



Cimok, Fatih, ed.

The Hittites and Hattusa

Istanbul: A Turizm Yayinlari, 2008. Pp. 184 + 360 figs.
Hardcover. €80.00. ISBN 9789756445228.

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As every professor of ancient history knows, the expectations of contemporary students, though easily labeled narcissistic, cannot simply be ignored. Put another way, if contemporary readers are to catch any excitement or learn anything substantive about the ancient world, then sometimes the boundary between academic and popular writing needs to be more porous than rigid. Fatih Cimok's volume on *The Hittites and Hattusa* well illustrates this pedagogical necessity. Deftly negotiating the boundary between populist expectation and academic credibility, this folio volume looks at first glance to be little more than a coffee-table book. In point of fact, however, this is a fascinating introduction aimed at "orienting the general reader with the Hittite sites without trying to press everything known about them into its limited space." Aiming at "tourists who have (or plan to) see Hattusa and other Hittite sites," this lavishly illustrated book (270 color photographs and 90 line drawings) "teaches the reader Hittite history, art, religion" through "compact chapters which can be read easily" (7).

These "compact chapters" (and they are indeed compact) both visually and linguistically introduce this specific audience to the following arcane subjects: pre-Hittite Anatolia, Kültepe, the history of the Hittite kingdom (good thumbnail sketches on the major individuals and events characterizing the reigns of all the kings from Hattusili I through Tudhaliya III), Hattusa (the great temple, western gate, lion gate, sphinx gate, king's gate, Inandik vase, *huwasi* stones, libation holes, city wall, Nişantepe, Güney Kale, and Büyük Kale), Yazilikaya (upper gallery, lower gallery), Alaca Höyük, Kuşakli Höyük, Gavurkale,

the biblical Hittites (two dense pages), Hittite myth (overviews of the Ullikumi and Illuyanka myths), Neo-Hittite inscriptions (Taş Surat, Karkamis, Topada, Gökbez, Suvasa, Karaburna, Ivriz, Bulgar Maden, Aslantaşlar, Karasu, Gürün, Malpınar, Keben, Kizildağ, Burunkaya, and Azatiwataya (Karatepe), and the sculpture worksite at Yesemek. Each chapter comes lavishly illustrated with up-to-date color photographs and maps not only pointing out the locations of these sites *in situ* but also publishing photos of the beautiful artifacts found in them over the past century (artifacts now displayed in the museums of Istanbul, Ankara, Boğazkale, and elsewhere).

While tourists will appreciate the beautiful maps and photographs, professional historians will appreciate the clarity Cimok packs onto every page (unreferenced, unfortunately). The chapter on Yazilikaya, for example (117–40), begins with a map of each gallery, then painstakingly matches color photos of each rock-carved deity (including the twelve netherworld gods) with annotated sketches designed to identify each god within its geographical, cultural, and religio-historical context (translating most, if not all, of the identificational hieroglyphs into readable English). Not only does this communicate the detail each sculptor brings to his contribution in this royal chapel; it also gives each reader a greater understanding of and appreciation for the syncretistic fullness of the Hittite pantheon.

Where scholars interested in perfecting their understanding of Anatolian history reach for Horst Klengel's *Geschichte des hethitischen Reiches* (Leiden: Brill, 1998) or Trevor Bryce's *The Kingdom of the Hittites* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) and teachers interested in the pedagogical needs of undergraduates have them pick up Billie Jean Collins's *The Hittites and Their World* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008) or Oliver Gurney's still-useful *The Hittites* (New York: Penguin, 1990), tour-group leaders struggling to find anyone interested in visiting Turkey and/or Syria would do well to recommend *The Hittites and Hattusa*. Why? Because it is difficult to imagine any other volume that so quickly and beautifully, yet accurately introduces this particular audience to this particular part of the ancient world.