Civilizations of the Ancient Near East

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Hittite Military Organization

RICHARD H. BEAL

The enemy has already arrived in Tarittara. He numbers seven thousand. He is harrying the shepherds and cowherds and provisioning himself with cattle. If he builds a fort, we will be blockaded. What shall we do? May the king my lord know. Our position is critical!

THE HITTITES, like all ancient (and most modern) countries, were surrounded by enemies or potential enemies. Hardly a year passed without the Great King having to suppress a revolt, punish a meddlesome neighbor, or stop an invasion. During some years there were pressing problems on two or more fronts. Only by keeping a strong army and a constant watch could the state survive.

MILITARY VIGILANCE

The Hittites had their own watch along their borders. The towns were strongly walled and were equipped with postern gates, tunnels under the fortifications which allowed the defenders to attack any besiegers from the rear. Watchmen (sentries) were posted on the walls and in pairs at various strategic places. There were three watches of the night and one or more day watches. The city gates were closed at night and a tamper-proof seal put over the lock, a process overseen personally by the governor, headman of the town, and high-ranking officers. Pickets or lookouts were placed in small towers at watchpoints that were distant from the towns. They were to "sweep" the trails for signs of the enemy and report immediately to their superiors. Several officers were constantly on patrol to supervise and collect this information. As night fell, the pickets returned to the city, herding people and animals into the safety of the city's walls. They themselves slept in the gate chamber, their very beds blocking the inwardly opening gates. In times of trouble the people and animals were kept inside the city, and the pickets stayed and watched day and night at their lookout posts.

In addition, spies were sent out to report enemy movements. Fugitives from the enemy and those captured were carefully questioned for militarily relevant information. Hittite spies sometimes posed as fugitives or deserters in order to spread disinformation to the enemy, a ploy (together with good intelligence of enemy movements) that directly led to Muwattalli II's victory over Ramesses (Ramses) II at the battle of Qadesh (properly Qids, now Tell Nebi Mend).

Letters from spies and outposts kept the provincial governors informed of the enemy's whereabouts, and they in turn informed the king. Kasshu and Pulli wrote to the king, "The grain is ripe. Among the Kashka, the locusts have eaten the harvest. Now the Kashka are besetting the harvest of Kashipura. There are no

troops available there." They then asked the king to send troops. Twenty teams of chariotry were then ordered to Kashipura, but they proved insufficient. "Thus My Majesty to Tatta and Khulla: Pisheni just wrote to me from Kashipura: 'The enemy has crossed over in large numbers at night, six hundred in one place and four hundred in another. They are harvesting our grain. As soon as this letter reaches you, hurry to Kashipura. If the crops are ripe, get the grain harvested and to the threshing floor.'" Another letter to the king reports more serious trouble: "The enemy has crossed over in two places. One band is in Ishteruwa and another band is in Zishpa. He has given no indication whether he will go across into Mount Shakaddunuwa, or whether he will turn back and come into (my) district. If the king would send somebody, the enemy would not molest (my) district. I have stationed long-range pickets on Mount Khapidduina. . . . May the king, my lord, know." Tributary kings were ordered in their treaties to be sentries, pickets, and watchmen for the Hittite king and to report any trouble to him as well as to the Hittite governor most likely to be affected.

The king could inquire of the gods concerning the plans of the enemy. For example, "Will the king of Assyria come and fortify Malatya?" Or a series of questions could be asked: "If the enemy will not attack into the midst of the fort, let the symbol-oracle be favorable. . . . As the enemy will attack into the midst of the fort, will he attack by night? [Let the symbol-oracle be unfavorable.] . . . Will the enemy attack into the midst of the fort by day? Let the symbol-oracle be unfavorable."

When a ruler acted in a hostile manner, the Hittite Great King would send him an ultimatum detailing Hittite complaints against him. (Border raiding and refusal to return fugitives were perennial problems.) If no satisfactory answer was received, then a second letter, a declaration of war, was sent to this effect: "Because you will not settle the complaints (referred to as a lawsuit), come let us fight each other and let the gods decide our case."

THE OFFICER CORPS

The Hittite Great King was commander in chief of the army. This does not mean simply that, as the top political figure, he gave the orders to march and appointed and removed generals. Rather, the Hittite king carried on an extensive correspondence on subjects major and minor, receiving reports and issuing orders directly to various levels of field army and garrison commanders. Furthermore, he was expected to lead all major campaigns in person. We do not know whether the king participated directly in the battle—as did, for example, Sargon II of Assyria—or sat with his guard some distance away and observed—as did, for example, Xerxes I of Persia.

If there were several active fronts, or if the king was still occupied with his religious duties, he could appoint anyone he pleased to lead the army. Oracles would be taken to ask the gods which commanders out of a list were likely to be successful on a particular campaign.

Among the officers, some seven ranks are known from Hittite sources. The highest rank under the king, comprising officers who could be designated to lead the entire army when the king was not present, or who could lead a division or wing under the king, included, in order of precedence, the crown prince (usually the king's eldest or favorite son), the Chief of the Royal Bodyguards (usually the king's brother), and the Chief of the Wine (Stewards). The latter is one of a group of titles that were originally given to people performing a menial function in the court. To be even a menial servant to the king required the king's trust, however, and many of these positions thus evolved into high civil or military offices. The European office of "marshal," literally "groom," experienced a parallel development.

At roughly the same level as these officers were Hittite royal princes who had been made kings of appanage states. The most powerful of these were the members of the cadet dynasty at Carchemish (Karkamish), who were viceroys over the tributary states in Syria. Others included (at various times) the kings of Khakpish, Tarkhuntassha, Ishuwa, and Tumanna. When these appanage kings joined the Hittite armies, it was probably as commanders of the troops of their own kingdoms.

The next level below consisted of the Chief of the Chariot Warriors of the Right, the Chief of the Chariot Warriors of the Left, the Chief of the Standing Army-Troops of the Right, the

Chief of the Standing Army-Troops of the Left, and the Chiefs of the "Shepherds" of the Right and Left. Each of these six officers appears to have commanded a brigade of one thousand men. Below these high-ranking officers, who were usually royal princes, were a number of middle-ranking ones (more or less equivalent to modern colonels) whose duties and relation to one another are not clear. The highest were the overseers of military heralds. The category also includes the overseers of country-clansmen and provincial governors. The second to the fourth levels of officers could be referred to generically as "lords of the army." Below them were the "dignitaries," of which some twenty-five to thirty, perhaps themselves of differing grades (equivalent to modern sergeant, lieutenant, and captain), served under an overseer of country-clansmen. The lowest-ranking officers were called "gentlemen." It is interesting to note that the Hittite word for "officer" translates literally as "the one who runs in front," namely, "the leader."

THE ARMY

The Size of the Army

Texts do not tell us how many men the Hittites had under arms at any one time; nor are they particularly informative about the size of a field army, its component units, or detachments and garrisons. But Egyptian accounts of the battle of Qadesh estimate Hittite troop strength at 2,500 Hittite chariots divided into four units, plus 1,000 more chariots of tributaries and allies. In addition they say there were units of 18,000 and 19,000 infantrymen. If the Egyptian figures can be trusted—and they are in line with figures for major expeditions of the Assyrian Empire of Shamshi-Adad I some centuries earlier—then Muwattalli had assembled some 47,500 men at arms for one of the biggest of all Hittite battles.

Terms of Service

When the situation did not warrant a large number of troops, or when a rapid response was necessary, the king would rely on his standing army. These troops were not disbanded at the end of a campaign season (spring through fall), but spent the snowy Anatolian winter (when campaigning was impractical) in winter quarters. They were issued direct rations by the government and were supposed to be ready to march at a moment's notice. Of these professional soldiers, at least the chariotry personnel and their horses would have been put through a rigorous training program when they first joined the army. If the enemy was a major power, or if there were problems on two or three fronts, then the king would levy the general population. This, of course, took more time and would only be practical, without severe economic disruption, during an agricultural dead-season. The Hittite army may also have included an intermediate category of soldier who was given land, which he and an associate worked and the crops of which were to support the soldier in lieu of pay. In addition, the king had agreements with small semiautonomous outlying districts to supply free men (nonslave) for the Hittite army. Small units of such men, commanded at junior levels by their own officers, were stationed in strategic places, generally far from home, throughout the empire. Also used was a type of troop designated by the Akkadogram ŠUTI/SUTE, perhaps a tribal war band, or some other exotic sort of group. Finally, tributary states were required by treaties, and allies were encouraged, to send "allied troops" to support the Hittites.

Induction

When soldiers were inducted into the Hittite army, they and their junior officers had to take an elaborate oath. In actions and in words soldiers subjected themselves to a series of conditional curses that would take effect if they were disloyal. Here is a quotation from such an oath:

> [The officiant] places wax and mutton-fat into their (the soldiers') hands. Then he throws them into a fire, while saying, "As this wax melts and fat fries, so may he who breaks the oath and deceives the Hittite king melt like wax and fry like fat." (The soldiers) reply, "so be it!" . . . They bring in women's clothing, and a spindle and distaff (symbols of womanhood); and they break an arrow (symbol of manhood). You speak to them (the troops) as follows: "What is this? Women's garments, which we have here for your oath. Whoever breaks these oaths and does evil to the king and the queen and the royal princes, let these oath-gods change him from a man into a woman. Let them change his soldiers into women. Let them dress them like

> women and cover their heads with kerchiefs like women. Let them break your bows, arrows, and (other) weapons in your hands and replace them with spindle and distaff." . . . They place in their hands a [male] statue, its innards filled with water. He says, "See the man who previously took this oath before the gods and then broke it. The oath-gods seized him. His innards are swollen. He holds up his swollen belly in front with his hands. May the oath-gods seize whoever breaks these oaths. May his innards swell. May the sons of Ishkhara [live] in him and feed on him."

The troops also swore to seize and hand over to the king any of their officers who were disloyal. Likewise, officers were ordered to hand over shirkers and deserters for royal judgment. Any officer who hid and did not denounce a deserter was to die with him. Allied troops presumably took such oaths to their own kings, who in turn were bound by oath in treaties to the Hittite king. (See also "Hittite Witchcraft, Magic, and Divination" in Part 8, Vol. III.)

BRANCHES OF THE ARMY

Chariotry

The army was made up of various branches of service. The senior was the chariotry, which was clearly important from the earliest days of the empire down to the end. Through the reign of Murshili II, chariots carried two men: the driver and the fighter. Muwattalli II added a third man in time for the showdown with Egypt at Qadesh (circa 1275 BCE), giving the Hittites an advantage, particularly at close quarters. Crew members wore a short-sleeved coat of scale armor reaching from neck to ankles. The shirt appears to have been slit to facilitate movement. Helmets and scale-armor gorgets were also apparently worn.

The chariot fighter was armed with bow and arrow. He wore a quiver on his back, and his bowcase was attached to the outside of the chariot cab. During the battle, a shield was held to protect the archer. As depicted in Egyptian wall paintings, the Hittite shield had a characteristic shape—rectangular, with convex edges on the top and bottom and concave edges on the sides. Some shields, perhaps belonging to the allies, were simply rectangular. Egyptian reliefs beginning with those of the battle of Qadesh show some Hittite chariots with spears that appear to be about seven to eight feet long. It is unclear whether they were actually spears useful for repelling foes at close quarters, lances for stabbing passing enemies, or javelins for throwing. Whichever they were, perhaps they were introduced as weapons for the third man. No Hittite text as yet links their use with chariotry, however. All personnel would have carried a sword for their personal defense.

The chariots were pulled by two stallions whose flanks, backs, and necks were protected by scale armor. Because scythed-wheel chariots were not introduced until about a millennium later, Hittite chariotry was designed not to overrun massed infantry, but rather to provide a mobile firing platform for archers. It could be used to panic green infantry, to run them down once they had broken rank, and to fight other chariotry. High-ranking officers fought from chariots. There were also soldiers called "elite (literally, golden) chariot-fighters." This relatively small unit perhaps protected the king.

Infantry

Usually found accompanying units of chariotry, large or small, were corresponding units of infantry. Egyptian reliefs show, and Hittite texts partially confirm, that these soldiers were primarily spearmen. The reliefs show them also carrying shields, a fact not yet confirmed by Hittite texts. While archery was clearly important to the Hittite military, there is as yet no evidence for infantry archers. Again, all soldiers would have carried a sword.

Although the contrary is sometimes asserted in popular histories, iron was not the Hittites' secret weapon that enabled them to cut through opponents' weapons as if they were made of butter. Hittite swords, spears, and arrowsheads, like those of their opponents, were made of bronze. Hittite technology did produce iron weapons, but they were rare and expensive, used ceremonially alongside weapons of gold and silver. Until the invention of quenched steel, bronze weapons would, at any rate, have been far superior in battle.

Cavalry

The Hittites also appear to have had a small cavalry. Several horsemen are shown on Egyp-

tian reliefs. Each has a bow, with a quiver over the shoulders; they wear plumed helmets and occasionally carry shields. They are so far only attested performing scouting and message-carrying duties.

Navy

Raised in the hills and plains of central Anatolia, the Hittites preferred to keep their feet on dry land. However, they did have a seacoast in Cili-

The Battle of Qadesh

The most famous battle in which the Hittites were involved was the battle of Qadesh (properly Qids), fought between the Hittites under Great King Muwattalli II and the Egyptians under Pharaoh Ramesses II. The battle was one in a long series along the northern border of Egyptian Canaan. At first the struggle was between Egyptians and Mitannians, but when the Hittites took over Mitanni's Syrian possessions, it became the Hittites against the Egyptians. The immediate cause of this war was the large border state of Amurru, which for three generations had been an important loyal tributary of the Hittites, but had recently defected to Egypt. The Hittites could not afford to let Amurru go without a fight, a fact that the Egyptians knew full well.

Muwattalli assembled all the troops he could and called on all of his allies and tributaries to send forces. Troops came from, among other places, Qadesh, Nukhashshe, Aleppo, Ugarit, Carchemish, and Mitanni in Syria; Kizzuwatna (Cilicia) and Arawanna in eastern Anatolia; and Masha, Pitassha, Karkisha, Lukka (Lycia), Arzawa, and possibly even distant Troy in western Anatolia.

Muwattalli arrived at Qadesh, the last major city before the border. His spies told him that Ramesses was some distance to the south, crossing a small river. Muwattalli sent one of his spies to be "captured" by Ramesses and under interrogation to tell Ramesses that Muwattalli's army was still far to the north in the vicinity of Aleppo. It didn't take Ramesses long to conclude that most of Syria was thus his for the taking, if he could get there before Muwattalli. Just as Muwattalli had hoped, Ramesses then joined his lead (Amun) division and raced northward, with orders for the other three divisions (Re, Ptah, Sutekh) to follow as soon as possible. Muwattalli hid his army behind the mound and walls of Qadesh. Ramesses, with Amun, sped past Qadesh and made night camp beyond the city.

As the Re division was passing the city, Muwattalli sent his chariotry out from behind Qadesh and into the flank of Re. Outnumbered and thoroughly surprised, Re scattered in all directions. Those fleeing north had just enough time to throw panic into the Amun division before the pursuing Hittites attacked it too. Ramesses had just captured a real Hittite spy and tortured the truth out of him, but it was too late. Re was gone and Amun rapidly disintegrating. Ramesses gathered up his personal guard and fought bravely to avoid capture.

With victory virtually assured, the Hittites could not resist plundering the pharaoh's camp. The unexpected attack of a small group of Egyptian allies threw confusion into the already distracted Hittites, which allowed Ramesses to hack his way out of the melee and make his way back to the Ptah division. Ramesses later claimed that, in contrast to his own undoubted bravery, Muwattalli and the Hittite infantry remained in reserve in the shadow of Qadesh. In the end the Hittites held the battlefield and destroyed half of the Egyptian army; they were clearly the victors. Nevertheless, their most mobile troops were sufficiently disordered and mauled by the battle that immediate pursuit was out of the question.

Having regrouped and rested, Muwattalli led his troops after the retreating Ramesses, harrying the Egyptian rear guard. When he saw that the Egyptians were not about to give battle again, Muwattalli occupied the Egyptian province of Upi (Damascus). He then left his brother Khattushili, king of Khakpish (later to become Great King Khattushili III) to hold it while he returned to Anatolia, stopping long enough to depose the disloyal king of Amurru. After a year, the Hittites, perhaps for strategic reasons or perhaps remembering the plague that the gods had sent the last time they had invaded Egyptian territory, evacuated Upi and reestablished the border where it had been for generations before the Amorite defection had started the war.

(For further information on Muwattalli and the historical context of this battle, see the chapters "Military Organization in Pharaonic Egypt" in Part 4, Vol. I, "Khattushili III, King of the Hittites" and "Pharaoh Ramesses II and His Times" in Part 5, Vol. II.)

cia and via their tributary states in Syria, whose ports were engaged in active merchant trading. Documents from the tributary state of Ugarit show this state's fleet operating under Hittite command. Shuppiluliuma II describes several great sea battles by which he repeated his father's conquest of Cyprus. While the Hittites appear to have succeeded in assembling a navy with which to take Cyprus, they were apparently not able to challenge the domination of the Minoans/Mycenaeans in the Aegean. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, we may assume that naval vessels were merchant ships requisitioned in time of need. Compared to the army, the navy was always a minor element in Hittite strategic thinking. (See also "Island Cultures" in Part 6, Vol. III.)

THE CAMPAIGN

Campaign Planning

As there was likely to be trouble simultaneously on more than one of Khatti's borders, the king consulted his superiors, the gods; for example, "Do you, O god, approve of a campaign this year by His Majesty on the Durmitta front?" or "Do you, O god, approve a campaign this year for His Majesty on the Nerik front?" The king might inquire about his control of land while on campaign: "If while My Majesty is returning from a campaign (in the east) against Assyria, will these (northern) borderlands not defect and no harm come to the holy city of Nerik?" Or the king might ask the very outcome of a campaign: "Will you give me the gods of the king of Assyria and will I defeat him in battle?"

The gods were also asked to approve specific strategies. One text asks about nine detailed variants on the same campaign: "Third possibility, (the king) will leave Khankhana and enter Khattena. He will hide at Tell Katruma. He will enter Pittagalassha, whether peacefully or by storm is not the question. In the morning he will destroy Shunupasshi and Pittalakhshina. Then he will sleep in his father's fort. In the morning he will strike Dasshenatta and enter Khatenzuwa and Tappilussha. He will [. . .] the Kashkaeans and enter Nerik. . . . Fourth possibility, he will leave Khankhana and hide at Tell Katruma. In the morning the horse troops will attack Piqqauzza. The ŠUTI troops will march forth to them. His Majesty, however, will [enter] his father's fort. The horse-troops and the ŠUTI troops will return to His Majesty in his father's fort. In the morning he will burn Shunupasshi and Pittalakhshina, but he will sleep in his father's fort."

On Campaign

Before a campaign, the officers were given magical help. According to the ritual of Azzari, the Hurrian female physician, she would recite an incantation over some fine oil and then anoint with it the commanding "lord of the army," his horses, his chariot, and implements of war. Another lady, Nikkaluzzi, wrote a ritual designed to protect the Hittite general and destroy his opponent: "We made two statues, [one of cedar] and one of clay. [On the one] of cedar we place the name of the enemy of His Majesty, but on the one of clay [we put] the name of Khishmi-Sharruma." The figures were presumably both then thrown into a fire, whereupon the cedar figure of the enemy burned up while the clay one of the Hittite was baked solid.

On the way to face the enemy, probably at a major rendezvous point, the king would hold a review of his troops. At this point, it might be decided to send part of the army rapidly ahead to attempt to contain the situation, while the remainder was readied.

Marching large numbers of troops over considerable distances was quite common. On one occasion, the king of Carchemish brought his army (and presumably those of the Syrian tributary states) from Syria to join in a campaign against Arzawa on the Aegean coast. Another time, troops from the Aegean coastal states joined in a campaign that reached Qadesh, deep in Syria. On the march, troops carried rations. While in Hittite territory, they were resupplied with food, and their horses with fodder, from strategically placed depots. If a passing army desperately needed an animal, they could requisition it from the local population. It would be returned when the need for it ended or it would be paid for if it could not be returned. While in territory considered Hittite, the troops were under strict orders against raping and plundering. Even if they were suppressing a disturbance, only the

guilty were to be plundered. If an ally sent troops to help his treaty partner, the treaty stipulated that it was the duty of the host country to support these troops while they were in that land.

When the army reached the enemy's land, another ritual would be performed in which the Hittites presented a legal justification for the war to the gods, together with a number of offerings. A challenge to battle was usually sent to the enemy king.

In enemy territory a good deal of foraging and living off captured booty was, no doubt, expected. In this event care had to be taken to avoid enemy ambushes. One such ambush was avoided when the Hittites noticed excessive bird movements and noise along the road ahead.

Among the Hittite king's constant worries were the barbarous and decentralized Kashka people, whose presence in the mountains not too far from the capital made them a constant threat. Usually the king would invade and seize a sizable expanse of territory and hope that the area would be quiet for a few years. It was far preferable to induce the barbarians to fight a pitched battle, so that the superiority of the Hittite forces could be put to best use. The favorite Hittite strategy was to ravage an area so thoroughly by burning its crops and villages that the men of the district and its neighbors would feel compelled to try to stop the Hittite army. This would result in the decisive battle that the Hittite king wanted. A variant of this tactic, also used against more centralized powers, was to demolish one town taken by storm in the often successful hope that neighboring towns would submit without a fight. We also know the case of one Hittite governor, Prince Khudupianza of Pala, who was left to his own devices against barbarian guerrillas, while the king was fighting wars on three other fronts. Khudupianza held onto his province for many years and defeated his opponents by adopting the guerrillas' own tactics.

The original strategy approved by the gods must often have gone awry in the field, and a good deal of strategic thinking became necessary in the course of a campaign. Murshili II explained in his memoirs that he intended to fight Pittaggatalli and his army of some nine thousand men, so he left his baggage train behind in Altanna. He had hoped to surround Pittaggatalli, but on approach Murshili realized that Pittaggatalli had posted pickets to give himself early warning so that he could withdraw to fight on his own terms. In response Murshili set off in a different direction, but when night fell he turned and marched through the night toward Pittaggatalli. By the time the sun rose, Pittaggatalli was confronted by Murshili's army, which he was compelled to fight then and there. Although Pittaggatalli managed to escape, much of his army was captured along with considerable booty; it was sent back to the base at Altanna, while Murshili moved against another enemy force.

To cross a river under hostile fire was clearly no officer's favorite tactic. We know, however, that this maneuver, requiring considerable discipline and courage, was successfully accomplished. There is also some evidence that on rare occasions a battle of champions might settle the issue.

Sometimes detachments were sent out with orders to rejoin the main force after accomplishing their mission. Multipronged attacks were certainly within the army's bag of tricks. A projected campaign, presented for divine approval in an oracular inquiry, suggested that the king would attack Shakhuzimisha while the rest of the forces attacked Dakhash: Temeti and Ashduwari from opposite Kammama, Kuniya-ziti with ŠUTI troops coming up from behind Kuwarina, and [. . .-] luwa, also with ŠUTI troops, from a third direction. Here we see planned a three-pronged attack on one target while a detachment simultaneously attacks a second target.

Siege Warfare

If strategically important towns could not be taken quickly by storm, they needed to be besieged. First a challenge to battle was sent to the enemy commander. If it was rebuffed, then the exits were blocked to insure that the enemy inside the town would not receive supplies and reinforcements from outside and could not send messages out. Fierce battles would be fought at the gates in an attempt to enter. Attacks would be made at night in the hope of surprising the defenders. Attempts would be made to set the wooden doors of the gate on fire. Battering rams would be brought in. Not just the door, but the

wall itself would be battered to create a breach. There was probably also tunneling either to gain access or to undermine the walls. Siege towers would be built to get above the walls. Construction would begin on a great ramp of earth to allow a mass of besiegers to cross the enemy's moat and gain access to the top of the wall. Throughout the attempt, the besiegers would have to worry about sallies from the enemy, which could take quite a toll. Siege works were constructed to protect the besiegers from such sallies. Attempts to talk the people out or create a "fifth column" would be made, usually explaining why justice was on the Hittite side. For instance, if the enemy leader was a rebellious tributary, it would be explained that by betraying the trust of his overlord, a leader had forfeited his right to his people's loyalty. They were now direct servants of the Hittite king and so should surrender immediately to the Hittite army. If all else failed the army would attempt to starve the enemy into submission.

Such sieges of important places could drag on for some time. Lack of food could sometimes become as much of a problem for the besiegers as for the besieged. Although no texts mention it, one can presume based on records of other prolonged sieges that more people, both besiegers and besieged, died of disease than from battle. A number of rituals are magical attempts to rid army camps of devastating diseases and to pass them to the enemy.

If a campaign season ended and the siege was not yet successful, the main army would return to winter in Khatti, while a detachment would be left to maintain the siege. This could be dangerous if the enemy received help from a field army. Alternatively, the main Hittite army could spend the winter in enemy territory. This was also a precarious situation considering the difficulties of acquiring sufficient supplies for a large force while subject at all times to enemy sallies. Of course a sally, if unsuccessful, could do more damage to the besieged than to the besiegers. In one memorable case, an attempted enemy sally left their own water supply exposed long enough for an alert Hittite commander to seize it. In another case a king, with winter approaching, employed an effective stratagem. He ordered the siege abandoned and returned home. Later, he sent a detachment of troops back to the city, which, as the king guessed, thought itself safe for the winter and relaxed its guard. The city, which had refused to fall to the whole Hittite army, now fell easily to the Hittite detachment.

Morale on Campaign

Some unusual natural occurrence, seen by both sides as a sign of divine pleasure or displeasure, might dramatically affect morale. When the king of Arzawa's capital was struck by lightning, Arzawan morale collapsed while Hittite confidence soared.

If things were going badly for the army, a ritual could be tried to turn things around:

> When it gets scary in the field for a "lord of the army" or when all goes right for the enemy in battle and it doesn't go right for our boys, one performs the following ritual: Throw hot fir cones and hot stones into water. As the fir cones and the stones hiss and then get cold and become silent, so may the manhood, battle, and awareness of you (the enemy) and your troops likewise grow cold and be extinguished. Like a stone let them become dumb and silent. Let their bowstring and arrow. . . grow cold. The gods march on our side. The (former) kings speak on our behalf. The multitude has hurried to our side. The gods have given boys to our army with manhood and bravery.

Of course, despite the best efforts of strategists and magicians, defeats did occur. In this case, too, a ritual was performed:

> If the troops are defeated by the enemy, they perform the far-side-of-the-river ritual. On the far side of the river, they cut in half a person, a billy goat, a puppy, and a piglet. Half of each they place on this side and half on that side. In front they build a gate of hawthorn. . . . Overtop they draw a rope. In front, on either side, they light a fire. The troops go through the middle. When they reach the river, they sprinkle them with water. Afterward they perform the ritual of the battlefield for them in the usual way.

That is, whatever impurity caused the defeat was magically removed from the troops by the hawthorn's scraping, the fire's burning, and the water's purification. They were then magically reinducted into soldiering. They could thus put their defeat behind them and, with morale high again, look forward to their next victory.

FROM WAR TO PEACE

When a city was taken, it would usually be looted and then often burned. The people were valuable. Sometimes only the leaders were seized, while the people, judged to be victims themselves, were left in peace. Sometimes cities or city quarters escaped plundering out of respect for the deities who dwelt there. More usually people, herd animals, and other desirables were rounded up. In cases of small police actions, the guilty men were executed; the women, children, and servants were sent to the king, while the troops kept the animals. In wars, the booty was divided first between Hittites and their allies—equal allies getting equal shares. Then civilian captives (known literally as "transportees") and other booty were divided between the king and the troops. The share that went to the troops probably became slaves, either sold on the market or put to work in the soldier's house, business, or farm. At least some of the king's share were given land, supplies to begin farming, and a three-year remission of taxes; they apparently became ordinary subjects. Because the entire population of a captured country was considered "transportees," the king would sometimes hand them over as subjects to a newly installed native ruler. After a victory, some of the spoils—people as well as valuable goods—would be given to the gods of Khatti who had "run before the army," as an expression of thanks for making victory possible. The people became dependent peasants on the gods' estates. Sometimes an entire town and its hinterland would be emptied of its gods and people and dedicated to the Hittite storm-god as pasture for the divine bulls who pulled his chariot. This could be symbolically indicated by sowing the site with fennel (a weed that grows particularly well on abandoned settlements).

When peace was in the offing, oracles were taken to this effect: If we conclude this treaty, will we have nothing to worry about? Eventually, treaties would be signed laying out the borders and the duties and obligations of each side. A defeated state would become a tributary state and, among other things, would be required to supply troops to the Hittite army. In a newly (re)conquered area, forts and fortified towns would be constructed. Finally, in order to get the area back on a firm economic foundation, attempts might be made to turn the locals into loyal subjects, to bring back local refugees, and to resettle "transportees."

Thus the Hittites had a well-organized and efficient military machine. This enabled them not only to maintain their own territorial integrity for several centuries, but to hold their own against the other great powers of the day.

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