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Sacred Landscapes of Hittites and Luwians

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Front cover photo: Drawing of the rock reliefs at Yazılıkaya (Charles Texier, *Description de l'Asie Mineure faite par ordre du Governement français de 1833 à 1837*. Typ. de Firmin Didot frères, Paris 1839, planche 72).

ENTE
CASSA DI RISPARMIO
DI FIRENZE

CONTENTS

RELIGION AND PROPAGANDA UNDER THE GREAT KINGS OF KARKEMIŠ

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Abstract

This paper focuses on monumental art decorating public gates at Karkemiš as a key to understanding the negotiation of political power in the period between 1200 and 950 BC. I argue that this kind of public art was first developed in Hittite Central Anatolia as a form of propaganda connected to state cults and formally bound to the centre of the Empire. After 1200, this art practice migrates south and is taken up by emerging polities seeking to perpetuate Hittite ideology. In the 12th century, Hittite-inspired public art is limited to the political milieu of the Great Kings of Karkemiš, with images centred on cult and kingship. In the course of the 11th century, the territorial influence of Karkemiš deflates and competing polities start their own Hittite-style public art projects. At Karkemiš, Hittite blueprints are forever abandoned in the first half of the 10th century, when public art shifts its focus from cult and kingship to the display of heroic force. I argue that this change of visual idiom is related to the rising political influence of a new class of governors, the Country Lords, and reflects the struggle of the Great Kings to negotiate a balance of power. By the end of the 10th century, the Country Lords reach full independence, the city's political identity changes radically, and public art morphs into something entirely different.

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An identifying trait of the sacred landscape of Iron Age Luwian cities is the use of public space outside institutional buildings and holy precincts to commemorate and sometimes perform rituals and ceremonies, with much effort put into decorating architectural façades with monuments and inscriptions. In a number of important studies, and particularly in a seminal contribution on *The Gate and the City*, Stefania Mazzoni (1997) recognized Syro-Hittite city gates as places of religious and political significance, where monumental images were erected to illustrate and celebrate a characteristically urban ideology. This paper is a re-appraisal of the subject matter in the light of recent discoveries, with a specific focus on the history of Karkemiš from the dissolution of the Hittite Empire until the first half of the 10th century[1]. The aim of this contribution is to examine public monumental art and its religious and political connotations in diachronic perspective, framing its development into the two major historical trends of the period in question: a) the geopolitical expansion and the subsequent slow but inexorable fragmentation of the Land of Karkemiš; and b) the rise and fall of its 'Great Kings', the self-proclaimed heirs of the Hittite Empire destined to be finally ousted by their own local governors, the city's 'Country-Lords'.

1. Public monuments and urban festivals in the Hittite Empire

The practice of decorating urban gates with monumental art is rooted in Bronze Age Hittite ritual traditions, and linked particularly to the urban festivals that involved processions with sta-

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tions at the city gates and within the city (Mazzoni 1997; Görke 2008). Figurative stone reliefs such as those found at Büyükkale (Neve 1984; Orthmann 2008: 30) or, more recently, outside *Gebäude A* at Kayalıpınar (Müller-Karpe, Müller-Karpe 2009) and at the entrance of Building D at Ortaköy (Süel 2005; Süel, Süel 2013) indicate that Hittite rulers started decorating the façades of «buildings of special function» (Mielke 2011) with sculpted imagery related to the cult as early as the 15th century[2]. In the course of the 14th and 13th centuries, monumental art expanded into public urban spaces, notably city gates (Schachner 2013: 539). When the city walls of the Hittite capital Ḫattusa were re-designed[3], three ceremonial city gates – the Lions' Gate, the Sphinx Gate, and the King's Gate – were decorated with, respectively, monumental portal lions, sphinxes, and the oversize image of a god[4]. The elaborated figurative frieze at the Sphinx Gate of Alaca Höyük shows that, in the course of Hittite history[5], the decoration of urban gates with «the illustration of rituals in continuous narrative strips» (Mellink 1970: 18) acquired a significant position in the urban scenery. Written sources inform us that Hittite city gates were meeting places used by institutional power for public display and communication: at the gates, death sentences were carried out, prisoners exchanged, edicts read out aloud (Miller 2012). In short, the city gate was used by the Hittite king as «a forum to convey his authority» (Miller 2012: 679). Next to and intertwined with this 'political' value, city gates were also a place where religious rituals took place (Marazzi *in press* a; Marazzi *in press* b; Miller 2012; Dittmann 1999: 167-168; Voos 1983; Del Monte 1973). The figurative decoration of the gates at Ḫattusa and Alaca Höyük is directly linked to such rituals. Furthermore, the iconography chosen at Alaca Höyük to represent royal power and the royal persona expresses specific theological concepts and represents the ritual 'participation' of the king, through offering and libations, in the divine nature of the Sun-God and the Storm-God (van den Hout 1995). There are good reasons to assume that these gates were planned as places where religious celebrations were not only evoked in images, but actually performed. In favour of this view we may list a number of significant features: the presence of cup-marks for libations (Neve 1977-1978); the location of the decorated gates at nodal points of the cities' sacred landscape[6]; their stage-like architecture (particularly evident at the Sphinx Gate of Ḫattusa) (Schachner 2011: 158-164); the portrayed subjects (Hittite texts, for example, describes figures of sphinxes employed in the cult as «overseers of rituals» [Gilibert 2011a]); and finally, the presence of short Hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions picked on or next monumental images. As argued by Marazzi, these 'signatures' relate to the transformative and protective power ascribed to the passage, and to the images that guarded it (Marazzi *in press* b).

The narrative reliefs at Alaca Höyük, with scenes of royal libations, ritual hunting, music, and games, fit well into our knowledge of Hittite festivals and suggest that at least some of the depicted events may have in fact taken place in the open spaces around the gate area (Mazzoni 2013: 472)[7]. If this line of argument is correct, and considering the pivotal role played by the Hittite king and queen in the imagery at Alaca Höyük (Alexander 1989; Sievertsen 2008: 577), we may reasonably conclude that the practice of decorating urban gates with religious stone reliefs was initiated by Hittite rulers in the context of

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[2] Figurative architectural reliefs were also known in Middle Bronze Age Syria: Kohlmeyer 2012: 65-66, and below. However, they appear to have been used in less accessible locations, for example inside temples, as in the case of a relief found reused in Aleppo. On the development of Hittite monumental reliefs, see De Martino 2010.

[3] A. Schachner (2011: 92-93, 159) favours a date for this event in the late 14th century, considering that the Lion's Gate was left unfinished and proposing a connection of this fact to the temporary transfer of the Hittite capital to the city of Tarḫuntassa initiated by King Muwattalli at the beginning of the 13th century. Arguments for an even earlier date are discussed in Simon 2011 and Schachner 2012.

[4] The Sphinx Gate seems to have been originally decorated with a number of further stone reliefs that were recovered only in fragments, which apparently included the standing figure of a male person: Bittel 1937: 7; Ussisshkin 1989: 486.

[5] For the dating of the Sphinx Gate at Alaca Höyük in the (late) 13th century BC, see in particular Neve 1994, with further literature, and, more recently, Orthmann 2002a, Sievertsen 2008, Taracha 2011. For an argument in favour of a date in the early 15th century, on the basis of parallels with Kayalıpınar, see Schachner 2012: 139.

[6] For the case of Ḫattusa, see Neve 1996: 17-21 and Schachner 2011: 158-164. For Alaca Höyük, see Neve 1994 and Sievertsen 2008: 575-577. Alaca Höyük was a small city near Ḫattusa, with a comparatively vast ceremonial and administrative centre, a fact that led to identify the site as a «cult city» (Mielke 2011) where important religious festivals took place, probably the ancient Arinna (Erkut 1992; Taracha 2011; although Popko 2000 proposes Zippalanda). The Sphinx Gate was the main entrance to the city centre, leading from a broad avenue (Neve speaks of a «processional way») to a urban square. From this square, access to the royal palace complex was granted.

[7] The development of open spaces on either side of city gates into ceremonial squares, which is a signature of the Luwian and Aramaean cities of Iron Age Syro-Anatolia (Mazzoni 2008; Gilibert 2012), may in fact have its origins in Hittite urban design (Matthiae 2008).

a state cult that involved rituals performed *in loco*[8]. Apparently, an important aspect of these rituals was the religious legitimation of the king, who, together with his family, presented himself in front of a wider public in his role as sponsor of religious festivals and pious executor of the cultic calendar.

As far as the extant evidence allows us to judge, the Hittite practice of decorating urban gates with monumental stone reliefs was geographically limited to Ḫattusa and its environs, that is, to the symbolic and religious centre of the Empire. In Northern Syria, Hittite rulers and high-ranking subordinate dignitaries initiated significant architectural projects, involving the decoration of temples with both typically 'Hittite' and more locally inspired sculptures, as the Late Bronze Age figurative evidence at Aleppo, 'Ain Dara, and Tell Atchana show (Yener, Dinçol, Peker 2014; Kohlmeyer 2012: 65-66; De Martino 2010: 94)[9]. Fragments of a relief frieze found out of context indicate that architectural sculpture in Hittite style was also employed in building projects at Karkemiš[10]. However, none of these projects apparently involved the decoration of a urban gate, or of a comparable public location[11]. If we consider that, both in Mesopotamia and the Levant, urban gates were important, multi-functional, and ritually significant meeting places[12], and that their architecture involved the employment of monumental stone orthostats at least since the early 2nd Millennium BC (Matthiae 2000: 177-178; Harmanşah 2007), the fact that Hittite rulers appear not to have exported the habit of decorating urban gates to Northern Syria may imply a strong link of this practice to religious cults that were formally bound to the hearth of the Empire in Central Anatolia. Perhaps, with the demise of the Empire, the ritual bounds that held this monumental habit anchored to Central Anatolia loosened up: if so, this may explain why the habit of decorating public gates migrated away from its roots to be transplanted into South-Eastern Anatolia.

2. *The imperial cosmos and the art of the 12th and 11th centuries BC*

Immediately following the collapse of the Hittite Empire, former Hittite provinces and the *araḫzena utnē*, the 'outer lands' of South-Eastern Anatolia, re-organized themselves into small-sized local polities under the hegemony of presumably two «rump states» (Harrison 2009; Weeden 2013) corresponding *grosso modo* to the former Hittite appanage kingdoms of Karkemiš and Tarḫuntassa (Starke 2002; Wittke *et al.* 2012: 32). The Kingdom of Karkemiš, risen to new power, is so far the most visible and the better understood among the two powers. The last Hittite viceroy of Karkemiš, Kuzi-Teššub, a descendant of Šuppiluliuma I, survived the collapse of the Empire and profited from the dissolution of central authority, perpetuating Hittite ideological habits and replicating Hittite forms of territorial control (Wazana 2001; Dodd 2007; Mora, D'Alfonso 2012: 393-395)[13]. He considerably expanded the

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[8] For the dichotomy between 'state' vs. 'non-state' cults, each one with its own apparently mutually exclusive set of musical and athletic performances, see now Cammarosano 2014a: in particular 162-164, with further literature.

[9] As pointed out by S. Mazzoni (2013: 473), the quarries of Yesemek and Sikizlar suggest the existence of an (itinerant?) Late Bronze Age workshop of stone artists working with Hittite conventions and style in Southeastern Anatolia and Northern Syria. This 'school' may have later survived the collapse of the Empire and sold its services to new Iron Age patrons.

[10] Cf. Woolley 1952: Pls. 50b, 51a-b, 66b. For a recent discussion, see Aro 2013: 252-253. For evidence of an older, Middle Bronze Age sculptural tradition at Karkemiš, see Marchesi 2014a; Marchesi 2014b: fig. 4; Di Paolo 2006; Mazzoni 1972: 80, with ns. 1-3.

[11] In Northern Syria, a specific tradition for monumental decoration of entrances, most notably with portal lions, did exist, and went back at least to the Middle Bronze Age, but was limited to temple architecture: cf. e.g. the evidence of Temple P2 and Temple D at Ebla (Matthiae 1992).

[12] See, most recently, May 2013.

[13] The drift to independence and the imperial attitudes of the viceroy of Tarḫuntassa and, perhaps, of Karkemiš go back to the latter period of the Hittite Empire (Giorgieri, Mora 2010; De Martino 2010; cf. also Payne 2014: 150, n. 7). Attitudes and destinies of the Kingdoms of Tarḫuntassa and Karkemiš in the transition between Late Bronze Age and Iron Age differ. In the 13th century, Kurunta, King of Tarḫuntassa, let himself be represented on monuments and seal with the iconography and the title of 'Great King', apparently with the forced consent of the Great King of Hatti (De Martino 2010: 91; Giorgieri, Mora 2010: 144; Singer 1996); however, all material traces of the imperial *allure* of the Great Kings of Tarḫuntassa dissolve concurrently with the collapse of the Hittite Empire. Conversely, the 13th-century kings of Karkemiš appear never to openly compete with the Great Kings of Hatti. In fact, the contemporary iconography of the seals of princes and officials of Karkemiš, including a seal of Ini-Teshub, King of Karkemiš, incorporated the image of a long-robed figure with a winged-disk over his head, which has been convincingly interpreted as a materialization of the Hittite royal title 'My Sun' and thus a direct iconic recognition of the supremacy of the Hittite Great King (Giorgieri, Mora 2010: 142). Perhaps, the political stance of the Kings of Karkemiš was more solid and less conflict-ridden than that of their counterpart in Tarḫuntassa (De Martino 2010: 92; Mora 2004). And accordingly, after the collapse of the Hittite Empire, far from disappearing from the political scene, the Kings of Karkemiš expanded their influence and claimed the title of Great Kings (see discussion below).

dominion of the Land of Karkemiš to the North, taking control of regions west of the Euphrates up to the Land of Malatya, which had formerly been the easternmost stronghold of the Empire, seat of a Hittite governor (Liverani 2004)[14]. At the same time, as evidence indirectly suggests, Kuzi-Teššub took on the title of 'Great King' (Hieroglyphic Luwian MAGNUS.REX)[15], formerly prerogative of the Hittite king (Hawkins 1988)[16], and set the precedent for his successors, who continued to claim the same 'imperial' title for the following two centuries (here and hereafter, the reader is referred to Fig. 1 for a provisional overview of the rulers of Karkemiš)[17]. In order to enforce their dominion, the 12th-century Great Kings of Karkemiš appear to have applied a double system of territorial control, directly inherited from the former Hittite administration: in some cases, they acted as overlords of vassal polities governed by local chiefs[18]; in other cases, territorial control was direct and entrusted to governors. Kuzi-Teššub installed governors with the title of «Country Lords» (REGIO.DOMINUS)[19] both in the city of Malatya and in Karkemiš itself (Hawkins 1995b)[20]. The Country Lords had, in one case at least, family ties with the Great King: at Malatya, Kuzi-Teššub installed as REGIO.DOMINUS one of his sons, PUGNUS-*mili* (I)[21]. A necessary and crucial, if as yet still speculative corollary of the early politics of the Great Kings is that, at least in order to implement administrative decisions, at Karkemiš scribal schools and archival practices continued to exist across the Late Bronze Age/Iron Age ridge and beyond, although the production of cuneiform texts on clay tablets was apparently entirely dropped – in favour, we must assume, of the *tabulae ceratae* written in Luwian Hieroglyphs that will later feature so prominently in the self-display of the local élites. The written tradition of Karkemiš in the first two centuries of the Iron Age, still almost completely eluding us, is the missing link to understand the stream of tradition behind the politics of the Great Kings (Aro 2013: 246-248)[22].

The system of territorial control devised by Kuzi-Teššub was destined to slowly but constantly disgregate into its elemental parts. Probably already by the second half of the 12th century, the Country

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[14] The significant expansion to the North, however, may have been counterbalanced by a loss of control in the south-western parts of the former kingdom.

[15] Hawkins (1995: 27-28; but see the discussion in Houwink ten Cate 2007: 191-193) proposes *šalli-ḫaššu-* as the Hittite rendering of Luwian Hieroglyphic MAGNUS.REX (= Cuneiform LUGAL.GAL), and *ura-ḫantawati-* as its Luwian counterpart.

[16] The earliest text ascribing to Kuzi-Tešub the title of Great King are the rock inscriptions Gürün and Kötükale, composed by his 'grandson' Runtiya, ruler of Malaya in the latter part of the first half of the 12th century (Hawkins 2000: 295-301). The possibility must be considered that Kuzi-Tešub himself never employed the title, and that it was ascribed to him by later rulers claiming direct lineal descent only as a posthumous construct (Aro 2013: 256, n. 119; Payne 2014: 150).

[17] In the epigraphic records of Karkemiš, the title of MAGNUS.REX is employed by, in descending chronological order, Tutḫaliya (Karkamiš A16c; Karkamiš frag. a/b), Sapaziti, and Ura-Tarḫunta (Karkamiš A4b, and now stele KH.11.O.400), who all ruled in the (second half of the) 11th century BC. We may add to these occurrences the 'Great King' *I(a)+ra/i*-TONITRUS mentioned in the Karahöyük (Elbistan) stele (Hawkins 2000: 288-295). The stele, authored by a local magnate controlling the plain of Elbistan on behalf of the Great King in question, is dated by Hawkins on epigraphic grounds to the early 12th century. The political ascription of *I(a)+ra/i*-TONITRUS, whose name may be read Ir-Teššub, Yarri-Tarḫunta, or Ini-Teššub, is still a matter of debate (Harmanşah 2011: 65-69; Freu, Mazoyer 2012: 37-38). However, there is a strong argument (Simon 2013) in favour of an identification of *I(a)+ra/i*-TONITRUS with a descendant of Kuzi-Teššub, either his successor or a king who reigned at some point in the 12th century. Simon (2013: 828) thinks it possible that *I(a)+ra/i*-TONITRUS may be identical with the «Ini-Teššub, King of the Land of Hatti» met by Tiglath-pileser I c. 1100 BC, as reported in the annalistic texts of the Assyrian king (RIMA 2, A.0.87.3, ll. 26-28; A.0.87.4, ll. 28-30).

[18] The stele Karahöyük is the earliest evidence for the post-collapse politics of indirect territorial control of 'Great Kings' (of Karkemiš?) over local rulers. Further, it has been recently argued that a silver bowl with a Luwian Hierogliphic inscription from Ankara mentioning a «Labarna» Tutḫaliya and a «king» *(Maza)-Karhuha* may date to the post-Hittite period (cf. the abstract of the current discussion in Weeden 2013: 7-8, with references). If this dating should prove correct, the bowl could give further evidence for the early Iron Age political system involving the coexistence of 'Great Kings' and vassal kings.

[19] The Luwian full reading is not established: J.D. Hawkins (2000: 96) discusses the problem and tentatively proposes REGIO = **utniyasi*, «of the country».

[20] The title REGIO.DOMINUS was derived by the imperial administrative structures: Hittite rulers appointed «Country Lords», translated on seals by the cuneiform EN.KUR[TI], as governors with civic and military functions (Giusfredi 2010: 97-101; Payne 2014: 150-151, with further literature. For a Hittite Country Lord at Alalakh and its political ties to Late Bronze Age Tell Afis, see Archi, Venturi 2012).

[21] For relations in lineage between Great Kings and Country Lords, see Payne 2014: 151-152.

[22] On the Luwian scribal tradition in the Hittite period, and on the 13th-century «scriptorial and scribal leap» from Hittite to Luwian and from the cuneiform clay tablet to the hieroglyphic wooden board, I refer to M. Marazzi, particularly Marazzi 2002, with further literature; see also van den Hout 2006 and Waal 2011. On the use of Luwian hieroglyphs at Karkemiš in the Late Bronze Age, see the works of C. Mora, particularly Mora 1998 and Mora 2010. On scriptorial techniques, see Cammarosano 2014b.

Lords of Malatya ceased submitting to the overlordship of Karkemiš, and pursued independent politics[23]. Malatya was the first, and northernmost, region to secede from Karkemiš. By the end of the 11th century, an independent Kingdom of Palistin, with its royal city at Tell Tayinat in the Amuq, was rising to considerable power and influence over the territory corresponding to the Late Bronze Age Hittite apanage kingdom of Aleppo (Harrison 2010). In the course of time, and increasingly so during the 10th century, further vassal polities followed suit and declared independence[24], while Aramaean élites wedged themselves more and more in the interstices of Karkemiš' fading 'imperial' power.

At Karkemiš itself, however, Great Kings and Country Lords coexisted at least until the first half of the 10th century, with both titles being inherited by paternal lineage (Hawkins, Peker 2014; Payne 2014). Diplomatic relationships and power balance between Great Kings and Country Lords, as well as foreign politics of the Land of Karkemiš after the collapse of the Hittite Empire, are still largely unknown. Assyrian sources report that, around 1100, Tiglath-Pileser I met «Ini-Teššub, king of the Land of Hatti», who must have been a king of Karkemiš (RIMA 2, A.0.87.3, ll. 26-28; A.0.87.4, ll. 28-30)[25]. At Karkemiš, the epigraphic record dating to the 12th and 11th centuries boils down to three fragments of monumental inscriptions, to be cautiously connected to the Great Kings of the (latter half of the) 11th century:

I   the upper part of a broken basalt stele Karkamiš A16c, on which it is possible to read
(1) MAGNUS.REX MONS-*t*[*u*?] MAGNUS.REX HEROS *kar*-[*ka-mi*-]-*sà* ⌜REGIO⌝
(2) REGIO.REX

(1) Great King Tutḫaliyas Great King Hero of the Land of Karkemiš
(2) King of the Land […; (Hawkins 2000: 82; Giusfredi 2014: 485)[26]

II the badly preserved Karkamiš frag. a/b, that is the fragment of the upper part of a further basalt stele[27] of the same(?) Tutḫaliya, read and translated by Hawkins as follows:
(1) [MAGNUS?.R]EX MONS-tu [MA]GNUS.REX IUDEX? …
(2) […*kar-ka-mi-s*]*à* REGIO REX ⌜*pi-ia-si*-⌜*li*⌝ […

(1) [Great?] King? Tutḫaliyas [Great?] King Labarna? …
(2) … King of the Land of Karkemiš, Piyassilis'… (Hawkins 2000: 590-591)[28].

[23] The first Malatyan ruler who incontrovertibly ascribes to himself a royal title, REX.*462 («Potent(?) King»), is PUGNUS-*mili* II, grand-grand-grandson of Kuzi-Teššub: cf. *Relief K* of the *Porte des Lions*, i.e., Malatya 8 (Hawkins 2000: 309-310), and the stele Malatya 14 (Hawkins 2000: 313-314). PUGNUS-*mili* II is also the first Malatyan ruler to initiate a cycle of monumental reliefs at the citadel gate, on which he is portrayed as king: public art appears here to connect with a conscious act of beginning a new political era. It remains to be explained why PUGNUS-*mili*'s son Arnuwanti II designates his father «Country Lord» (a title that is not attested in the inscriptions of PUGNUS-*mili* II), but titles his grandfather Arnuwanti I «King» (REX). The textual and visual contents of the steles İspekçür and Darende by Arnuwanti I leave two possibilities open: either the first ruler of Malatya to become independent from Karkemiš was in fact Arnuwantis I, father of PUGNUS-*mili* II, or Arnuwantis II construed a false tradition. In both cases, for reasons unclear, Arnuwanti II played down the political role of his father. What we know with a reasonable degree of certainty is that Runtya, an older brother(?) of Arnuwanti I and the commissioner of the rock inscriptions Kötükale and Gürün, did not claim royal titles neither for himself nor for his father PUGNUS-*mili* I.

[24] As in the instructive case of Gurgum (Porter 2003; D'Alfonso 2012: 190, n. 24) and, poorly documented, Kummuh, the classical Commagene. Cf. also the emblematic case of Tell Ahmar/Masuwari, located on the east bank on the Euphrates, which may have raised to independence from Karkemiš in the late 10th century BC, fell under the rule of the Aramaean tribe of Bīt Adini in the mid-9th century, and was then conquered by the Assyrians (for a different interpretation, according to which Tell Ahmar fell under Assyrian control in the reign of Tiglath-Pileser I, was then conquered by the Arameans, who appropriated the Luwian monumental language of Karkemiš, and was finally re-conquered by the Assyrians, see Bunnens 2013).

[25] It is interesting to note that, although the Assyrian sources use the expression «King of the Land of Hatti», reflecting the survival of a perception of Karkemiš as a fulcrum of 'Hittite' presence, the rulers of Karkemiš themselves never claimed a geographical control over a «Land of Hatti». L. D'Alfonso (2013) points out this fact to invite caution in believing in the will of the early rulers of Karkemiš to actively appropriate the Hittite imperial past.

[26] The stele is decorated with a winged sun-disc surmounted by a crescent and a planet. It may be provisionally dated to the late 11th century on the ground of its palaeographic affinity to the similar steles erected around 1000 BC by the Country Lord Suhi I (KH.11.O.400; Dinçol *et al.* 2014) and by his son Arnu-*x* (Karkamiš A4b; Hawkins 2000: 80-82), for which see below. The 11th-century date is also supported by the iconography of the winged sun-disc, to be compared with the sun-disc on the relief B30b, the so-called 'sacrificial slab', found at the Water Gate and dated to the 11th century on iconographic and stylistic grounds (Mazzoni 1997: 316-317, see also below).

[27] As indicated by the slanted edge of the 'proper end' sketched in the squeeze of the British Museum (Meriggi 1975: Pl. XVI).

[28] The dating is given to the late 11th century on palaeographic grounds.

III a small inscribed fragment (the upper hind leg?) of a portal lion, mentioning an otherwise unknown «Ḫuwa-Šarruma, King of the land of Karkemiš» (Karkamiš A18d, now lost)[29].

These fragments corroborate further the existence of Great Kings at Karkemiš[30] and show their cultural debt to the Late Bronze Age administration of the city. Format and contents of the inscribed stelas remind of Hittite antecedents[31]. The use of the determinative REGIO for the definition of Karkemiš as a political entity, as in *karkamissa* («REGIO»), follows the same use in the period of the Hittite vice-regency. The royal onomastic in general, and in particular the occurrence of the name Piyassili in Karkamiš frag. a/b, show strong ties to the Hittite forefathers and may even point to the persistence of an ancestral memory going back to the very first Hittite king of Karkemiš, Piyassili, son of Šuppiluliuma I (Hawkins 2000: 590-591; Payne 2014: 153, n. 31).

Scant but crucial collateral information for Karkemiš in this period is given by the Hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions left by Taita, King of Palistin, in the Temple of the Storm-God of Aleppo at some point during the 11th century[32]. In Aleppo 6, offerings are prescribed according to rank and status (§5-9). Highest status is given to kings (REX), who shall offer an ox and a sheep. There follows Princes, Country Lords, and «River-Country Lords» (FLUMEN.REGIO.DOMINUS), apparently all belonging to the same hierarchical level (prescribed offerings: a sheep). Everybody else is listed generically as 'inferior', and shall offer bread and little else[33]. The passage does not acknowledge the existence of 'Great Kings' (Taita himself is titled REX): it seems that, by the age of Taita, the title MAGNUS.REX had morphed into a simple variant of REX, linked perhaps exclusively to Karkemiš, and did not automatically imply superiority over other titles. From the inscription Aleppo 7 (§2), we infer that Taita, at a certain point, for reasons unclear, was able to enter a secluded place of significance (DOMUS sa_5-sa_5-*tà-ti*: a treasury? a granary?) within the walls of Karkemiš (Hawkins 2011: 49). The nature of this 'visit' is yet to be understood: the context seems to imply a singular event of plunder. The presence of Taita at Karkemiš and his disregard for 'Great Kings', combined with the dearth of local epigraphic and archaeological evidence, epitomize the loss of territorial hegemony and the increasing presence of political competitors that incurred to Karkemiš in the 11th century (Weeden 2013: 6, 10)[34]. However, the fact that Taita turned his presence in the city into literature, whatever nature and duration of this presence might have been, seems to reflect the continuing cultural aura that Karkemiš exerted on its neighbours.

Turning our focus on monumental art, the production of the 12th and 11th centuries (corresponding, in terms of the archaeological sequence defined by S. Mazzoni (2000), to the phase Iron Age IA-B) may be divided into two main sets: art produced for temples and temple precincts[35], and art produced for public gates. Both sets reflect the same continuity with Hittite traditions highlighted by the textual sources. In this respect, the extraordinary artistic evidence from the temples of Aleppo and 'Ain Dara is emblematic. Both temples were kept in use and variously re-decorated throughout the 13th to the 9th centuries. In the late 11th century, Late Bronze Age images of sphinxes, lions, and *Mischwesen* were still downright copied, in the obvious attempt to replicate a style and iconography unmistakably bound to the Hittite Empire (Kohlmeyer 2008, 2012)[36].

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[29] J. D. Hawkins (2000: 83) proposes a date on palaeographic grounds in the 11th century, «somewhat older» than Karkamiš A16c. If this is correct, then the lion fragment of Huwa-Sarruwa would be the oldest Iron Age epigraphic record in Karkemiš.

[30] The fact that Karkamiš A18d titulates Huwa-Sarruma as «REX *karkamissa*(REGIO)» does not rule out the possibility that Huwa-Sarruma also bore the title MAGNUS.REX, which never appears specified by a genitive: I thank Jörg Klinger for pointing this out to me.

[31] Cf. the stele of the «Great King, Tabarna Tutḫaliya» (IV) on exhibit in the Boğazköy Müzesi (Neve 1992: 34, fig. 84-85).

[32] For these inscriptions and their dating in the 11th century, see Hawkins 2011.

[33] Cf. with the later inscription of Katuwas, Karkamiš A3, §19: «whether he is a REX or a REGIO.DOMINUS […]» (Giusfredi 2010: 99).

[34] See also Summers 2013: 316 for evidence from Tille Höyük inviting to rethink the political weight of Carchemish in this period.

[35] I include in this set the subset of inscribed steles, including four steles from the Kingdom of Malatya (Hawkins 2000, Malatya 13, Malatya 14, Darende, İspekçür) and a stele found at Samsat (Hawkins 2000, Samsat 1 – *pace* Hawkins 2000: 333, the royal figure with long robe and lituus is indicative of a date to the 12th century). Although none of these steles has been found *in situ*, dedication to gods mentioned in their inscriptions and comparisons with cognate inscribed steles found within precincts (Karahöyük, Karkamiš A4b) suggest that this kind of artefact were destined to locations of limited access, probably temple courtyards.

[36] Pushing K. Kohlmeyer's line of argument further, we shall consider the possibility that the *Sockelreliefs E*, decorating the socle of the cella inside the temple of 'Ain Dara and representing 'mountain gods' and other

It appears that city gates were renovated and re-built at a faster pace than temples, and thus the early fates of public art are known only in outline, and mostly from spolia. Nonetheless, a corpus of gate sculptures reminiscent of Hittite antecedents indicates that, within the Karkamishean milieu, Luwian rulers took up, adapted and developed the Central Anatolian habit of decorating important urban gates with symbolic and religious imagery. So far, evidence for longer figurative cycles and, significantly, for short Luwian Hieroglyphic captions[37], has been recorded only at Karkemiš itself and at Malatya. In the course of the 11th century, gate decoration spread also to less important sites, but was apparently limited to anepigraphic portal lions[38]. This 'trickle-down' of portal decoration may be yet another indication of the progressive erosion of Karkemiš's political hegemony. The loss of political strenght, together with an enduring cultural influence, may have opened up the chance and triggered the desire of emerging political subjects to emulate the city's most visible monuments. The earliest dated Iron Age example of a longer figurative cycle are the reliefs associated with king PUGNUS-*mili* (II) of Malatya, to be ascribed on genealogical, palaeographic, and artistic grounds to the second half of the 12th century[39]. Six fragmentary reliefs found re-used at the Water Gate of Karkemiš and several stray fragments may date to the same period (Woolley 1921: fig. 33; Pls. B. 28; B. 29a-b; B. 31a-b.)[40]. Two further relief blocks (Woolley 1921: Pls. B. 30a-b) and the fragment of a portal lion (Woolley 1921: fig. 32) from the Water Gate and further stray fragments[41] are stylistically different and evidently later; they closely resemble the earlier Iron Age reliefs of 'Ain Dara and Aleppo (the portal lion is virtually identical to the portal lion found at 'Ain Dara: Fig. 2), and consequently are to be dated to the age of Taita (i.e., 11th century)[42]. A coeval addition of new reliefs to existing cycles is also recorded at Malatya,

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Mischwesen, may be a 12th-century copy of a similar relief, the *Sockel G 1*, found out of context but certainly dating to the Hittite Empire period (see Mazzoni 2013, 473 for a Late Bronze Age date of the «1st style mountain gods»; for images, cf. Abū 'Assāf 1990).

[37] For Karkemiš, cf. the fragment KARKAMIŠ A18d mentioned above.

[38] Cf. the 11th-century lions found at 'Ain Dara, Elbistan, and Tilmen Höyük. The lions of 'Ain Dara were apparently found re-used as paving slabs in a later gate (cf. the indications in Seirafi 1960 and Orthmann 1964). Their archaeological context of the lions has not been published in detail; for their analysis and dating on stylistic grounds, see Orthmann 1971, 58, 476, 'Ain Dara A/1-3; Kohlmeyer 2008: 124, n. 20, fig. 7.

[39] Delaporte 1940, *Reliefs B-K*. The reliefs B-E were found re-employed together with other *spoliae* at the *Porte des Lions*, a citadel gate dating to the 9th century. On chronology and stratigraphy at Malatya in the transition between Bronze and Iron Age, see Manuelli 2012. F. Manuelli also recently presented the results of his stratigraphic and architectural analysis of the *Porte de Lions* and an earlier Iron Age gate on which the *Porte de Lions* was superimposed, the so-called «Porta Schaeffer» belonging to the Malatya level IIIA2 (Manuelli 2012: fig. 1). Excavations of the IIIA2 context at the 'Porta Schaeffer' revealed a series of aniconic slabs and sculpted orthostats *in situ* belonging to Orthmann's 'Malatya III' style (Manuelli 2012: fig. 4). These orthostats were sealed by a destruction level dating to the end of the 11th or the beginning of the 10th century (Manuelli 2014). This approximate date is thus a terminus *ante quem* for the *spoliae* re-employed in the later *Porte de Lions*, including the PUGNUS-*mili* reliefs. For the dating of the *Porte des Lions* and its antecedents, see also Liverani 2011, 92-93. For the dating of PUGNUS-*mili* (II), see Hawkins, Peker 2014: Table 1. For the early dating of the PUGNUS-*mili* reliefs on stylistic and iconographic grounds, see Bunnens 2006: 51-52, summarizing the discussion and referring to the works of S. Mazzoni; Orthmann 2002b: 277; Brown 2008: 304-307.

[40] The Water Gate is a 2nd-millennium gate that underwent several re-modelling phases. All reliefs were found spoliated or re-employed in the masonry (for the find-spots of the reliefs, see Woolley 1921: 103-116). Several stray fragments belonging to the same period of the Water Gate reliefs were found reemployed as filling material in later context. These are: a) fragments of five reliefs representing anthitetical bull-men holding a palmette, one of them a corner-block (Woolley, Barnett 1952: fig. 70; Pl. B. 52b-f); b) the fragment of a somewhat different bull-men, holding a drooping plant (Woolley, Barnett 1952: Pl. B. 49a); the basalt relief of, presumably, a passing sphinx, found exhibited in the courtyard of the Storm-God Temple (Woolley, Barnett 1952: Pl. B. 48a); c) fragments of at least one orthostat representing a passing lion (Woolley, Barnett 1952: pt. 4, fig. 72).

[41] These include fragments of at least two basalt lions in the 'Ain Dara style (Woolley, Barnett 1952: 182-183, pts. 3, 5 and 6, figs. 71, 73); and a sphinx head found out of context, virtually identical to the 11th-century sphinxes at 'Ain Dara (Woolley, Barnett 1952: Pl. B. 67a).

[42] I follow A. Özyar and S. Mazzoni in dating the reliefs B. 30a-b on iconographic grounds to the earliest phase of Iron Age monumental art (Mazzoni 1997: 316-317; Özyar 1991: 29; see also Brown 2008: 325-327). For further antiquarian and iconographic clues speaking for an early date, consider the folding stool on B. 30b, closely related to Late Bronze Age images of furniture (Symington 1996: 129-132), and cf. B. 30a with the relief of a man leading a bull to sacrifice at the temple of Ain Dara (Abū 'Assāf 1990: 58-59, *Stele F3*; for the dating to the 11th century, see Kohlmeyer 2008). Taking further into consideration the stray finds listed above, it may very well be that the same 11th-century workshop of sculptors that operated at 'Ain Dara also operated at Karkemiš. Similar attestations of the same sculptural school at sites under different political is a recurring fact, evidently connected with the existence of wandering artisans: cf. the case of Tell Ahmar and Zincirli in the late-10th and 9th century, when local rulers hire the same sculptural workshop active in Karkemiš and let them produce replicas or shorter versions of the Karkamišean figurative cycles.

where, during the 11th century, a second, and perhaps a third set of reliefs with images of *Mischwesen* were added to the PUGNUS-*mili* cycle[43]. In short, both at Karkemiš and Malatya changes in style allow us to identify two main sets of monumental art: a set dating to the 12th century and a set dating to the 11th century. At Karkemiš, this latter set corresponds to the 'Ain Dara-style reliefs. As we shall see below, it is tempting to imagine that this set of reliefs mark the renovation of the Water Gate after Taita of Palistin was able to force his army into the city.

The interpretation of these earliest Iron Age reliefs is hampered by the fact that they were all found re-used as *spolia* in later versions of the gates where they originally stood. This fact gives us an impression of how valued the reliefs continued to be through time, but also leaves us with nothing but the *disiecta membra* of the former visual message. On the basis of iconography, we can identify three main groups of images: portal lions (Fig. 2), which apparently grew into a sort of *conditio sine qua non* for decorated gates; representations of the king worshipping the gods (Fig. 3); and images of passing animals and *Mischwesen* (Fig. 4)[44]. Even if specific emblematic associations elude us, it is clear that the basic rationale underlying the choice of imagery is first of all a religious one, keyed, as I shall now discuss, on the faculty of the king to guarantee through the performance of rituals the benevolent presence of the local gods, and their teriomorphic manifestations.

Exemplary for this period is the image of the king libating in front of a god, an iconography strongly tied to the Late Bronze Age Hittite culture that will later on, significantly, entirely disappear from the local visual idiom. At Malatya, the 'potent king' PUGNUS-*mili* (II)[45] materializes it in traditional Hittite fashion, reiterating on eight small-size blocks the image of himself, perhaps of his late grandfather[46] and, once, of his wife[47], all represented pouring libations in front of nine differ-

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[43] These are the three relief orthostats filed by W. Orthmann under the style 'Malatya III' (Orthmann 1971: 94-95, Malatya C/1-3), to which we may now add two further reliefs found in situ at the «Porta Schaeffer» (Manuelli 2012: fig. 4). F. Manuelli (personal communication) has pointed my attention to the fact that that the corner orthostat Malatya C/1 has been later reworked and transformed into a stele, adding the image of a storm-god to an originally aniconic face (Malatya C/1b). This fact has not been recognized by W. Orthmann, who has been thus misled into a general later dating of this set of reliefs, leaving unexplained a series of close stylistic connections with the PUGNUS-*mili* reliefs (Orthmann 1971:95). On the bases of the iconographic development at Malatya and Karkemiš that I discuss in this article, I propose to re-organize the chronological sequence of the reliefs at Malatya according the order Malatya I – Malatya III – Malatya II, all of them dating before the destruction of the 'Porta Schaeffer' at the end of the 11th/beginning of the 10th century BC. The reliefs of the 'Malatya III' group can be further split into two stylistic sub-groups: 1. the heraldic reliefs with the armed *Mischwesen* (with stylistic parallel with a number of antithetical bull-men found at Karkemiš: see above, n. 63); and 2. the reliefs of the winged geniuses with pine-cone and a drooping plant on one side (with stylistic parallels in the relief Karkemis K/24 in Orthmann 1971). Since the first subgroup seems to have stricter stylistic affinities with the Malatya I group, it may be tentatively proposed to date the first subgroup earlier than the second subgroup.

[44] Passing animals, including bulls, sphinxes and winged lions, belongs to the earliest figurative decoration of the Water Gate at Karkemiš. At Malatya, winged geniuses, a passing bull, and armed *Mischwesen* were added to the PUGNUS-*mili* reliefs in the 11th century. Such animal arrays were part of the Late Bronze Age international language of the decorative arts, as a number of luxury items from Ugarit, Egypt, and elsewhere show (Feldman 2006: 25-58). Repeatedly combined with bull-men, however, they remind of specific arrangements – bordering on the notion of a cosmic diagram – developed in the Hittite milieu, and then adapted in the temple of 'Ain Dara: compare with the arrays of bulls, lions, fantastic animals and Atlantic figures at the spring sanctuary of Eflatun Pınar (Bachmann, Özenir 2004), on the Hittite ivory inlay from Megiddo (Loud 1939: no. 1; no. 44, pl. 11), on a ceremonial axe from Şarkışla (Bittel 1976a: 19-27), on a gold disc from Magnesia (Riemschneider 1954, Taf. 108), or on a stone plaque from Alaca Höyük (Bittel 1976b, fig. 246). A single relief block from Malatya, *Relief H*, is an odd one out, and represents a mythical battle between a Storm-God and a snake. The same iconography returns on a stele found at Tell Ashara, and may be tentatively interpreted as a symbolic transposition in myth of a discourse on supremacy and political struggle (Pecchioli 2001).

[45] While the kings of Karkemiš used the title MAGNUS.REX, other independent rulers of contemporary polities, without or with less direct links to the Hittite royal house, used as highest forms of address the title REX (Luw. **hantawati-*; Giusfredi 2010: 82-88). At Malatya, PUGNUS-*mili* introduces the compound REX.*462, perhaps to be translated as «Potent King» (Hawkins 2000: 307, following Meriggi).

[46] On *Relief E*, the caption «PUGNUS-*milii*» appears next to two different images of male figures: one of them is bearded and wears a horned, pointed hat; the other one is beardless, wears no hat, and sports long hair styled in peculiar curls. The PUGNUS-*mili* with beard and horned hat may be the dead grandfather of PUGNIS-*mili* (II), who sponsored the relief cycle (Brown 2008: 303). If this is the case, we shall assume that the royal title is assigned to the grandfather retroactively, since the first PUGNUS-*mili* appears to have been a REGIO.DOMINUS under the dominion of Karkemiš (as discussed above).

[47] On *Relief I,* a woman libates in front of the goddess Sauska. A Hieroglyphic Luwian caption identifies her as «Princess Tuwatis» or, alternatively, the «daughter of King Tuwatis» (Hawkins 2000: 287, n.72, referring to a proposal by M. van Loon). I favour the second interpretation, because Tuwatis seems to be a male name, and because the iconography is fit for a queen. What kind of reason would have PUGNUS-*mili* to represent, if any of his descendants, his daughter? But it makes sense to stress with the caption an inter-dynastic marriage with the daughter of a (Tabalian?) king whose name, we may presume, was conductive of political weight and influence.

ent gods[48], each identified by his or her attributes and by Hieroglyphic Luwian captions. Evidently, the depiction of ritual practices linking the ruling dynasty with the community of the gods had a programmatic value. The steles from İspekçür and Darende and the Taita relief at Aleppo show that comparable images were also set up in other contexts, specifically in temples. In most cases, they were integrated by inscriptions indicating that these were commemorative monuments dedicated by the king to the gods upon the accomplishment of political deeds[49]. Although dedicatory inscriptions are not attested for gate reliefs, we may surmise that the occasion of their set up may have been similar. In the case of Malatya, the reliefs may relate to the early secession operated by PUGNUS-*mili* (II) from the Land of Karkemiš and with his choice to enforce the newly acquired royal power exhibiting his cultic ties to the gods of the land. At Karkemiš, two large reliefs representing the king libating to the Storm-God and sitting at a ceremonial banquet were erected at the Water Gate – after a major destruction. If, as argued above, the libation and banquet diptych date more or less to the age of Taita, the devastation of the Water Gate and its earlier reliefs may be a material trace of Taita's presumed raid, and the libation and banquet relief part of a new gate decoration program (including basalt lions in 'Ain Dara fashion), and a celebration of the reinstated authority of the Great King.

The iconography of the worshipping king is emblematic of a public discourse that puts a great accent on the king, and on him alone, as the chief cultic performer. The theological background replicates ideas of the 13th-century Hittite Empire (cf. van den Hout 1995). Gods are represented in anthropomorphic form only face-to-face with the king (or, seldom, with a member of his family), almost as if only the king could truly summon and propitiate them. In these images, king and gods engage in a sort of private communication, whom the viewer contemplates as through a window. Much attention is paid to ritual gestures, hierarchy of appearances, cultic implements, symbolic attributes, and offerings, but virtually none to other individuals, who, if at all, are represented subordinated and instrumental to ritual procedures.

3. The balance of power in the art of the early 10th century BC

At the beginning of the 10th century, monumental inscriptions at Karkemiš begin to illuminate the coexistence of the Great Kings with a line of local Country Lords, evidently reflecting the growing political influence of latter over the first. The Country Lords progressively imposed themselves as ruling subjects, and ultimately, in the second half of the 10th century, expedited the disappearance of the Great Kings from the political scene.

Earliest epigraphic records of this process are two analogous basalt steles of the early 10th century, set up by the Country Lord Suhi and his son Arnu-*x* in honour of the Great King Ura-Tarḫunta:

I   a nearly 2 m high basalt stele set up by Suhi (Inv. No. KH.11.O.400), found on the southern slope of the acropolis in 2011 (Dinçol *et al.* 2014); and

II   a smaller stele of Arnu-*x*, son of Suhi and priest of Kubaba (KARKAMIŠ A4b), which was exposed in the courtyard of the Temple of the Storm-God for at least three centuries (Hawkins 2000: 80; Gilibert 2011b: 52).

The steles commemorate in similar terms the military victory of Ura-Tarḫunta over the Land of Sura (Assyria?)[50]. We infer from their content that, at the beginning of the 10th century, Karkemiš was still governed by a Great King, who was also the leader of the army: «a dispute arose for him with the Land of Sura, and he opposed the army» (KARKAMIŠ A4b, §2-3, Hawkins 2000: 80-81; Dinçol *et al.* 2014: 148). A Country Lord, specifically Suhi (I), operated next to him and bore the additional title of *tarwanis*, «ruler»[51].

I follow F. Giusfredi in attributing a third stele found near Kelekli, 10km north of Karkemiš, to the same Suhi (Giusfredi 2014)[52]. The stele reproduces the iconography of the worshipping ruler typi-

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[48] Cf. the «nine gods» (the Malatyan pantheon?) mentioned in IZGIN 1, the inscription of CRUS+*RA/I* , perhaps to be read Tara, who was king of Malatya in the early 11th century (Hawkins 2000: 316, §18).

[49] Cf. DARENDE, §2-3: «I [Arnuwanti of Malatya] settled the city (-)tumani …, and I dedicated this stele to the god» (Hawkins 2000: 305).

[50] Weeden 2013: 10 *contra*, Simon 2012, proposing an identification with a region in Cappadocia.

[51] IUDEX-*ni*: a title attested only in the Iron Age, and specifically for the greater region around Karkemiš (Giusfredi 2010, 96). For an overview of the discussion, see Giusfredi 2009.

[52] In his recent important contribution, F. Giusfredi makes a convincing case for the existence of a Country Lord Astuwalamanza, father of Suhi I. *contra*, J. D. Hawkins, who prefers to attribute the stele of Kelekli to Suhi II, but admits that this creates «a historical puzzle» (Hawkins 2000: 93).

cal of the earlier centuries (it is in fact its latest attestation), only this time the ruler represented is not the King of Karkemiš, but the city's Country Lord[53]. In the first-person, Suhi lists his titles (REGIO. DOMINUS and *tarwanis*), states the name of his father (Astuwalamanza)[54], and formally declares his intent to marry his daughter to an otherwise unattested «King Tutḫaliya», whom, we must presume, was Ura-Tarḫunta's son (Kelekli, Hawkins 2000: 92-93; Giusfredi 2014: 490-491).

The steles of Suhi (I) and his son Arnu-*x* bespeak the growing aspirations and rise to power of the Country Lords. While still recognizing the authority of the Great King, Suhi takes possession of the royal idiom. He represents himself in ruling attitude and pursues attentive politics concerning his offsprings: the coronation of this politics must have been the marriage of his daughter into the legitimate royal family[55], but he also foresaw the instalment of his son Arnu-*x* as priest of Kubaba and of his son Astuwalamanza (II) as his successor. Astuwalamanza (II) features in a fragmentary inscription on a portal lion as the ruler who presided over the building of a gate, presumably the great gate that led up to the citadel (Karkamiš A14b, Hawkins 2000, 83-87). Because of this inscription, F. Giusfredi (2014: 492) sees in Astuwalamanza (II) the first *tarwanis* of Karkemiš who acts as a ruler, in full independence from a Great King. Astuwalamanza's portal lion, however, was originally conceived to be located at the left hand of a gate jamb, and it comes in pair with a second, specular portal lion that bears an inscription of Astuwalamanza's son, Suhi (II) (Karkamiš A14a; Hawkins 2000: 83-87). Both portal lions share stylistic and palaeographic traits, and I am inclined to date both to a single commission by Suhi (II), who, in his inscription proclames:

«they [the gods] gave me authority […] my father and my grandfathers […] for them the gods did not exalt (their) person(s), but they exalted me» (Karkamiš A14a, §3-7, translation by J. D. Hawkins)[56].

If this is correct, then it is Suhi (II) the first independent *tarwanis* of Karkemiš, his father Astuwalamanza (II) would have been the last Country Lord to operate under a Great King (Tutḫaliya?), and the political 'turn-over' shall be dated not earlier than the mid-10th century.

The proposed reconstruction leaves us with a period of 'political pre-redefinition' taking place in the first half of the 10th century and lasting about two generations, corresponding to the father-son dynasties of the Great Kings Ura-Tarḫunta and Tutḫaliya on one side and the Country Lords Suhi (I) and Astuwalamanza (II) on the other side. A conspicuous number of reliefs indicate that, in this period, public gates continued to be an important projection surface for visual messages. However, the Hittite iconography of the previous centuries was almost entirely abandoned, and the visual palette shifted to a whole range of new images. At Karkemiš, the *corpus* of reliefs dating to the first half of the 10th century consists of slabs found re-employed at the King's Gate and at the Herald's Wall – both built in the latter part of the same century (Gilibert 2011a: 38-49, with further references)[57]. Once again, the original set-up is unknown; at least some reliefs, and perhaps all of them, seem to have been conceived for an earlier version of the King's Gate.

The dominant tone of the images is still imbued with symbolism and religious connotations. Now, however, the accent is not any more on the royal state cult of Hittite tradition, but on the display of heroic force in combat and the hunt. The iconography of the worshipping king disappears altogether, while images of gods, demigods, demons, fighters and hunters in action multiply and intersect in heraldic forms. Emblematic for this phase, and quite specific to Karkemiš, are three-figure compositions on a single slab on which two mythical beings, or heroes, kill a fantastic animal, or an enemy, in a hand-to-hand

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[53] Kelekli, §1: [… *kar-ka-*]*mi²-si-sa*(URBS) REGIO.DOMINUS-*ia-i_x-sa*. The toponym *Karkamissa* is here determined with URBS, as opposed to REGIO, which is the archaic form. J. D. Hawkins has proposed to relate the habit of determining *Karkamissa* with URBS with the territorial loss of the late 10th century BC (Hawkins 1995: 90, n.32; Hawkins 2000: 74; Payne 2014: 151), which would be an argument for attributing the stele of Kelekli to Suhi II. However, in the 10th century BC the use of the determinative URBS instead of REGIO and *vice versa* seems to have been less than univocal: for example, Katuwa, the son of Suhi (II), employs URBS as a rule, but at least in one case declares himself «Lord of *Karkamissa*(REGIO)»: Karkamiš A2, §1.

[54] Formerly spelled Astuwatamanza: for the new reading, see Rieken and Yakubovich 2010: 203. This is the «Astuwatamanzas Zero» identified by Giusfredi 2014.

[55] This marriage, if ever took place, may be at the roots of the fact that, beginning with Suhi (I) down to Katuwa (end of 10th century) Country Lords presented themselves as 'kinsmen' of the Great Kings (for Suhi I, see the new stela in Dinçol *et al.* 2014: 150; for Katuwa, cf. Karkamiš A11b-c and A11a).

[56] This *topos*, of which the quoted passage is the earliest attestation, seems to belong to a new royal idiom. It returns, in modified forms, in inscriptions of Suhi's son, Katuwa (Karkamiš A2, Karkamiš A12, Karkamiš A25), on the statue of Halparuntiya (II) of Gurgum (Maraş 4, mid-9th century), as well as in the inscriptions at Tell Halaf (Kapara, c. 900) and Zincirli (second half of 9th century).

[57] At Malatya, these set of reliefs has its contemporary counterpart in the reliefs of the 'Malatya II' group, consisting of three slabs with hunting scenes, integrated by Hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions (Orthmann 1971: 93).

combat[58]. The interest for three-figure contest scenes is best observed on four large square slabs, each an elegant variation of the same theme (Fig. 5). These images, as well as most reliefs of this period, have nothing 'Hittite' about them, but rather go back and elaborate on earlier North-Syrian patterns. Their antecedents are best sought in the hunt and contest scenes on Mittanian and Middle Assyrian seals[59]. One of the seals of Ini-Teššub (Fig. 6), viceroy of Karkemiš under Tutḫaliya IV, shows that, at Karkemiš in the late 13th century, such contest scenes were already part of the local royal self-representation, and were employed as a complement to the image of the worshipping king (Mazzoni 1977: 13-14; Beyer 2001: 48-49). The artists of the early 10th century call upon this visual tradition, which evidently lived a parallel, and partially hybrid, life next to the Hittite idiom. Its monumental reformulation in the Iron Age introduces a significant interest for tripartite contests where the main contestants are not fighting over their prey, but collaborating to kill it – a variant of the contest scene which enjoyed only a limited favour in the later 2nd millennium BC (Matthews 1990: 104-105). How shall we understand the switch to this different visual palette in the decoration of urban spaces? As we have seen, the Great Kings started using gates for the public representation of the negotiation of royal power and divine grace; in doing so, they used signature images of the Hittite Empire. I propose to relate the abandonment of these signature images and the change of visual idiom to the introduction of a new discourse in public propaganda. Although the mythological narratives behind the triadic combats elude us, it is quite safe to assume that these images were charged with allegorical meanings. The basic theme reiterated over and over again is the balance of power between two parties, who fight side-by-side to overcome a common enemy. Perhaps we may put it like this: at a time when military conflicts were steadily increasing, and territorial control progressively contracted, the imperial pretensions of the Great Kings of Karkemiš lost ideological grip, and grew increasingly untenable. At the same time, epigraphic sources indicate that, for reasons that are still to be explored, the Great Kings placed more and more power in the hands of their governors, the Country-Lords. Taking into consideration this political background, we may begin to understand why, in public contexts, the last Great Kings of Karkemiš resorted to images of propaganda keyed on cooperation and control, with a world 'out there' wild and untamed.

4. Conclusions

The reliefs at the King's Gate and at the Herald's Wall are the last examples of the art of the Great Kings. Next comes the art of the independent Country Lords, who *de facto* invent a novel political identity, change ritual practices and redefine criteria of visual propaganda[60]. In the second half of the 10th century, Suhi (II) and his son Katuwa relocate public art from the urban gates to the walls lining the central square of Karkemiš, transforming it into an arena for mass ceremonies and initiating great figurative cycles, dominated by images of civic ceremonies and military triumphs. Warriors, women, young people are represented together with the king and the queen in joint celebration. The reliefs are accompanied by longer Hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions reporting the civic and military deeds of the ruler, and including prescriptions for offerings to his image: statues of rulers are erected nearby, with installations for the performance of offering rituals. As S. Aro (2013: 236-244) and S. Mazzoni (2013: 475-476) recently spotlighted, the new monumental and epigraphic habit also forsaw the 'capitalization' of the incipit of inscriptions, the Hieroglyphic Luwian sign EGO (*amu-*, «I am»), into the full-blown figure of the ruler in the gesture of speaking. In short, the public art of the Country Lord initiates a new cult of the ruling dynasty, with markedly mundane images appealing to a sense of belonging and addressing the audience directly, in fact actually *speaking* to the audience, and requiring regular offerings. We may relate the remarkable effort invested by Suhi and Katuwa into building this elaborate machinery of propaganda to their need to cement public consensus in and around the city, where conflict was rampant.

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[58] Related iconographies are also found at the Palace of Kapara at Tell Halaf and, of more difficult interpretation and much later in date, at the gates of Karatepe.

[59] The best discussion of these antecedents is Mazzoni 1977: 15-20; N.B. the important reference to the 14th-century seal of Aššur-mutakkil (Mazzoni 1977: 19).

[60] Once again it is interesting to compare with the situation at Malatya, where the hunting scenes of the early 10th century (the 'Malatya II' group) are the last traces left by an iconographic tradition tightly tied to the Hittite world of the Late Bronze Age. The destruction of the gate where they were originally set up was followed by a gap period of at least two generations, during which the ruins were occupied by squatters. A century later, the fortifications were re-built and the architects took care to integrate in them *spolia* of the older gate decoration, but all significant ties to Hittite material culture had forever been severed (Manuelli 2014).

A long and prominently exhibited inscription of Suhi, Karkamiš A1a, records Suhi's military triumph over an otherwise unknown Hatanima, but also reveals that Hatanima was able to raid the city and ravage its temples (Hawkins 2000, 87-89). Even more indicative of political stress are two inscriptions of Katuwa, Karkamiš A11a (Karkamiš A11a, §5-6) and A11b+c (Hawkins 2000: 94-108), which imply that the «grandsons of Ura-Tarḫunta» staked claims upon the throne of Karkemiš until the end of the 10th century, when a certain Ninuwi organized a revolt, gained the military support of the hinterland, and took possession of the city. Afterward, so claims Katuwa, «the city lie desolate» (Karkamiš A11b, §3)[61]: according to the new reading proposed by C. H. Melchert (2011: 77), Katuwa in some way acknowledged the claims of Ninuwi, and actually bought him out of the city by means of some sort of legal transaction[62]. And this is the last we hear of the progeny of the Great Kings of Karkemiš.

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[61] For the translation, I follow Melchert 2011: 76.

[62] C.H. Melchert (2011: 77) ingeniously suggests that Katuwa traded Karkemiš for other cities. I venture to suggest that that was the beginning of one of the numerous territorial secessions that dismembered the Land of Karkemiš in the course of the 10th century. The resolution of political conflict by diplomatic and legal means is in line with the monuments erected by Katuwa to commemorate this accomplishment: Katuwa's figurative cycles are pervaded by a sense of civic harmony, and avoid images of fight and violence (as opposed to the macabre parades of dead and dying enemies of his father Suhi). It is also significant that the independent Country Lords did not remove the monuments of the Great Kings from the city's public spaces – indeed, as in the case of the Herald's Wall, they even gave them new importance. It is also telling that the stele of Arnu-*x*, a written testimony to the original loyalty of the Country Lords to the Great Kings, was left on exhibit in the courtyard of the Storm-God temple throughout the city's history. The same may be said of the survival of the Late Bronze Age Hittite royal jewels that have been found in the Iron Age Gold Tomb of Karkemiš (probably 7th-6th century BC; Woolley 1952: 250) – apparently the jewels had been treasured over centuries, probably not only for their material value, but also for their symbolic significance. In short, the extant evidence coherently indicates that the Country Lords of the second half of the 10th century integrated the previous regency of the Great Kings in their claim to a legitimate rulership.

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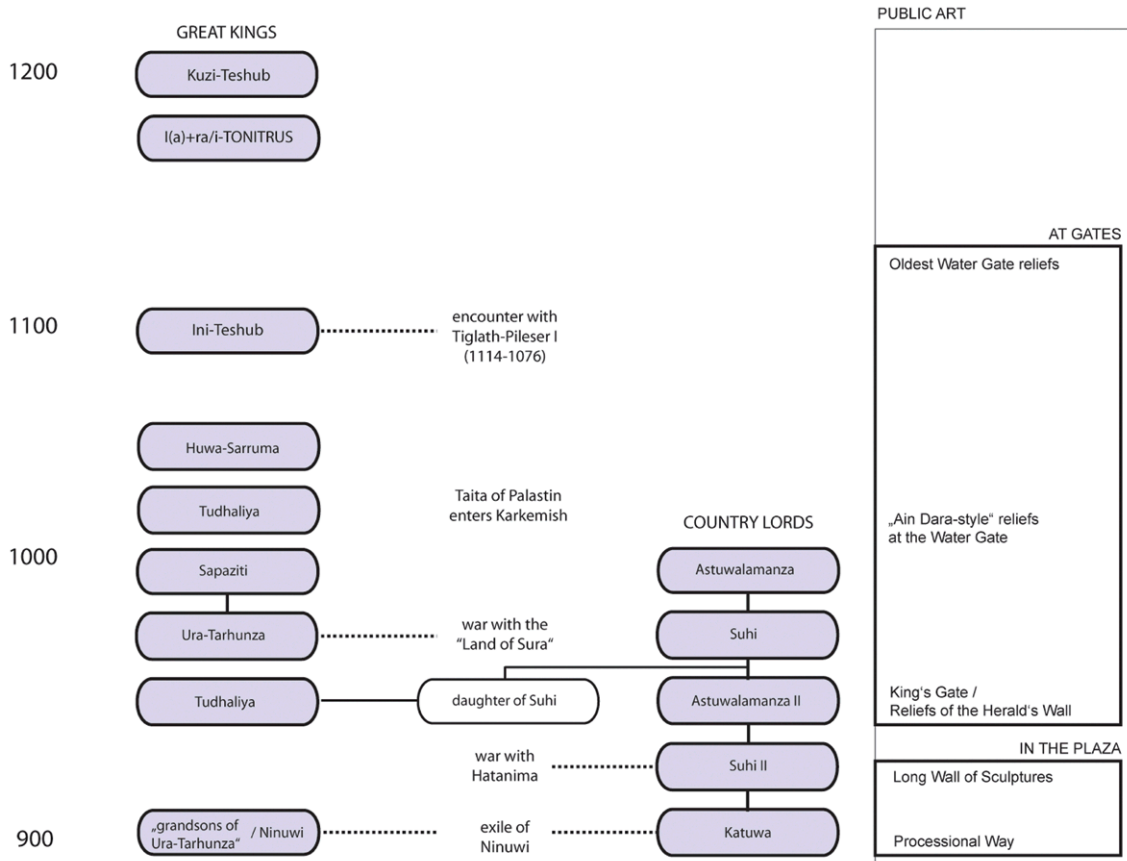

Fig. 1. Great Kings and Country Lords at Karkemiš between 1200 and 900 BC: a provisional overview following Giusfredi 2014.

Fig. 2. 11th-century portal lion from 'Ain Dara (left) and fragment of a nearly identical portal lion found at the Water Gate of Karkemiš (Wolley 1952, fig. 32).
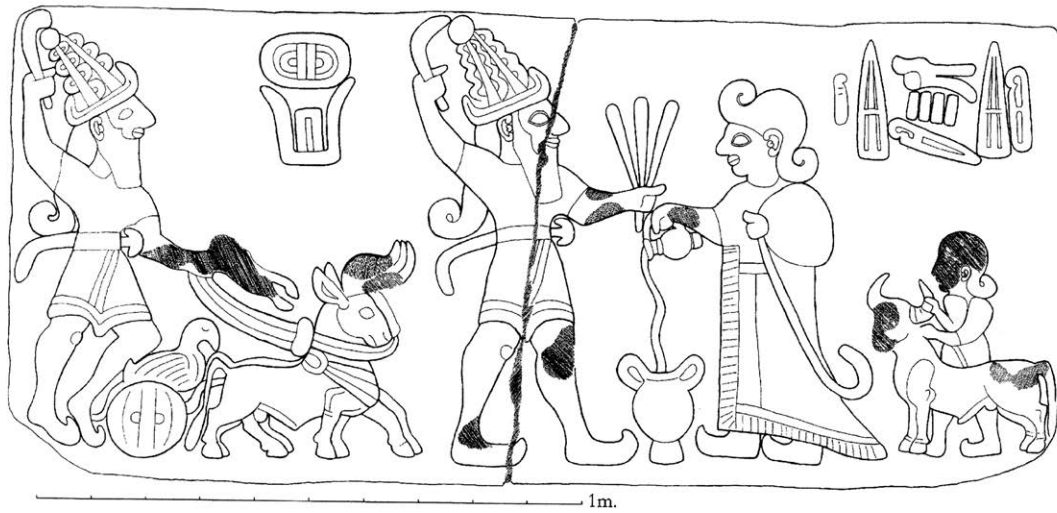
Fig. 3. *Relief K* from the *Porte des Lions* at Malatya, 12th century BC (Hawkins 2000, Malatya 8) and the 'libation slab' from the Water Gate at Karkemiš, 11th century BC (Wolley 1952, Pl. B. 30a).
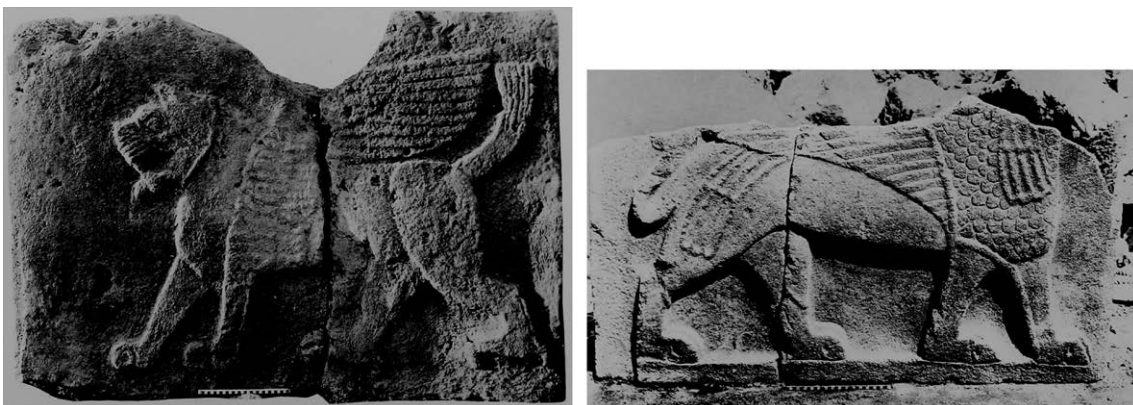

Fig. 4. Winged lion from the Water Gate and coeval sphinx found in secondary context at Karkemiš (Woolley 1952, Pls. B. 29b, B. 48a)
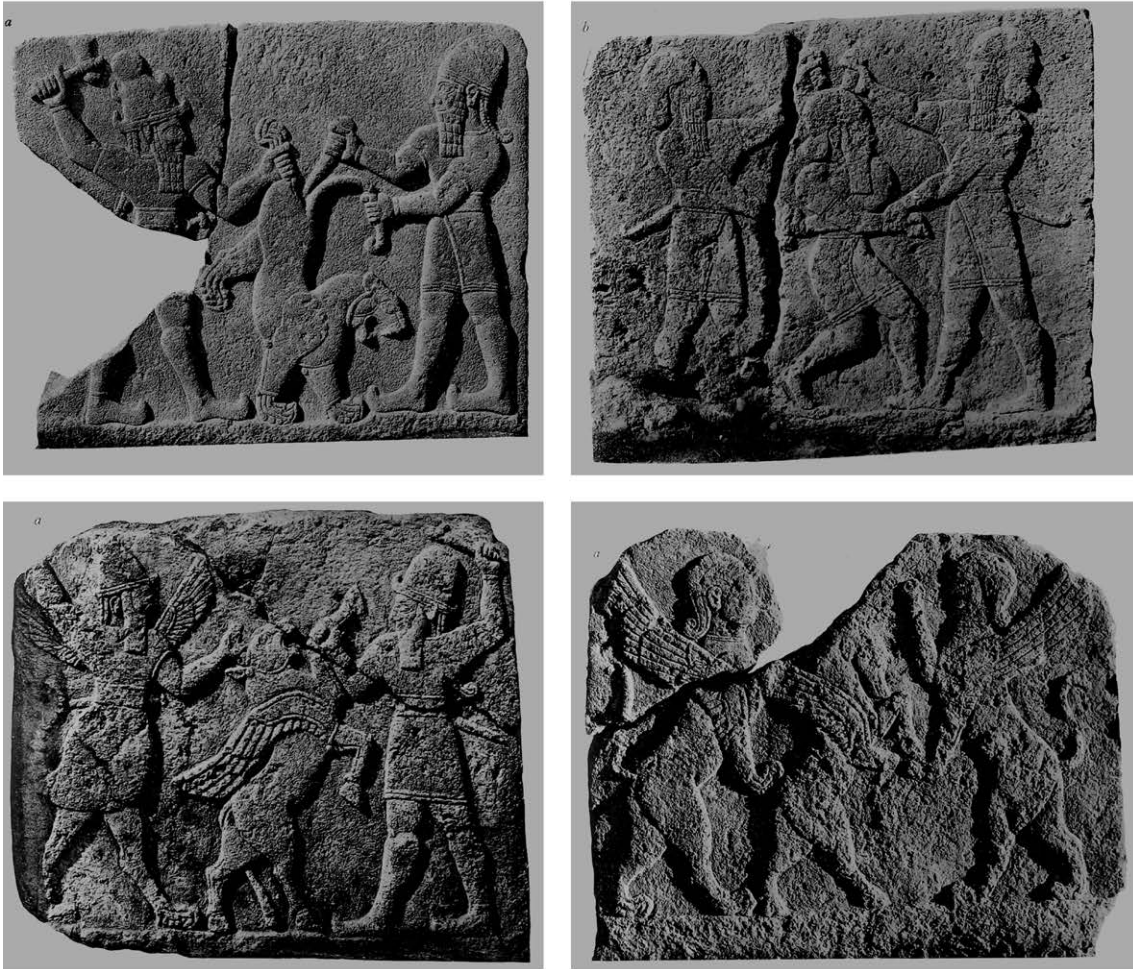
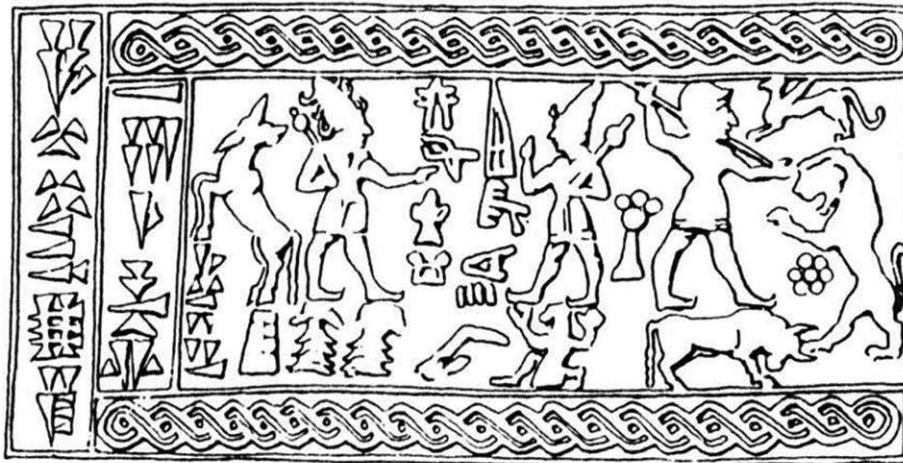Fig. 5. Three-figure contest scenes from the Herald's Wall (Wolley 1952, Pls. B. 11a, B. 15a-b, B. 16a).

Fig. 6. Seal of Ini-Teššub, king of Karkemiš under the Hittite Great King Tutḫaliya IV, late-13th century BC (Schaeffer 1956, fig. 32).

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