we consider the third sign as L66 and not as L270; since this cuneiform expression matches perfectly with MAGNUS.VIR.PI. Thus, not only the shape of the third sign matches L66 more easily than L270 (as indeed I pointed out at the beginning of this paper), but also the argumentation itself (about the possible cuneiform equivalent of the hieroglyphic expression) is another proof that the right interpretation (identification) of the hieroglyphic signs is Güterbock’s. Indeed it proves the correct transliteration is VIR.PI since the cuneiform ideogram LÚ has a perfect correspondence to the hieroglyphic VIR.PI, which could be rendered with the cuneiform *pešn-/pišen-*, i.e. the Hittite word for “man”.

Here are the forms for the “grandees”:

-)KBo V 6 III 17= XIV 9 III 6': nu-za LÚ.MEŠ.GAL-TI me-mi-ya-ni pa-ra-a hal-za-is
-)KBo X 7 III 11 LUGAL-un tu-li-ya-as pi₂-e-di[
12 LÚ.MEŠ.GAL.GAL-SU wa-ag-ri-an-zi
-)KUB II 3 I 77'
-)KBo I 5 I 42 (accadic)

In the Hittite phonetic complementation:

accusative plural	LÚ.MEŠ.GAL.GAL-us KBo III 40 Ro 10'
dativ	LÚ.MEŠ.GAL.GAL-as VboT 1r. 4, 8

Accadic:

singular: GAL-*TIM* KUB XLVIII 29 Vo 6'

plural: LÚ.MEŠ.GAL-*TIM* KBo XII 4 III 4'; XIV 13 III 8'; IboT III 84 r.13'

LÚ.MEŠ.GAL-*TI* KBo I 3 Ro 12; 10 I 13 (LÚ.MEŠ.GAL.MEŠ-*TI*), 64 (GAL.MEŠ-*TI*); XVIII 38 Ro 7,9

LÚ.MEŠ.GAL.GAL-*TIM* KBo V 4 II 19; KUB I 16 III 45; III 21 Vo 17'; 88 Ro 9' (GAL.GAL-*TIM*)

There are also documented “big dignitaries” in other countries, but even if these “big dignitaries” have a differentiation in grade in those places, that would not be so useful in our context. Nevertheless, I will give some examples:

KBo I 3 Ro 12:	of the Mitanni
KBo I 10 I 13, 64:	Babylonians
KBo V 4 II 19:	of Hapalla
KUB XXIII 103 Ro 21':	Assyrians
VboT 1 r. 4:	of the Egyptian king
r. 8:	of the Arzawa king

The equivalence between the hieroglyphic MAGNUS.VIR.*PI* and the cuneiform GAL.LÚ (big dignitaries) works well since the final sign <pi> indicates the language in which to read VIR (man), that is the Hittite word for man, *pešn-/pišen-*. And in this case we can consider L66 <pi> as a phonetic indicator (the final <pi> should be a phonetic indicator). That matches perfectly to the cuneiform ideogram LÚ too. The problem is that every time we find a sign connected to the phonetic expression (rendering/phonetic yield) of VIR in the hieroglyphic, it is always <zi/a> which indicates the Luwian reading for man, i.e. *ziti*. There is also the sign VIR₂ to specify “man”, but in this case we never have a phonetic complement or a phonetic indicator specifying the language. All in all, when the ideographic sign for man has a phonetic indicator which specifies the language, it (that) is always <zi/a> specifying the Luwian reading; only in (on) the seals analyzed here VIR is associated with L66 to express the Hittite word for “man”. Why should in this case VIR be expressed with the Hittite word for man (that is *pešn-pišen-*) and not by the Luwian word for man (that is *ziti*) as usual? In my point of view the reason can be linked to the specific profession that MAGNUS.VIR.*PI* and VIR.*PI* indicate, that is the “big dignitary”.

The following could be a possible sociolinguistic explanation, even if it is far from being exhaustive. And the sociolinguistic argumentation (and conclusion) it is not to be expected as a definitive proof.

6. Introductory statement

The Hittite language has a word for “man”, that is *pešn-/pišen-*; the Luwian language has a word for man that is *ziti*. In the late empire period the Luwian language was the common and vernacular language of the Hittite empire. Cappadocean tablets have attested the presence of Luwian speakers alongside Hittite speakers since the Colony period, a presence which gradually increased at least from the Middle Hittite Kingdom (see CARRUBA 1995, HOUT 2006A, GOEDEGEBUURE 2008, YAKUBOVICH 2008).

7. A possible (but not exhaustive) explanation

In the late empire period, “man”, considered as the generic word for a “male” individual was indicated with the Luwian term *ziti*, as demonstrated on glyptics by the sign L312 (VIR) followed by L376 (*zi*). The Hittite word for “man”, *pešn-/pišen-*, however, survived and ended up indicating a particular class of men: the great dignitaries, expressed in cuneiform with the ideograms GAL.LÚ (literally the “big man”). This wording designating such “grandees” had derived from the oldest Hittite tradition, before the majority of the population had become Luwian speakers, and was therefore designated with a Hittite word. It is plausible that the “grandees- great dignitaries” were the cornerstones of the Hittite State from its earliest beginnings; in fact, in ancient time, is known a large assembly (i.e. *panku*). Since the title GAL.LÚ is deeply rooted in tradition, it would be preserved in the Hittite language thereafter. We have no phonetic rendering of the cuneiform ideograms GAL.LÚ, but the reading in Hittite would have been something like *šalliš pešn-/pišen-*. It is easy to assume that the Hittites had in fact called their dignitaries by their language of origin as the designation was inherited from their ancestral tradition when only the Hittite language was used (or at least was the predominant one), thus giving phonetic values to the Hittite cuneiform characters GAL.LÚ. If the “Hittites” (Hittite speakers) were a population numerically contained (with respect to the Luwians) and which arrived later than the Luwian speakers in Anatolia, as claimed by Goedegebuure, then our linguistic reconstruction gains even more meaning. In fact, in this case it is more plausible that the Hittite population was based on its own socio-political cornerstones. These cornerstones would have given a strong sense of unity and they would be referred to their original language, Hittite. This expression in Hittite would be *šalliš pešn-*. No one knows for sure how the Hittites would read GAL in that context. Since usually *šalli-/šallai-* is the Hittite word for “great” in reference to the royal family, another cornerstone of Hittite State tradition, maybe even in this case GAL should be transliterated with *šalli-/šallai-*. But even if this cannot be stated with any certainty, anyway in the early days of the Hittite kingdom GAL.LÚ was presumably read in Hittite as *šalliš pešn-*. Subsequently, in the late empire period when the population had begun to speak Luwian, most likely because Luwian speakers increasingly outnumbered the Hittite speakers (CARRUBA 1995, YAKUBOVICH 2008), the common word for “man” became the Luwian *ziti*, but the Hittite word *pešn-/pišen-* (man) survived as a designation for a title. A specific title linked to the early days of the Hittite Kingdom, well rooted in the Hittite tradition of the State. This would explain why this expression survived in Hittite during a period where the common language was Luwian. GAL.LÚ at the end of the late imperial period continued to indicate the position of the grandees and therefore could not be rendered in Luwian, so the original Hittite expression was kept. To a Luwian speaker of the late empire period *salliš pešn-* did not mean the “big man”, but was just the word to indicate the position of “great dignitaries /grandees” without any meaning. Only the acculturated administrative personnel could understand the title/profession *salliš pešn-* in its original Hittite meaning of “big man”. That is why the scribes represented that expression in hieroglyphic with MAGNUS.VIR. More probably we could consider this expression (*salliš pešn-*) as a loanword belonging to the administrative terminology.

This explanation would also shed light on why we have two different phonetic indicators for the same hieroglyphic logogram VIR, that are *pi-* (L66) and *zi-* (L376).

This explanation allows us to illustrate these linguistic issues related to MAGNUS.VIR in a plausible way, and at the same time to support the thesis that the vernacular language in the late imperial period was Luwian. The issue of the vernacular language, Hittite or Luwian, during the late imperial period is a complicated one, and we have only a small amount of evidence to shed light on it. Maybe the argumentation about the title/profession MAGNUS.VIR.*PI* could be considered as evidence too.

The aim of this paper is to indicate a new deciphering and a new interpretation of the seal imprints 191BG, 192BG and T3.1; starting from this topic we are now discussing about its implications. In my point of view one of these implications involves the use of the Luwian language as the vernacular language during the late empire period. But this weak (shortly detailed) argument has no claim to provide a decisive proof in support of this thesis.

On the other hand it is worth considering that in cuneiform writing the phonetic complement for LÚ is always nasalized (in *ni /na /ne*), and that specifies the Hittite reading for LÚ (Sumerian transliteration for that ideogram), which is *pešn-/pišen-*; while (on the opposite) in hieroglyphic writing the phonetic indicator is always *zi* (except of course for the seal imprints analyzed here), and that specifies the Luwian reading for VIR (Latin transliteration for that ideogram), which is *ziti*. The problem of the spoken language during the late imperial period is based on which of the two writings (cuneiform and hieroglyphic) is of greater importance when indicating which language was the vernacular one. It is clear then that the problem is based on the “weight” and the functionality of the two different type of writing. The cuneiform script expresses (mainly) the Hittite language, the hieroglyphic script expresses (mainly) the Luwian language. One, the cuneiform, was an archive writing (a script used for the archive), understood only by few people; the other one, the hieroglyph, although it was properly understood by few people, it had to be somehow understandable by the majority of the population. In fact, hieroglyphic writing was the king’s “advertising medium”, and as such was used on monumental inscriptions so that it could be seen by the entire whole population. It was the monumental writing, visible to everyone, and during the Hittite late imperial period, an increasing use seems to have been made of this script for this purpose (e.g. Yalbur inscription, and the so-called Südburg inscription in Hattuša). It was also the writing of the seals which were widespread in Hittite society of the late imperial period. I believe this is an important consideration that confirms that the spoken language in the late empire period was Luwian. In addition to that, Carruba has already mentioned a series of long and convincing historical reasons as to why at the end of the late imperial period the population within the Hittite Kingdom were predominantly Luwian speakers (CARRUBA 1995).

In the same year I wrote my Ph.D. thesis, from which this article is taken, a very interesting article by Van den Hout was published; it (this article) dealt with some linguistic evidence (based on the gloss of the Hittite cuneiform documents) attesting to the spread of the Luwian language even within cuneiform documents written in Hittite (HOUT 2006). Yet another proof for the predominance of the Luwian language over the Hittite in the Anatolia of the late empire period.

If we take as valid Goedegebuure’s theory according to which a proto-Luwian language substrate contributed to change the Hattian language, and if we assume that, as it is most likely, the Luwian language predated the Hittite language in Anatolia (and in

my opinion Carruba's interpretation of the ethnonym *nuwa'um* attested to in the Colony period confirms this hypothesis; for Carruba *nuwa'um* is referred to "Luwians", see CARRUBA 1995), then we could consider the proto-Luwian language as a well-rooted and widespread Indo-European language in Anatolia already at the end of the III mill. BC, to which subsequently a Hittite stratum was inserted. This last Hittite stratum tried to maintain its own peculiarity until it was totally absorbed.

Something like it happened for the Goths or the Langobards (both of them German speakers) in Italy (where the population spoke Latin) in the first part of the European Middle Ages. But even assuming that Renfrew is right to believe that both Hittite people and Luwian people were indigenous people of the Anatolia, it would not change our explanation about the significance of MAGNUS.VIR.

What we want to claim here is the predominance of the Luwian language at the end of the imperial Hittite period. This is a picture that corresponds to the conclusions proposed by Yakubovich too.

"Beginning with Anitta's conquest, Hittites and Luvians were united in one polity, where the first group exercised social dominance, while the second one was linguistically dominant. The subsequent migrations of the Luvians in southwestwards and westwards directions were closely connected with the expansion of the Hittite state. At the same time, the unstable balance between the Hittite and Luvian speakers in Hattusa and its surrounding area continued to shift in favor of the second group, till the point when all the Hittite elites, including the king and the members of the royal family, were fully bilingual in Luvian." (YAKUBOVICH 2008: 6)

Moreover, although it is controversial as to whether or not some languages documented in the I mill. BC in Anatolia descended from Luwian, it is actually known that during this period no Anatolian languages descended from Hittite. And at the same time, we have to consider the fact that Luwian continued to be spoken in Anatolia during the I mill. BC, whereas in the same period Hittite (the Hittite language) disappeared completely. And this fact must have some meaning.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, the seal imprints 191BG, 192BG and T3.1 have the same proper name (Ka-x-satu or Kanisatu) and they present (have) the same title/profession, only the degree/status of which changes regardless if this title/profession is actually to identify with GAL.LÚ (as probably it is even if in the cuneiform texts they do not have a difference in grade) or with *hapiya* (also here in the cuneiform texts we do not have a difference in grade among this title/profession, but in this case the difference is more plausible). Moreover, the three seals are from the same city and from the same context; all of them come from temples. So probably there is a single person behind the three seals. That is, one single owner of the all three seals. If it is so, Ka-x-satu (or Kanisatu) was in the service of Temple III with the function/title of VIR-*pi* and then, in line with the changes in his position, we find him referred to MAGNUS.VIR-*pi* in Temple I. Since Temple I was the most important temple in Ḫattuša, it is logical to think that the most important officials would have worked there.

In my opinion the new deciphering and transliteration, together with the related speculative implications, concerning his title/profession (MAGNUS.VIR-*PI*) also allow

us to introduce a new evidence supporting the thesis (idea) that during the late imperial period the language in common use in the Hittite kingdom was the Luwian one.

In my opinion the sign expressing the title/profession should be identified with L363, L312 and L66, and they have to be transliterated as MAGNUS.VIR.PI. This title/profession has two possible identifications: GAL.LÚ and *hapiya-*. Even if both of them have good reason to be considered the correct one, the first one (GAL.LÚ) is to be preferred. The new deciphering and the new interpretation of the hieroglyphic signs, together with the related speculative implication concerning this title/profession allow us to introduce a new evidence supporting the idea (thesis) that at the end of the late imperial period the language in common use (the vernacular language) in the Hittite kingdom was Luwian.

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Figures



Fig. 1: 191BG (left) and 192BG (right) as published in BOEHMER – GÜTERBOCK 1987

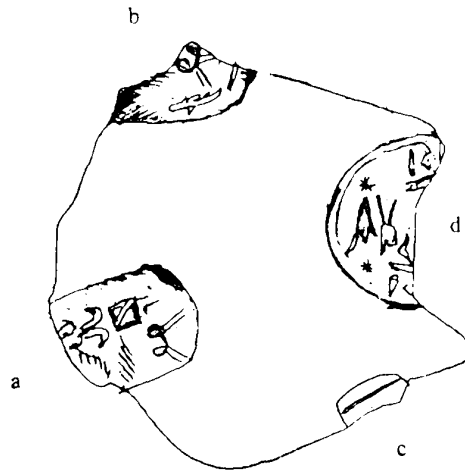


Fig. 2: Bulla as published by Ali and Belkis Dinçol (DİNÇOL – DİNÇOL 2003)



Fig. 3: T3.1 by DİNÇOL – DİNÇOL 2003

