



ART

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Hilani-Decoration

The richness of Guzana's works of art rests mainly on the ornamentation of the *Hilani* and the adjacent «Skorpionentor». It is possible to separate three stylistic groups within a short time span.

The most famous sculptures are the three monumental statues of Guzana's three main gods standing on their symbolic animals. According to the reconstruction of Max von Oppenheim's architects, the sculptures are incorporated, in the manner of caryatids, into the entrance façade of the *Hilani*. Besides the weather-god standing on a bull and his wife on a lioness, a third, male god is shown on a lion. Today, replicas of this ensemble decorate the entrance of the National Museum in Aleppo (**Fig. 1**).

Scientific interest has further centred upon the «Little Orthostats», which appear, in secondary context, on the southern wall of the *Hilani*: stylistically as well as iconographically, they show several special features. Besides being strongly influenced by the Late Hittite art of north Syria they have obviously been in contact with the Mitannian-Hurrian iconography of the Late Bronze Age. So far, we can only speculate about the way in which this contact was brought about.

Ancestor-worshipping sculptures

A specialty of Guzana are images of ancestor-worship which were deposited in cult rooms, underground or above (**Fig. 2**). It shows that worshipping the ancestors played a major role. The tradition of such images of ancestor worship goes back to the first half of the 2nd millennium B.C. Corresponding statues of the ancestor cult were not only deposited in Guzana but also at other places that obviously belonged to the principality of Bit-Bakhiani: Four such seated figures were found in Girbel and Bozhöyük, today on the Turkish side of the former Aramaean principality. That tradition of worshipping the ancestors lived on in Guzana even after the incorporation into the Assyrian empire is testified by the statue of a scribe called Kammaki, exposed in 1999 in the north-eastern lower town, during the construction of a bathroom for a modern dwelling; stylistically and iconographically, the statue corresponds to the earlier images of ancestors but probably dates to the rule of Ashur-dan III (772–754 B.C.).

(Translation: B. Finkbeiner / A. Sollee / B. Sollee)