

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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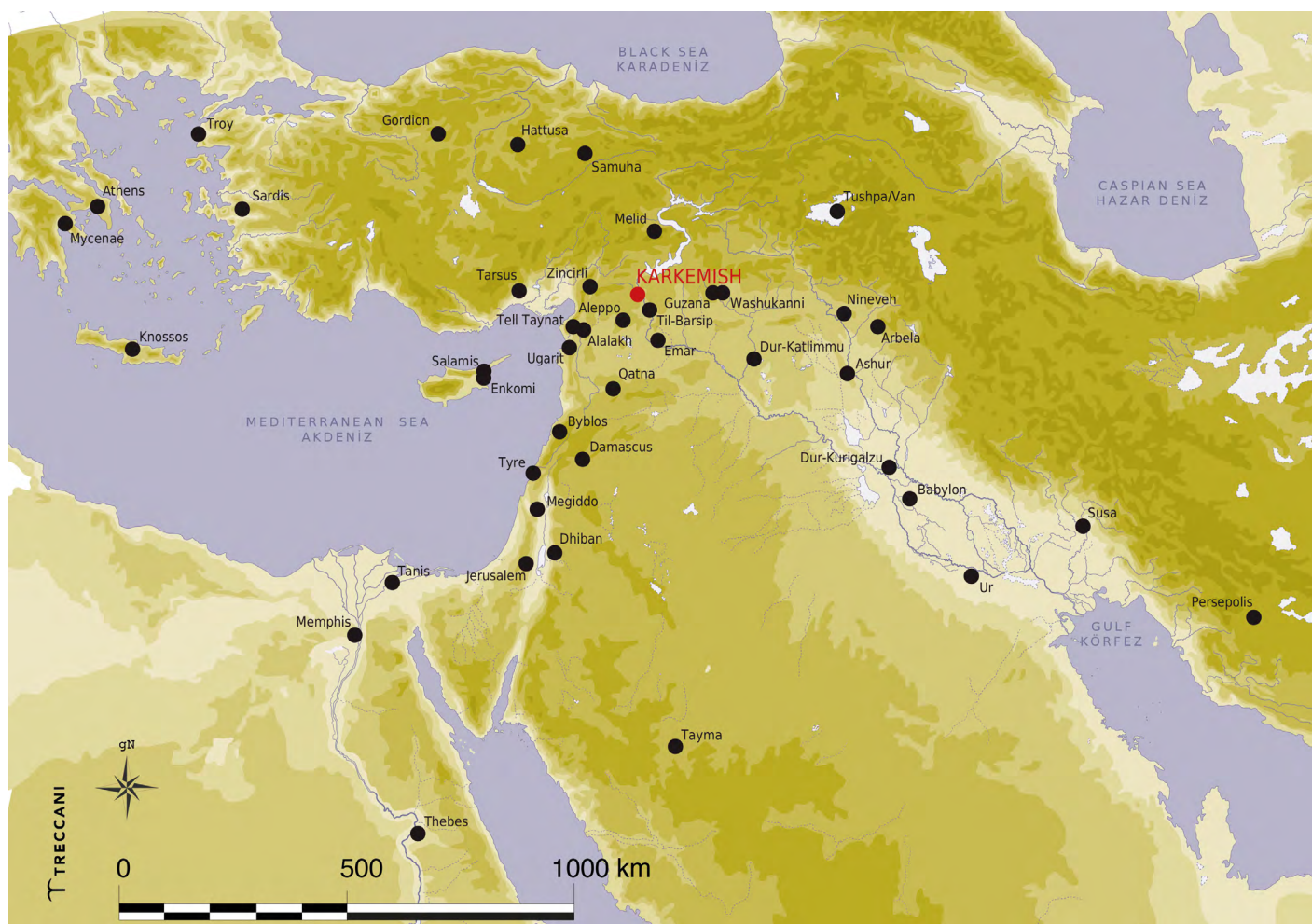
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Cylinder seal

Excavation no. YU.25.O.5 (Gaziantep)

Material: Steatite or chlorite

Dimensions: diam. 1.7; h. 4.8 cm (perf. diam. 0.5 cm)

Context: Yunus necropolis, area 26, fill F.15017

Date: Early Iron II, late 10th-9th centuries BCE

*Cat. 33**Description*

The cylinder seal was found in the upper fill of a grave from the Hellenistic period (G.15015) in the Yunus necropolis. The grave, dug in a narrow and deep pit, had been robbed in antiquity of its rich contents (but a few of them remained, such as some golden leaves under the skull): rather than being a heirloom within the funerary assemblage, we think that this much earlier seal must have fallen into the robber's pit as deriving from another robbed, nearby grave of the Iron age, as so many other examples prove that was the case in the cemetery area. The seal is quite exceptional both in its dimensions, and in its careful and detailed execution over two registers: above, the kneeling archer, with a dagger at the waist and wearing a kilt, aims at an ibex looking backwards and at a deer, while below a lion attacks a charging bull (both motifs closely recall the King's Gate reliefs by the ruler Katuwa of the end of the 10th century BCE, Woolley and Barnett 1952: pls. B.57-60). A scorpion, a fish and a star are fillers (probably also charged with vague symbolic meanings) introduced to better give a tapestry effect to the whole scene. The seal shares several features (such as the notched borders) with other specimens from the area, which contributes to the definition of the main glyptic workshop active at the site (see above pp. 19-20, Fig. 11).

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