

Gender and Politics at Ugarit: The Undoing of the Daughter of the Great Lady

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The integral role of royal women in political systems structured by diplomatic marriage is revealed in a series of legal verdicts from a case that involved the rulers of Late Bronze Age Ugarit, Amurru, and Hatti. These verdicts adjudicate the divorce, loss of political status, and execution of a royal woman who was the wife of the king of Ugarit, the daughter and sister of two successive kings of Amurru, and the granddaughter and niece of two successive Hittite Great Kings. The undoing of her multivalent political status destabilized the regional and imperial system in which she was enmeshed. Protracted negotiations were required to restore equilibrium to the system. Examination of the rhetorical and legal strategies through which these negotiations took place reveals the extent to which the relative power of royal men depended on their relationships to royal women.

Legal texts that document the divorce, exile, and execution of a royal woman in Late Bronze Age Ugarit provide rare insight into the politics of a world woven together by diplomatic marriages.¹ This woman's loss of status and, eventually, loss of life lay bare the way in which women mediated power relationships among men. The verdicts that document her case never reveal her name. She was identified purely in terms of her relationships to major political figures in Hittite-controlled Syria. She was called both the "daughter of Bentešina" and the "daughter of the Great Lady," as she was the offspring of the imperial-vassal marriage between Bentešina, king of Amurru, and Gaššuliyawiya, daughter of the Hittite Great King, Hattušili III. She became the wife of Ammistamru II, king of Ugarit. She was the sister of Šaušga-muwa, who ruled as king of Amurru during the period in which her case unfolded. The Hittite Great King, Tudḫaliya IV, who was her maternal uncle, adjudicated her case. Within the very structures of Hittite rule that might have been expected to protect her, Ammistamru II divorced her, exiled her from Ugarit to Amurru, and then took her back to Ugarit and killed her.

Her case was dramatic, but the framework of alliances the woman mediated was not unusual. The capacity of a single royal woman to function simultaneously as a daughter, wife, sister, and mother provided a framework for political relatedness among multiple men. Royal households were constituted by relationships forged by the immediate parties to a marriage alliance and by the relationships such alliances created in subsequent generations. Women functioned on two axes. On the one hand, by virtue of their simultaneous roles as daughter, wife, and sister they provided points of contact between royal houses. On the other hand, by virtue of their roles as mothers they mediated dynastic transitions across generations of male rulers. The relative positions of royal men were shaped by their relationships

1. Bibliographic abbreviations include *PRU III* = Jean Nougayrol, *Le palais royal d'Ugarit*. Vol. III: *Texts accadiens et hourites des archives est, ouest et centrales*, ed. Claude F.-A. Schaeffer. Mission de Ras Shamra 6 (Paris: Imprimeries Nationale and Klincksieck, 1955). *PRU IV* = *Le palais royal d'Ugarit*. Vol. IV: *Textes accadiens des archives sud*, ed. Claude F.-A. Schaeffer. Mission de Ras Shamra 9 (Paris: Imprimeries Nationale and Klincksieck, 1956). *HDT* = Gary Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 2nd ed., ed. H. A. Hoffner, Jr. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999).

to royal women. In this case, Ammistamru II, king of Ugarit, and Šaušga-muwa, king of Amurru, negotiated their relative power through their relationship to the woman who was respectively their wife and sister. The stakes of their negotiations were high. As the daughter of a Hittite princess and the former king of Amurru, the wife of the king of Ugarit, the mother of his heir, and the sister of the reigning king of Amurru, this woman was the pivot point of generations of political alliances among Ḫatti, Amurru, and Ugarit.

The case generated a dossier of Hittite imperial verdicts and regional accords that outnumber any other surviving group of texts at Ugarit that document a political incident. The dossier includes Hittite imperial verdicts addressed to the woman herself, those addressed to Ammistamru II and Šaušga-muwa, and regional accords between these two kings.² The two initial divorce texts—a lengthy decree authorized by Tudḫaliya IV of Ḫatti (RS 17.159) and a shorter complementary decree authorized by the Hittite viceroy Ini-Tešub of Karkamiš (RS 17.396)—were addressed to the woman. The decrees record her marriage to Ammistamru II, certify her divorce and exile, and dictate the consequences of the divorce in terms of her property and her relationship to her son, Ammistamru II's heir.

When she left Ugarit for Amurru, she was allowed to take the goods that she had brought with her from Amurru, but was forced to leave behind what she had acquired in Ugarit. Her son Utri-Šarruma was given the choice to remain in Ugarit as his father's heir or to follow his mother back to Amurru and surrender his right to succeed his father as king. An extraordinary measure further stipulated that should Utri-Šarruma attempt to reinstate his mother as queen after the death of his father, he would lose his position as king and be replaced by another of Ammistamru II's sons. Furthermore, his mother was forbidden from appealing to her other sons, daughters, or sons-in-law. The purpose of the initial arbitration was the total removal of the woman from the constellation of power in Ugarit, during the reign of her husband and beyond.

As the case progressed, however, the legal negotiations were carried on exclusively between Ammistamru II and Šaušga-muwa. What ultimately came to be at stake in this conflict was the power of each king to assert and defend the parameters of his royal household. Ammistamru II was not content to assert his will over his own household and kingdom. He also sought to assert his will over Šaušga-muwa's royal house. Ammistamru II extricated his wife from the network of relationships in which she was situated. He successfully stripped her of status in Amurru as well as in Ugarit, then brought her back to Ugarit and executed her.

The stipulations of two imperial verdicts, RS 1957.1 and RS 18.06–17.365, indicate that Šaušga-muwa initially resisted Ammistamru II's incursion into his sphere of authority. However, faced with a situation in which he could not keep his sister within his household, Šaušga-muwa countered his loss of authority by negating his affiliation with his sister in three accords negotiated between the two kings (RS 17.228, RS 17.372 A–17.360 A, and RS 17.318–17.349 A). The terms of these accords shift from the language of divorce and succession found in the imperial texts to terms commonly found only in royal grants and property transfers. This aspect of the accords functions on two levels. First, the woman was rendered as property owned by one king and transferred to another, rather than being a political actor sent as a representative of one royal household to another. Second, by positioning the woman as property, the legal framework of the royal land grant reconfigured the relationship between

2. Hittite imperial verdicts addressed to the woman are RS 17.159 = *PRU IV*, 126–27 and RS 17.396 = *PRU IV*, 127–28. Hittite imperial verdicts addressed to the two kings are RS 18.06–RS 17.365 = *PRU IV*, 137–38; RS 17.082 = *PRU IV*, 147–48; and RS 1957.1 in Lauren Fisher, *The Claremont Ras Shamra Tablets* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1971) 11–21. Regional accords between these two kings are RS 16.270 = *PRU IV*, 134–36 and *PRU III*, 41–44; RS 17.228 = *PRU IV*, 141–43; RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360 A = *PRU IV*, 139–41; and RS 17.318–RS 17.349 A = *PRU IV*, 144–46.

the two kings into one of grantor and grantee. Šaušga-muwa's status was restored by being positioned as the royal grantor with the power to give his sister to Ammistamru II. The considerable compensation in gold that Ammistamru II gave Šaušga-muwa in exchange for the woman's life indicated the stakes of the agreement. This exchange between Ammistamru II and Šaušga-muwa constituted a process by which the regular means of forming interdynastic alliances were inverted. Rather than an alliance between two royal men being forged by the transfer of a royal woman in a diplomatic marriage, the alliance between these men was renewed by sending a woman to her death.

I. THE DAUGHTER OF THE GREAT LADY

A closer look at the practice of diplomatic marriages reveals the political significance of this case. From the first onslaught of Šuppiluliuma I's mid-fourteenth-century military conquests, which re-established Hittite rule in Syria, a primary strategy by which the Hittite Great Kings consolidated their power was to give their daughters and sisters as wives to subjugated kings.³ When such alliances were made, treaties stipulated the primacy of the Hittite royal women as ruling queens in the subjugated kingdom and the primacy of their offspring as royal heirs. The political dominance of the Hittite Great Kings was embodied in the position of their sisters and daughters in vassal kingdoms. The relationships forged between Hittite royal women and vassal rulers were not simply signs of an agreement; they were fundamental to the symbolic and human architecture of imperial rule. In the case of the kingdom of Amurru, both Bentešina and his son, Šaušga-muwa, married Hittite royal women as part of vassal alliances with Ḫatti.⁴

The treaty between the Hittite Great King Ḫattušili III and Bentešina, king of Amurru, was critical to the configuration of Hittite rule in Syria and to the cultural and political orientation of the kingdom of Amurru. Prior to the treaty, when the armies of the Hittite Great King Muwattalli II defeated Rameses II's forces at Qadeš, Muwattalli II took measures to reestablish dominance in Syria by retaliating against vassals like Bentešina who had capitulated to the Egyptians. Muwattalli II removed Bentešina from his throne and took him to Ḫatti as a prisoner in recompense for his disloyalty. However, Ḫattušili III requested that his brother Muwattalli II give Bentešina into his protection, and he subsequently brought him to Ḫakpiš and gave him a household.⁵ Itamar Singer considered Bentešina's residence in Ḫakpiš under the tutelage of Ḫattušili III as a period of "political re-education" that instigated the Hittite acculturation of the royal family of Amurru.⁶ The alliance between Bentešina and Ḫattušili III was brought to fruition when Ḫattušili III gained control of Ḫatti. Ḫattušili III asserts in the treaty that "When Muwattalli, Great King, went [to] his fate, I, Ḫattušili, took my seat upon the throne of my father. I released Bentešina for a second time to(!) [the land of Amurru]. I assigned to him the household of his father and the throne of kingship."⁷

Bentešina's reinstatement in Amurru under Ḫattušili III's protection was inaugurated with marriages between Bentešina and Ḫattušili III's daughter Gaššuliyawiya and between

3. See Franco Pintore, *Il Matrimonio interdinastico nel Vicino Oriente durante i Secoli xv-xiii* (Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente, Centro per le antichità e la storia dell'arte del Vicino Oriente, 1978), 71–75.

4. Treaty between Ḫattušili III of Ḫatti and Bentešina of Amurru, *CTH 92 = HDT 16*; Treaty between Tudḫaliya IV of Ḫatti and Šaušga-muwa of Amurru, *CTH 105 = HDT 17*.

5. *CTH 92 = HDT 16*: 11–15.

6. Itamar Singer, "A Concise History of Amurru," in S. Izre'el, *Amurru Akkadian: A Linguistic Study* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 168.

7. *CTH 92 = HDT 16*: 16–18. The significant fact omitted in the historical prologue to this treaty is that when Muwattalli II went to his fate, his designated successor was not his brother Ḫattušili III but his son Urḫi-Tešub, whom Ḫattušili deposed in a coup that Houwink ten Cate states "had a lasting impact on the inner stability of the country." P. H. J. Houwink ten Cate, "Urhi-Teshub Revisited," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 51 (1994): 233.

Ḫattušili III's son Nerikkaïli and a daughter of Bentešina. Yet these marriages were no more equal than the terms of the treaty. The only bride whose future status was secured was Ḫattušili III's daughter. The treaty stipulates:

[I have given] Princess Gaššuliyawiya to the land of Amurru, to the royal house, to Bentešina, [as] his wife. She now possesses queenship [in the land] of Amurru. In the future the son and grandson of my daughter shall [exercise] kingship in the land of Amurru . . . No one shall take the kingship of the land of Amurru from Bentešina, or from the hand of his son or his grandson, the progeny of Bentešina and the progeny of my daughter. The son of Bentešina and his grandson, the progeny of Bentešina and the son of my daughter, shall hold the kingship in the land of Amurru.⁸

Gaššuliyawiya thus becomes the conduit for the rule of her father over the vassal kingdom. The succession in Amurru is twice-fathered: future kings are the offspring of Bentešina and the offspring of the Hittite Great King through his daughter. Yet this conflation of father and daughter does not erase Gaššuliyawiya. On the contrary, her queenship makes her sons kings. The designated heirs of a vassal king were at one and the same time descendants of the local king and members of the imperial family through their mothers.

This political arrangement is expressed in the identification of the woman at the center of our case as being both the “daughter of Bentešina” (DUMU.MUNUS ¹ZAG.ŠEŠ) and the “daughter of the Great Lady” (DUMU.MUNUS ¹rabīti).⁹ These two titles identify her as the offspring of the imperial–vassal marriage between Bentešina and Gaššuliyawiya. Gaššuliyawiya's elevated status as “Great Lady” (¹rabīti) in Amurru is expressed in her daughter's title.¹⁰ The term ¹rabīti can be correlated with a Hittite royal designation that

8. CTH 92 = HDT 16:18–21, 29–32.

9. “The daughter of Bentešina” and “the daughter of the Great Lady” were for a long time considered to be two different women, both married and divorced by Ammistamru II, because each title appeared independently of the other in the initially excavated texts. Jean Nougayrol divided the texts into two different dossiers in his *éditio princeps* (VC and VD in *PRU IV*, 125–48). For an exemplary statement of the distinction between the two putative dossiers and the two women they were presumed to represent, see Mario Liverani, *Storia di Ugarit nell'eta' degli Archivi Politici* (Rome: Centro di Studi Semitici, Istituto di Studi del Vicino Oriente, 1962), 108. After Loren Fisher's publication in 1971 of RS 1957.1, it became clear that the previously published texts were in fact an extended series of negotiations relating to a single royal woman. As will be discussed below, the opening lines of RS 1957.1 list the full set of titles that appear in both dossiers: *Ammistamri šar Ugarit bitta* (¹bī-it-ta) *rabīti aššassu mārāt Bentešina* (DUMU.MUNUS ¹ZAG.ŠEŠ) *šar Amurru ištu bītišu mātišu itabakši* (RS 1957.1: 6–10). While Fisher himself interpreted ¹bī-it-ta as a proper name ¹pī-id-dá, both Nougayrol and Cord Kühne demonstrated that the word was the common noun ¹bī-it-ta, “daughter,” a West Semitic version of the more commonly appearing DUMU.MUNUS, in the title DUMU.MUNUS *rabīti* found in the rest of the texts bearing this title. See Nougayrol, “L.R. Fisher, *The Claremont Ras Shamra Tablets*, Review,” *Revue d'Assyriologie* 66 (1972): 89, and Cord Kühne, “Ammistamru und die Tochter der ‘Grossen Dame’,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 5 (1973): 176–77.

10. Kühne first suggested the identification of the “Great Lady” as Gaššuliyawiya (“Ammistamru und die Tochter der ‘Grossen Dame’,” 181–83). However, he raised two potential objections to this proposal. First, it would require that the Hittite king Tudḫaliya IV agreed to put his sister Gaššuliyawiya's daughter to death. Second, Tudḫaliya IV's other sister, whom he gave to Šaušga-muwa as a wife as a part of their vassal treaty, would have been Šaušga-muwa's aunt. As I argue, the first concern indeed represents the crux of the case. Protracted negotiations were necessary precisely because Ammistamru II sought to kill a woman of high Hittite lineage. In regard to the second concern, Kühne asserts that a dynastic marriage ordinance would likely have superseded any potential taboo. Furthermore, the fact that Šaušga-muwa's personal seal identified him as a Hittite prince argues that he was the son of the Hittite princess Gaššuliyawiya and not simply the brother-in-law of Tudḫaliya IV (*ibid.* 183 n. 68).

On the reflection of Šaušga-muwa's dual status in his use of Hittite-styled seals, see Itamar Singer, “Hittite Cultural Influence in the Kingdom of Amurru,” in *La circulation des biens, des personnes et des idées dans le Proche-Orient ancien: Actes de la XXXVIII^e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Paris, 8–10 juillet 1991*, ed. D. Charpin and F. Joannès (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1992), 233. This seal is impressed on all three of the accords issued from Amurru which stipulate the terms of the final surrender of the daughter of the Great Lady (RS 17.228; RS 17.372A–RS 17.360A; RS 17.318–RS 17.349A; Ug. III, fig. 38–47).

refers precisely to the political role Gaššuliyawiya played in Amurru. Singer persuasively argued that the Hittite royal title DUMU.MUNUS.GAL, which he renders “Great Princess,” was used to refer to women such as Gaššuliyawiya who were given in diplomatic marriages to vassal kings or peer rulers.¹¹ The title ^f*rabīti*, like DUMU.MUNUS.GAL, refers to the lineage of a woman who was descended from a Great King.¹² The title DUMU.MUNUS ^f*rabīti*, “daughter of the Great Lady,” thus identified the Hittite lineage of both mother and daughter, a lineage that elevated both of them within the royal household of Amurru. The Hittite mediation of the divorce between Ammistamru II and “the daughter of the Great Lady” was thus not just a matter of keeping peace between Ugarit and Amurru, but of managing the demands of a valuable vassal king, Ammistamru II of Ugarit, against the honor and entitlements of Ḫattušili III’s line in Amurru.

The importance of this Hittite lineage in Amurru is further demonstrated by the appearance of a contingent identified as “the sons of the Great Lady” (DUMU.MEŠ ^f*rabīti*), who appear alongside Šaušga-muwa in his negotiations with Ammistamru II.¹³ The identification of this group of men as claimants on their sister’s behalf indicates that the network of relationships in which the daughter of the Great Lady was situated within the royal household of Amurru included her maternal siblings. Whether or not the Great Lady Gaššuliyawiya was still living, her status as a Hittite princess continued to distinguish the status of her offspring, differentiate members of the royal household of Amurru, and pose an inherent challenge to one who would confront this imperial lineage.

II. THE IMPERIAL VERDICTS

The Hittite verdict RS 1957.1 locates the daughter of the Great Lady at the nexus of dynastic connections among the royal households of Ugarit, Amurru, and Ḫatti. The text opens by identifying the woman in terms of the full range of her affiliations within the royal households of Ugarit and Amurru. The irony of the text, however, is that while these identifications position her at the fulcrum of multiple alliances, the thrust of the edict is to remove her from her positions.

*Ammistamri šar Ugarit bitta rabīti
aššassu mārat Bentešina šar Amurru
ištu bītišu mātišu itabakši
u ina Amurri uttērši u Šaušga-muwa
šar Amurri bitta rabīti aḫātšu
ištu ekallīšu ša Amurri itabakši
ina āli šanīm-ma ultēšibši*

Ammistamru, king of Ugarit, drove the daughter of the Great Lady,
his wife, daughter of Bentešina king of Amurru,
away from his house and his country,
and he returned her to Amurru. Šaušga-muwa,
king of Amurru, sent the daughter of the Great Lady, his sister,
away from his palace in Amurru
and settled her in another city.

(RS 1957.1: 6–12)

11. I. Singer, “The Title ‘Great Princess’ in the Hittite Empire,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 21 (1991): 332–33.

12. *Ibid.* 335.

13. RS 17.082 and RS 17.318–RS 17.349A. Kühne made the case that the use of the term DUMU.MEŠ ^f*rabīti* does not distinguish these men from Šaušga-muwa but from their half-brothers, that is, sons of Bentešina and other wives, who would have had no basis for inclusion in the case (“Ammistamru und die Tochter der ‘Grossen Dame’,” 180–81).

She is identified as the wife of Ammistamru II, but she has been driven from his household and country. She is the daughter of Bentešina, the late king of Amurru, the daughter of the Great Lady, and the sister of Šaušga-muwa, the current king of Amurru, but she has also been driven from the palace in Amurru. She is both embedded in a network of relationships yet dislocated from the political loci in which they inhere. She is poised between two centers of power and displaced from both.

The legal language that displaces her from these positions is explicitly patrimonial. The verdict states that Ammistamru II has driven her from his house and his country, *ištu bītīšu mātišu itabakši* (RS 1957: 8). The word *bītīšu* (É-šu) refers not to a physical location but a social unit that is placed in conjunction with the larger polity. This usage of the term corresponds to David Schloen's concept of the patrimonial household as a political model in which the "metaphorical extension of kinship itself provides the administrative structure of the patrimonial state."¹⁴ The patrimonial model has been articulated predominantly in terms of male kinship. The dynamics at play in this dispute reveal another facet of the patrimonial household, in which the relative status of two men is constituted by their relationships to a woman. Ammistamru II's authority within his household is expressed here in his actions as a husband, not as a father. Likewise, the restraints on Šaušga-muwa's actions as a brother, not as a father, are what test the limits of his power as head of his royal household. The respective position of the two kings and their authority within their households were manifested in their ability to act with respect to the woman as a wife or sister.

The statement that Ammistamru II has driven his wife out of his household and his country is followed by the complementary statement that Šaušga-muwa has driven her from his palace, the royal palace of Amurru, *ištu ekallīšu ša Amurri itabakši* (RS 1957.1: 8, 11). The main verb (*itabakši*) and the syntax of these statements are identical; only the political entity from which she is driven differs. In the case of her brother Šaušga-muwa, she is not driven from his, or their, country (*ištu mātišu*), nor is she driven from his household (*ištu bītīšu*). She is driven from the palace (*ištu ekallīšu*). The nuance in this choice of terms suggests that while she has been removed from the center of power embodied in the palace, she has not been effectively cut off from her lineage within the royal family of Amurru.

The crucial difference suggested by this shift in terms is amplified by the fact that, as the verdict continues, she is consistently referred to as both the daughter of the Great Lady and Šaušga-muwa's sister, *bittu rabiti aḫātšu* (RS 1957.1: 10, 18, 21–22). The language of Hittite imperial descent and Amurrite royal kinship persists, indicating that her affiliation with the Amurrite royal family continues, even if her political prerogatives have been eliminated by removing her from the palace. The persistence of these modes of identification provides the rationale for the prohibitions on Šaušga-muwa that follow, as well as the prohibitions in subsequent verdicts that restrict her maternal brothers from making claims on her behalf.

The verdict dictates three prohibitions on Šaušga-muwa with regard to his relationship to his sister. She may not go to his palace, *ina ekalli ša šar Amurri appūna lā elli* (RS 1957.1: 13–14). Šaušga-muwa, her brother, may not speak with her, *Šaušgamuwa aḫūši ittiša lā idabbub* (ll. 14–15). Finally, he may not return her to Ugarit, *u appūna ina Ugarit lā utārši* (ll. 16–17). The assumption in these stipulations is that unless prohibited, Ammistamru II's divorced wife would have resumed upon her return from Ugarit a position within the royal household of Amurru involving communication and even political collaboration with her brother the king. Daniel Arnaud and Mirjo Salvini have suggested that the injunctions against

14. J. David Schloen, *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the Ancient Near East* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001), 70.

Šaušga-muwa conferring or speaking with his sister, *ittiša lā idabbub*, should not be construed in the mundane sense of conversation, but in a juridical or political sense. They suggest that the intention of the stipulation is to prohibit brother and sister from collaborating in a claim for justice, a conspiracy, or a plot.¹⁵ Thus the final stipulation, *u appūna ina Ugarit lā utārši*, forbids Šaušga-muwa from returning his sister to Ugarit because such a move would constitute a threat to Ammistamru II's power.¹⁶

Arnaud and Salvini's interpretation of *ina Ugarit lā utārši* as a threat to Ammistamru II is strengthened when considered in light of the fact that the verb *târum*, "return," is also used in the injunctions against her son, Ammistamru II's heir, Utri-Šarruma, stipulated in the initial divorce text RS 17.159. This verdict dictates that if, after the death of Ammistamru II, Utri-Šarruma should return his mother to her position as queen of Ugarit, *ana šarratutti utārši*, he will be removed from his own position as king (RS 17.159: 31–37). The use of *utārši* in the prohibition in RS 1957.1, *ina Ugarit lā utārši*, expresses a corresponding concern over Šaušga-muwa restoring his sister's status. In both cases, to return her from Amurru to Ugarit would be to reinstate her as queen. The necessity of an imperially endorsed prohibition on her son Utri-Šarruma and on her brother Šaušga-muwa indicates the level of political investment each man held in their mother and sister's political position.

The stipulations limiting the physical movement, communication, and corresponding political position of Šaušga-muwa's sister constitute a limitation on Šaušga-muwa. While the purpose of the verdict is to displace the woman from any status she might have held in Amurru by virtue of being the sister of the king and the daughter of a Hittite princess, ultimately the king of Amurru is the one whose actions are restricted. Šaušga-muwa shall not speak to his sister, he shall not restore her to Ugarit, nor shall he make any legal claims on her behalf. Šaušga-muwa's actions within his own household in Amurru are regulated to assuage the concerns of Ammistamru II. Ammistamru II intervenes in Šaušga-muwa's sphere of authority in order to prevent Šaušga-muwa from intervening in his own. By dictating the configuration of Šaušga-muwa's royal household, Ammistamru II constrains Šaušga-muwa's authority as king.

The competition between the spheres of authority of the two kings that underlies this conflict comes to the fore in a subsequent text. The Hittite verdict RS 18.06–17.365 reveals that the stakes for both kings in the fate of the woman are in fact their own positions within their kingdoms and their royal lineages. At this stage of the dispute Ammistamru II was no longer content that his wife be displaced from power in Ugarit and Amurru. He sought to bring her back to Ugarit to kill her. RS 18.06–17.365, which records the resulting clash between Ammistamru II and Šaušga-muwa, is broken such that the standard prologue and the concluding formulas of the legal verdict have been lost.¹⁷ The text that remains is an elaborate imprecation against Šaušga-muwa. He may not attack or prevent Ammistamru II's troops and ships from taking his sister back to Ugarit from Amurru. The terms of the divine punishment with which Ammistamru II threatens Šaušga-muwa indicate that rather than simply determining the fate of an Amurrite princess and former queen of Ugarit, the verdict arbitrates a potentially violent conflict between two kings.

The imprecation that forms the heart of the surviving text anticipates the pivotal moment at which Ammistamru II's troops will seize Šaušga-muwa's sister and take her to her death.

15. Daniel Arnaud and Mirjo Salvini, "Le divorce du roi Ammistamru d'Ougarit: Un document redécouvert," *Semitica* 41/42 (1991–1992): 12 n. 15.

16. *Ibid.* 20.

17. While the introductory formulas have been lost, Nougayrol observed that the color of the clay, the shape of the tablet, and the form of the signs indicate without a doubt that the tablet is of Hittite origin (*PRU IV*, 137).

The tense of the verbs in the opening conditional statements indicates that the Ugaritic ships are on their way but have not yet arrived. The intent of the verdict is to intervene in direct military confrontation.

[*u šumma*] Šaušga-muw[*a mār Bentešina šar Amurri*]
nērta eppaš ana Ammistamri mār Niqmepa
šar Ugarit u eppaš nērta
ana eleppēti u ana šābī ša illakūni
ana ḥulluqi mārat rabīti

[If] Šaušgamuw[a, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru],
 should do violence to Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa,
 king of Ugarit, or do violence
 to the ships and to the troops who are coming
 to make the daughter of the Great Lady disappear . . .
 (RS 18.06–17.365: 1'–5')

The expression *nērta eppaš* is striking, especially as it is applied not only to the king of Ugarit and his troops, but even to the ships. While the phrase is translated here “do violence,” in other contexts it is used to mean “commit murder.”¹⁸ Although the purpose of the Ugaritic troops and ships coming to Amurru is expressed somewhat obliquely as *ana ḥulluqi mārat rabīti*, “to make the daughter of the Great Lady disappear,” the level of anticipated violence by Šaušga-muwa makes it clear that life and death are at issue, for the woman as well as for the two kings.

The stakes of the conflict between the kings are revealed in the language of the imprecation that follows. The oath goes further than threatening Šaušga-muwa’s life and physical safety. His right to rule as a king of Amurru and his place in his paternal lineage are threatened. Ammistamru II calls heaven, earth, and a host of deities to punish Šaušga-muwa in kind, both for the violence he might do to Ammistamru II and for the violence he might prevent Ammistamru II from doing to his sister.¹⁹ The imprecation repeats the key words *nērtu* and *ḥulluqu*.

u ilānū annātu
nērta lipušūniššu
u liḥalliḳūšu ištu libbi bīti abīšu
u ištu libbi māt abīšu u ištu kussī
ša abbēšu

. . . may these gods
 do violence to him,
 and may they cause him to disappear from his father’s house,
 from the country of his father, and from the throne
 of his fathers.

(RS 18.06–17.365: 11'–15')

The injunctions *nērta lipušūniššu* and *liḥalliḳūšu* in the apodosis echo both forms of violence expressed in the protasis, *nērta eppaš* and *ana ḥulluqi*. The first injunction, *nērta lipušūniššu*, is a straightforward parallel to the protasis: If Šaušga-muwa attempts to kill

18. Deriving from the verb *nēru*, ‘to kill’, *nērtu* is a rare word, appearing in specialized contexts, e.g., CH 1:28, CAD N/II: 177.

19. Many of the gods called upon in the imprecation are, as is common, local manifestations of the major deities: ^dIŠ₈-TAR ^{uru}ū-ni-ip, ^dIŠKUR ḪUR.SAG ḥa-zi, ^dḥé-bat ^{uru}a-ri (RS 18.06–RS 17.365: 7'–9'). Notably, in the case of Ishtar of Tunip, the locality is at the frontier between Amurru and Ugarit.

Ammistamru II, his troops, or even his ships, then let Šaušga-muwa be killed. The second injunction, *liḥalliḳūšu*, is more complex. If Šaušga-muwa attempts to protect his sister by doing violence to the ships and troops *ša illakū-ni ana ḥulluḳi mārat rabīti*, “which are coming to make the daughter of the Great Lady disappear,” Šaušga-muwa will be made to “disappear” from every aspect of his political and patrimonial lineage: *ištu libbi bīti abīšu u ištu libbi māt abīšu u ištu kussī ša abbēšu*, “from his father’s house, from the country of his father, and from the throne of his fathers” (RS 18.06–17.365: 13’–15’). The counterpoint established by the pairing of *ana ḥulluḳi* in the protasis and *liḥalliḳūšu* in the apodosis reveals the full import of what Ammistamru II intends to do to his wife. The “disappearance” Ammistamru II intends for the daughter of the Great Lady is not merely death, but a radical erasure from her political position and royal lineage, such as the one with which Ammistamru II threatens her brother.

This punishment-in-kind formula, which links the status of the brother to the status of his sister, evokes the tie between the status of mother and son in the initial divorce verdict. As stated above, this verdict stipulated that if Utri-Šarruma, Ammistamru II’s heir and son of the daughter of the Great Lady, should return his mother to her position as queen of Ugarit, he would be removed from his own position as successor to his father and king in Ugarit (RS 17.159: 31–37). In both cases, if Utri-Šarruma or Šaušga-muwa attempts to reverse Ammistamru II’s actions against their mother or sister, they will receive the same punishment she is given: loss of political position within a patrimonial royal household and lineage. Utri-Šarruma stands to lose his inheritance from his father and his future position as king of Ugarit. Šaušga-muwa stands to lose his kingship and his place in his patrimonial line.

The equation of the status of royal women and men—sisters and brothers, mothers and sons—that emerges in this context of retribution sheds light on how relationships within royal households were conceptualized. Even after divorcing her, in order to delegitimize his wife’s claim on political status in Ugarit or Amurru, Ammistamru II had to sever her relationships first to her son and then to her brother. Ammistamru II stripped his wife of her position in Ugarit and prevented her from reclaiming it after his death by breaking the tie between her and Utri-Šarruma and forbidding any future political collaboration between mother and son. Ammistamru II then stripped his wife of her position in Amurru by breaking the tie between her and Šaušga-muwa and forbidding any future political collaboration between sister and brother.

In both cases, a man’s kingship and position in the patrilineal line were threatened on the basis of his protecting the position of a royal woman. These threats indicate that, beyond her relationship with her husband and father, a royal woman could be expected to rely on her son and brothers to maintain her political position. Furthermore, the threats indicate that royal men would be invested enough in the status of their mothers and sisters that they would be expected to offer such support. Kingship and queenship could be asserted or threatened on the basis of an extended network of relationships. The ability to regulate these relationships was crucial to establishing the authority of a ruler. The problem facing Šaušga-muwa was how to reestablish his authority on par with that of Ammistamru II in the midst of imperial authorization of Ammistamru II’s incursions into the sphere of his household.

III. THE ACCORDS BETWEEN THE KINGS

Šaušga-muwa’s response to this crisis further illuminates the integral connection between the relative status of royal women and men. Ammistamru II’s efforts to strip his repudiated wife of her status in Ugarit and Amurru were successful, as were the concomitant restrictions he placed on her brother Šaušga-muwa. The only way for Šaušga-muwa to save face in

this situation and to regain equal footing with Ammistamru II was to disavow his relationship to his sister and his investment in her status. He does this in a group of three accords with Ammistamru II (RS 17.228, RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360 A, and RS 17.318–RS 17.349). All of them include the convention of representing Šaušga-muwa’s direct speech. Šaušga-muwa’s stance toward his sister and Ammistamru II in these speeches differs radically from the incipient life and death conflict anticipated in the verdict RS 18.06–17.365. In these speeches, Šaušga-muwa no longer identifies Ammistamru II’s wife as his sister. In direct opposition to RS 1957.1, in which the title “the daughter of the Great Lady” is always paired with the phrase “his sister,” *bittu rabīti aḥātšu* (RS 1957.1: 10, 18, 21–22), in these accords her title is paired with identifications that place her purely in relationship to Ammistamru II and disassociate her from Šaušga-muwa. Šaušga-muwa refers to the daughter of the Great Lady not as sister, but as Ammistamru II’s wife, as Ammistamru II’s malefactor, and even as “that woman.”

The most remarkable feature of these accords, however, is that Šaušga-muwa’s direct discourse is set within the legal format of property transfer used in royal grants found in the palace at Ugarit.²⁰ While it has been noted that these accords follow the formula of royal property grants, the political implications of this fact have not been considered.²¹ The use of the specialized terminology of royal grants transforms an inter-regional conflict that required complex maneuvering between competing political interests into an exchange of property between two parties, Šaušga-muwa and Ammistamru II. The legal format of the accords and the rhetorical strategies of Šaušga-muwa’s direct speech work together to reconfigure the status of the woman, Šaušga-muwa’s relationship to her, and thus his status relative to Ammistamru II.

Examination of the accords in terms of their use of the major features of royal grants reveals the ramifications of Šaušga-muwa and Ammistamru II using such language with regard to a royal woman. When Nougayrol published the property transfer texts from the royal palace, he divided them into three types: exchanges between persons certified by witnesses, exchanges between persons certified by the king, and property grants made by the king.²² The last two types make up the majority of the corpus. The purpose of these texts is to certify the transfer of property and put the new ownership into effect by the inscribing of the tablet. Yet a royal grant is not just a gift of property but also an act that reinforces the relationship of sovereign to the grantee. The royal grant records the sovereign’s control of both the property and the transfer process. Furthermore, unlike exchanges between non-royal persons in which witnesses are a standard part of the document, in royal grants the king is his own guarantor.

A brief comparison of the relevant features of royal grants and the framework of the accords between Ammistamru II and Šaušga-muwa demonstrates their similarity in structure.

20. Comprehensive treatment of this genre of texts from Ugarit and their characteristic legal formulae is found in Ignacio Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Diplomats* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2006). Earlier discussions of the “*našû-nadānu*” formula include Ephraim A. Speiser, “Akkadian Documents from Ras Shamra,” *JAOS* 75 (1955): 154–65; Casper J. Labuschagne, “The *našû-nadānu* Formula and Its Biblical Equivalent,” *Travels in the World of the Old Testament: Studies Presented to Professor M. A. Beek on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. M. S. H. G. Heerma van Voss, Ph. H. J. Houwink ten Cate, and N. A. van Uchlen (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1974), 176–80; Jonas Greenfield, “*našû-nadānu* and Its Congeners,” in *Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Memory of Jacob Joel Finkelstein*, ed. M. de Jong Ellis (Hamden, CT: 1977), 87–91; Gerald Irving Miller, *Studies in the Juridical Texts from Ugarit*, Ph.D. Diss., Johns Hopkins Univ., 1980; and Clayton T. Libolt, *Royal Land Grants from Ugarit*, Ph.D. Diss., University of Michigan, 1985.

21. Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 282.

22. Nougayrol, *PRU III*, 23–28.

The first salient feature of the royal grants found in the accords between the kings is the introductory phrase, *ištu ūmi annîm*, “from this day,” which locates the legal relationship established in the property transfer in time and puts it into effect for all days to come.²³ The next feature is the statement of the royal grant in the legal formula, *našû-nadānu*, literally to “lift up and give,” in the perfect tense, *ittaši . . . u ittadin*, which indicates a transfer in ownership.²⁴ In the royal grants the property given is always immovable property: land, vineyards, and houses. The *našû-nadānu* clause is frequently followed by the repetition of the verb *ittadin* in a clause that states an amount of gold or silver that the one receiving the property offers to the one granting the property. Nougayrol characterized this type of grant as “a gift with a counter gift.”²⁵ Other transactions involve no such payment and simply certify the king’s grant of property or the transfer of property between two parties. In all of these exchanges, the standard terminology for the transfer of land, houses, and other immovable property is *našû-nadānu*. The transaction is then verified with a royal seal, usually the dynastic seal, but also occasionally with the personal seal of the reigning king.²⁶

The grant RS 16.260 lays out the royal grant structure in its most elementary form. The brief text, cited in full, is as follows:

From this day (*ištu ūmi annîm*), Niqmepa son of Niqmadu, king of Ugarit, has taken up (*ittaši*) the house and field and given them (*u ittadin*) to Amaniḫu, his servant, and Amaniḫu has given (*ittadin*) one hundred fifty shekels of gold as a payment to honor the king his lord. No one may take it from Amaniḫu. Seal of Niqmepa, son of Niqmaddu, king of Ugarit.

(RS 16.260: 1–8)

The framework of the accords between Šaušga-muwa and Ammistamru II follows this pattern exactly, with the additional inclusion of Šaušga-muwa’s direct speech. The exemplary schema of the accord RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360A, in outline form, is as follows:

From this day (*ištu ūmi annîm*), Šaušga-muwa, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru, has taken (*ittaši*) the daughter of the Great Lady and given her (*u ittadinši*) to Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa, king of Ugarit.

[Direct discourse of Šaušga-muwa.]

On the day that Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa, king of Ugarit, was informed that the daughter of the Great Lady had died, he gave (*ittadin*) a thousand shekels of good refined gold to Šaušga-muwa, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru. Seal of Aziru, king of Amurru, seal of Šaušga-muwa, king of Amurru.

(RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360A: 1–5, 8’–11’)

23. Guy Kestemont, *Diplomatique et droit international en Asie Occidentale (1600–1200 av. J.C.)* (Louvain-la-neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain, Institut Orientaliste, 1974), 172 and n. 76, cited in Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 180–81. Following Kestemont, Márquez Rowe considers the phrase to be an “entry-into-effect formula rather than a date.”

24. Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 216. This legal formula of conveyance, characteristic of the Ugaritic royal grants, is attested in earlier Hittite land grants and lives on in later Hebrew and Aramaic legal traditions. See Márquez Rowe’s discussion on pages 282–86.

25. *PRU III*, 28.

26. These features have been noted by all commentators on the royal grants from Ugarit. Márquez Rowe’s analysis of the schema of the royal grants in terms of four broad components is followed here: the impression of the royal or dynastic seal of the king, the operative part of the document, the statement specifying the owner of the seal, and the name of the scribe. Within the category of the “operative part of the document” Márquez-Rowe includes as diagnostic features the “entry-into-effect” formula (*ištu ūmi annîm*), the *našû-nadānu* formula, and the *nadānu* formula (*The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 175–21).

In this accord, Šaušga-muwa is positioned as the royal figure who grants the property, analogous to Niqmepa, the Ugaritic sovereign in RS 16.260, who was the father of Ammistamru II. By the same token, in a reversal of the Ugaritic royal grants in which he is always represented as the grantor, Ammistamru II is positioned as the grantee in the accords with Šaušga-muwa, analogous to Amaniḫu's position in RS 16.260. As does Amaniḫu, Ammistamru II gives a counter gift to his grantor Šaušga-muwa; however, in his case his counter gift is an amount of gold unparalleled in magnitude by any other royal grant from Ugarit. Šaušga-muwa's dynastic and personal seals, not Ammistamru II's, certify the transfer, further accentuating Šaušga-muwa's position as the royal grantor and his control over their transaction. Šaušga-muwa's dynastic seal is the anepigraphic seal of Aziru, the progenitor of the royal line, a seal that was used throughout the reigns of the preceding kings of Amurru. His personal seal is impressed with Hittite hieroglyphs and identifies the king as a prince of the Hittite imperial family.²⁷

This use of the royal grant framework transforms the relative positions of Ammistamru II and Šaušga-muwa. Whereas the imperial texts discussed above, particularly RS 18.06–RS 17.365, suggest that the transfer of the daughter of the Great Lady from Šaušga-muwa to Ammistamru II was an act of capitulation on the part of Šaušga-muwa, the framework of these accords makes her transfer back to Ammistamru II appear to be a grant bequeathed by Šaušga-muwa based on his own initiative and his ultimate control over the woman. This shift in power between the two kings is expressed in the fact that the grant is not authorized by an imperial authority, nor is it jointly authorized by Ammistamru II. Šaušga-muwa's seals alone authorize the transfer. The most profound feature of the accords' use of royal grant formulas, however, is the radical shift in the status of the woman upon which this shift in the relative status of the two men is based.

The "property" granted by Šaušga-muwa to Ammistamru II is the daughter of the Great Lady herself. Unlike a vineyard or a field a woman can be moved, just as in this case the woman was brought back to Ugarit from Amurru. However, the accord does not certify the woman's transfer in space. It certifies a transfer in ownership. The exchange of a royal person for a price is unprecedented in surviving texts from Ugarit. Certainly exchanges of staff or servants between two high-status individuals were not uncommon, but an exchange of a person of royal status on these terms exists nowhere else. Marriage arrangements and the giving of dowries do not make use of such language. The term that describes the initial relationship between Ammistamru II and the daughter of the Great Lady is the standard expression for marriage, *ana aššuttišu ilteqe*, literally, "he took her in wifedom" (RS 17.159: 5–6). The term for the dissolution of their marriage at that stage of the negotiations was the standard, *ētezibši*, "he divorced her" (RS 17.159: 10). A single text from the Ugaritic royal palace, RS 16.141, combines the transfer of a woman in marriage alongside the transfer of property, yet this grant makes the difference between these two acts explicit.²⁸ The giving of the woman is certified in a clause distinct from the giving of land and immovable property. The transfer of the house and property between the two men is expressed with the standard *našû-nadānu* formula, whereas the transfer of the woman is expressed in a clause comparable to *ana aššuttišu ilteqe*, namely, she is said to be given as a bride, *ana kallūtišu ša PN* (RS 16.141: 9). The bride herself is not property; rather, the property is part of the collateral, the value of which must be returned if the marriage is dissolved.

27. See above, n. 10.

28. RS 16.141 = *PRU III*, p. 60.

The use of the technical language and legal syntax of property conveyance in regard to the transfer of a royal woman is jarring, particularly given the typical relationship of royal women to land and property grants. From the earliest to the latest surviving records of Ugaritic royal women, property exchanges commonly appear. Such records survive for the first recorded queen, Pišidqi, for Ammistamru II's mother Aḫatumilki, and for the final attested queen of Ugarit, Šarelli. In all these transactions, the queen is never the property; she is typically the one acquiring property.²⁹ One broken and difficult text associated with Aḫatumilki, in fact, attests to her acquiring a person. While the nature of the position of the man she acquires might be debated, in this text Ammistamru II clearly transfers a man from a previous position into the service of the queen (RS 16.348).³⁰ While no such property transfer documents survive for the daughter of the Great Lady, the division of property stipulated in the initial divorce verdicts, RS 17.159 and RS 17.396, indicates that during her tenure in Ugarit she acquired moveable goods and persons as servants. How could a royal woman, who would be expected to be an agent in a property transfer, become the object of such a transfer?

A closer examination of the exchange between Ammistamru II and Šaušga-muwa framed in the accords RS 17.228 and RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360A shows how the rhetorical strategies of Šaušga-muwa's direct speech put this transformation into effect. Both accords open with the standard legal formula, *ištu ūmi annîm*, and then introduce Šaušga-muwa, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru, as the initiator of the grant (RS 17.228:1–2; RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360:1–2). At this point the two texts diverge slightly. RS 17.228 continues immediately with Šaušga-muwa's direct speech, while RS 17.372A–RS 17.360A prefaces this speech with a summary statement of Šaušga-muwa's portion of the exchange that makes use of the technical terms: *ittaši . . . u ittadin*.

ištu ūmi annîm
Šaušga-muwa mār Bentešina šar Amurri
akanna iqtebi ana Ammistamri
mār Niqmepa šar Ugarit
mā anummê mārāt rabīti aššatka
ša ḥīta rabā tētapaš ana kâša

From this day,
 Šaušga-muwa, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru,
 has spoken thus to Ammistamru,
 son of Niqmepa, king of Ugarit,
 "Here is the daughter of the Great Lady, your wife,
 who has committed a great crime against you . . ."

(RS 17.228: 1–6)

29. Exchanges by Pišidqi, wife of Niqmaddu II (1350–1315 BCE), include RS 15.086 = *PRU III*, 51–52, and RS 16.277 = *PRU III*, 50. For Aḫatumilki, wife of Niqmepa (1313–1260 BCE), see RS 16.197 = *PRU III*, 150–51, in which her seal documents an exchange in the name of her son Ammistamru II. In the case of Šarelli, wife of Ibiranu (1235–1225/20 BCE), several legal documents dealing with land transactions were found together in room 66 of the palace central archive that are clearly attributed to her. See Itamar Singer, "The Political History of Ugarit," in *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*, ed. Nicholas Wyatt and Wilfred G. E. Watson (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 696–97.

30. *PRU III*, pp. 162–63. The use of specialized terms for types of service makes the precise interpretation of this text elusive. The transfer is initiated by Ammistamru II and records that he "has removed (changed/transferred) Yanḥamma son of Napakki and his sons/ from the *mur*²*u* service of Ibiranu/ and installed him as a *mūdû* of the queen; *unakkir Yanḥamma mār Napakki u mārišul ištu pil(ki) mur*²*i Ibiranal u iškuššu mûde šarrati*" (RS 16.348: 4–6).

*ištu ūmi annîm Šaušga-muwa
 šar Amurri mār Bentešina šar Amurri
 ittaši mārat rabīti u ittadinši
 ana qāti Ammistamri mār Niqmepa
 šar Ugarit
 u akanna iqtabi umma šinništum šit
 ana kâša hiṭṭa rabâ tiḫteṭi*

From this day, Šaušga-muwa
 king of Amurru, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru,
 has offered up the daughter of the Great Lady and given her
 to Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa,
 king of Ugarit,
 and spoke thus, “that woman
 has committed a great offense against you . . .”

(RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360A: 1–7)

Šaušga-muwa’s direct discourse in each text identifies the woman as the daughter of the Great Lady, but in a manner that disassociates her from Šaušga-muwa or any vestige of her connection to Amurru. She is no longer identified as Šaušga-muwa’s sister, but as Ammistamru II’s wife, *aššatka*, or even “that woman,” *šinništum šit*, in both cases someone guilty of a great crime. The fact that the discourse is framed as the words of Šaušga-muwa to Ammistamru II allows for the use of second person singular forms that definitively place her in the sphere of Ammistamru II’s authority. Šaušga-muwa identifies her to Ammistamru II as “your wife,” one who has committed a great crime “against you.” While this rhetorical framework could have also allowed for Šaušga-muwa’s use of first person forms, such as “my sister,” these forms never appear in his speech. The transfer of the woman is both anticipated and enacted in the way she is rhetorically positioned with respect to Ammistamru II.

The speech of Šaušga-muwa that follows these lines is nearly identical in the two texts. Šaušga-muwa’s declarations constitute a complete disassociation of himself from his sister and represent any continued interaction with her as a service he has done for Ammistamru II.

*u anāku adi immati ašbāku
 u anaššar bēlet hiṭṭika*

Now, as for me, how long should I sit
 and guard your malefactress?

(RS 17.228: 7–8)

*u anāku adi mati ašbāku
 ana našāri aššatika anāku
 nāšir bēl hiṭṭika*

Now, as for me, how long shall I sit by
 and guard your wife? Am I
 the guardian of your malefactor?

(RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360A: 8–9)

Contrary to Šaušga-muwa’s violent resistance to Ammistamru II’s seizure of his sister that was anticipated in the Hittite verdict RS 18.06–17.365, Šaušga-muwa’s speech here asserts that Ammistamru II was responsible for the woman’s continued presence in Amurru. Indeed, the rhetorical questions convey indignation that this woman has been so long under Šaušga-muwa’s care. The juxtaposition of the first and second person forms, “Am I the guardian of your malefactor,” suggests that, since Ammistamru II is the injured party, he is

the one who should be responsible for her. Šaušga-muwa presents himself not as a brother surrendering a sister but as a king who demands that a husband take back his wife.

Šaušga-muwa's disassociation of himself from the fate of his sister reaches dramatic proportions in the final segment of his speech. A sequence of imperatives gives full license to Ammistamru II to punish her as he wishes.

annumamê mārat rabīti bēlet hītika
leqēša u atta
kī libbīka epušša
šumma libbīka u dēkša
u šumma libbūka³¹
ina libbi tām̄ti kururša
u šumma kī libbīka epuš mārat rabīti

Here is the daughter of the Great Lady, your malefactress,
 take her and you,
 do with her as you will.
 If you wish, kill her,
 or if you wish,
 throw her into the middle of the sea.
 Whatever you wish, do it to the daughter of the Great Lady.

(RS 17.228: 9–15.)³²

As in the previous segments of the speech, the title “daughter of the Great Lady” is paired with terms that incriminate her, position her as belonging to Ammistamru II, and distance her from Šaušga-muwa. In the previous segment Šaušga-muwa identifies his sister as *mārat rabīti aššatuka ša hīta rabâ tētapaš ana kâša*, “the daughter of the Great Lady, your wife, who has committed a great crime against you” (RS 17.228: 5–6; cf. RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360A: 11–12). Here again she is *mārat rabīti bēlet hītika*, “the daughter of the Great Lady, your malefactress” (RS 17.228: 9). The daughter of the Great Lady is no longer the sister of Šaušga-muwa, the daughter of Bentešina, or the mother of Utri-Šarruma, Ammistamru II's heir. She is simply Ammistamru II's wife and malefactress. In their repetition, the incriminating appositives begin to work on the significance of her remaining title.

By the time the title “daughter of the Great Lady” occurs on its own in the final injunction in l. 15, *u šumma kī libbīka epuš mārat rabīti*, “thus, do whatever you wish to the daughter of the Great Lady,” her title has become more associated with wrongdoing than with prestige. The rhetorical distancing of himself from his sister that Šaušga-muwa accomplishes by identifying her as “your wife, your malefactress, that woman” dissociates him from her loss of position and loss of life. Indeed, the speech reverses the documented chain of events in its claim that her violent end was the product of his suggestion, not Ammistamru II's initiative.

The alienation of the daughter of the Great Lady from her brother, the king of Amurru, provided the basis by which she was transformed from a political agent into the object of a royal grant. In all previous texts, the woman was identified by a range of relational terms that indicated the multiple network of imperial and royal relationships in which she was enmeshed. As the daughter of a Hittite princess her fate could not be decided independent of Hittite authority.

31. The text includes a conflict in case ending in the parallel construction: *šum-ma lib-bi-ka* in l. 12 and *šum-ma lib-bu-ka* in l. 13. Shlomo Izre'el reads the latter as the scribe's attempt to construct a locative adverbial form. See *Amurru Akkadian: A Linguistic Study*, Vol. I (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 199–200.

32. The parallel passage in RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360A breaks off halfway through this sequence of imperatives, at the injunction to throw her into the sea. The text resumes on the joined tablet RS 17.360A with stipulations on Ammistamru II regarding her transfer.

Ammistamru II was required to plead his case in a court higher than his own kingdom. By the same token, Šaušga-muwa could not act unilaterally with regard to his sister without imperial oversight, whether to expel her from his palace or protect her within it. In these accords however, imperial oversight is ostensibly replaced by regional authority. Šaušga-muwa alone grants his sister to Ammistamru II. The grant is authorized by no other authority than his own seal, and no mediation exists between his ownership of her and his granting of ownership to Ammistamru II. Although she continues to be identified as the daughter of the Great Lady, the imperial significance of this title is undermined by the framework of the royal grant and by a discourse in which she is positioned purely in relationship to Ammistamru II.

At the midpoint of the accord RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360A, a telling declaration is made. As discussed, the tablet opens with the legal statement that Šaušga-muwa has “offered up and given” his sister (*ittaši u ittadinši*), and then follows with Šaušga-muwa’s direct speech renouncing his sister. The tablet concludes by certifying that Ammistamru II paid a thousand shekels of gold to Šaušga-muwa in the wake of the death of the daughter of the Great Lady. At the center, between these two acts, is the declaration that the two kings and their future male offspring have established brotherhood between them forever, *aḫḫutta ina bērišunu adi dariti iltaknū* (RS 17.372 A–RS 17.360A: 6’–7’). The marriage between Šaušga-muwa’s sister and Ammistamru II had already made the two kings “brothers,” as was the political purpose for interdynastic marriages. However, here, the mutual renunciation of the woman has re-established their brotherhood. The relationship between the two men continues to be mediated by the woman but by her death, not her life.

The rhetoric of Šaušga-muwa’s speeches in these accords and the legal vehicle of property exchange thus reverse the standard method of forming interdynastic alliances. Rather than their alliance being brokered by a woman whose roles as wife, daughter, sister, and mother unite lineages, Ammistamru II and Šaušga-muwa forge an alliance by sending a woman to her death. The daughter of the Great Lady’s Hittite lineage and the political alliances she embodied meant that her case had to be arbitrated on both an imperial and an interdynastic level. The prolonged negotiations reveal the complex network of relationships in which royal women operated, within and between royal households. Ammistamru II asserted his sphere of authority over Šaušga-muwa by severing fundamental relationships within Šaušga-muwa’s royal household. Šaušga-muwa regained his standing in relation to Ammistamru II by disavowing his relationship to his sister. The royal woman who had been enmeshed in a network of alliances became merely property that could be transferred between two men.

IV. THE SONS OF THE GREAT LADY

The third accord between Ammistamru II and Šaušga-muwa, RS 17.318–RS 17.349 A, however, introduces a destabilizing element to the exchange between the two kings and evokes the persistent obstacle against which Ammistamru II contends, namely, that the woman’s status is not purely a function of her position as wife in Ugarit and sister in Amurru. The emergence of her maternal brothers, the “sons of the Great Lady,” alongside Šaušga-muwa in this third surviving accord indicates that Hittite descent was a marker of status for Gaššuliyawiya’s sons as well as for her daughter. Royal households were not constituted simply by kings, nor were interdynastic politics driven solely by negotiations between them. Along with the synchronic dimension of interdynastic politics, characterized by the circulation of women as wives, sisters, and daughters, royal households were also constituted by diachronic, intergenerational relationships, which shaped political dynamics among peers and siblings. Royal mothers were crucial in the reproduction of these intergenerational relationships. By definition, royal paternity was shared among members of a royal household.

Distinctions among siblings were made by their maternal affiliation. This third accord offers an example of the identification of a set of members of the royal household by their shared maternal descent. Furthermore, it communicates what this shared affiliation meant: a stake in the status and fate of maternal siblings.

RS 17.318–RS 17.349A involves the contingent of the “sons of the Great Lady,” who also appear in the fragmentary Hittite verdict RS 17.082. In both cases these men are represented as potential parties to a lawsuit, alongside Šaušga-muwa, on behalf of the daughter of the Great Lady. Because both passages follow the standard format of legal non-contest clauses, they are remarkably similar. RS 17.082 is the more conventional in format.

urram šēram
Šaušga-muwa mār Bentešina
šar Amurri
u mārū rabīti
dīna mimma
lā inammuš
itti Ammistamri mār Niqmepa
šar Ugarit
u itti mārīšu adi [dārī]i
šumma dīna mimma
iraggumū u tupp[u annū]
ila''ēšunu

In the future
 Šaušga-muwa, son of Bentešina,
 king of Amurru,
 and the sons of the Great Lady
 may not bring
 any kind of lawsuit
 against Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa,
 king of Ugarit,
 or his sons forever.
 If they pursue any kind of lawsuit,
 [this] tabl[et]
 will prevail against them.

(RS 17.082: 13–24)

The format of the conventional non-contest formula, *šumma dīna mimma iraggumū u tupp[u annū] ila''ēšunu*, is suggestive. The fact that the sons of the Great Lady are included alongside Šaušga-muwa with no further elaboration conveys that their stake in the suit is to be expected. What sets this verdict apart from the imperial verdicts in which the sons of the Great Lady do not appear is that the verdict is positioned as being issued after their sister’s death. The basis on which their potential suit is posited is expressed in the preceding clause by circumlocution, *kī ḥalqat*, meaning, “because she has disappeared (or perished)” (RS 17.082: 12). This verdict suggests that when the negotiations concerned her position within the royal household, their brother the king was the appropriate representative, but when it came to the value of her life, her other brothers were equally invested and would have been expected to make a claim.

The royal accord RS 17.318–RS 17.349A also indicates that the daughter of the Great Lady’s maternal brothers would be expected to join in the suit once their sister’s loss of life was at stake. The format of the non-contest clause is nearly identical to the Hittite text RS 17.082, yet this accord adds a crucial element of direct speech on the part of the sons of the Great Lady alongside Šaušga-muwa.

urram šēra[m lā] itūr
Šaušga-muwa mār Bentešina šar Amurru
u mārū rabīti ina dīnāti
itti Ammistamru mār Niqmepa
šar Ugarit
šumma dīnāti mīm[ma] inammuš³³
u iqabbû mā mullâ ša damī³⁴
ša aḫāti naši idnam-mi
u tuppū annû ila³⁵ēšu

In the future,
 Šaušga-muwa, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru,
 and the sons of the Great Lady shall not sue
 Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa,
 king of Ugarit.
 If they do initiate any suit
 and say: “Give (us) full compensation for the blood
 of (our) sister!”—
 then this tablet will prevail against them.
 (RS 17.318– RS 17.349: 17’–25’)

The claim for compensation for the blood of their sister erupts against the veneer of disassociation conjured by Šaušga-muwa’s opening speech. As the other two accords do, RS 17.318– RS 17.349 represents Šaušga-muwa as disowning his sister and granting Ammistamru II the right to kill her or treat her as he chooses. The contrast between this rhetoric and the prohibition suggests competing interests and political contingents within Amurru that must be dealt with on two registers.

The following clause of the accord confirms that the sons of the Great Lady are regarded as a contingent that can be distinguished from their brother the king. The connection the brothers appear to have to the mortal fate of their sister is asserted by Ammistamru II’s threat of punishment in kind.

šanītam šumma mārū rabīti dīna mimma
inammuš itti Ammistamru mār Niqmepa
šar Ugarit
u mārī rabīti tuttadnūšunu³⁵
ina qāti Ammistamru mār Niqmep[a šar] Ugarit
u ša kī ētapaš³⁶ ana [mārat rabīti]
akanna mārī rab[īti] eppušū

Furthermore, if the sons of the Great Lady
 should start any legal proceedings against Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa,

33. While the verb *inammuš* here is in the singular and the verb *ila³⁵ēšu* in the concluding formula carries a singular object marker, the subject and object should be considered plural, including the sons of the Great Lady. Márquez Rowe notes that, “it is probably due to the stereotyped nature of the phrases and formulas that must be attributed the lack of concordance (between subject and verb, noun and adjective, antecedent and pronoun) that is found in a significant number of examples” (Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 211). John Huehnergard concurs that the formulaic nature of the legal texts is likely responsible for the use of singular forms. See *The Akkadian of Ugarit* (Atlanta: Scholar’s Press, 1989), 237.

34. L. 23’ includes both the logogram and a phonetic gloss for the word “blood” (MÚD.MEŠ: *da-mi*).

35. On this hapax Dt form, *tu-ut-ta-ad-nu-šu-nu*, see Izre’el, *Amurru Akkadian*, Vol. I, 160.

36. *ētapaš* is construed as the Assyrian third person form for this verb with Ammistamru II as the subject. Ammistamru II is ultimately the one responsible for the death of the daughter of the Great Lady and it is into his authority that the sons of the Great Lady would be given.

king of Ugarit—

Then you shall give the sons of the Great Lady
 into the hands of Ammistamru, son of Niqme[a, king of] Ugarit,
 and as he did to [the daughter of the Great Lady],
 so shall be done to the sons of the Gr[eat Lady].

(RS 17.318–RS 17.349: 26'–32')

All the other accords and verdicts that restricted future legal suits by Šaušga-muwa and his future descendants contain only the standard assertion that, should they pursue legal claims, *tuppu annû ila"ēšu*, “this tablet will prevail against him.” This standard legal prohibition was evidently considered an appropriate and sufficient restraint. Even in the previous clause in this tablet, in which the sons of the Great Lady are posited as future claimants alongside Šaušga-muwa, this standard phrase appears. The additional threat of rendition and execution, aimed solely at the sons of the Great Lady, communicates that behind the struggle between Ammistamru II and Šaušga-muwa to assert and defend their spheres of patrimonial authority, the Hittite presence within the royal household of Amurru remained a force to be reckoned with.

The sons and daughter of the Great Lady are positioned as a political unit both by the identification of their shared Hittite lineage and by the terms of the retribution threatened in the accord. Even if this death threat is taken as legal rhetoric, its reciprocal framing—as was done to the sister, so shall be done to the brothers—posits that the daughter and sons of the Great Lady are a united constituency over which Ammistamru II has the power to exact retribution. Šaušga-muwa must hand over his sister to Ammistamru II; furthermore, he must hand over his brothers to Ammistamru II if they should take action on behalf of their sister. Šaušga-muwa thus relinquishes his authority to regulate or protect an entire elite constituency within his own royal household. Ammistamru II has asserted his power within the sphere of another king's patrimonial authority and struck a blow against the prestige of the Hittite line in Amurru. In doing so, Ammistamru II once again undermines the connection between a royal woman and her offspring, yet this time it is the Great Lady herself whom he is challenging. Just as he severed the connection between his wife and her children, Ammistamru II subverts the prestige and protection the Great Lady's children would have drawn from their mother's elevated status.

CONCLUSION

Ammistamru II could not do as he wished to the daughter of the Great Lady without undoing the wider network of relationships in which she was located, both on an immediate contemporary level and within the terms of a shared lineage. To remove one royal woman from her position, many relationships had to be severed. The severing of these relationships threatened the equilibrium of a system upheld by interdynastic and imperial-vassal marriages. The daughter of the Great Lady's Hittite lineage meant that her case had to be arbitrated on an imperial level and, thus, the dynamics of relationships that would otherwise have been assumed in the regular function of royal households were explicitly documented. The crisis in the system of power revealed the structures that supported it. The verdicts allow us to see that a royal household was constituted both by lateral exchanges between contemporaneous rulers and by what was inherited on a vertical, intergenerational level: a process of biological and political reproduction in which women were central figures.