

From Phrygia to Urartu.

The Phrygian Belts Discovered in Toprakkale/Rusaḫinili Qilbani=kai and the Relations between Urartu and Phrygia

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Quattro frammenti di cinture bronzee, rinvenuti nel sito urarteo di Toprakkale e confrontabili con reperti trovati nelle più antiche sepolture di Gordion, consentono una riflessione sulle relazioni tra Frigia ed Urartu, due entità che si svilupparono in Anatolia e nel Caucaso Meridionale durante l'età del Ferro. Partendo da una panoramica su quel che è noto riguardo le interazioni tra queste due entità politiche in base alle fonti scritte, gli autori inquadrano i frammenti delle cinture rinvenuti a Toprakkale proprio come un prodotto dei contatti tra Urartu e Frigia. I contatti tra queste due entità, iniziati probabilmente tra la seconda metà dell'VIII e l'inizio del VII secolo a.C., hanno portato, tra le altre cose, a una possibile assimilazione di alcuni elementi frigi nell'arte urartea, rilevabile quantomeno dagli oggetti prodotti a Toprakkale.

The history of the ancient Near East during the Iron Age has traditionally been mainly focused on a leading actor, Assyria, around which one can find many smaller political entities, such as Urartu, Mannea, Phrygia or the Syro-Hittite states, less powerful but also less studied. As we shall see in this contribution, Assyria is actually an essential element when talking about these lesser known entities: indeed, in the Assyrian archives are preserved texts describing important events connected to the relationship between the main leader and the lesser states. However, one should also consider that these smaller political entities had contacts and relationships between each other, even though they are less documented both in the written and in the archaeological context. In the case of this article, we would like to focus mainly on the interactions between the notorious Assyrian Northern enemy, Urartu, and the Phrygian state (see Fig. 1 for a map). Both Urartu and Phrygia have mainly been studied in a subordinate way in relation to Assyrian history and, only regarding Phrygia, to the better-known Greek world. Thinking about and analysing the contacts between these two states would allow to deeper understand the Near Eastern setting during the Iron Age period, emancipating its comprehension from the sole study of the “biased” Assyrian sources, and decentring the understanding of the Iron Age in the whole ancient Near East. The relationship between these two states is actually only cursorily documented in Assyrian sources of the

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