

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

The Hittite Empire

Trevor Bryce

1 Indo-European Origins

Around the middle of the 18th century BC, a king called Pithana led his troops against the city of Nesa and took it by storm. Nesa lay in central Anatolia, just south of the river today called the Kizil Irmak, the Halys of Classical and the Marassantiya of Hittite texts. Also known as Kanesh, Nesa was the seat of one of several Middle Bronze Age kingdoms of central Anatolia, and the headquarters of the network of Assyrian merchant colonies spread through eastern and central Anatolia. It now became the new royal seat of Pithana, whose ancestral city Kussara lay in the anti-Taurus region. From Nesa, Pithana and his son and successor Anitta embarked on a series of military campaigns both east and west of the Kizil Irmak, which culminated in Anitta's conquest of the city of Hattush. This was the capital of the kingdom of Hatti, then ruled by a man called Piyusti. It was located within the Kizil irmak basin on the site of the later Hittite capital Hattusha. Piyusti had been Anitta's most formidable opponent. His defeat marked the end of the kingdom of Hatti. Anitta razed Hattush and declared its site accursed by sowing it with weeds. It was never again to be resettled. But Anitta commemorated his victory by recording it on a stele set up in the city's gateway, and 150 years later, this account of his and his father's triumphs had become firmly entrenched in Hittite historical tradition (Halla and Younger 2003: 182–4).

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Pithana's and Anitta's exploits are generally regarded as a prelude to the history of the Hittite kingdom, whose origins probably date to the early 17th century, early in the Late Bronze Age, half a century or more after the empire built by Anitta had disappeared and the Assyrian colonies had come to an end. The royal dynasty that held sway over the kingdom for virtually the whole of its history, until its collapse early in the 12th century, was of Indo-European origin. Opinion varies widely on when Indo-European speaking groups first appeared in Anatolia. Most scholars favor the theory of Indo-European migrations into the region during the Early Bronze Age (3rd millennium BC), but earlier dates have also been proposed. All we can be certain about is an Indo-European presence in various parts of Anatolia by the early 2nd millennium – on the basis, primarily, of Indo-European names in the texts of the Assyrian merchants. In the Late Bronze Age Hittite texts, three main groups of Indo-Europeans are discernible: one group speaking a language called Palaic, located in the region of later Paphlagonia on the southern shore of the Black Sea; a second group that became widely dispersed though central, southern, and western Anatolia during the 2nd millennium, called the Luwians; and a third group called the speakers of the Nesite language. As a matter of modern convention, we call this language “Hittite.” It is from the Nesite-speaking population group that the royal Hittite dynasty emerged.

As its name indicates, Nesite was so called after the city which Pithana adopted as his capital. It is likely that, at the time of Pithana's conquest, the city already had a substantial Indo-European population and that Pithana adopted the language it spoke as his own. But Nesite may in fact have been his native language, if the city from which he came, Kusshara, was primarily an Indo-European foundation. His statement that he made the inhabitants of Nesa “his mothers and fathers” *may* indicate ethnic affinities between the two cities. But other interpretations of this curious expression are possible. At all events, Kusshara was regarded by at least one future Hittite king, Hattushili I, as his ancestral home.

2 The Old Kingdom

Hattushili is in fact the earliest Hittite king with whom written records can be associated. He ascended his throne c.1650 BC (for the dates used throughout this article, see Bryce 2005: 376–80), and from his own and other Hittite records, we know that there was at least one king who preceded him on it. Hattushili reports the exploits of the first clearly attested Hittite king, a man called Labarna, probably his grandfather. In a series of military conquests, reminiscent of those of Pithana and Anitta, Labarna established his sway over many of the small states of eastern Anatolia, from the Marassantiya basin southward to the coast of the Mediterranean (Bryce 2005: 64–8). Later Hittite kings adopted his name as a royal title, much like the title Caesar in Roman imperial titulature. We do not know where the base of his operations was located. Perhaps it was the city

Kusshara, the original home of Pithana. But in any case, his grandson (?) and probable successor Hattushili took a major new step in the consolidation of Hittite power in Anatolia, by resettling the site once declared accursed by Anitta, originally called Hattush and now Hattusha. A large outcrop of rock, today known as Büyükkale (“Big Castle”), provided an excellent location for a citadel, for it was virtually impregnable from the north and could easily be protected by walls built on its eastern, southern, and western sides. The region in which the city lay had abundant water supplies from seven springs, and was at that time thickly forested. Practical considerations such as these clearly outweighed any qualms Hattusili may have had about defying the curse placed upon the site.

Hattushili consolidated and extended Labarna’s conquests in central Anatolia, and then carried his arms into Syria. Here he conducted a number of campaigns against the northern Syrian states, like Alalakh in the Amuq plain and Hahhum on the Euphrates (Bryce 2005: 70–3). He crossed the Euphrates and penetrated deep into northern Mesopotamian territory, where he contracted an alliance with a king called Tunip-Teshub (Tuniya), ruler of the land of Tikunani (Salvini 1996).

For all their apparent success, Labarna’s and Hattusili’s military ventures fell far short of establishing what we might call an empire. Labarna’s attempts to hold his conquered territories by sending his sons to govern them proved disastrous. Rebellions broke out in the territories, and Hattushili had to conquer them all over again. Further, Hattushili’s Syrian campaigns were little more than raiding expeditions which established the king’s credibility as a war-leader and brought rich plunder into his treasuries but failed to make any lasting impact upon the regions thus afflicted. No attempt was made to annex them or subject them in any way to permanent Hittite authority. Indeed, many of them were, and continued to be, vassal states of the northern Syrian kingdom Yamkhad, whose capital was located at Aleppo. Hattushili never succeeded in capturing Aleppo itself. It fell finally to the Hittites during a campaign against it by Hattushili’s grandson and successor Murshili I, who followed up his victory by marching south along the Euphrates to the city of Babylon, which he captured, sacked, and destroyed (Bryce 2005: 97–100). This last exploit, dated to c.1595 BC, brought to an end the dynasty of Hammurabi (Ch. II.37).

Murshili too made no attempt to impose his sovereignty upon the lands and cities he had conquered in Syria and Mesopotamia. And within a few years of his military triumphs in these regions, he fell to an assassination plot. The assassin Hantili, Murshili’s brother-in-law, now became king. Struggles over the throne in Hattusha persisted through the reigns of five of Murshili’s successors, which weakened the kingdom to the point where it not only lost most of its subject territories, but suffered invasion of its core territory, particularly by Hurrian forces from the southeast. This was the first, and would not be the last, time the Hittite kingdom was brought to the brink of annihilation. Order was restored by a king called Telipinu (c.1525–1500 BC) – also a usurper – who drove the enemy occu-

piers from his homeland, and firmly imposed his authority within it. Most importantly, he established fixed rules for the royal succession, assigning considerable powers to a body of officials called the *panku*. Protection of the reigning sovereign was clearly the prime responsibility of this group, which was authorized to take severe disciplinary action against any subjects, including those of the highest rank, who sought to defy the new succession provisions (Halla and Younger 2003/I: 196–7). Further afield, Telipinu set about regaining, by force of arms, some of the territories lost by his predecessors. But in one case, he adopted a policy which was to become a lynch-pin of later Hittite influence through much of the Near Eastern world. In southeastern Anatolia a new kingdom had been formed out of the local territories formerly subject to the Hittites. It was called Kizzuwatna. Instead of attempting to regain its territory by military action, Telipinu negotiated a settlement with its ruler Ispatalsu, confirmed by treaty. The treaty was to become an important diplomatic instrument used by many Hittite kings for the maintenance of their control over their subject territories and the establishment of peaceful relations and alliances with foreign rulers.

In the short term, however, Telipinu's reforms and policies had but limited effect. During the next century, the Hittite kingdom made relatively little impact on the international scene. No more campaigns were undertaken into Syria, and squabbles broke out afresh over the royal succession. But Hatti's fortunes rose once more, early in the 14th century, when a man called Tudhaliya occupied the throne in Hattusha. His accession marked the beginning of a new era in Hittite history, the period of the "New Kingdom," which lasted for just over two centuries, until the fall of the Hittite capital Hattusha c.1186 BC. It was in this period that the Hittites built what became for a time the most powerful empire in the Near Eastern world.

3 Language and Scripts

At its greatest extent, in the 14th and 13th centuries BC, the Hittite Empire stretched from the Aegean coast of Turkey across Anatolia through Syria south to the northern frontier of Damascus, and to the western fringes of Mesopotamia. The core region of the empire was what is now commonly referred to as the Hittite homeland, which lay within the region of north-central Anatolia roughly defined by the Marassantiya river. This homeland territory was called the Land of Hatti in Hittite and other ancient sources. "Hittite" is a modern term derived from biblical sources. The Hittites themselves never used any form of ethnic designation. They simply called themselves the people of the land of Hatti – a name which goes back centuries and perhaps even millennia, before Hittite history begins. Hatti was the traditional name of the region, and the term "Hattian" is applied by scholars to the region's indigenous culture, including its art, language, and religion. Remnants of this culture survived in the Hittite

period. Indeed, it is possible that the population of the Hittite homeland, including the capital, had a significant Hattian component, at least in the kingdom's earlier years. The Hittite, or more strictly the Nesite, language was certainly the kingdom's official language, used for written communications between the kings and his officials, and in letters and treaties exchanged between the king and his western vassal rulers. It was the language of the elite administrative class of the kingdom, a testimony to the Indo-European origins of the royal dynasty. But we cannot be sure how widely spoken it was outside the highest levels of Hittite society. It was undoubtedly a minority language within the kingdom as a whole, and perhaps even within the Hittite homeland, and the capital itself.

For writing their documents, the Hittites used the cuneiform script, adopted from northern Syria, or from scribes brought back from the region in the wake of Hattushili's campaigns there. The great bulk of our information about the Hittite world is derived from these tablets, first deciphered by a Czech scholar Bedřich Hrozný during World War I. The majority of the tablets have been found in various locations in the Hittite capital, as well as in the kingdom's regional centers. Wood was also used as a writing material. Though no wooden tablets have survived, we know of their existence from references in the clay tablets to "scribes of the wooden tablets." Important documents, like international treaties, were sometimes inscribed on metal, including gold, silver, and bronze. One of the most significant finds made at Hattusha in recent years is a bronze tablet, fully intact, more than 350 lines in length, and containing the text of a treaty between one of the last Hittite kings, Tudhaliya IV (c.1237–1209 BC), and his cousin Kurunta, who had been appointed appanage ruler of the southern Hittite kingdom Tarhuntassa (Hallo and Younger 2003/II: 100–6).

The repertoire of Hittite cuneiform tablets includes international and vassal treaties, a wide range of correspondence, between Hittite kings and their officials, vassal rulers, and foreign peers, festival and ritual texts, mythological texts, lists of duties for royal officials, and a collection of 200 Hittite laws. Seal impressions provide another important category of written information about the Hittite world. The seals of kings, other members of their families, and high officials were impressed on a range of documents, including land-grants, royal gifts, treaties, and records of goods purchased. Many of the seals are digraphic. They contain (for example) the name of a king and his titles in an inner circle, written in a hieroglyphic script (see below), and the king's name and titles and information about his genealogy in (usually) two outer rings, written in the cuneiform script. Only a few hundred of these seals were known prior to 1990, in which year an archive of 3,535 of them came to light during excavations on a rocky outcrop, now known as Nişantepe or Nişantaş, located in the so-called "Lower City" of the Hittite capital (Neve 1992: 48–63). The great majority of the new discoveries were clay *bullae* – i.e., lumps of clay stamped with a seal and attached to a document as a certificate of authentication. There were also a small number of seal impressions on land-grant documents.

The hieroglyphic script used on the seals represent the language used by Hittite kings for their monumental inscriptions. It first appears on a small number of royal seal impressions, dating to the Hittite Old Kingdom and bearing, in hieroglyphic symbols, the Hittite royal title *Labarna*.

The language of the script is not Hittite, but Luwian. This was the language of one of the three Indo-European population groups whose presence is first attested in Anatolia in the early 2nd millennium BC. The Luwians were undoubtedly the most populous and widespread of these groups, and by the Hittite New Kingdom may well have formed a substantial component of the Hittite homeland population. Their language also makes its appearance, in cuneiform script, in a number of ritual passages inserted into Hittite texts. The reading and decipherment of the Luwian hieroglyphic script (the name “hieroglyphic” is adopted from the so-called, but totally unconnected, pictographic script of ancient Egypt) proved an almost impossible task until the discovery, in 1946, of a bilingual text with both Phoenician and Luwian hieroglyphic versions, at Karatepe in eastern Cilicia. Though difficulties still remain, particularly with the reading of a number of the script’s symbols, the problems of decipherment have been largely solved, thanks to the work of a number of scholars, primarily J.D. Hawkins, H. Çambel, A. Morpurgo-Davies, and G. Neumann (Hawkins 2000).

Hieroglyphic inscriptions dating to the Hittite Empire include a few graffiti found on the paving stones and orthostats of the Temple of the Storm God at Hattusha as well as a number of bowls and other small metal objects from this period. But the great majority of Late Bronze Age hieroglyphic texts appear as monumental inscriptions on rock faces and built stone surfaces. Of 13th century date, most of these have been found within the Hittite homeland, but they are otherwise widely distributed throughout Anatolia. Some record a king’s military exploits and other achievements, or are attached as epigraphs – i.e., identification labels – to the figures of deities or Hittite kings or other members of Hittite royalty. Why did Hittite kings choose the Luwian hieroglyphic script for their public monuments? The usual answer is that it was a much more impressive visual medium than the cuneiform script for the purposes of public display. But T. van den Hout has argued that the main purpose in using this form of communication was to help Hittite kings identify more closely with the Luwian populations in whose regions many of the inscribed monuments were located (van den Hout 2006: 222–37). That may well be so. In any case, the Luwian hieroglyphic script became the standard medium used by Hittite royalty for recording their achievements on stone in many parts of the empire, including Hattusha, during the empire’s final century. The longest known inscription in Luwian hieroglyphs appears on the rock face at the site of Nişantaş in the Hittite capital. Though now almost entirely illegible, enough of its first line can be read to identify its author as Shuppiluliuma (II), the last Hittite king (1207–? BC). Also dating to Shuppiluliuma’s reign is a recently discovered hieroglyphic text found in one of the rooms of a two-chambered structure on the so-called Südburg (“south hill”) at Hattusha,

just south of the royal acropolis (Hawkins 1995). This inscription, which is accompanied by reliefs of a deity and the king himself, records a number of the king's military operations in southern Anatolia. It is perhaps a condensed version of the longer Nişantaş inscription. The building in which it appears is believed to be what Hittite texts call a KASKAL.KUR, a symbolic entrance to the Underworld.

4 The Hittite Empire in its Near Eastern Context

Written sources of information provide us with a reasonably comprehensive outline picture of the evolution, development, and fall of the Hittite Empire, though this picture is constantly being adjusted as new information comes to light. Campaigns undertaken by the Hittite king Tudhaliya I as far as the Aegean coast in the west and the Euphrates in the east established the basis for the re-emergence of Hatti, the kingdom of the Hittites, as a major international power (there is some uncertainty as to whether the western and eastern campaigns should be assigned to two different kings called Tudhaliya; hence the convention of referring to the king or kings in question as Tudhaliya I/II.) In the west, Tudhaliya fought several campaigns against enemy coalitions, most notably one commonly known as the Assuwan Confederacy (Bryce 2005: 123–7). Among the leading members of these coalitions were a number of states known collectively as the Arzawa lands, whose populations, most scholars believe, included large Luwian-speaking groups. Despite the victories Tudhaliya claimed to have won during these campaigns, and the thousands of prisoners of war he allegedly brought back from them, the west remained a constant threat to Hittite security, as later events were to demonstrate. In the east and southeast, Tudhaliya claimed crushing victories over Aleppo and the kingdom of Mitanni. He may have paved the way for his operations in the region by annexing the kingdom of Kizzuwatna, which had fluctuated in its external alignments between Hatti and Mitanni.

By the end of the 16th century, the kingdom of Mitanni had been formed from a number of small Hurrian states in Upper Mesopotamia. One of the four great kingdoms of the Near Eastern world during the first half of the Late Bronze Age, it was to become Hatti's greatest rival for political and military supremacy over northern Syria and eastern Anatolia. The other great kingdoms of the age were Egypt, which also sought to expand its territories in Syria, particularly under the pharaoh Thutmose III (1479–1425 BC), and Babylon. The rivalry between Hatti and Mitanni came to a head in the reign of the Hittite king Shuppiluliuma I (c.1350–1322 BC), whose accession to the Hittite throne, by the path of usurpation, followed a period when the Hittite kingdom was, once again, almost obliterated. This happened during the reign of Tudhaliya III, Shuppiluliuma's father and predecessor. In what is commonly called the “concentric invasions,” the Hittite homeland was attacked from all around its frontiers and occupied by enemy forces (Bryce 2005: 145–8). Contingents from Arzawa figured prominently among the attackers. Tudhaliya abandoned Hattusha and took refuge in

a place called Shamuha, probably located on the upper course of the Marassantiya river, which he used as a base for driving the enemy forces from the homeland. Almost certainly, Shuppiluliuma was the principal architect of the recovery of the homeland, and the restoration of Hatti's status as one of the great powers of the age. No doubt he felt he had the right to succeed his father, in place of his brother Tudhaliya the Younger, the designated successor, who was assassinated in a palace conspiracy.

Once he was firmly seated upon his throne, Shuppiluliuma set his sights on achieving the ultimate ambition of his career, the elimination of the kingdom of Mitanni. Within five or six years of his accession, he had largely realized this ambition. In 1344 BC he conducted a massive campaign of conquest against Mitanni's allies in northern Syria, and followed this up with an invasion deep into Mitanni's homeland in northern Mesopotamia, capturing and plundering its capital Washukkani (Bryce 2005: 161–3). The Mitannian king Tushratta was forced to flee for his life. He was later assassinated by a group of his own subjects, including his son. Shuppiluliuma now became overlord of northern Syria, subjecting to vassalhood the former subject territories and allies of the Mitannian king. But elements of Mitannian resistance lingered on, and it was not until 1326 BC that the final Mitannian stronghold Karkamish on the Euphrates fell to Shuppiluliuma after a six-day siege (Halla and Younger 2003/I: 190). Shuppiluliuma forthwith placed Karkamish under the rule of his son Sharri-Kushukh (Piyassili) as viceroy. He also appointed another of his sons, Telipinu, as viceroy in the former Syrian kingdom Aleppo. For the first time, large territories outside the Hittite homeland were under direct Hittite rule. Other northern Syrian states retained their own rulers, who were obliged to swear oaths of allegiance to Shuppiluliuma as his vassals. A number of scholars would argue, with some justification, that it was with Shuppiluliuma that the era of the Hittite empire truly began. But there is no doubt that the foundations of empire had been laid several generations earlier, by the first king called Tudhaliya.

Hittite sovereignty was also established in the west, particularly in the reign of Shuppiluliuma's son and second successor, Murshili II (c.1321–1295 BC), who ascended the throne after the premature death of his brother Arnuwanda, Shuppiluliuma's first successor. Military campaigns conducted in the west by Murshili in his third and fourth regnal years were sufficient to bring to heel the recalcitrant Arzawa states in the region (Bryce 2005: 192–7). Their subjection and allegiance to Murshili was formalized in a series of vassal treaties which Murshili drew up with their rulers.

5 How the Empire Was Controlled

The treaties were personal contracts between the king and his vassal ruler (see Beckman 1999b: 11–124). The latter was bound to his overlord by a number of obligations. He swore allegiance to the Great King, and pledged support for his

legitimate successors; he undertook to provide the king with troops, particularly when the king or his commanders were campaigning in his region; he promised to inform the king of anti-Hittite activities in his region, to have no dealings with the rulers of foreign states, nor to harbor refugees from Hittite authority, and (in at least some cases) to pay an annual tribute into his overlord's coffers. Provided he fulfilled his treaty obligations, the vassal was allowed, in almost all cases, to rule his state as he saw fit. And, in the event that his kingdom was attacked by outside forces or he was threatened or overthrown in a coup by his own subjects, he was guaranteed the protection of his overlord. Sometimes, Hittite garrisons were stationed in vassal states. But this happened only when the states in question had a history of prolonged instability or were located in frontier territories that were vulnerable to enemy incursions.

The vassal treaty system was one of the most important instruments used by Hittite kings in maintaining their authority over their subject territories. At its height from the mid-14th to the mid-13th century BC, the Hittite Empire consisted essentially of its core homeland territory, the Land of Hatti in the strictest sense, and a large network of subject states, spread over much of Anatolia and northern Syria. As we have noted, Shuppiluliuma I extended direct Hittite rule into Syria with his appointment of his sons as viceroys in Karkamish and Aleppo. Otherwise, Hatti's control over its so-called empire was a relatively loose one, which depended ultimately for its survival on the loyalty and support of treaty-bound vassal rulers. There were periods when the vassal system worked relatively well, particularly during the reign of Murshili II. But there were also many occasions when vassal states rose in rebellion against their overlord, or overthrew a pro-Hittite ruler, necessitating campaigns by the Great King himself or by one of his high-ranking military commanders, to reassert Hittite authority in the region. In the wake of such campaigns, hundreds and sometimes thousands of the populations of the rebel states were brought back to the homeland as deportees, along with large numbers of livestock and other booty. This had the twofold effect of restocking the homeland's workforces and significantly reducing the prospects of further uprisings in the subdued states, since many of the deportees culled from the local populations must have been able-bodied males of military age. In their new homeland, the deportees were given various roles. Some were assigned to the king's officers, to work on their estates as agricultural laborers; some were drafted into the royal militia; some were assigned cultic duties in the Hittite land's numerous religious establishments; and large numbers were settled in regions with low populations near the kingdom's frontiers.

Shortage of manpower seems to have been a chronic problem throughout Hittite history, and the deportation system must have played an extremely important role in replenishing the kingdom's human resources, particularly for agricultural and military purposes. Hittite military expeditions were always costly enterprises, even if ultimately successful, because of the drain they imposed on the kingdom's available manpower. For major campaigns, the king's standing

army had to be supplemented by levies drawn from the agricultural workforce. And the absence of large bodies of Hittite troops on campaigns far from their homeland exposed the homeland to attack from the enemies across its frontiers. One of the most formidable and persistent of such enemies consisted of tribal groups from Kashka, a rugged and in parts impenetrable region located in the Pontic mountains south of the Black Sea and north of the Hittites' northern frontiers. Kashkan forces repeatedly raided Hittite territory, particularly in periods when Hittite armies were engaged in expeditions abroad. Though Hittite kings frequently scored victories over Kashkan armies, and destroyed many Kashkan settlements, the enemy remained an elusive and ultimately unconquerable one.

It is understandable that on many occasions Hittite kings attempted to settle problems that arose in the vassal states, particularly problems associated with rebel movements, by diplomacy rather than military force. A number of their campaigns against the western Arzawa lands, for example, were undertaken only when all attempts at resolution of a crisis by diplomatic means had failed. The western states were particularly prone to rebellion, often, it seems with the prompting and support of a foreign power called Ahhiyawa in Hittite texts. Most scholars believe that Ahhiyawa was the Hittite way of referring to the Greek Mycenaean world, and in some cases to a specific kingdom within this world, perhaps Mycenae itself. The name Ahhiyawa, which also appears in the variant form Ahhiya, is thought to come from the word Akhaioi (Achaeans), one of the names by which the Greeks are known in Homer's epic poems. If the identification is valid, it is clear from Hittite texts that at least one Mycenaean king sought to expand the territories he controlled onto the Anatolian mainland, into what was Hittite vassal territory, and using local anti-Hittite elements as agents for this expansion. For a time, the important city called Milawanda (Milawata) on Anatolia's western coast came under Ahhiyawan or Mycenaean control, and was used by the Mycenaean king as the main base for the extension of his activities through the western Anatolian coastal regions. Milawata was the Bronze Age ancestor of the city later to be called Miletus.

6 Hatti's Relations with Egypt

In the southeast, Hatti's subject territories extended through northern Syria to the frontier of the land of Damascus, which marked the northern limit of Egypt's subject states. Disputes between Hatti and Egypt over control of two local Syrian kingdoms, Amurru and Qadesh, located in the Orontes region to the north of Damascus, had culminated in two military showdowns at Qadesh between Hittite and Egyptian armies. The more famous of these, fought in 1274 BC between the Hittite king Muwattalli II and the pharaoh Ramesses II (Halla and Younger 2003/II: 32–40), resulted in a stalemate. But the Egyptian forces withdrew

to the region of Damascus, and Amurru and Qadesh were gathered firmly within the Hittite fold. A gradual easing of tensions between Hatti and Egypt led finally to the conclusion of a peace treaty in 1259 BC drawn up between Ramesses and Muwattalli's son and second successor Hattushili III. Unlike the Hittite vassal treaties, the Hittite-Egyptian treaty represented a bilateral agreement between its contracting parties. Versions of it were prepared separately in Hattusha and Ramesses' capital Pi-Ramesses, each from the respective treaty partner's viewpoint (Beckman 1999b: 96–100). The Hittite version was originally written in Akkadian, from a first Hittite draft, inscribed on a silver tablet, and then sent to Egypt, where it was translated into Egyptian. The Egyptian version of the treaty was first composed in Egyptian, and then translated into Akkadian on a silver tablet before being sent to Hattusha.

Akkadian was the international language diplomacy of the Late Bronze Age, and many of the tablets found at Hattusha could be read some years before the decipherment of the Hittite language, since they were written in Akkadian. This was the language used by Hittite kings in their communications with their vassal rulers in Syria and in their correspondence with their foreign counterparts. A large number of letters have survived in the Hittite archives from the reigns of Hattushili III and Ramesses II, exchanged between the Hittite and Egyptian kings and also members of their families, in the period leading up to the treaty, and subsequently in the years preceding the first of two marriages which Ramesses contracted with Hattushili's daughters. Each king addressed the other as "my brother," and "Great King." The latter form of address was reserved exclusively for the rulers of the four great kingdoms of the age. The other rulers were the kings of Assyria and Babylon. Assyria had occupied the power vacuum left in northern Mesopotamia by the Hittite destruction of the Mitannian Empire, and became an increasing threat both to its southern neighbor Babylon and to the territories west of the Euphrates. Indeed, fear of a resurgent Assyria, formerly a vassal state of Mitanni, may have been one of the prompts for the treaty concluded between Hattushili and Ramesses.

7 The Duties of Royalty

Like his royal brothers, the Hittite king exercised three major functions: he was the chief priest of the empire, he was its supreme judicial authority, and he was commander-in-chief of its armies (Bryce 2002: 11–31). In all his functions, his role was very much a hands-on one. His appointment as king was divinely sanctioned, but he ruled merely as the servant and chief executive officer of the storm god, the most important deity in the Hittite pantheon. The religious duties which he was expected to fulfill in person were numerous, and in some cases had to take priority over all his other activities. Kings are known to have cut short military campaigns in order to discharge a particular religious responsibility – or

else invoke the wrath of the offended gods, which might be unleashed in the form of a plague of devastating proportions. Not least among the king's religious duties was the celebration of certain religious festivals, which often entailed pilgrimages to a number of the kingdom's cult centers. Of the four most important festivals of the religious calendar, two were held in spring – the AN.TAH.ŠUM (“crocus”) and the *purulli* (“earth”) festivals – and at least one and perhaps two in autumn – the *nuntarriyashas* (“festival of haste”) and the KI.LAM (“gate-house”) festival. The AN.TAH.ŠUM festival was performed primarily for the Sun-Goddess of Arinna, consort of the storm god and the second most important deity of the Hittite pantheon.

The Hittite New Year festival may have been celebrated in a natural rock sanctuary located 1 kilometer northeast of Hattusha and now known as Yazilikaya (“Inscribed Rock”). Hattushili III built a gatehouse and temple complex with interior court and inner sanctuary across the front of the site, and his son and successor Tudhaliya IV embellished the complex with relief sculptures. The main group of reliefs in the main chamber (Chamber A) consists of two files of deities, male on the left and female on the right (with one exception in each case). Their depiction and their names, presented in the Luwian hieroglyphic script, show marked Hurrian influence, illustrating the strong impact which Hurrian culture made on the Hittite civilization, especially in Late Bronze Age Hatti's final century. In the second, narrow, rock chamber in the complex (Chamber B), 12 running or marching gods are depicted, with curved swords over their shoulders. They are generally believed to be the 12 gods of the underworld. On the wall opposite them, two human figures are represented. From the royal cartouche above his name, the smaller of the figures can be identified as Tudhaliya IV. He is dressed in priestly garb, with long robe and close-fitting skull-cap, and he carries a curved staff (Latin *lituus*). The larger figure, who extends a protective arm around him and grasps his wrist, is Tudhaliya's patron deity Sharrumma. On the same wall, the relief of a dagger plunged into the ground, its hilt consisting of a human head, with two protomes of lions beneath, is also considered to have underworld associations. A number of scholars have speculated that Yazilikaya may have served as a mortuary chapel in the kingdom's last decades. Chamber B may be Tudhaliya's tomb. If so, it would be the only known royal tomb from the Hittite world.

One of the most powerful figures in the Hittite kingdom was the woman known as Tawannana. In most instances, she was the king's chief consort, and held office for the whole of her life, even if her husband died before her. She was chief priestess of the Hittite world, and by virtue of this and her other roles, she could be a powerful influence within the kingdom. This sometimes proved dangerous for the kingdom's stability, as illustrated by Murshili II's accusations against his stepmother, the Tawannana of the day, wife of his deceased father Shuppiluliuma and a Babylonian princess in origin. Accusing her of stripping the palace of its treasures to lavish on her favorites, introducing undesirable foreign

customs into the kingdom, and murdering his wife by witchcraft, Murshili had her banished from the kingdom (see Bryce 2005: 207–10).

But the most powerful of all reigning consorts was the Hurrian priestess Puduhepa, whom Murshili's son Hattushili (III) married on his way home from Syria, following the battle of Qadesh. Apart from her role as chief priestess of the Hittite realm, a role reflected in a number of religious reforms which she made, she closely partnered her husband in many other activities, particularly in the judicial sphere. The king's responsibilities as supreme judge within his realm were far-reaching. Capital offences were referred to him for judgment, and he served as a final court of appeal for all his subjects, as illustrated by an appeal made to him by a priest in Emar on the Euphrates, who was in dispute with a local garrison-commander over property and taxes. Puduhepa's engagement in the administration of justice at a microlevel is illustrated by the judgment she handed down in a case involving a damaged boat in Ugarit. She deputized for the king in this case, and actually used his royal title "My Sun" in authenticating the document recording her decision.

The Hittite collection of 200 laws provide us with many valuable insights into the mores and value systems of Hittite society (Hoffner 1997a; Bryce 2002: 32–55). Though in many instances adopted from earlier Mesopotamian laws, particularly those of the Babylonian king Hammurabi, the Hittite laws generally take a less draconic, more pragmatic approach to the administration of justice. More emphasis is placed on appropriate compensation for the victim of an offence than punishment *per se* for the offender. The Hammurabic (and biblical) "eye for an eye" principle has no place in Hittite legal provisions. The laws are far from comprehensive in their coverage and consist for the most part of a selection of legal precedents based on earlier court rulings. Property rights figure prominently in the laws, as do marriage provisions – understandably, since marriage regularly involved a transfer of property, in the form of dowries and bride-prices. The status of parties to a dispute had a considerable bearing on the penalties imposed upon the offender and the compensation awarded to the victim. Mutilation was in a number of cases prescribed for a slave offender, whereas such punishments were replaced for offenders of free status by monetary compensation, or compensation in kind. Certain categories of sexual offences were punishable by death, but in general capital punishment was relatively rare.

As commander-in-chief of the Hittite army the king was expected to lead campaigns against rebel or enemy forces in person. Indeed, many kings were engaged in military campaigning for a large part of their reign. On a number of occasions, however, the king delegated command to his highest-ranking officers, generally a close member of his family and often one of his sons, typically the crown prince or one of his brothers. The core element of the Hittite militia was a standing professional army, made up of infantry and chariotry which wintered in military barracks in the capital and could be used as a laborforce for building projects or as a policeforce when not engaged in military duties. For major cam-

paigns, their ranks were supplemented by levies from the homeland population, and also by conscripts provided by various provincial districts. According to Ramesses II, the Hittite king Muwattalli assembled a force of 47,500 infantry and chariotry for the showdown at Qadesh, boosting his own forces with mercenary contingents.

8 Archaeological Sites Within the Homeland

Our knowledge of Hittite history and civilization based on written sources is complemented by archaeological data from various sites within the Hittite world. The largest and most important of these sites is the Hittite capital Hattusha, founded c.2000 BC by an indigenous Hattian population group. It lies adjacent to the modern village Boğazköy (Boğazkale). Excavations have been conducted on the site from 1906 to the present day, primarily as joint operations of the German Archaeological Institute and the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft (Neve 1992; Seeher 2002). In its first Hittite phase, beginning around the middle of the 17th century BC, the city was relatively small (c.62 ha). Its two chief features were an acropolis, located on the rocky outcrop now called Büyükkale, where the royal palace and ancillary administrative buildings were located, and to the northwest of it the Temple of the Storm God, a vast, sprawling complex covering an area of more than 20,000 square meters. This first city lacked adequate defenses, until the 15th century BC king Hantili II built an 8 meter thick wall around it. It subsequently fell to invaders and was sacked in the reign of Tudhaliya III (first half of the 14th century BC). The second phase of the city's history began with the restoration of Hittite authority through the Land of Hatti probably late in Tudhaliya's reign. Hattusha underwent a major redevelopment and a expansion of its boundaries to the south. The city now covered an area of c.185 hectares, tripling its original size. It was protected by new walls extending over a distance of 5 kilometers, punctuated by towers at 20 meter intervals along its entire length. The fortifications included an extension to the northeast, spanning a deep gorge and enclosing within the city limits a mountain outcrop now called Büyükkaya. Access to the city was provided by a number of gates in the walls, the most important of which, still to be seen *in situ*, are the Lion, Sphinx, and Warrior Gates. The first of these provided the main ceremonial entrance to the city. The last features on its interior a relief sculpture of a god, equipped for battle. The original city, with the royal acropolis and the Temple of the Storm God walled off within it, is now commonly referred to as the "Lower City," to distinguish it from the great, southern extension, the "Upper City." Excavations conducted in the Upper City by P. Neve brought to light the foundations of 26 temples, increasing to 31 the total number of temples so far unearthed at Hattusha (Neve 1992: 23–43).

Neve believed that Hattusha's substantial redevelopment was due largely to Tudhaliya IV in the late 13th century BC, though allowing that Tudhaliya's father Hattushili may have been the inspiration behind the project. However, Neve's successor J. Seeher has argued, from a range of criteria including radiocarbon dating and pottery analysis, that parts of the Upper City had been occupied and fortified much earlier, in the late 16th or early 15th century BC. We have referred above to a number of comparatively recent finds within Hattusha, including the Südburg structure, with its reliefs and inscriptions, the seal archive unearthed at Nişantaş and the bronze tablet discovered outside the Sphinx Gate. Other recent discoveries include 11 underground grain-pits on Büyükkaya (dated to the 14th–13th century BC) and an above-ground grain-storage complex, consisting of two parallel rows of 16 chambers each (dated to the late 16th/early 15th century BC). The granaries, discovered by Seeher, had a total capacity of almost 8,000 tons of grain, mostly barley (Seeher 2000). Seeher also discovered five reservoirs, which he called the “southern ponds,” built on the plateau in the Upper City. Up to 8 meters deep, four of these were rectangular in shape, one circular. They have been dated to the 15th century BC. Probably fed from nearby springs, they must have provided a large part of Hattusha's water supply for a short time before silting up and being abandoned by the end of the century.

Forty kilometers northeast of Hattusha lie the remains of the site now known as Alaça Höyük, a fortified Hittite city containing a palace, residential quarters, and several temples (Bryce 2009: 20–2). Well preserved remains of the city's main gateway, flanked by sphinxes, depict in relief a religious festival in progress. The Hittite king and queen are represented standing before an altar of the storm god, represented as a bull. A seated goddess is also depicted – almost certainly the Sun Goddess of Arinna, consort of the storm god. Alaça Höyük may well have been the city Arinna, the goddess's cult-center. Reliefs on the sculptured blocks forming the city's gateway depict other participants in the festival, including acrobats, a sword-swallower, a lute-player, perhaps a bagpiper, cult officials and animals for sacrifice. The city is also well known for its pre-Hittite Early Bronze Age II remains (mid-/late 3rd millennium), which feature 13 “royal” shaft graves, whose most impressive contents, accompanying the burials, include ritual disk and arc standards, incorporating stylized bulls and stags.

Excavations conducted in north-central Anatolia in comparatively recent years have brought to light a number of previously unlocated Hittite sites known from written sources. These include the provincial administrative centers of Shapinuwa, Tapikka, and Sarissa. Shapinuwa is located 60 kilometers northeast of Hattusha, on the site of modern Ortaköy. Covering an area of 9 square kilometers, it is frequently attested in Hittite texts as a religious and administrative center and a base for Hittite military operations. Excavations have been conducted at Ortaköy by A. Süel since 1990 (Süel 2002). Prominent among its architectural remains is a structure designated as Building A, tentatively identified as a palace or administrative building. Three thousand tablets came to light in this building, in widely

dispersed fragments. Although not yet published, the majority are apparently Hittite letters with some administrative texts. Other texts are written in Akkadian, and there are a few Hittite-Akkadian, Hittite-Hattian bilingual texts. About 25 percent of the corpus consists of ritual texts written in Hurrian. The tablets have been dated to the first half of the 14th century and probably belong to the reign of Tudhaliya III. Of the other buildings unearthed on the site, one has been identified as the ground floor of a storeroom (Building B) and two are believed to have been part of a ceremonial complex (Buildings C and D).

Tapikka lay a short distance to the east of Shapinuwa, and 116 kilometers northeast of the Hittite capital (near modern Maşat). Though a relatively small site (c.10 hectares), it probably also served as a regional administrative center and military base of the Hittite kingdom. Excavations (1973–84) by T. Özgüç revealed a citadel and lower city (Özgüç 2002). Occupation began in the late 3rd millennium, but the settlement reached its peak in the first half of the 14th century BC, probably during the reign of Tudhaliya III, when its most important feature was a 4,500 square meter building erected on the citadel, clearly the headquarters of the local administration. The remains of the north and east wings of this building, commonly referred to as a palace, are preserved, as well as an inner, colonnaded courtyard. The only significant remains of the lower city are those of part of a temple. Among the small finds from the site, the most important was a tablet archive, consisting of 116 texts. Of these, 96 are letters, mostly exchanges between the king and his local officials. For the most part they deal with matters relating to the security of the region. It is believed that the entire corpus may date to a period of a few months, immediately preceding the city's destruction by enemy forces during Tudhaliya's reign. Texts of a cultic nature were also found. These have been dated to the final phase of Tapikka's existence in the 13th century BC.

The city of Sarissa (modern Kuşaklı) was located south of the Marassantiya river, 200 kilometers southeast of Hattusha. It was founded in the 16th and destroyed in the first half of the 14th century BC, no doubt during the massive invasions of the Hittite homeland in this period. Excavated since 1992 by A. Müller-Karpe, the 18 hectare site consists of an acropolis, with settlement spreading over its terraces and slopes and flat areas at the bottom of the hill, and a lower hill lying to its south (Müller-Karpe 2002). The whole area is enclosed within a double casemate wall, with access to the city via four main gates. The largest and most impressive building on the slopes of the acropolis is a rectangular complex of more than 110 rooms, whose focus is a central court. Since its layout is similar to that of the sacred buildings at Hattusha, it is thought to be a temple, perhaps of the storm god. Among its small finds were a number of clay sealings, with the inscription "seal of Tabarna, the Great King. Who changes it will die," and two well-preserved letters of what philologists call the "Middle Hittite" period. Sarissa no doubt played an important role as one of the Hittite kingdom's administrative centers on the outer fringes of the homeland.

9 The End of the Empire

The Hittite kingdom came to an end early in the 12th century BC, within the context of the upheavals associated with the collapse of the Late Bronze Age civilizations and centers of power throughout the Greek and Near Eastern worlds. Many reasons for the collapse have been suggested, including a prolonged drought, food shortages, uprisings of local populations, the collapse of international trading networks, and invasions by outsiders, including the so-called Sea Peoples of Egyptian records. A number of these factors in combination may have been responsible for the end of the Hittite kingdom. Factional rivalries within the royal dynasty may also have played their part in weakening the kingdom to the point of extinction. Some signs of this are evident in the reigns of the last kings of Hatti. The final event which marked the end of the Hittite kingdom was the fall of Hattusha, but there is some question about the circumstances in which this occurred. Earlier excavators of the site, notably K. Bittel and P. Neve, attributed Hattusha's destruction to enemy attack. But Neve's successor, J. Seeher, has argued that this conclusion can no longer be maintained. In his view, and that of his successor A. Schachner, Hattusha was abandoned by a large part of its population, most notably its elite elements including the king and his family, before its destruction. All indications are that many of the city's buildings, including the palace, were systematically cleared of their contents by their occupants, who took these with them on their departure (Seeher 2001). Certainly the destruction by fire of large parts of the city can be attributed to enemy invaders. But according to Seeher, when the invaders entered the city, it was almost deserted.

That of course raises the question of where the city's inhabitants went. A number of scholars assume that many of the peoples of western and central Anatolia moved southeast, following the fall of the Hittite kingdom, and resettled in southeastern Anatolia and northern Syria, where the Iron Age "Neo-Hittite" kingdoms (Ch. II.42) emerged from the late 2nd millennium onwards. "Neo-Hittite" is a term applied by modern scholars to a number of Iron Age kingdoms in these regions (Karkamish, Kummuh, Malatya among them), because they display a degree of cultural continuity with the Late Bronze Age Hittite world, including the retention of the Luwian hieroglyphic script for recording their kings' achievements, the retention of royal Hittite names in their ruling dynasties, and the preservation of a number of Hittite elements in their art and architecture. But conclusions about ethnic and cultural continuity between the Late Bronze Age Hittite Empire and its alleged Neo-Hittite successors raise more questions than they answer. The reasons for the fall of the empire and the subsequent history of its populations remain matters for speculation.

Above all, what happened to the inhabitants of Hattusha after they abandoned their city? Archaeology may one day find us an answer to that question.

GUIDE TO FURTHER READING

O.R. Gurney's 1952 book *The Hittites*, last reprinted in 1990 (with some revisions), is a useful general work on Hittite history, society, and civilization, but it has been superseded in many respects by Collins (1990). Works devoted specifically to Hittite military and political history include Klengel (1999) and Bryce (2005). In the former, aimed more specifically at an academic market, each section is accompanied by a detailed list of the relevant primary written sources. Bryce (2002) covers a range of aspects of Hittite society and civilization, including the role of the king, the laws, marriage provisions, the gods, rituals and festivals, warfare, merchant operations, and myth and literature. Burney (2004) is a comprehensive reference work on Hittite cities, lands, and archaeological sites. Beckman (1999b) provides translations, with accompanying notes, of the majority of extant Hittite treaties, a selection of the correspondence exchanged between Hittite kings and their vassal rulers and foreign counterparts, and a selection of other diplomatic texts. It belongs to a series of publications on the writings of the ancient world published by the Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta. Other books in the series include Hoffner (1990) on Hittite mythology and Hoffner (2009) on Hittite letters. The latter contains both transliterations and translations of a wide range of Hittite letters, accompanied by extensive notes. Useful general chapters on the history and archaeology of the Hittite Empire and its Iron Age Neo-Hittite successors are contained in Sagona and Zimansky (2009).