

Karkemish of the Hittites on the Euphrates New Discoveries and New Acquisitions



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM - UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA
DIPARTIMENTO DI STORIA CULTURE CIVILTÀ

Karkemish of the Hittites on the Euphrates New Discoveries and New Acquisitions

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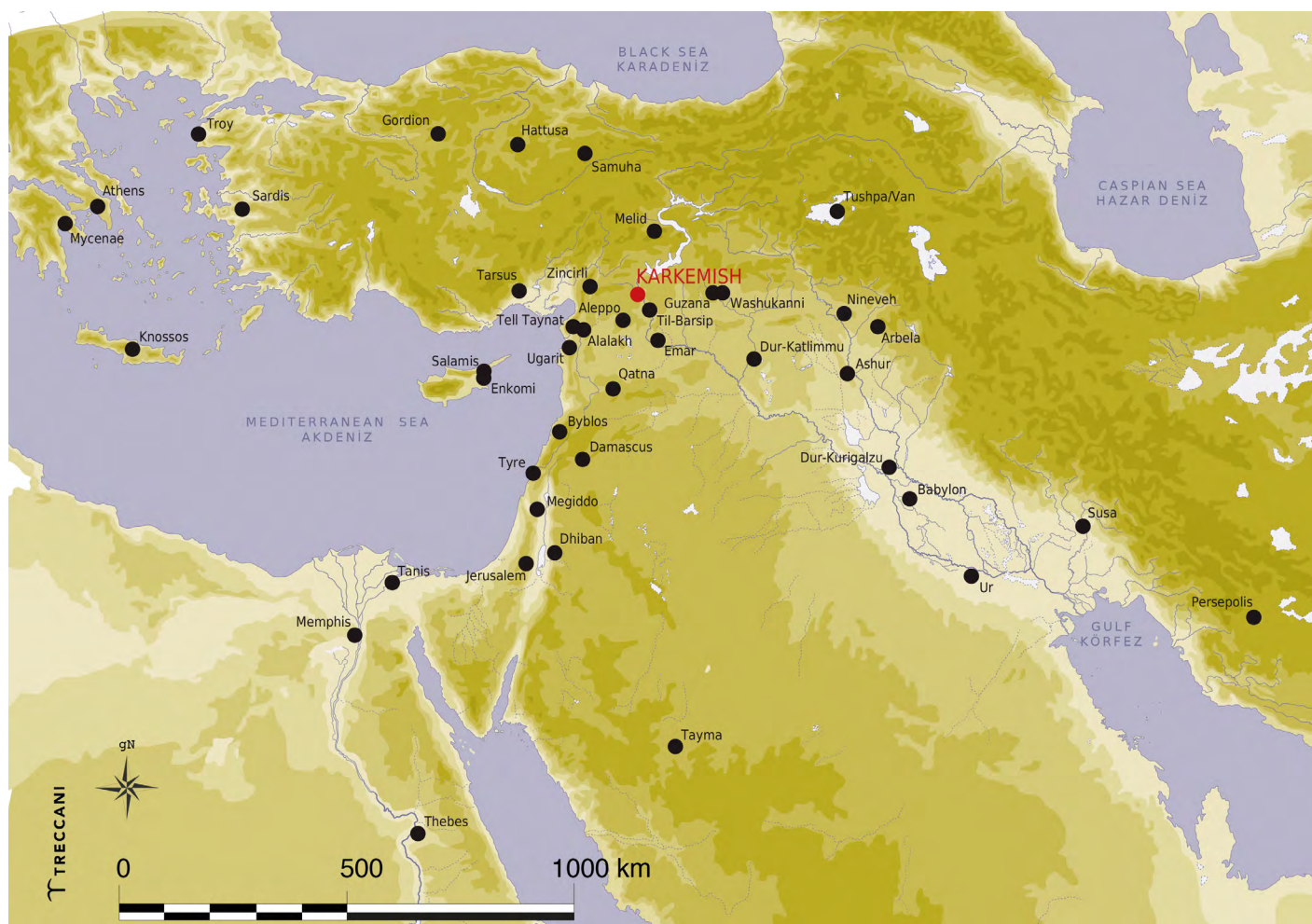
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Pyxis lid

Museum no. 6970 (Istanbul)

Material: Steatite or diorite

Dimensions: l. 6.92; w. 6.83; th. 1.9 cm

Context: British Museum excavations, acropolis mound, surface find

Date: Iron II, 9th-8th centuries BCE

Cat. 39

Fragmentary lid belongs to a round stone pyxis: it was acquired by Woolley, having been allegedly found on the acropolis mound. It is carved with a hunting scene on the top and a guilloche on the edge. Stone pyxides were likely used as containers for spices, oils, cosmetics and other kinds of expensive perishable substances. These were likely consumed during rituals performed by elite groups: this interpretation seems to be confirmed by the depiction of pyxides in banquet scenes on funerary stelae, as the Katumuwa stele from Zincirli, as well as on the dining table of Ashurbanipal's "Garden scene" at Nineveh. At Karkemish, in particular, such rituals may have been performed in the plaza between the Storm-God temple, the Hilani and the palace compound (where in fact a pyxis fragment was found in 2014, D'Orazio 2025: 71-72, fig. 2, table 1).

CDO

Description

Woolley 1921: pl. 28.2-2; Winter 1983: 184, pl. XLIX.a; Mazzoni 2001: 294-295, 297; Wicke 2008: 272, no. Kar k.3, pl. 42.g-h; D'Orazio 2022: 89, cat. no. 5, fig. 5

References