

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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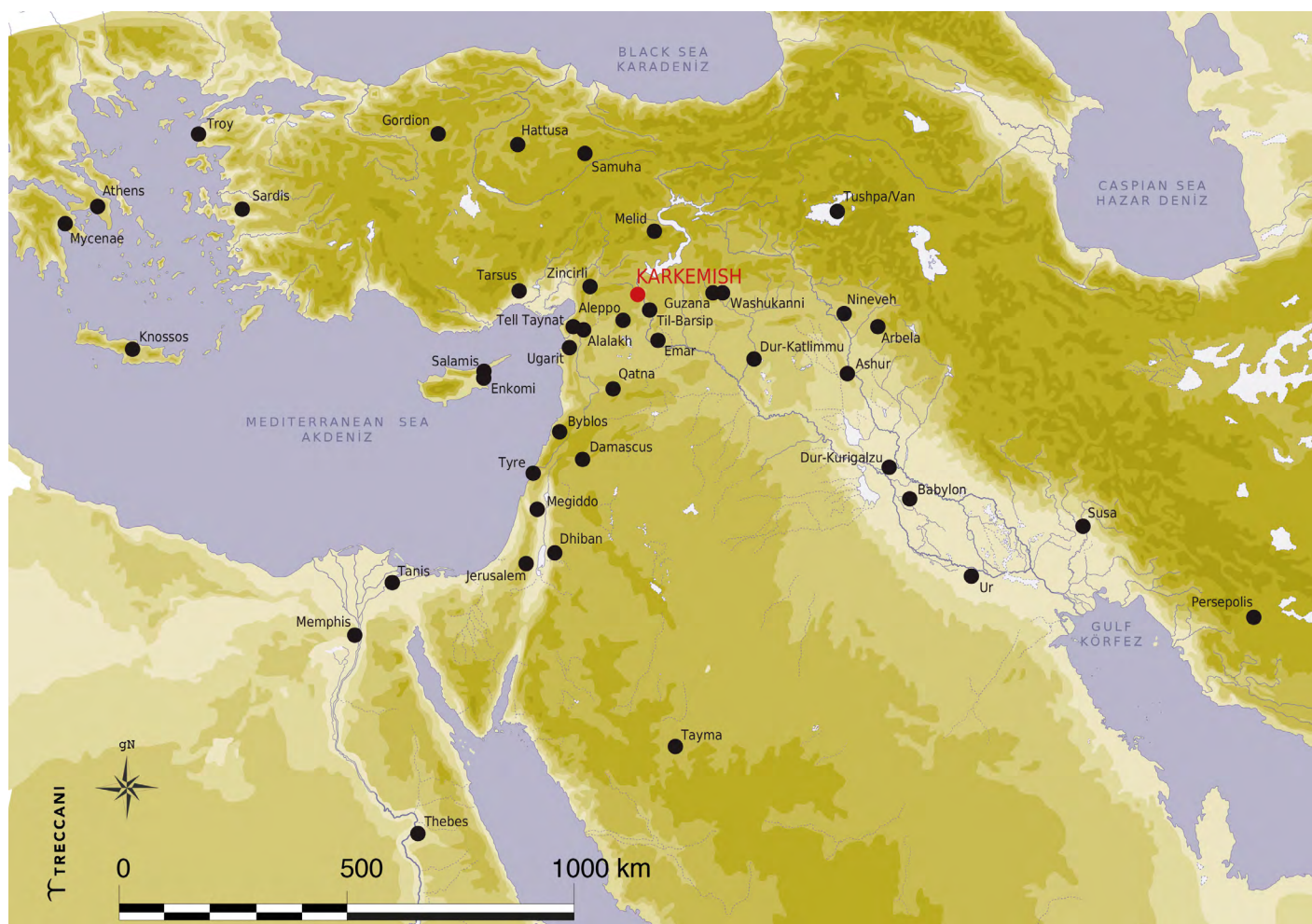
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Incense burner or altar model

Excavation no. KH.13.O.63 (Gaziantep)

Material: Limestone

Dimensions: h. 6.9; w. 4.2; th. 4 cm

Context: Lower Palace, area A West, fill F.1824

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

Cat. 41

Description

Small limestone parallelepiped with figural graffiti, possibly used as incense burner or altar model, from a topsoil layer (F.1824) to the west of the Storm-god temple. Cut-marks in the middle part indicate later re-use of the artefact. On one side, it is possible to distinguish the bottom part of a figure, with pointed feet and fringed long robe, standing above a crouching lion, that can be compared with the Great Lion slab (Woolley and Barnett 1952: pl. B.33). On the next side, there is the head of a male figure with a plait of hair which finds comparisons among the male figures carrying calves of the Processional Entry (Woolley 1921: pls. B.22b, B.23a-b, B.24a). On the third decorated side (the last one is plain), faint sketched lines might represent a standing animal next to a tree, a theme known in the outer citadel gate at Zincirli (von Luschan 1902: pl. 38.a). Based on the above mentioned iconographic comparisons, a 9th-8th cent. BCE date might be proposed for the manufacture of the artifact. As for its function, morphological similarities can be seen with the incense burners and altar models from the southern Levant, e.g. from Lachish (Tufnell 1953: 383-384, pls. 68-71, also decorated with sketched motifs). Hence, the Karkemish incense burner/altar model seems a product of popular art, perhaps in connection with cult practices in the area next to the Storm-god temple during the Iron II period.

CDO