

## The Hittites

The **Hittites** were originally migrant peasants who lived north of the Black Sea. About 2300 B.C. they moved into **Anatolia**, which is the ancient name for Asia Minor. It is known as Turkey today. The land was rocky, but they could grow grain and graze animals. The land also held many metal ores.

### Hittite City-States Become an Empire

The Hittite Civilization began in 1750 B.C. and lasted until 1200 B.C. It was not as organized as some other civilizations. The city-states that comprised the empire were spread throughout Asia Minor and Syria. They were often separated by mountains. Many city-states maintained their own languages and religions. The city-states often fought among themselves until Labarnas became king. Under his leadership, the Hittite empire grew to include most of Turkey. His son, Hattusilis I, expanded the empire into Syria. Hattusilis made the city of **Hattusa** the capital of the Hittite Kingdom. For protection, Hattusa was built high in the mountains and was protected by a stone wall 26 feet thick. Hattusilis' grandson, Mursilis, invaded and defeated Babylon. The crowds cheered and celebrated his great victory, but when he entered his palace, he was assassinated by his brother-in-law.



The Hittite and Egyptian treaty

### Iron

The Hittite Civilization borrowed many ideas from other cultures. However, the Hittites did make two great contributions to humankind. The first was the use of iron. Weapons and tools had been made from copper or bronze, which are soft and bend easily. Iron is much harder. However, extracting the metal for use is more complicated than it is for other metals. The process of extracting ore is called **smelting**. Exactly when and where iron was first smelted is a mystery, but it is generally agreed that real iron **metallurgy** began with the Hittites some time between 1900 and 1400 B.C.

### The First Treaty

The second notable accomplishment of the Hittite Empire, occurring in the 1200s B.C., was a treaty. The Hittites and the Egyptians decided that fighting each other was costly and inefficient. They signed a treaty pledging not to fight each other. If one was attacked by someone else, the other pledged to come to its defense. The treaty was engraved on a silver plaque, clay copies

were placed in the Hittite library, and the Egyptians etched the treaty on walls. This was the first recorded treaty by two great powers.

### Fair Laws

The Hittite laws were considered the fairest of the time. The Hittite law tried to **compensate** the person who was wronged. According to Babylonian law, if a man injured another, the man who caused the injury would be injured the same way. In the Hittite civilization, however, he would have to pay a fine to the person he injured.

### HITTITE CIVILIZATION AT A GLANCE

**WHERE:** Anatolia, the ancient name for Asia Minor

**WHEN:** 1750 B.C.–1200 B.C.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS:

- One of the first civilizations to use iron
- Signed peace treaties
- Established a set of laws considered the fairest of the time

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Knowledge Check

#### Matching

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| _____ 1. Hittites   | a. the ancient name for Asia Minor; known as Turkey today                         |
| _____ 2. Anatolia   | b. the science and technology of metals   |
| _____ 3. Hattusa    | c. migrant peasants who lived north of the Black Sea and then moved into Anatolia |
| _____ 4. smelting   | d. pay back an equal amount for an injury or loss                                 |
| _____ 5. metallurgy | e. the capital of the Hittite Kingdom   |
| _____ 6. compensate | f. the process of extracting metal from ore                                       |

#### Multiple Choice

7. What was one of the Hittite Civilization’s great gifts to humankind?
 

a. defeating Babylon	b. requiring injured people to be paid
c. learning how to smelt iron ore	d. uniting the Hittite city-states
  
8. Who united the Hittite city-states into an empire that included most of present-day Turkey?
 

a. Hattusilis I	b. Labarnas
c. Mursilis	d. Hammurabi
  
9. The first recorded treaty between two great powers involved what empires?
 

a. Egypt and Sumeria	b. the Hittites and Babylonia
c. Assyria and Babylonia	d. Egypt and the Hittites

#### Constructed Response

10. Why was the Hittite law code seen as the fairest of its time? Use details from the reading selection to help support your answer.

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