Lecture 5: The Hittites

Physical Geography

Rugged Mountains
granite

timber
copper
silver
iron
glasslands
grazing
horses
barley and
grapes
harsh
winters
limited
campaign
season

Natural Resources of Anatolia: CU, FE, AG

The Hittites (1900-1200)

Indo-European people
— migrated from the N. shore of
the Black Sea ~2500
1900 established in Anatolia
1500 society developed Feudal
society
— placing ethnic Hatti over local
population
— order based on land holdings
(fiefdoms)
— council of powerful families
“Great Family” held highest offices
— military command based on
blood-kin
— officer corps, professional army
expanded as Hittites expanded
into Syria and Upper Euphrates
Capital at Hattusas
Hittite Chronology

7000-1700 BCE  Pre-Kingdom
- Indo-European Migrations
  - Mysterious Origins
1700-1500 BCE  Old Kingdom
  - Hattusili I
  - Edict of Telipinus
  - Mursili I sacks Babylon (1595 BCE)
1500-1400 BCE  Middle Kingdom
  - Civil War
  - 1400-1180 BCE New Kingdom (Empire)
    - Suppiluliumas I
    - Muwatallis II
      - Battle of Qadesh (Kadesh) 1274 BCE
After 1180  Collapse

Hittite Old Kingdom

- Hattusili I (1650-1620 BCE)
- son of Labarna
- successful general
- Record of his military exploits
  - Annals of Hattusili
  - Palace Chronicles
  - Edict of Telipinus

Hittite Sack of Babylon (1595 BCE)

- Mursili I (1620-1590 BCE)
  - grandson of Hattusili
- campaigned against Halap, the Hurrians Syria and Babylon
  - sacked Babylon (1595 BCE)
- upon his victorious return to Hattusha, was killed by brother-in-law
  - cup bearer who marries Mursili’s sister
Social Organization

Feudal
- 2 classes of fief holders
  - liegeman
  - “man of the weapon”
- received land for service but reverted back to king after death
- constant family struggles for authority

Hittite
The language is attested in cuneiform, in records from as early as the 20th century BCE down to the 12th century BCE.

Thousands of tablets found at Bogazköy
Instruction Text for the Lords of the Towers

§1 Lords of the Towers who protect the borders, may the obligation be.
§2 The forwardmost ones of the towers and towns must be (protected) by means of a watch. They must protect the watch carefully!
§4 they must sweep the perimeter carefully (with their eyes). They must quickly bring back word. [...] down from the watch he must come just so.
§12 What troops hold the towers, may they protect (them). Further, may they cover the roads carefully, and may they observe the enemy traces.
§28 The gutters of the bath-house, of the cupbearer’s house, and of the ḫilamni-house must turn (freely), so they must keep inspecting them. Whatever one is clogged by water, they must unblock it. What bird ponds are in your district, may they be in good condition!

Hattusha, Capital of the Hittite Empire (Bogazköy)
Documentary
*Dark Lords of Hattusha* (2008) BBC
- fortifications
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAonYbxyCQI&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAonYbxyCQI&feature=related)

Middle Kingdom
1500-1400 BE
- Struggle for Succession
- Weak military leaders who lose land to Kaska and the Ahhyawan (Achaean) or Mycenaean Greeks
- Composes *Instruction Texts for the Lords of the Towers*

Lion Gate of Hattusas
“King’s Gate” at Hattusha

- Represents “ideals” of Hittite Kingship
  - strong muscles
  - armed with sword and mace
  - wearing helmet
  - left arm in gesture of aggression or religious piety

12 Warrior Gods at Yazılıkaya

Hittite Empire 1400-1180 BCE

Suppiluliumas I
- conquers the Euphrates Valley
- Queen of Egypt asks to marry his son
- son is killed before reaching Egypt

Mursilis II
- extends conquest further

Muwatallis I
Muwatallis II
- Battle of Qadesh (1274 BCE)
Hittite Army in Empire Period

- Organized on the decimal system
- squads of 10; companies of 10 squads; battalions of 10 companies
- deployed 10 wide and 10 deep
- battalions of 100 “Hittite phalanx”
- no cavalry
- more flexible for uneven terrain
  - mix of troop and chariot configurations
  - clothing and weapons

Troop armor and weaponry

Rugged Terrain
- bronze helmets
  - ear pieces
  - cheek guards
  - hinged neck piece
  - plume
- boots
- leather scale armor

Weapons:
- sickle sword
- dagger
- battle-ax
- no spear

Hittite Chariot

- Heavier than other chariots
- single text noting 80 chariots in a single battle
  - Middle Kingdom
- training manual for charioteers found
- Most important arm of military by Early Empire under Suppiluliumas (~1375)
"Master horse trainer from the Kingdom of Mitanni"
chariot horse training text written in Hittite dating to the Hittite New Kingdom (around 1400 BCE)
The text is notable both for the information it provides about the development of Indo-European languages and for its content.
Similar to modern conventional training, Kikkuli horses
• were stabled, rugged, washed down with warm water
• fed oats, barley and hay at least three times per day
• Unlike conventional horse training, the horses were subject to warming down periods.

Battle of Kadesh (1274 BCE)