Foreword

The current volume appears in the series *Empires Through the Ages in Global Perspective*, which is edited by Robert Rollinger, Kai Ruffing and Michael Gehler, and hence our primary objective was to present the most significant aspects of the political history of the Hittite kingdom of Hatti, a typology of the written and archaeological evidence, the structure, the administrative organisation, and the economy of this state. This book aims to reach a varied audience that includes the researchers in the field of Hittitology and ancient Near Eastern studies, as well scholars of other historical disciplines and keen readers of history and archaeology.

The Hittite kingdom was a multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic political entity, and three chapters in the first section deal with the peoples who inhabited Anatolia in the second millennium BC, and with the documented languages and scripts. Anatolia is also characterised by a great environmental heterogeneity, and the chapter in the second section focuses on the connection between the cultural and political development of Hatti and the regional conditions of its territory.

The third section in this volume comprehends four chapters. The first one deals with the development of Hatti from regional polity to empire. The second one examines the international relations of the Hittite kingdom. The members of the court and of the most important families played a significant role in the political and economic life of Hatti, and this is the topic of the third chapter. The last essay in this section offers an overview of the Hittite cults, the state pantheon and the relation between religion and power.

The most visible expression of Hittite power was the monumental buildings of Hattusa, and the chapter in the fourth section focuses on the Hittite capital. The Hittite king was the highest authority and although the Hittite kingdom was an absolute monarchy, royal propaganda was a significant tool for acquiring a wide consensus. The two chapters in the fifth section address the different media employed in royal promotion, namely, the written documents and the images of the king on seals and reliefs. Two chapters are included in the sixth section, and they deal, respectively, with the main features of the economy of the Hittite kingdom, and the production of pottery, its diffusion, and its social role.

The last section examines the reception of the Hittite culture in the Republic of Turkey.

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ing me to edit the current volume. My thanks also go to the publisher and the editorial team of de Gruyter for their constant support.

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