

Yazılıkaya Hittite Rock Sanctuary

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Entry tags: Archaeological monument, Anatolian Religions, Open-Air Sanctuary, Religious Group, Hittite Religions, Religious Place

Yazılıkaya is a open-air Hittite rock sanctuary located near the Hittite capital Hattusa in central Anatolia. It was one of the most important monumental remnants of the Hittite empire. The sanctuary was built between a group of rock outcroppings, some reaching 12 meters in height, where one large and one smaller opening (Chambers A and B) served as its open-air halls. Excavations of the site revealed the existence of a multi-room building complex that once stood in front of the sanctuary and controlled access to its chambers. The site was in use from at least 1500 BCE, but gained particular significance after the carving of the reliefs in the thirteenth century. The main group of reliefs in Chamber A portrays sixty-three deities. The male deities on the left wall and the female deities on the right wall are depicted in separate processions, which lead to a central scene on the wall across from the entrance, where the two processions meet, headed by the two supreme deities of the Hittite pantheon, the Storm god and the Sun goddess. Most of the deities are accompanied by hieroglyphic labels, although many of these are illegible because of erosion. The labels identify the deities with their Hurrian rather than their Hittite names, which demonstrates the strong influence of Hurrian cultic traditions on the Hittite court in the thirteenth century. Thus the Storm god is labeled as Teššub and the Sun goddess is Hebat. Chamber A also has a well preserved 2.60-meter-high relief of Great King Tudhaliya IV. The smaller Chamber B has fewer but better preserved reliefs, including another relief of King Tudhaliya IV, this time depicted in the embrace of his personal protective deity Sharruma. Both reliefs are accompanied by Tudhaliya's royal "cartouches." Other reliefs of Chamber B are the 12 gods of the underworld shown in a procession and the 3.5-meter-high sword shaped relief of a somewhat mysterious Sword god, possibly representing Nergal or another underworld deity. The specific function of the sanctuary is not securely determined, but Chamber A was likely a ritual site during periodic cultic festivals, while Chamber B probably served as a memorial or mausoleum for king Tudhaliya IV upon his death.



Date Range: 1500 BCE - 1200 BCE

Region: Yazılıkaya Hittite Rock Sanctuary

Region tags: Middle East, Asia Minor, Turkey

Located at the outskirts of the Hittite capital Hattuša in central Anatolia, about 150 km north of modern day Turkish capital Ankara. It consists of mainly two chambers situated within a rocky outcrop and a building complex that controlled the entry to the chambers.

Status of Participants:

✓ Elite

General Variables

Sources and Excavations

Print Sources

Print sources used for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Bittel, K., Boessneck, J., Damm, B., Güterbock, H. G., Hauptmann, H., Naumann, R., and Schirmer, W. (1975) *Das hethitische Felsheiligtum Yazılıkaya*. Berlin.
- Source 2: Seeher, J. (2011) *Gods Carved in Stone: The Hittite Rock Sanctuary of Yazılıkaya*. Istanbul.
- Source 3: Alexander, R. L. (1986) *The Sculpture and Sculptures of Yazılıkaya*. Newark.

Notes: See also: Seeher, J. (2016) Yazılıkaya. *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 15 (1/2): 149-155. Güterbock, H. G. (1982) *Les Hiéroglyphes de Yazılıkaya. A propos d'un Travail récent*. Paris. Haas, V. and Wäfler, M. (1974) "Yazılıkaya und der große Tempel," *Oriens Antiquus* 13: 211-226. Neve, P. (1989) "Einige Bemerkungen zu der Kammer B in Yazılıkaya," Pages 345-355 in *Anatolia and the Ancient Near East: Studies in Honor of Tahsin Özgüç*, edited by K. Emre, B. Hrouda, M. J. Mellik, and N. Özgüç. Ankara: TTK.

Online Sources

Online sources used for understanding this subject:

- Source 1 URL: <https://www.hittitemonuments.com/yazilikaya>
- Source 1 Description: A photographic guide

Has this place been the focus of excavation (pre-modern, illicit, or scientific):

Answer 'Yes' for each period or type of excavation.

– Yes



Type of excavation:

– Scientific

Reference: Ernest Chantre. *Recherches archéologiques dans l'Asie occidentale : mission en Cappadoce, 1893-1894*. Paris: E. Leroux.



Years of excavation:

– Year range: 1893-1894



Name of excavation

– Official or descriptive name: Mission en Cappadoce

– Yes



Type of excavation:

– Scientific



Years of excavation:

– Year range: 1907



Name of excavation

– Official or descriptive name: Die Ausgrabungen in Boghaz-Köi Im Sommer 1907

Notes: As part of the official excavation of the Hittite capital at Boğazköy by Hugo Winckler (1906-1912), Theodor Makridi excavated at Yazılıkaya in 1907.

– Yes



Type of excavation:

– Scientific



Years of excavation:

– Year range: 1938-1939, 1966-1967



Name of excavation

– Official or descriptive name: Boğazköy Excavations

Notes: Excavated by Kurt Bittel of German Archaeological Institute as part of the Boğazköy excavations.

Reference: Kurt Bittel , Joachim Boessneck , Bernhard Damm , Hans Güterbock H., Harald Hauptmann , Rudolf Naumann , Wulf Schirmer. Das hethitische Felsheiligtum Yazılıkaya. Berlin: Gebr. Mann. isbn: 3786122121.

Topographical Context

Is the place associated with a feature in the landscape

– Other [specify]: Rocky Outcrop

Notes: The main chambers of the open-air sanctuary are built within a limestone rock massif.

Does the place involve human-made features besides structure:

Other features might be ground clearing, terracing, other modifications of the local environment.

– Yes



Type of feature

– Leveling of ground

– Clearing

– Other [specify]: Flattened rock walls, reliefs

Is the place situated in an urban or significantly urbanized area:

– Yes

↳ Is there a distinct boundary between the place and the urban fabric:

– Yes

Notes: The entrances of the unroofed main chambers of the sanctuary are shielded from view (and access) by a building complex built on its west side.

↳ Is the place located significantly within the urban fabric:

Is the place centrally located, or at the crossroads of significant pathways?

– Yes

Notes: Today the site is located about 1.5 km to the city walls of the ruins of Hattusa, but during the Hittite times the settlements outside the city walls reached all the way to the sanctuary (Seeher 2011:19).

Is the place situated in a rural setting:

– No

Is the place situated far removed from non-religious places of habitation:

– No

Structures Present

Are there structures or features present:

Instructions: Answer once for each structure/feature or group that can be differentiated.

– Yes

↳ A single structure

– No

↳ A group of structures:

– Yes

↳ Are they part of a single design/construction stage:

– No

↳ A group of features:

– Yes

↳ Are they part of a single design/construction stage:

– No

↳ Is it part of a larger place/sanctuary:

– No

↳ What is the function of the structure/feature or group:

Answer "Yes" once for each distinct function

– Memorial

– Worship

↳ Worship:

– Communal

↳ Is the structure/feature finished:

– Yes

↳ Was the structure/feature intended to last beyond a generation:

– Yes

↳ Was the structure/feature modified through time:

– Yes

↳ Was the structure/feature destroyed:

– No

↳ Has the structure/feature been reconstructed:

– No

Reasons for Creation/Construction/Consecration

Is the place used for the worship of/communication with non-human supernatural beings:

– Yes

↳ Dedicated to a supernatural being:

– Yes [specify]: Deities of the Hittite pantheon headed by the Storm-God and the Sun-Goddess.

↳ Dedicated to more than one supernatural being:

– Yes [specify]: Deities of the Hittite pantheon headed by the Storm-God and the Sun-Goddess.

Is the place used for the worship of a semi-divine human being:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is quite likely that the Chamber B was a memorial (or mauseloum) built for the deceased Hittite king Tudhaliya IV, deified upon his death.

Is the place used for the worship of non-divine ancestors:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is quite likely that the Chamber B was built by the Hittite king Šuppiluliuma II as a memorial (or mauseloum) for his father, Tudhaliya IV.

Was the place commissioned/built by an official political entity:

A political entity is a local power structure that leverages a workforce.

– Yes

↳ Specify

– King or emperor

Were the Structures built by specific groups of people:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is no specific information, but it is quite likely that corvee labor and slaves were utilized for its construction, as well as the Hittite artisans and craftsmen that were in the employment of the state cult.

Was the place thought to have originated as the result of divine intervention:

– Field doesn't know

Was the place created to mark or commemorate the birthplace of a supernatural or human being:

– No

Was the place created as the result of an event:

– Field doesn't know

Was the creation of the place sponsored by an external financial/material donation:

– Yes

↳ Is this sponsor of the same religious group/tradition as the main usage of the place:

– Yes

Notes: The sanctuary was almost certainly commissioned and used by the Hittite state cult, headed by the royal family.

Was the establishment of the place motivated by:

– Other [specify]: There is no information regarding the reasons for the initial building process. Chamber A was likely a ritual site during periodical cultic festivals, while Chamber B probably served as a memorial or mausoleum for king Tudhaliya IV. Rituals and festivals were conducted to appease the deities at the least, and thus to avoid their wrath.

Was the place built specifically for housing scriptures/sacred texts:

– No

Design and Material Remains

Overall Structure

Is the place made up of multiple built structures:

– Yes

↳ Are any of the structures attached to or associated with a landscape feature:

– Yes

Notes: The chambers are built into a limestone rock massif.

↳ Are any of the structures attached to other structures:

– Yes

Notes: The walls and buildings are attached to the rock massif that has the main chambers.

↳ Is there a hierarchy among the structures:

– Yes

Notes: Northernmost building was likely a gateway that controlled access to the entire complex. The inner buildings also facilitated the access to the main rock chambers and housed the cultic inventory.

Is monumental architecture present:

Monumental architecture is defined here as a built structure that surpasses average human proportions and in general is larger and more complex than is necessary to fulfill the structure's utilitarian function(s). Examples of monumental architecture include Mesopotamian Ziggurats, Egyptian Pyramids, Greek and Roman temples, Mesoamerican Pyramids, North American and Aegean burial mounds, etc.

– No

Is the structure/feature made out of natural materials:

Answer [Yes] for each material type

– Yes

↳ Earth

– Yes

↳ Is this material sourced locally:

– Yes

↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:

– No

↳ Sand

– Yes

↳ Is this material sourced locally:

– Yes

↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:

– No

↳ Clay

– Yes

↳ Is this material sourced locally:

– Yes

↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:

– No

↳ Plaster

– Yes

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↳ Is this material sourced locally:

– Yes

↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:

– No

↳ Wood

– Yes

↳ Is this material sourced locally:

– Yes

↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:

– No

↳ Grass

– Yes

↳ Is this material sourced locally:

– Yes

↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:

– No

↳ Stone

– Yes

↳ Is this material sourced locally:

– Yes

↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:

– No

↳ Other

– Other [specify]: N/A

Is the structure/feature made out of human-made materials

– Yes [specify]: Buildings were built of unfired mud-bricks, which were made by mixing loam (earth containing clay) with water and adding straw and sand for durability (Seeher 2011: 127f.).

Decoration

Is decoration present:

– Yes

↳ Is decoration part of the building (permanent):

– Yes

↳ On the outside:

– No

↳ On the inside:

– Yes

↳ Is decoration attached to the building, i.e. movable reliefs or tapestries

– Field doesn't know

↳ Is the decoration figural:

A figural representation is defined here as one that contains the depiction of discernible human, anthropomorphic, animal, or zoomorphic forms. In general, it differentiates between animate and inanimate beings, as well as between narrative compositions and still life, landscapes, abstraction, etc. Answer [Yes] for each type of figure depicted

– Yes

↳ Are there gods depicted:

– Yes

↳ Are there other supernatural beings depicted:

– Yes

↳ Are there humans depicted:

– Yes

↳ Are there animals depicted:

– Yes

Notes: Only as divine beings.

↳ Are there animal-human hybrids depicted:

– Yes

↳ Is the decoration non-figural:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: In terms of decorations only remnants are the reliefs of the deities, but plausibly the chambers had painted plasters too.

↳ Is the decoration hidden or restricted from view:

– No

Notes: The reliefs are clearly visible on the inner walls of the chambers, but not visible from outside the sanctuary.

↳ Are there statues present:

– Yes

↳ Cult statues:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is plausible that the Chamber A did contain cult statues prior to the 13th century when the reliefs were carved on its walls.

↳ Statues of gods/supernatural beings:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is plausible that the Chamber A did contain cult statues/statues of gods, prior to the 13th century when the reliefs were carved on its walls.

↳ Statues of humans:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is no definitive evidence, but it has been speculated that Chamber B may have had a statue of the King Tudhaliya IV (Seeher 2011: 160f.).

↳ Other [Specify]

–Other [specify]: portal lions

Notes: Fragments of a couple of lions were found in the area of the building complex, which suggest portal/gate lions, common in Hittite art, were used in decoration.

↳ Are there reliefs present:

A relief as opposed to sculpture carved on the round is a work of sculpture in which the figures project from a background support, generally a flat surface. Reliefs can be carved out of stone, clay, or a similar material.

– Yes

↳ Reliefs representing the god(s) worshipped at the place:

– Yes

↳ Reliefs representing mythological narratives:

– No

↳ Reliefs representing human/historical narratives:

– No

↳ Other [Specify]

– Other [specify]: Reliefs of King Tudhaliya IV

↳ Are there paintings present:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Pigments have not been detected but it is quite possible that colors were used.

↳ Are there mosaics present:

– No

↳ Are there inscriptions as part of the decoration:

– Yes

↳ Are the inscriptions ornamental:

– No

↳ Are the inscriptions informative/declarative

[e.g. historical narratives, calendars, donor lists etc...]

– Yes

Notes: Inscriptions are present only as labels that identify reliefs of numerous deities. Also, the reliefs of the Great King Tudhaliya is identified by his stylized aedicula/cartouche that incorporates his name.

↳ Are the inscription a formal dedication:

– No

↳ Other [Specify]

–Other [specify]: N/A

↳ Other type of decoration:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is likely that the buildings did have significant decoration but nothing remains.

Iconography

Are there distinct features in the places iconography:

– Yes

↳ Eyes (stylized or not)

– No

↳ Supernatural beings (zoomorphic)

– Yes

Notes: Reliefs of a double headed eagle and animal-human hybrids (see images)

↳ Supernatural beings (geomorphic)

– Yes

Notes: Relief of mountain deities with stylized skirts in the shape of mountains (see image).

↳ Supernatural beings (anthropomorphic)

– Yes

Notes: Most of the deities are depicted in human forms.

↳ Supernatural beings (abstract)

– No

↳ Portrayals of afterlife

– Field doesn't know

Notes: In Chamber B, King Tudhaliya IV is shown in the embrace of his protective god Sharruma (see image). The scene could be interpreted as the protection and guidance of the god on the spirit of the deceased king. However, same scene is also encountered on the seals

that were used by Tudhaliya IV, where having been led by the god could be taken as being righteous and legitimate.

↳ Aspects of doctrine (e.g. cross, trinity, Mithraic symbols)

– No

↳ Humans

– Yes

Notes: Reliefs of King Tudhaliya IV

↳ Supernatural narratives

– Yes

Notes: On the rock walls of Chamber A, the male deities on the left and the female deities on the right are depicted in separate processions, which lead to a central scene on the wall across from the entrance, where the two processions meet, headed by the two supreme deities of the Hittite pantheon, the Storm-God and the Sun-Goddess (However, such a procession of deities is not a known narrative from Hittite textual sources).

↳ Human narratives

– No

↳ Other [Specify]

–Other [specify]: N/A

Beliefs and Practices

Funerary Associations

Is this place a tomb/burial:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is no definitive evidence, but Chamber B of the sanctuary might be a mausoleum for King Tudhaliya IV.

Is this a place for the worship of the dead:

– Yes

↳ For the worship of a deceased person(s):

– Yes

Notes: Chamber B of the sanctuary was probably a memorial, if not a mausoleum, for King Tudhaliya IV.

↳ For the worship of a deified human:

– Yes

Notes: Chamber B of the sanctuary was probably a memorial, if not a mausoleum, for King Tudhaliya IV. The Hittite kings were deified upon death.

↳ For the worship of a deceased hero:

– No

Is this a place for treatment of the corpse:

– No

Notes: Hittite kings were cremated upon death. The chamber is too narrow of a space for a cremation ceremony.

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

Co-sacrifices are animal/human sacrifices prompted by the death of the primary occupant of the tomb/burial.

– No

Are grave goods present:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Even if the Chamber B was a mausoleum, there is not much space for the storage of large amount of goods. There is no textual evidence for such goods.

Are formal burials present:

– No

Supernatural Beings

Is a supreme high god is present:

– Yes

↳ Are they anthropomorphic:

– Yes

↳ Are they sky deity:

– Yes

↳ Are they chthonic (underworld)

– No

↳ Are they fused with king/kingship role (king = high god)

– No

↳ Are they the monarch is seen as a manifestation or emanation of the high god:

– No

↳ Are they kin relation to elites:

– No

↳ Are they other type of loyalty or connection to elites:

– No

↳ Are they unquestionably good:

– No

Does the supreme high god communicate with the living at this place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Rituals did take place at the site, but their extent is unclear.. If there was any communication with the divine beings that was probably through divination.

Are previously human spirits present:

– Field doesn't know

Do human spirits communicate with the living at this place:

– Field doesn't know

Are nonhuman supernatural beings present:

– Yes

↳ Human spirits can be seen:

– Yes

Notes: They are visible in the relief representations

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt:

– Field doesn't know

Do nonhuman spirits communicate with the living at this place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Rituals did take place at the site, but their extent is unclear. If there was any communication with the divine beings that was probably be through divination.

Are mixed human-divine beings present:

– Yes

↳ Mixed human-divine spirits can be seen:

– Yes

Notes: The Hittite kings were deified upon death. Thus the reliefs of King Tudhaliya IV, which presumably post date his death, can be taken as representations of human-divine spirits.

↳ Mixed human-divine spirits can be physically felt:

– Field doesn't know

Do mixed human-divine beings communicate with the living at this place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Rituals did take place at the site, but their extent is unclear. If there was any communication that was probably be through divination.

Is the supernatural being/high god present in the form of a cult statue(s):

– Field doesn't know

Notes: In the earlier phase of the sanctuary, prior to the commissioning of the reliefs (13th century BCE) there may have been cult statues in Chamber A. Also, Chamber B may have had a statue of a deified King Tudhaliya IV.

Supernatural Interactions

Is supernatural monitoring present:

– Field doesn't know

Do visitors communicate with the gods or supernatural beings:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The extent of rituals that took place in the sanctuary is unclear, although it is possible that offerings, sacrifices, libations did take place, all of which could be taken as a sort of "communication".

Ritual and Performance

Sacrifices, Offerings, and Maintenance

Are sacrifices performed at this place:

– Yes



Are there animal sacrifices:

– Yes [specify]: There is archaeological evidence of the ritual sacrifice of a pig embryo, although that was probably not as an offering to the deities, but rather for a substitution ritual (Bittel at al 1975: 64ff. and Seeher 2011: 87, 91). It is likely that animal sacrifices were part of the rituals performed at the sanctuary.



Are there human sacrifices:

– No

Are there self-sacrifices present:

– No

Are material offerings present:

– No

Notes: There is no archaeological evidence. However, offerings were likely a part of the rituals performed in the sanctuary.

Is attendance to worship/sacrifice mandatory:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is unknown which festivals/rituals were performed in Yazılıkaya. However, many Hittite festivals were required to be performed periodically.

Is maintenance of the place performed:

– Yes

Notes: Considering the lengthy use period, it would be unlikely to think otherwise. The buildings of mud-brick construction did require periodical maintenance.



Is it required:

– Yes

Notes: Although there is no definitive evidence for this location, this was highly likely. There are Hittite instruction texts that outline the duties of officials which include the maintenance of buildings and temples.



Is there cleansing (for the maintenance):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there periodic repairs/reconstructions:

– Yes

Notes: The sanctuary did go through phases of reconstruction, which is visible in the remains of the building complex. While the sanctuary was in use at least since 1500 BCE, the reliefs in the rock chambers were carved in the second half of the 13th century BCE. Whether they replaced earlier reliefs is unclear. Furthermore, the buildings themselves, made of mud-brick, did require periodical maintenance.

↳ Is the maintenance performed by permanent staff:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Temples did typically have permanent personnel. They may have been responsible for small scale upkeep, but for repairs like replastering of walls, painting etc. they may have used experienced craftsmen.

Pilgrimage and Festivals

Are pilgrimages present:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The sanctuary was probably the location of periodical festivals/rituals but there is no evidence that it was a site of pilgrimage in the modern sense of the word.

Is this place a venue for feasting:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is probable since Hittite festivals often include eating and drinking.

Are festivals present:

– Yes

Notes: Although definitive evidence is lacking, it is highly likely that the sanctuary was a location of festivals.

↳ Frequency of festivals

– specify: It would depend on which festivals were celebrated at the site. If it was the location of Spring Festival or KI.LAM Festival as was proposed by some scholars, the frequency would be once a year.

↳ Do all members of the society participate in the festival(s):

– Elites

– Other [specify in comments]

Notes: Festivals, which serve the state cult, are attended by the royal family, high officials and numerous professionals like priests, dances, singers, actors, soldiers, guards, servants etc. Attendance by commoners is unclear. Even if they attend, the parts of the festival that take place inside the sanctuary are unlikely to have involved them.

↳ Are festivals a defining element in the construction/decoration of the place:
– Field doesn't know

↳ On average, how many participants gather at this place:
– number: Unknown. The festivals involve numerous people including royal family, high officials, priests, various groups of performers, and numerous servants. The numbers should easily reach hundreds. But how many are allowed inside the sanctuary is difficult to answer.

↳ Is feasting part of the festival(s):
– Field doesn't know

Notes: We do not have any particular information for the Yazılıkaya sanctuary. Festivals often involve ritual eating and drinking. The is most typically the case for the royal participants, but other attendants such as priests/priestesses, high officials, and even some performers.

Divination and Healing

Is divination present:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Various forms of divination was a part of the Hittite culture, but there is no evidence about its presense at Yazılıkaya.

Is healing present/practiced at this place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is a single find of a ritually deposited pig embryo in the rock chambers. It appears to have been a substitution sacrifice used for a purification ritual. But it is difficult to determine how common such rituals were.

Do rituals occur at this place:

Rituals are visibly enacted behaviors by one or more people for the purposes of religious observance.

– Yes

Notes: Probably. It is likely that rituals took place as they were often part of the festivals. Also, there is a single find of a ritually deposited pig embryo in the rock chambers. It appears to have been a substitution sacrifice used for a purification ritual. But it is difficult to determine how common such rituals were.

↳ Do large-scale rituals take place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: If rituals were conducted as part of a festival, they were probably a large scale rituals.

↳ Do small-scale rituals take place:

– Field doesn't know

↳ On average how many participants are present in large-scale rituals:

– specify: Unknown. Probaby in double digits.

↳ How often do these rituals take place:

– specify: Unknown. Once a year, if the rituals are conducted as part of the yearly festivals. But there may have been other rituals too.

↳ Are there orthodoxy checks:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there orthopraxy checks:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there synchronic practices:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there intoxicants used during the ritual:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is probable as rituals often involve drinking various types of beer or wine.

Institutions and Scriptures

Religious Specialists

Are religious specialists present/in charge of this place:

Religious specialists are individuals who's primary duties within a population group are not concerned with subsistence or craft production but the maintenance of the religious landscape and culture of the group.

– Yes

Notes: Although we lack definitive evidence for the location, generalizing from what is known about Hittite priesthood, it is almost certain that there were cultic personnel in charge of the Yazılıkaya temple/sanctuary.

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↳ Present full time
– Field doesn't know

↳ Present part time
– Field doesn't know

↳ Are the religious specialists of specific sex/gender:
– No
Notes: Both male and females were among the Hittite cultic personnel.

↳ Are the religious specialists of specific ethnicity:
– Field doesn't know
Notes: Probably not. Names from different cult centers reflect a variety of ethnic origins.
Reference: Ada Taggar-Cohen. Hittite Priesthood. Carl Winter. isbn: 978-3-8253-5262-5. p.170

↳ Are the religious specialists of specific class/cast:
– Field doesn't know
Notes: There are some indications that priesthood does continue within the same families, but that is true for many professions/trades in Hittite society. Yet, there are no indication of restrictions preventing other from being inducted into priesthood. (See Taggar-Cohen 2006: 436).

↳ Are religious specialists dedicated to the place for life:
– Field doesn't know
Notes: Probably not. Priests were appointed by the state administration and could be transferred to different locations.
Reference: Ada Taggar-Cohen. Hittite Priesthood. Carl Winter. isbn: 978-3-8253-5262-5. p.442

↳ Are the religious specialists stratified in a hierarchical system:
– Yes

↳ Is access within the space segregated by this hierarchy:
– Field doesn't know
Notes: To a certain degree this might be true as only the temple personnel did have access to "cross the threshold", but it is unclear whether the hierarchy within the temple personnel did have further levels of segregation of access.

Does this place incorporate a living space for religious specialists:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Probably not. The building complex by the rock sanctuary does not seem extensive enough to include living quarters. Also, it is generally known that Hittite priests did have their own residences and did not live in the temples.

Reference: Ada Taggar-Cohen. Hittite Priesthood. Carl Winter. isbn: 978-3-8253-5262-5. p.442

Is this place used for the training of religious specialists:

– Field doesn't know

Are there formal institutions for the maintenance of the place:

Institutions that are authorized by the religious community or political leaders

– Yes

Notes: Yazılıkaya was part of the state-run cultic administration. Based on what is known about cultic institutions and Hittite administration in general, temple personnel were responsible for the daily upkeep and cleaning, but administrative officials were also responsible for the large scale repairs and even staffing of the temple.

Bureaucracy

Is there a formal bureaucracy present at this place:

A bureaucracy consists of a hierarchical system of accounting and rule maintenance primarily concerned with material wealth.

– Yes

Notes: Again, we do not have specific information about the Yazılıkaya sanctuary, but it is known in general that the temples did have extensive inventory lists and detailed record keeping practices, and even audits by the state officials.

↳ Is a bureaucracy present permanently:

– Yes

↳ Is a bureaucracy present on a temporary or seasonal basis:

– Field doesn't know

Does this place control economic resources (land, goods, tools):

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is known that the state assigned resources (land, slaves, tools, etc) to the use of priests, but we lack specific evidence for Yazılıkaya.

Public Works

Does this place serve as a location for services to the community:

– No

Notes: Probably not. The sanctuary was part of the state cult and at the service of the royal administration.

Writing/Scriptures

Is non-religious writing stored at this place:

Economic documents, records etc.

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is known that Hittite temples did keep administrative records, such as inventory lists, although nothing of that sort were found in the archaeological layers of Yazılıkaya.

Are there scriptures associated with this place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There are some texts of festivals and rituals that were proposed to have taken place at the Chamber A of Yazılıkaya. Likewise some texts were suggested to be associated with Chamber B as King Tudhaliya IV's memorial/mausoleum. But we lack definitive evidence. For a summary of these views see Seeher (2011: 155-164).

Bibliography

Entry/Answer References

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