



Visiting Hours

Opening Time: 10:00
Closing Time: 19:00

Closed on Monday.

Address: Site, 80752 Karatepe/Kadirli/Osmaniye

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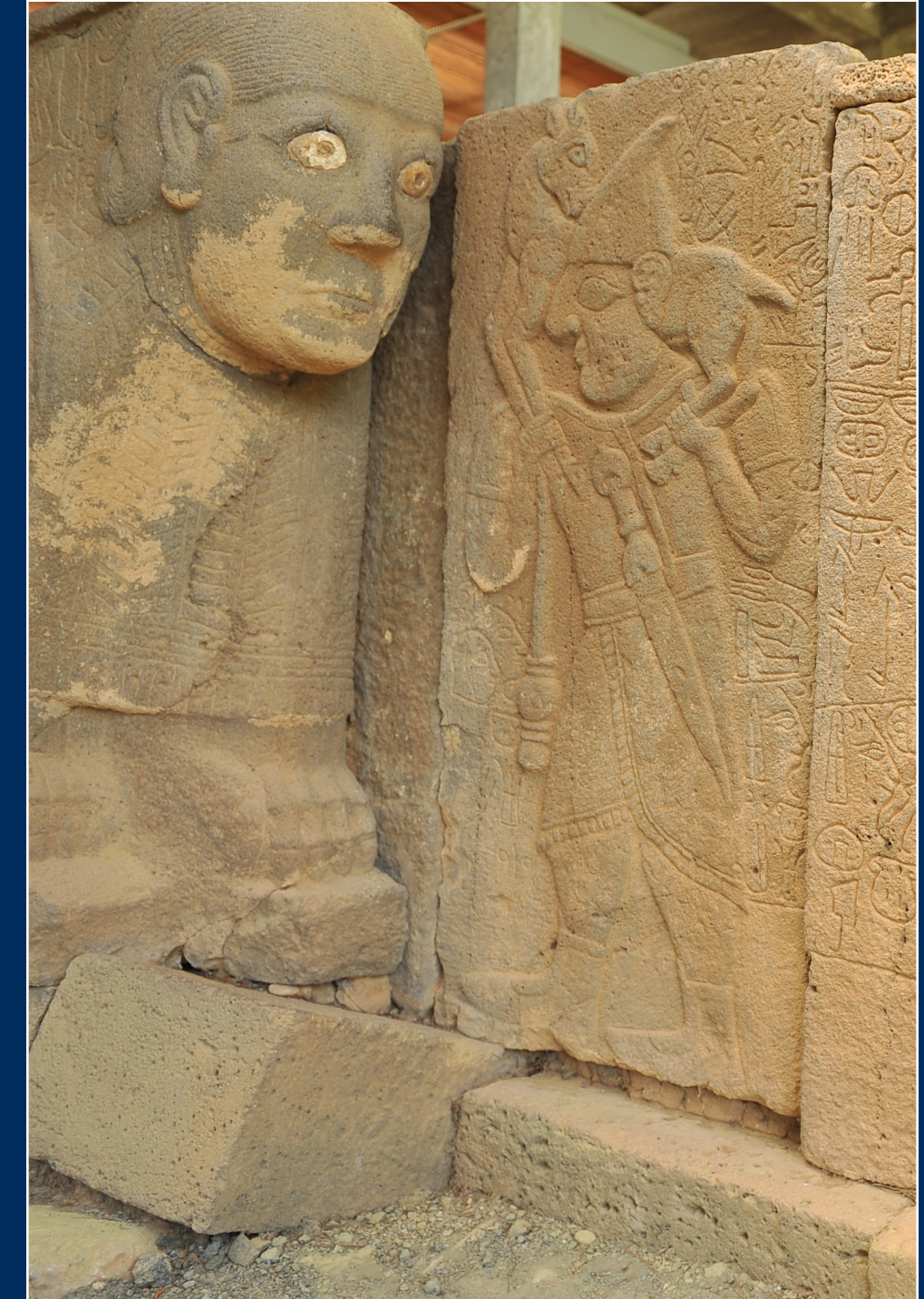
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KARATEPE ASLANTAŞ ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR
CULTURAL ASSETS AND MUSEUMS





Karatepe was discovered in 1946 by Prof Helmut Bossert and Dr Halet Çambel. The first excavations were carried out by Bossert and Prof. Bahadır Alkım. Halet Çambel continued the excavation, preservation and repair works in Karatepe and turned the castle into an Open Air Museum. It is Turkey's first Open Air Museum.

Karatepe Azativataya Castle is a settlement area where the most concrete remains of the Que Kingdom, dating back to the middle of the 8th century BC, the Late Hittite Period, have survived to the present day. Azativataya, a unique castle that reflects almost all the features of the monumental art, architecture and technique of its period, controlled an important trade route of the period. The walls of the castle are 195 m in east-west direction and 375 m in north-south direction. The castle, which is protected by a double wall system, is supported by 33 towers.

The castle is entered through two monumental gates, called the North Gate and the South Gate, supported by towers. The northern and southern gates of the castle are decorated with inscribed statues, inscribed and embossed orthostats. After entering the South Gate, there is a sanctuary where the Tarhunda statue is located. The inscriptions found in Karatepe are bilingual in Luwian and Phoenician languages. The inscriptions are the longest known bilingual text in these languages and played an important role in deciphering Anatolian Hieroglyphs. The fact that the rulers, who claimed to be descendants of Muksas-Mopsos, accepted the Phoenician language as the language of written expression, represents the first step towards the creation of the Greek alphabet. In the inscriptions, it is stated that Azativatas, a lord in the service of Avarikus, the King of Adanava city, founded this castle and named it Azativataya.

Inscribed sculptures and reliefs depict and represent the characteristics of different cultures such as Hittite, Egyptian, Assyrian, Phoenician, Aramaic and Greek. The relief depictions illuminate a dark period of the Iron Age and uniquely reflect the synthesis of eastern and western cultures. The beliefs, gods and mythological creatures of the period, their social lives, clothing, musical instruments, furniture, feasts, hunting parties, warriors and their armor and weapons, horse-drawn chariots, fishing boats, warships are depicted on the reliefs. There are musical instruments, warships, armor and helmets of warriors, lotus-palmette decorations on orthostates.