

# Karkamish and Karatepe: Neo-Hittite City-States in North Syria

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KARKAMISH (CARCHEMISH) and Karatepe (ancient Azatiwataya) are the two most important sites of the Neo-Hittite period, though as sites they differ markedly from each other. The period that they typify, the Neo-Hittite, was that of the smaller city-states into which the Hittite Empire dissolved. They flourished about 1200–700 BCE in an area stretching from the southeast corner of the Anatolian Plateau through the Taurus Mountains as far as the Euphrates and northern Syria. Their Hittite character resided in their preservation and development of many of the most notable features of the Hittite Empire's civilization, its architecture and monumental sculpture, and particularly its commemorative inscriptions, written in the hieroglyphic script of Anatolia. It was recognized in the designation *Khatti*, which continued to be applied to these peoples by their neighbors.

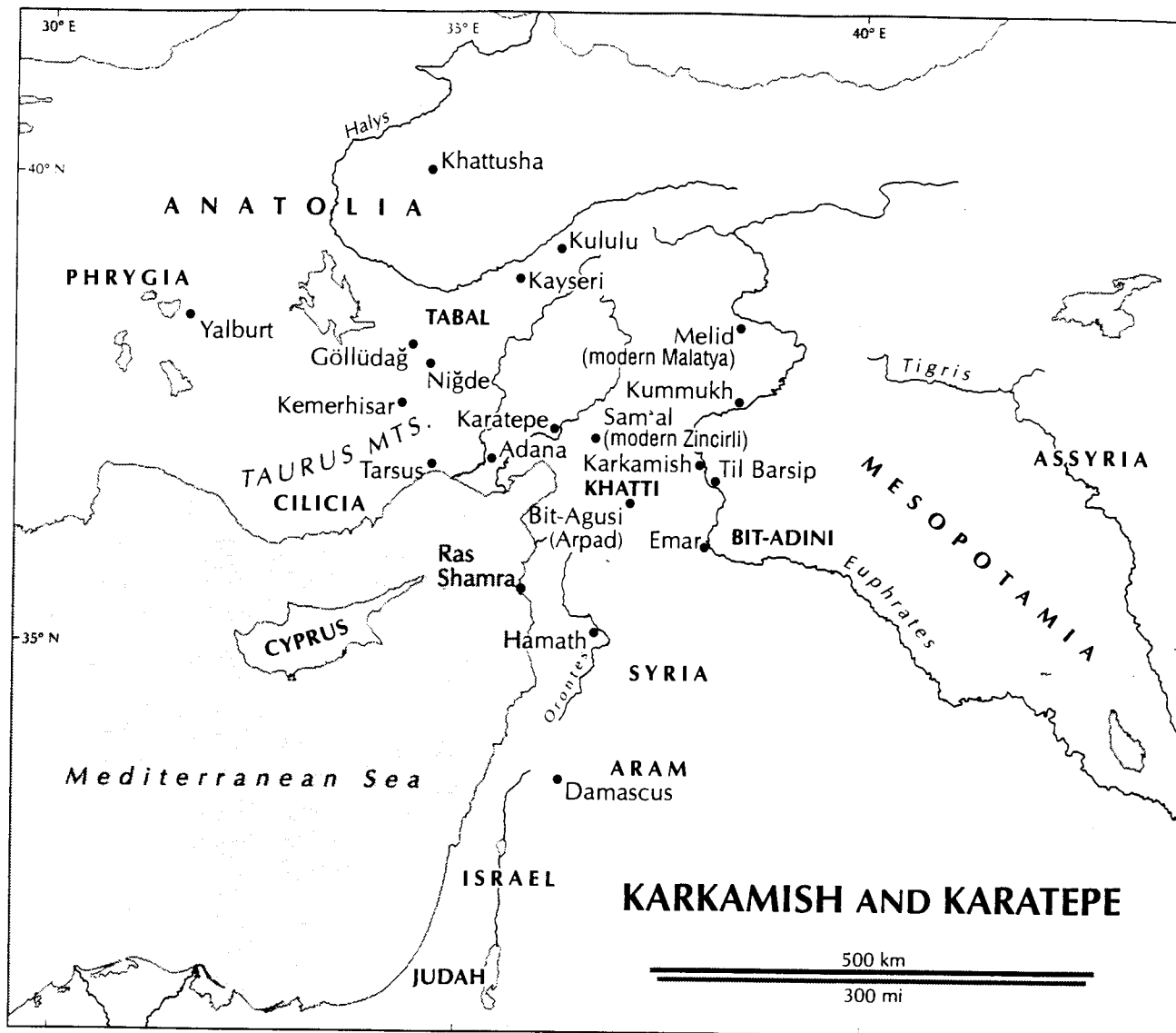
That Karkamish should remain a center of Hittite civilization is hardly surprising. Situated on the west bank of the Euphrates at a strategic crossing, in the days of the Hittite Empire it had been the seat of the Hittite viceroys who governed Syria under the ultimate authority of the Hittite Great King in *Khattusha* (modern Boğazköy). It now seems likely that the city survived the collapse of the empire without serious

disruption and thus was naturally the leading Neo-Hittite power. As such, it has transmitted the greatest quantity of sculpture and inscriptions from the period, representing most of its phases.

By contrast, Karatepe is a small hilltop site situated in a remote corner of the hill country to the northeast of the Cilician plain. It shows essentially only one period of occupation, and its sculpture is very crude and provincial in comparison to the high Karkamish style. Its importance is due to the great bilingual inscription found there, parallel texts written in hieroglyphic and in alphabetic Phoenician, providing the longest known text in either language.

## THE NEO-HITTITE WORLD

Besides Karkamish and Karatepe, a number of other important Neo-Hittite centers are more or less well known. On the Anatolian plateau, the central area—the original land of *Khatti*, with its capital, *Khattusha*—was lost to the Hittites, but the southeast provinces of the plateau were held, though they rapidly fragmented into a number of small city-states known in general as *Tabal*



to the Assyrians. A similar process seems to have taken place in Cilicia. Across the Taurus on the Upper Euphrates, a substantial kingdom formed at Melid (classical Melitene, modern Malatya). South of Melid, in a wide eastward bend of the Euphrates, lay the land of Kummukh (classical Commagene), ruled from a city of the same name on the bank of the Euphrates at the site of Samsat Höyük (Samosata). Southwest of Melid and west of Kummukh was the smaller land of Gurgum, with its capital at Marqas (Marqasi, modern Maraş [pronounced Marash]). Downstream from

Kummukh was Karkamish itself, occupying the west bank of the Euphrates and its hinterland, while only twenty kilometers (12 miles) south of Karkamish the city of Til Barsip (modern Tell Ahmar) formed a tiny Hittite enclave on the east bank.

At this juncture, the Anatolian peoples dwelling in the former territory of the Hittite Empire came up against a newly arrived people, the Aramaeans, who settled in large numbers across the Fertile Crescent from about 1100 onward. A very large Aramaean tribal state, Bit-Adini (Beth

Eden), formed in upper Mesopotamia along the Middle Euphrates as far as Karkamish and it later seized Til Barsip from the Hittite dynasty. To the west of Karkamish, another important Aramaean state was forming, Bit-Agusi, with its later capital at Arpad (modern Tell Rifa'at). West of Bit-Agusi on the Lower Orontes, the Hittite state of Pattina, also known as Unqi (modern 'Amuq), replaced the Late Bronze Age province of Mukish. (See the chapter "Aramaean Tribes and Nations of First-Millennium Western Asia" immediately preceding this chapter.)

In the midst of these Hittite and Aramaean states, a smaller but well-known city-state, Sam'al, situated at the eastern exit of the main pass over the Amanus (modern Nur) Mountains into Cilicia, presents a curious mixture of Hittite and Aramaean elements. These include a dynasty whose members bore names of either people, art and architecture strongly influenced by its Hittite neighbors, and alphabetic Semitic inscriptions showing similar influence.

The southernmost state to have a Neo-Hittite dynasty was the kingdom of Hamath (modern Hama), occupying all of central Syria from the sea to the desert and lying between the major Aramaean powers of Bit-Agusi and Damascus. But this dynasty, which ruled Hamath in the ninth century, had by the eighth century been replaced by an Aramaean one.

### *The Peoples*

This whole patchwork of states was known to its neighbors as Khatti and Aram. These neighbors included the Phrygians to the northwest on the Anatolian Plateau, the Urtians to the northeast in the Armenian highlands, the Assyrians east across the Euphrates, the Phoenicians of the Mediterranean littoral, and the Hebrew kingdoms of Israel and Judah to the south. Ethnically, the populations were probably not very homogeneous. Syria under the Hittite Empire was inhabited principally by long-settled West Semitic peoples with a strong admixture of recently arrived Hurrians. To these elements were added the Aramaeans, as noted. What is less clear is the extent to which Anatolian peoples had moved into Syria. There is little evidence for mass migration during the Hittite Empire at the time in which the governing class was of

Anatolian origin. It would perhaps not be surprising if the fall of Khattusha and the loss of central Anatolia had led to a movement of peoples from the plateau into Syria, and this would help to explain the political dominance of the Neo-Hittite states in the area. The nature of the evidence for the period neither confirms nor disproves this hypothesis. It is clear, however, that the name Khatti migrated from its original central Anatolian homeland and came to designate the area of Karkamish and the other Neo-Hittite states of north Syria.

### *The Language*

So far, the terms "Neo-Hittite" and "Khatti" have been used to designate the states and dynasties that clearly continued the traditions of the Hittite Empire. Their script may be reasonably termed "Hittite hieroglyphs," because it is known in the time of the empire principally in its use by the dynasty of Khattusha. It must now be noted, however, that the language written in this script was never Hittite proper (that is, Nesite), but always Luwian, a language also found written in the cuneiform archives of Khattusha and closely related to Nesite. These two languages together, along with some others, form the Anatolian group of Indo-European, and the term "Anatolian" may be used to designate the Luwo-Hittite peoples and languages. (For a further discussion of language groups, see various chapters in Part 9, Vol. IV.)

At the time of the Hittite Empire, it would seem that the Hittite people who spoke Nesite belonged to central Anatolia, and those who spoke Luwian, to the west and south. What is not clearly understood is why the Neo-Hittite states abandoned the Hittite tradition of writing Nesite in cuneiform script on clay tablets and instead developed the tradition of writing monumental inscriptions in the hieroglyphic script and the Luwian language—indeed, as far as we may judge, using them also for such everyday texts as letters, contracts, and legal documents, although such texts have hardly survived because they were written, most commonly, on perishable materials. The implication seems certain that the Neo-Hittite states were probably Luwian-speaking.

argument  
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## Hieroglyphic Writing

The hieroglyphic script of Anatolia ("Hittite hieroglyphs") was developed during the second millennium BCE. It first appears at Boğazköy on seals of the Hittite Old and Middle kingdoms in the names and titles of the seals' owners. Under the Hittite Empire, the script was used on royal seals, where the king's names and titles would be written in a central circle in hieroglyphic and in surrounding rings in cuneiform. Such seals are termed "digraphic" and are the only places in which hieroglyphic and cuneiform appear together.

Later in the empire, the use of the script was extended to writing identifying labels for monumental sculptures on stone, giving, as on the seals, the names and titles of human or divine figures. Here the signs, like the sculptures, would normally be executed in high relief.

At the end of the empire, the Hittite kings began to write extended monumental inscriptions of commemorative character on stone. Decipherment has shown that these hieroglyphic inscriptions were composed in the Luwian language rather than Hittite, which was used for the bulk of the royal archives on clay. The reason for this choice is not clearly understood.

After the fall of the Hittite Empire, the successor states did not continue the Hittite chancellery practice of writing Hittite in cuneiform on clay tablets. Instead, they continued and expanded the use of the hieroglyphic script and the Luwian language. Both survive mostly on stone inscriptions, again of a commemorative character, but a few letters and economic texts survive, written on strips of lead, which indicates a common use of the script for everyday documents otherwise committed to a perishable material, such as wood.

The bulk of the surviving stone inscriptions from this late period accompany sculptures on architectural elements such as orthostats and doorjambes. There are also many freestanding inscribed stelae, statues, and bases, as well as tombstones. Finally, many dedicated objects, such as stone bowls, have been found.

The end of this hieroglyphic tradition, circa 700, may have been caused by the destruction of the Neo-Hittite states by the Assyrians; but a contributory factor to the disappearance of the cumbersome hieroglyphic script could also have been the spread of the easier alphabetic writing to Anatolia and Syria, which took place during the eighth century. (See Part 9, Vol. IV, "The Story of the Semitic Alphabet.")

## Archaeological Investigation

Our archaeological knowledge of the main centers of the Neo-Hittite period is by no means as extensive as might be wished, even for the leading city, Karkamish, because the British excavations of the period 1911–1914 were interrupted by the outbreak of World War I, and the subsequent drawing of the Turkish–Syrian border right through the site of Karkamish has precluded resumption. The principal contribution of the excavations was the exposure of an area of the lower town stretching from the Water Gate, which revealed the facades of buildings adorned with sculpted and inscribed orthostats well representing the city's Neo-Hittite zenith. No significant remains of earlier periods were uncovered, so, for example, the position of Karkamish as the seat of the Hittite Empire's viceroys of Syria is not documented.

Other Neo-Hittite capitals have yielded remains of this period. At Hama the Danish excavations of 1931–1938 uncovered the Neo-Hittite palace and temple area of the citadel with monumental architecture and sculpture, but unfortunately little in the way of inscriptions. The known series of Hama hieroglyphic inscriptions, the evidence for the ninth-century dynasty's Hittite character, have all been found by chance. The American excavations of 1933–1938 at Tell Ta'yinat (ancient Kunulua) in the 'Amuq have similarly exposed the Neo-Hittite palace area with very badly destroyed sculpture and inscriptions, and from the same kingdom, the Syrian Department of Antiquities has excavated at Ayn Dara a massive early Neo-Hittite temple with rich but badly damaged sculpture. In Commagene, the key site of Kommagene at Samsat Höyük was unfortunately lost to a modern dam project before significant areas of the Neo-

Hittite settlement could be exposed by Turkish rescue operations conducted during the 1980s. Perhaps a part of this kingdom, the site of Sakça Gözü (pronounced Sakcha Gozu) yielded to the British excavator a small Neo-Hittite palace with well-preserved sculptures but no inscriptions to establish its attribution to a known center.

At the ancient site of Arslantepe near Malatya, French excavations in the 1930s revealed the well-known Lion Gate, with its sculpture and inscriptions. Gurgum's capital, Marqas, doubtless lies under the ancient citadel mound of Maraş, but in spite of many chance finds of sculpture and inscriptions from here and its locality, it has never been formally excavated. Surprisingly, one of the best-known sites of the area is that of Zincirli (pronounced Zinjirli), the capital of ancient Sam'al, with its mixed Hittite and Aramaean dynasty and art, excavated by the Germans in five campaigns during the years 1888–1902.

The Anatolian Plateau is even less well known archaeologically than northern Syria and the Taurus. Important Neo-Hittite capitals probably lie at Kululu, north of Kayseri, and at Kemerhisar near Bor, perhaps also under the medieval citadel at Niğde, but in spite of being sources of sculpture and inscriptions these sites have received only very limited attention. Most of the city-states known by name have not even been located. Excavated sites include Porsuk Höyük, on the road running down into the Cilician Gates, and Göllüdağ, a Neo-Hittite palace situated on the rim of an extinct volcano between Niğde and Nevşehir (pronounced Nevshehir).

In Cilicia the main Neo-Hittite capital, ancient Adana, presumably lies under modern Adana but has not been specifically located. The important site of Tarsus was excavated by an American team from 1934 to 1938 but has not produced substantial Iron Age settlement. Thus, the Cilician Iron Age is known mainly from Karatepe, the scene of Turkish excavations since its discovery in 1946. In spite of its great importance for the bilingual inscription, this small site, with its provincial art, is not very representative of the whole period.

An important question is the degree of continuity or discontinuity between Late Bronze and

Early Iron Age settlement, but none of the excavated sites has produced clear evidence. Either we see destruction followed by abandonment, as typically at Boğazköy (Khattusha) and Ras Shamra (Ugarit), or destruction followed by resettlement nearby, as at the sites of Tell Açıana (pronounced Atchana, ancient Alalakh) and Tell Ta'yinat. Sites that might be expected to show peaceful transitions, in particular Karkamish, have not yet provided remains of the earlier period. Thus, to form an idea of the origins of Iron Age society, we must look at evidence other than the archaeological.

## THE HISTORY

### *Sources*

The history of the Neo-Hittite states can be reconstructed from two types of sources. The first is external: the references to them by Assyrian kings in their historical inscriptions, including Tiglath-pileser I (ca. 1100) and Neo-Assyrian kings from Assurnasirpal II to Sennacherib (883–681). This source has the advantage of linking named rulers and events to absolute Assyrian chronology (though only for the period specified), but by its nature, it is limited because it records only attacks on the western states.

The other source is internal: the hieroglyphic inscriptions themselves, which, being largely monumental stone inscriptions, belong to the category of commemorative texts, which record building works, dedications, funerary texts, and occasional land grants and sales. They preserve the names of the dynasties and genealogies of their respective states, but they also show a rather limited range of interest, being concerned mostly with internal affairs and seldom with international events. Some of these monuments may be dated to the ninth and eighth centuries by linkage to Assyrian references, but the crucial problem with the others is how they are to be distributed in the period 1200–900. Until recently, this problem had to be approached through stylistic analysis of the sculpture, but now new evidence has appeared that points to more positive conclusions.

## Excerpts from Hieroglyphic Inscriptions

*From Karkamish A11a, an orthostat forming the door-jamb to the King's Gate records various building projects of the ruler Katuwa:*

Then I constructed the temple for the storm-god of Karkamish with magnificence, and for him I established perpetual bread (offerings). These gates of my ancestors passed to me, and when I built the holy temple, these stone slabs became available to me, and I decorated these gates with stone slabs, and they were very costly. Also I built with wood, and I made these upper stories as women's apartments for Ana my dear wife, and this god Atrisuha I seated in these gates with honor.

*On the stela base Karkamish A15b, the ruler Yariri boasts of his achievements in writing and learning foreign languages:*

... in the script of the city (hieroglyphic), the script of Asshur (cuneiform), the script of Sura (Urartu?), and the script of Taiman (Aramaic?). And I knew twelve languages, and my lord brought in for me the son of every country by traveling for the sake of language, and he caused me to learn every wisdom.

*On a fragment of a colossal inscribed statue, Halparuntiya II, ruler of Gurgum, records his deeds:*

### *Continuity with the Hittite Empire*

**Malatya** The dynasty of viceroys who ruled Carchemish during the Hittite Empire descended in direct line from a son of Shuppiluliuma I. Until the 1980s, the last known king belonged to the fourth generation, Talmi-Teshub, contemporary of Shuppiluliuma II of Khattusha, his third cousin, also the last known king of his line. It is assumed that the fall of Khattusha occurred during his reign. But in 1985 there appeared a number of impressions of a magnificent royal seal naming as author a son of Talmi-Teshub, Kuzi-Teshub, also entitled "King of Karkamish," thereby adding a further generation to the dynasty. While it is quite possi-

I defeated the city Iluwasi, and I cut off the feet of the men, and I made the children our eunuchs. I exalted my image thus, and I went forth and sat on my throne.

*On a memorial stela, a dead man speaks:*

I was Ruwa the ruler, the sun-blessed . . . The gods loved my life, and they put into me a beloved soul, and with my soul I served under my lords and my sovereign. I was dear to my lords, and they made me governor, and I was steward in my lord's house. The gods received the beloved soul that they had put into me.

*Azatiwata, the builder of Karatepe, writes about his reign:*

I am Azatiwata the sun-blessed prince, the servant of the storm-god, whom Awariku, king of Adana, made great. . . .

In my days there was plenty and luxury and good living, and peacefully dwelled Adana and the plain of Adana. I built this fortress and I gave it the name Azatiwata, and the storm-god and stag-god supported me in building this fortress. I built it . . . in plenty and luxury and good living and peace of heart, to be a protection to the plain of Adana and the house of Mopsos. . . .

Hereafter, may Azatiwata's name continue to stand for all ages as the moon's and the sun's names stand! (See "Autobiographies in Ancient Western Asia" in Part 9, Vol. IV, for the inscription of Azatiwata.)

ble that the collapse of the Hittite Empire took place during his reign, there are further indications that he survived the cataclysm and even benefited from it.

The hieroglyphic inscriptions and associated sculpture from Arslantepe itself and from outlying areas of the kingdom form a fairly homogeneous group, coalescing around two dynastic genealogies, one of at least five generations, the other of at least three; the two are probably closely connected, though actual links are tenuous. A recent reading has established that an early group of these inscriptions, the work of two kings who were brothers, names the grandfather in the genealogy as Kuzi-Teshub, who further entitled "Great King, Hero of Karkamish." There can be little doubt that this figure

the same as Kuzi-Teshub, son of Talmi-Teshub, and the implications of his title and his position at the head of the Arslantepe genealogy are striking. He is likely to have claimed the title only after the disappearance of the dynasty of the Great Kings of Khattusha, and he would have done so by right of being a surviving descendant (great-great-great-grandson) of Shuppiluliuma I. Further support for this claim could well have been that at the dissolution of the central control of Khattusha, Kuzi-Teshub as ruler of Karkamish was left holding the eastern part of the empire, specifically the inland area following the west bank of the Euphrates from Malatya through Karkamish to Emar (modern Tell Meskene, the probable source of one of the impressions of his seal).

Some of the earliest pieces of Arslantepe sculpture definitely come from a king claiming to be the great-great-grandson of Kuzi-Teshub. The largest group, the Lion Gate sculptures, bear the name of a king who was either the son of Kuzi-Teshub or great-grandson or possibly a later

ruler of the same name. However the exact attributions may work out, it is adequately clear that the largely homogeneous Arslantepe sculptures and inscriptions were the work of Kuzi-Teshub's more or less direct descendants who ruled the city. As such, they may be dated to the twelfth and eleventh centuries. This date disagrees with recent attempts based on stylistic analysis, which would place the group not earlier than the tenth century, but it supports an earlier, more intuitive dating based on observation of the close links of style and motifs with the art of the Hittite Empire.

*Karkamish* It does not seem likely that the "Great Kingdom" of Karkamish, successor to that of Khattusha, long endured before breaking up into independent states of the Neo-Hittite period. Even Kuzi-Teshub's grandsons ruling in Melid and their descendants may have owed only nominal allegiance to Karkamish. Neverthe-



Karkamish orthostat Alla forming the doorjamb to the King's Gate. BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON

the Assyrian historical record of contacts with the western states. Assurnasirpal II (circa 870) crossed the Euphrates, the first Assyrian king to do so since Tiglath-pileser I. He marched through north Syria to Mount Lebanon collecting tribute from several Syro-Hittite rulers, none of whom has been identified in the indigenous inscriptions.

His son Shalmaneser III spent the greater part of his reign fighting in the west. In his first five years, he shattered a coalition of north Syrian states led by Bit-Adini. He seized its capital, Til Barsip on the Euphrates, which thereafter, under the name Kar-Shalmaneser, remained Assyria's bridgehead on the river. North Syria submitted and began to pay tribute. A number of the named rulers are known from their own inscriptions.

For the subsequent decade, Shalmaneser turned against a coalition of south Syrian states headed by Hamath and Damascus, but against this alliance his repeated campaigns seem to have made little headway. During this period, the Hittite dynasty in Hamath is known from its own inscriptions, and it seems likely that this city was finally won over to an alliance with Assyria. Shalmaneser's final campaigns were directed against Cilicia, Melid, and Tabal (the Anatolian Plateau), which he was the first Assyrian king to penetrate. None of the named rulers is known from the inscriptions.

### *The Successors of Shalmaneser*

Shalmaneser's successors were by no means so active in the west. His son Shamshi-Adad V never crossed the Euphrates, though he held the crossing at Kar-Shalmaneser. His son Adad-nirari III was able to take more initiative and clearly had allies among the western states. Two boundary stones have recently been published which were set up by him to mark the frontiers between Kummukh and Gurgum, and between Hamath and Arpad. The rulers named are known from their own inscriptions. The establishment of the first boundary stone involved a fight against a north Syrian coalition headed by Arpad; the second, a battle in support of Hamath against the same alliance. In the latter campaign, the *turtān* (commander in chief) Shamshi-ilu, who played an important role in Assyrian rela-

tions with the west for nearly fifty years, made his first appearance.

Adad-nirari was succeeded by his three sons in turn, who were clearly very weak. The main Assyrian power in the west was Shamshi-ilu, now based in Kar-Shalmaneser. Assyrian campaigns recorded for these years, mostly against Khatarikka (northern Hamath), Damascus, and Arpad, were presumably conducted by him. But, in spite of his active interventions, these years witnessed strong Urartian pressure on the most northerly Hittite states. Under the Kings Menua (circa 810–786) and Argishti I (circa 786–764), first Melid and then Kummukh fell under Urartian influence, which was also felt on the Anatolian Plateau. This was the genesis of the strong anti-Assyrian alliance that was later to face Tiglath-pileser III.

### *Karkamish During the Assyrian Ascendancy*

A curious feature of the years between about 850 and 750 is the lack of external reference to Karkamish, though its own monuments suggest that it was strong, prosperous, and artistically prominent. The inscriptions permit the reconstruction of a dynasty of at least three generations, extending from an Astiruwa through a regent Yariri, guardian of Astiruwa's son Kamani, who later succeeded to his father's throne. Kamani's vizier is named as Sastura, whose son is later found as king. The latter's name is lost, but he may have been Astiru II, or perhaps Pisiri, the last king of Karkamish, attested in Assyrian sources, 738–717. Other kings represented by fragmentary inscriptions may have to be inserted into this dynasty.

Of these rulers, three are represented by major monuments. The regent Yariri executed the famous Royal Buttress celebrating his guardianship of his lord Astiruwa's children. In other inscriptions he boasts of his fame on the international stage and his skill in writing and languages. Kamani left, among other inscriptions, two remarkable land donations and a sculpted and inscribed stela of Kubaba recording the building of her temple. Sastura's son's inscriptions, associated with the last style of sculpture, are executed in a curious archaizing script accurately reflecting the style of the Hittite Empire.



less, two early hieroglyphic stelae from Karkamish do name three rulers with the title "Great King."

It is not clear how far back some of the earliest Karkamish sculpture that lacks identifying inscriptions may be dated. An early group of inscriptions with much associated sculpture is presented as the work of a four-generation dynasty of rulers, particularly that of the last two, Suhi II and his son Katuwa. Their inscriptions relate mostly to the building of the structures in the excavated areas of the lower town, where they were found—the temple of the storm-god, Tarhunza; the Processional Entry; the Long Wall of Sculpture; and the Gatehouse on the Great Staircase. One passage records a struggle for possession of the city with the grandsons of one of the Great Kings, and others describe military victories, unfortunately obscure because of the unknown place-names.

The dating of this group is somewhat difficult. The style is very clear and recognizable at other sites, and its early phases seem certainly to antedate Assurnasirpal II of Assyria (883–859). In general, a tenth-century dating is likely to be correct. But even recognizing that some sculpture may be earlier, we still lack monuments that may be dated to the twelfth and eleventh centuries. We may wonder what was happening in Karkamish while Kuzi-Teshub's grandsons were so active in Melid.

*Anatolian Plateau* Political continuity parallel to that at Karkamish surviving the fall of the Hittite Empire is also likely in the south of the Anatolian Plateau, as suggested by recent interpretation of long-known evidence. A group of inscriptions on the Karadağ and the adjoining Kızıldağ north of Karaman, the work of a certain Hartapu who styles himself and his father, Murshili, "Great Kings," has long been problematic and has recently been joined by another such inscription found at Burunkaya, some 150 kilometers (90 miles) to the northeast. An incised figure of the enthroned king on the Kızıldağ has been plausibly dated to the eighth century, yet the inscriptions have always appeared much older. The publication in 1988 of a long hieroglyphic inscription of Tudkhalia IV from Yalburt confirms this impression, for Hartapu's inscriptions

are so close to the empire style of Tudkhalia that they must be dated to the immediate post-empire period. Instead of trying to force the inscriptions and the sculpture into the same date, it seems better to admit that the former are indeed from the twelfth century and that the latter was added in the eighth century.

Who, then, are these two south Anatolian Great Kings of the post-empire period? We may suggest that they were later members of the line of the south Anatolian kingdom of Tarkhun-tassha, also descended from Shuppiluliuma I by his grandson, Great King Muwattalli. With this lineage, they, like the king of Karkamish, would have been able to claim the title "Great King" after the disappearance of the royal line in Khat-tusha.

*Other Early Remains: Tell Ahmar and Maraş* Sculpture and inscriptions closely linked with the Suhi-Katuwa style at Karkamish also come from the sites of Tell Ahmar and Maraş. The former has produced two large and two smaller storm-god stelae, with a number of associated fragments. From these, a dynastic narrative covering several generations can be partly reconstructed, which must belong approximately in the tenth century. Maraş, though unexcavated, has produced a series of funerary stelae showing men, women, and families at funerary repasts rendered in a fair range of styles from early to late. Some notable pieces also give a dynastic genealogy of seven generations stretching back to the founder of the line, a man known from an early tenth-century inscribed stela that features a ruler figure. His great-great-grandson, mentioned by Assyrian sources in 853, is known from a fragment of a colossal funerary statue with an inscription rehearsing his royal deeds, a practice attested under the Hittite Empire, though no such monument has been found.

## ASSYRIAN ASCENDANCY

### *Assurnasirpal and Shalmaneser*

The later hieroglyphic inscriptions, those of the ninth and eighth centuries, must be fitted into

### *The Final Phase*

The accession of Tiglath-pileser III in 745 inaugurated an aggressive policy in the west that sounded the knell for Hittite and Aramaean states alike. As these states were conquered, they were sacked and systematically looted, their populations and wealth carried off, and new peoples from elsewhere settled in their territory under Assyrian governors. For the Neo-Hittite civilization, this was the end. The process of turning the western states into provinces annexed to the Assyrian Empire was inexorable: Arpad fell in 740, Unqi and north Hamath in 738, Damascus and north Israel in 732, Israel proper in 722, Hamath in 720, Tabalian states in 718 and 715, Karkamish in 717, Melid in 712, Gurgum in 711, and Kummukh in 708.

Many Neo-Hittite centers show clear traces both of Assyrian destruction in the form of sacked palaces and smashed monuments, and of the reality of Assyrian occupation in the form of Assyrian governors' palaces built in Mesopotamian style. Thereafter, the term "Khatti" for north Syria lingered on only as a historical shadow devoid of any political reality.

Most of these provinces remained firmly in Assyrian hands until the destruction of the empire a century later. Only the more remote north-western areas seem to have regained a measure of independence, specifically Tabal, Melid, and Cilicia.

## THE ASSYRIANS IN ANATOLIA AND CILICIA

In Anatolia a number of kings are recorded as tributary to Tiglath-pileser III. The most important kingdoms were Tabal proper, approximately the modern provinces of Kayseri and Nevşehir, and Tuwana, the modern Niğde. The kings of Tabal in their own inscriptions employed the title "Great King," as had Hartapu in the twelfth century. Tiglath-pileser III, however, removed the last of these kings, replacing him with a "son of nobody."

Sargon II was also active in Anatolia, where he clashed with the anti-Assyrian power of Muski (Phrygia) under its king Mita, or Midas. Later, Mita—impelled probably by fear of the Cimme-

rians, who burst into Anatolia in this period—made proposals of peace to Sargon. The latter received them gladly, but when he came in person to Anatolia, he was killed in battle, a catastrophe that checked forever Assyrian expansion to the northwest. This was the period of the last monuments, sculpture, and inscriptions of the Neo-Hittite period in Anatolia.

Like Anatolia, Cilicia was beyond the reach of all but the most active Assyrian kings. Tiglath-pileser III recorded a tributary king, Urikki, and in the reign of Sargon an Assyrian governor of Que (called Khume in Babylonian times) is attested, showing that it was by then an Assyrian province.

The main cities of Cilicia, whether excavated like Tarsus or not investigated like Adana and others, have produced no characteristic monuments of the Iron Age, which is thus represented only by the provincial site of Karatepe. The dating of its sculptures—between the ninth and eighth centuries—remains controversial. The great bilingual inscription, however, is certainly late, connected most closely with the Tabalian inscriptions. Historical considerations are also significant.

The author of the inscription is one Azatiwata, who was installed as subking by Awariku, king of Adana. He subsequently established his lord Awariku's family on the throne of Adana, and by suppressing rebellion in the west brought peace and prosperity to the plain. Awariku is clearly the same name as Urikki and probably refers to the same individual, who is attested as still alive late in Sargon's reign at the time of the Assyrian governor. This factor and the nature of the events narrated in the inscription combine to suggest that the regency of Azatiwata is best dated after the death of Sargon in a comparatively independent Cilicia. Sennacherib records one campaign here, conducted by his generals in 696 against rebels in the west, and it is possible to envisage Azatiwata being involved on the Assyrian side. It has also been plausibly suggested that he was the Sanduarri, king of Kundi and Sissu, who was executed in 676 by Esarhaddon. However this may be, it now seems that the inscription of Karatepe is the latest in the hieroglyphic tradition and that the sculpture, even if it includes earlier elements and reused pieces, belongs largely to the same period.

## NEO-HITTITE CULTURE

The half-millennium of Neo-Hittite civilization terminated by the Assyrians is now well enough known for its salient features to be clear. The Neo-Hittite states led by Karkamish shared and developed their heritage from the Hittite Empire, which is most apparent to us in their architecture, sculpture, and monumental writing.

### *City Layout and Architecture*

Their cities typically centered on high citadels built on ancient mounds, where the main temples and palaces would be located. The lower cities would contain other temples and public buildings and the residential areas. Upper and lower cities were surrounded by massive fortification walls pierced by gates in towered gatehouses. Building techniques consisted typically of bases of rubble foundations surmounted by half-timber frameworks of massive beams filled with mud-brick. Very characteristically, the wall footings were faced and protected by large orthostat slabs of black basalt or limestone, and these slabs were often sculpted and inscribed, particularly at prominent points in the architecture such as doorways. Most notably, such entrances might have their doorjambs carved as protective beasts, lions, or sphinxes. There is documentary evidence for the existence of upper stories built in wood as residential quarters.

The usual unit of palace architecture was the *bīt hilāni*, a hall fronted by a columned portico, and these units could be grouped together in palace enclosures like the kiosks of Ottoman palaces. The temples consisted of a central cella containing a cult statue set in a surrounding court and approached through monumental entrances.

Sculpture appears mostly in relief on the orthostats of walls, gates, and doors and covers religious, cultic, and mythological scenes as well as military and chariot processions. A distinct development of styles is visible over the period. Statues in the round are also found, particularly colossal figures of deities and of rulers mounted on double lion podiums as funerary memorials to receive a cult. Rulers so presented were probably regarded as deified. The degree of mutual influence between Neo-Hittite and Assyrian art

is disputed, but in this regard it must be pointed out that not only was Neo-Hittite art fully developed in the period before Assurnasirpal, with whom the tradition of Assyrian palace wall sculpture begins, but all of its elements can be traced back to Hittite Empire prototypes. It would thus seem certain that early influence passed from the west to Assyria, even if in the later period some return influence is visible. Likewise, Aramaean sculpture originated in the matrix of the surrounding Hittite style and drew extensively on its traditions, though it did develop its own characteristics.

### *Literature and Religion*

Because the hieroglyphic monumental inscriptions, as noted above, are commemorative in character, they are of somewhat restricted content. But there is evidence that hieroglyphic writing served everyday needs of communication and administration in the form of a few surviving letters and economic texts written on strips of lead. These occasional finds imply the common existence of such documents, which must be presumed to have been written on perishable material and so to have been lost. It is by no means impossible that even literary texts so written might have circulated.

Neo-Hittite religion shows close links with that of the earlier Hittite Empire, itself well attested in the surviving record of Khattusha, where so many tablets of the royal archives concern religious matters—the pantheon, the cult, and the mythology. This written evidence is supplemented by the iconography found on sculpture and seals. Hittite Empire religion was very syncretistic, drawing on the Hittites' own traditions, the pre-Hittite religion of Anatolia, and the religions of Syria and Mesopotamia. The heads of the composite pantheon were the storm-god of heaven and his consort. Other prominent gods were associated with the sun and moon, and there was a protector-god, while the most prominent goddess was Ishtar, patroness of both love and war.

The Neo-Hittite states generally show pronounced cultural continuity with the empire in all matters, but especially in religion. Because there are fewer hieroglyphic inscriptions than the cuneiform of the empire, much less of the

cult is documented in the later period. The dedicatory inscriptions and religious iconography do, however, give much information. There is some distinction between the religion of the Anatolian provinces and that of the Syrian states. The former suggests close continuity with the cult of Khattusha, while the latter shows more Syrian influence and is quite perceptibly the religion of the city Karkamish. The storm-god remains head of the pantheon, and the protector-god is noticeably more prominent. At Karkamish, and clearly disseminating from this center, the chief goddess is Kubaba, who is known to have been the city's main deity from much earlier times. Here, along with the storm-god and a local version of the protector-god, Kubaba formed part of a leading triad. The prestige of Ishtar was much reduced during this period, perhaps because it was partially absorbed by that of Kubaba.

Some temples of the period have been discovered, sometimes along with their dedicatory inscriptions; for example, the temple of the storm-god of Karkamish. The inscribed stela with the cult statue of Kubaba was also found here. At Hamath, by contrast, the ruling Neo-Hittite dynasty worshiped and built temples to the storm-god but also to the Semitic goddess Ba'alat. The biggest and most elaborate Neo-Hittite temple known is that of Ayn Dara, but as no inscriptions were found with it, we know nothing of the patron deity or cult.

A feature of the contemporary religion that appears to be new is the existence of many personal memorials in the form of both sculpted and inscribed stelae. The sculptures normally show individuals or families seated at funerary meals, and the inscriptions refer to individuals entering the company of the gods. Belief in a personal afterlife seems to have been a new concept in the culture.

### *Economy*

The main economic base of the Neo-Hittite states was presumably, as for most ancient societies, agricultural. But, as we learn from lists of tribute and booty extracted from them by the Assyrians, they had accumulated very substantial wealth in the form of materials, prominent

among them metals, raw and manufactured, and other luxury goods, such as ivory. This evidence reminds us of their position on the principal east-west trade routes, and there can be no doubt that for states such as Karkamish, trade must have been of an importance second only to agriculture. Evidence also suggests that they occupied a central position in the highly developed metallurgy of the day, known to us now mainly through the bronzework.

## AFTERWORD

How did this flourishing Hittite civilization with roots stretching back into the early second millennium come to disappear so rapidly and so completely? There is no doubt that brute force applied by the Assyrians can account for the disappearance of the states most immediately exposed to them, in particular Karkamish. These smaller states simply lacked the power and persistence, even in coalition, to withstand the Assyrian military machine. But some Neo-Hittite states, particularly in Anatolia and Cilicia, were remote enough from Assyria to escape the most dire effects of that aggression. They were subjected to other pressures, first the Phrygians and then the probably more deleterious Cimmerians. But possibly the threats were more cultural than political. That the hieroglyphic script disappeared some time at the beginning of the seventh century is certain, and the distinctive tradition of monumental inscriptions went with it. It is clearly superseded by the alphabet, which was spreading over Anatolia at least from the time of Midas in Phrygia. As for the other archaeologically recognizable features of the civilization, the architecture and sculpture, it is possible that these traditions too gave way to new styles. But we must remember that the period after 700 in Anatolia and Cilicia until the arrival of Hellenism is even more poorly known archaeologically and attested in the written record than the early Iron Age. It may be that here, too, future research will establish that there was no such sharp break, as occurred in north Syria, to define the end of the Neo-Hittite period.

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