

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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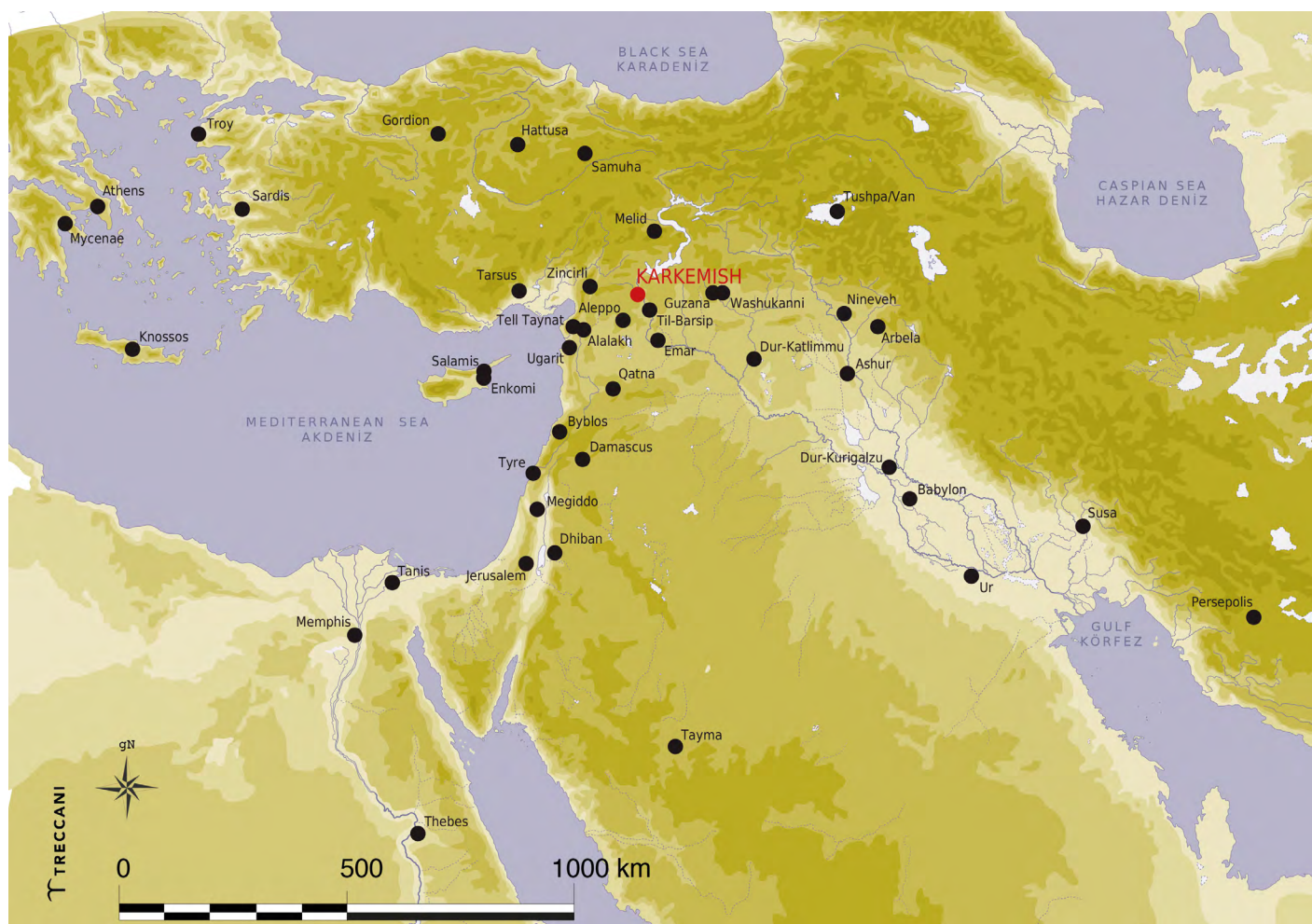
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Storm-god figurine

Excavation no. KH.11.O.516 (Gaziantep)

Material: Bronze

Dimensions: h. 18.9; w. 6.4; th. 4 cm

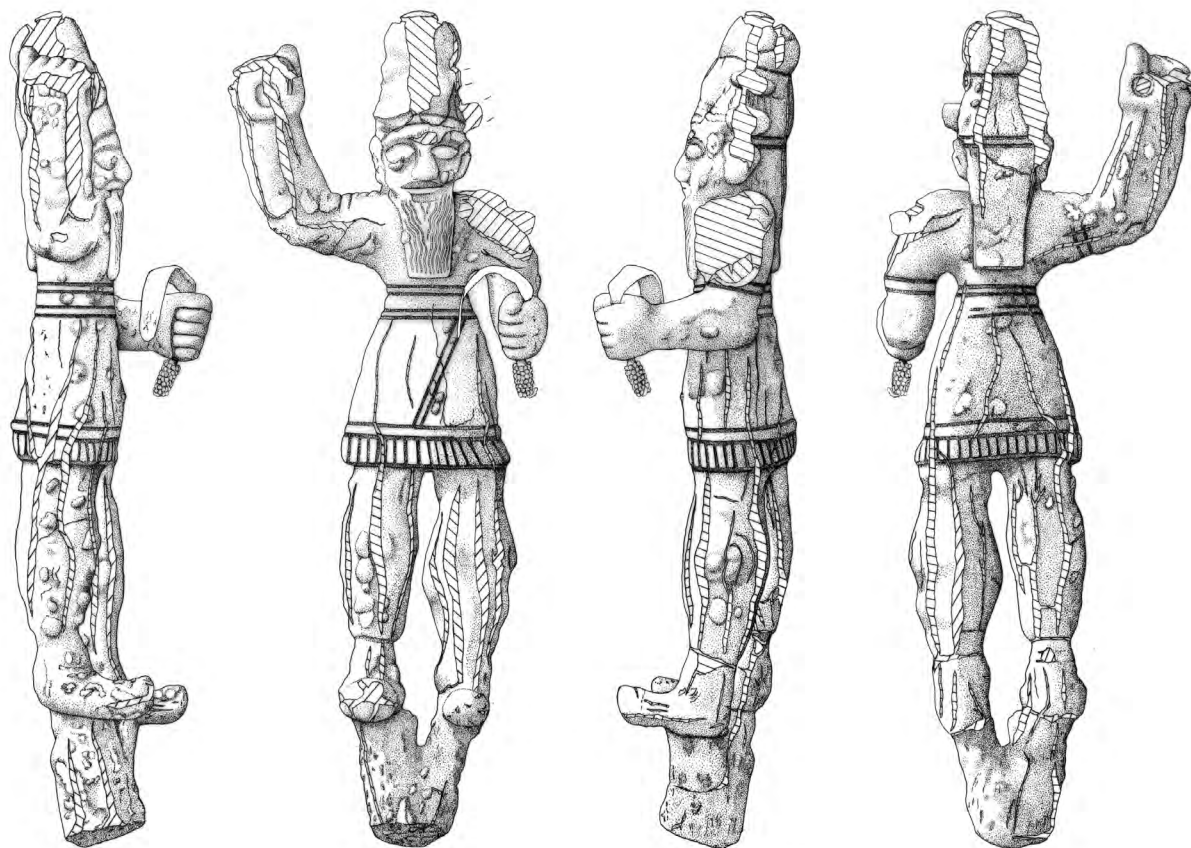
Context: Lower Palace, area A West, Storm-god temple, fill F.92

Date: Early Iron II, late 10th century BCE

Cat. 44

Description

A bronze statuette, intentionally broken into two pieces in antiquity, was found against the back wall of the cella in the temple of the Storm-god, just below its floor L.12 (Marchetti 2014b: pl. XXII). Notwithstanding the severe corrosion suffered (the metal had formed deep vertical cracks), the robust and plastic modelling of the original cast was still quite evident. The statuette, made in the lost-wax technique, represents a god, as the headgear with rounded top and two pairs of horns (of which two stumps remain along the left side) show. A flat and straight plait falls over the back and this may well be the three-dimensional reproduction of the tress which is represented in seals and reliefs on the Storm-god's back. The face is delicately modelled and displays a finely worked beard. The god wears a shirt (with sleeves indicated by a double incision) and a skirt with tasselled fringe. The right hand is raised in the smiting position and held a lost object, probably an axe if we compare it with the representation of the Storm-god in the Long Wall of Sculpture at Karkemish by the ruler Suhi II (Woolley and Barnett 1952: pl. B.38). The left hand holds a dagger, seemingly, which is made of silver and ends in a hilt shaped as a bunch, perhaps of grapes. The figurine wears shoes with upturned toes, under which there is a completely preserved tenon for the insertion into a base, now lost. As for the dating and the identification of the subject depicted, we must revert to comparisons from the site itself. There are two representations of the Storm-god among the reliefs by the ruler Katuwa from the Herald's Wall (Woolley



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*



and Barnett 1952: pls. B.11a, B.16a), the former of which presents identical details with our statuette, i.e. headgear, beard, shirt and shoes, to the extent that an attribution of the bronze statuette to Katuwa seems compelling. Since Katuwa is responsible both for building his palace decorated with reliefs and refurbishing the temple of the Storm-god (Hawkins 2000: 108-112 sub II.13+14, pls. 18-21), it is just likely that when he performed the latter operation he also dedicated a cultic statuette, which after some time was buried within the cella. The interment of the two pieces 60 cm apart shows that the breakage had been intentional and may thus have had a ritual character, perhaps in connection with a renewal of the cult statue.

NM

Marchetti 2014b: 310-315, fig. 3, pls. XXII-XXV

References