e-ISSN 2036-5845

**KASKAL**
Vol. 3 – Nuova serie – Novembre 2026

# Hamath, a Kingdom of Neo-Hittite Origin and the Bible

Andrea Bemporad
Independent researcher

**Abstract** Hamath, a Syrian kingdom of Neo-Hittite origin, may have played a role of mediation and, therefore, transmission towards the Israelite world of some elements of the rich Hittite cultural tradition. Indeed, we can hypothesise that the close commercial, cultural, military and perhaps religious between Hamath and ancient Israel were actually more profound than those we can deduce from both biblical and extra-biblical sources. Finally, could the king of Hamath Toi be identified with Taita II, who appears in two Luwian-hieroglyphic inscriptions and whose kingdom of *W/Palistin* still remains largely obscure?

**Keywords** Hamath. Israel. Palistin. Neo-Hittite. King Toi/Taita. Assyrian army.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 2 Biblical Quotes. – 3 Extrabiblical Sources. – 4 Conclusion.

## 1 Introduction

The historical-archaeological and textual evidence we have regarding the Syrian kingdom of Hamath, the lack of precise chronological connections notwithstanding, seems at least in part to confirm that this kingdom had continuous political contact and cultural and economic exchanges with Israel, sharing with it a stretch of border and the tragic fate of defeat and deportation at the hands of the Assyrian army.

Hamath (חֲמָת) does not seem, as is often the case with other foreign kingdoms, to have been hostile towards the Jewish people or an instrument in the hands of God to punish their sins; indeed, the biblical editors mention this kingdom on several occasions as being considered a potential ally of the Israelites. This could also suggest that Hamath played a role in the transmission of some Hittite cultural elements to the biblical world.

Furthermore, as shall be shown, the king of Hamath Toi (תֹּעִי), mentioned together with David in 2 Samuel (8:9-10), can probably be identified with Taita, whose kingdom of *Palistin*, despite having a certain political importance, still remains largely obscure.[1]

This possible Toi/Taita identification could also partly answer another question: that is, whether it was actually King David who maintained relations of equal rank with the kingdom of Hamath or whether this supposed political-economic balance between the two states was instead achieved only in later times, corresponding, in our opinion, to the reign of subsequent sovereigns such as Jeroboam II.[2]

**1** In this regard, see Sass 2010, 169-74; Aro-Valjus 2010, 1-9; Emanuel 2015, 11-40; Čech 2015, 63-73; Archi 2016, 35-7; Hawkins, Weeden 2016, 9-21; Welton et al. 2019, 291-333.

**2** Cf. also Frevel 2019, 349-50.

Edizioni Ca'Foscari

**Peer review**

Submitted 2025-12-22
Accepted 2026-03-11
Published 2026-11-13

Check for updates

**Open access**
© 2026 Bemporad | CC BY 4.0

**DOI 10.30687/KASKAL/2036-5845/2026/03/005**

## 2 Biblical Quotes

"Toi king of Hamath" 2 Samuel (8:9): תֹּ֣עִי מֶ֣לֶךְ חֲמָ֑ת

In the story of King David's conquest in 2 Samuel (8:9-10) and the parallel verses in 1 Chronicles (18:9-10)[3] it reads:

> When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer[4] then Toi sent Joram his son unto king David, to salute him and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: for Hadadezer had wars with Toi. And Joram[5] brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of bronze.

In these verses, Toi does not appear to be a ruler seeking submission to David[6] at all, but appears to be leading a state that has excellent diplomatic relations with Israel. This alliance may have contributed to the defeat of a common enemy like Hadadezer and to increasing the prestige of the king of the Israelites, activating the common practice of sending gifts between sovereigns of equal status.[7]

The biblical account of the Davidic-Solomonic monarchy, while not providing precise historical data realistically compatible with other Near Eastern sources,[8] could, however, lead us to a possible identification of Toi with Taita, whose name occurs in texts in Hieroglyphic Luwian.

This identification makes use of some linguistic considerations, such as that of Steitler, according to whom *Taita* would be a name of Hurrian origin containing the root *taḫḫe* (man) with the addition of a suffix *-ta* for personal names. The Hebrew form could be interpreted as an abbreviation of the Hurrian *taḫḫe=ta* used in Hieroglyphic Luwian contexts. Furthermore, given the frequent change of the long vowel *ā* to *ō* in Canaanite, together with some other clues, such as the presence of the original vowel "*a*" attested in the Greek form of the biblical name "Toi" in Josephus (Jewish Antiquities 7.108) and in some manuscripts of the Septuagint (Codex Vaticanus, Codex Alexandrinus), there could be confirmation of a possible Toi/Taita correspondence.[9]

Even if the biblical verses cited seem, perhaps partly erroneously, to name the kingdom of Hamath rather than the land of *Palistin*,[10] we could have, as shall be shown, further possible evidence of the excellent diplomatic relations that appear to have existed between Hamath and Israel from the outset, and their shared evident hostility towards Hadadezer.[11]

Indeed, Hamath appears in several contexts of the biblical narrative as an important political entity of the time, often involved in the historical and prophetic destiny of ancient Israel.[12] The contexts are examined below.

**3** In 1 Chronicles the name of the ruler Toi appears in the variant Waw: תֹּ֫עוּ

**4** Hadadezer (הֲדַדְעֶ֔זֶר) appears in the biblical story as the king of Zobah, a sworn antagonist of Toi of Hamath. In these contrasts perhaps we can already glimpse the signs of a future friction between the Luwian and Aramaic elites, with Damascus allied and at the time partially subjected to Hadadezer of Zobah against Toi and David (cf. 2 Samuel 8:3-8).

**5** The name of the son of Toi appears in 2 Samuel (8:9) as a Semitic name derived from YHWH; however, in 1 Chronicles (18:9) the same character instead bears the name of Hadoram which would more likely bring to mind a theophoric name derived from the deity Hadad.

**6** Especially since Toi does not bring the gifts personally, but through his own son who probably acted as viceroy. For Stoebe 1994, 251, the particularity of the account of the verses (9-10) speaks in favour of their reliability and indeed of the central role of Toi and his gifts which were also placed in the sanctuary of YHWH (2 Samuel 8:11).

**7** See later 2 Kings (7:6) where Hamath may have again provided logistical or military support to the kingdom of Israel. Furthermore, in Amos (6:2) Hamath is defined as "the Great".

**8** See Janzen 2008, 39-58; Garfinkel 2011, 13-35; 2017, 5-59.

**9** Furthermore, Steitler argues for equating Hebrew *t'y* with Hurrian *taḫḫe* as the interchangeability between *ḥ* and ʿ would be a common phenomenon in the realisation of foreign words and names in Western Semitic texts. Steitler 2010, 81-99. See also Collins 2007, 198-9; Galil 2014, 75-104. Alternatively see Simon 2014, 725-6.

**10** In general, as we know, even the comparison with celebratory inscriptions or real annals does not often provide us with clear and genuine information on historical events, as they essentially imply, above all, propaganda purposes, while the biblical story seems to anachronistically move the chronology of negative events and unfortunate events in the history of ancient Israel to the reigns of rulers deemed unworthy by the various biblical authors who followed. Cf. Galil 2013, 167-8; Blum 2016, 46-7.

**11** Hadad-ezer is a typical theophoric name composed of the Aramean deity Hadad, presumably inspired by the Hittite storm god. Therefore, the king of Zobah, hostile to Toi and defeated by David in 2 Samuel, may not correspond with the later Hadadezer king of Damascus, who later seems to have joined with Hamat and Israel and other adverse regional potentates for reasons of political survival attempting to stem the neo-Assyrian military power.

**12** 2 Kings (14:28; 19:13; 23:33; 25:21), 1 Chronicles (18:3), 2 Chronicles (8:3-4), Isaiah (10:9; 11:11; 36:19; 37:13); Jeremiah (38:5; 49:23; 52:9; 52:27), Amos (6:2; 6:14), Zechariah (9:2).

In 2 Kings (5) it tells of the conversion of a commander of the Aramean army to the God of Israel YHWH,[13] which could be a possible reference to the actual presence of a cult of YHWH, in some historical periods, even outside Israelite territory, and precisely in the kingdom of Hamath, given its geographical proximity.[14] The annals of Sargon II testify to a revolt of a king of Hamath with the significant theophoric name Yahu-bihdi,[15] later killed by Sargon himself, which dramatically put an end to the Hamathite kingdom in 720 BCE.

In the biblical text the connection "at the entrance to Hamath" (לְבוֹא חֲמָת) recurs several times. This geographical indication would seem to suggest a gap or point of access within a border area that seems to mark the northern limit of the Israelite kingdom,[16] a territorial extremity that seems to occupy a central importance in biblical historiography. This region is also often cited precisely as an ideal frontier of the kingdom of Israel in the prophetic context as well,[17] almost as if to underline, in respect of divine will, its role as the geographical boundary to the north of the "Promised Land", without ever becoming, therefore, a terrain disputed with Hamath, unlike Damascus and other contemporary regional political forces.[18]

The kingdom of Hamath and the kingdom of Israel, in fact, seem to have shared military alliances on certain occasions, gravitating in two evidently distinct and non-competing geographical spheres, and also presenting a certain cultural and political affinity. The Bible describes the kingdom of Damascus led by Hazael and his son and successor Ben-Hadad as an expansive force,[19] which seems to have presented a threat to both Hamath and Israel, whose territories could allow it valuable access to the Mediterranean Sea along two directions, north-west and south-west.

In 2 Kings (6:8) it is said that the king of Damascus, defined as king of Aram (מֶלֶךְ אֲרָם), clashed with Israel, and during this war, Hamath, who is perhaps referred to in a generic and symbolic way in 2 Kings (7:6) as "king of the Hittites", may have provided decisive help in an highly critical moment when the Israelites were on the verge of succumbing.

## 3 Extrabiblical Sources

In the southern part of the territory that would later constitute the kingdom of Hamath we find the important site of Mishrifeh,[20] in which various excavations provided very important new archaeological and epigraphic data which add to the data provided by the Tell sites Tayinat, Tell Afis further north, as well as Aleppo itself, with the Temple of the Storm God.[21] As previously mentioned, a ruler with a probably Hurrian name Taita ruled a kingdom called *Palistin*, whose name appears to have a Luwian origin.[22] This potentate, from its epicentre and crossroads Tell Tayinat (ancient Kunulua),[23] around the eleventh century BCE, probably controlled large territories and interacted with them; among these

**13** Römer 2019, 105-19.

**14** Wazana 2016, 393: "Extrabiblical evidence suggests the possibility of YHWH worship in Syria, particularly in Hamath". Dalley (1990, 21-32) argued, mainly on the basis of onomastic data, that YHWH was worshipped as a major god in Hamath.

**15** This sovereign would in fact seem to bear a name formed in environments close to a cult of YHWH, perhaps assimilated by Aramean populations through regional contacts between Hamath and northern Israel. Sargon in his inscription describes Yahu-bihdi as "evil Hittite". See Frame 2021, 402-37.

**16** Numbers (13:21; 34:8); Joshua (13, 5); Judges (3:3); 1 Kings (8:65); 2 Kings (14:25); 1 Chronicles (13:5); 2 Chronicles (7:8). In 2 Kings (14:25) it is said that Jeroboam II responded (הֵשִׁיב) to the loss of part of the territory, restoring this apparent historical border after a victorious reconquest at the entrance of the kingdom of Hamath. See Niehr 2019, 373-87.

**17** See Ezekiel (47:16-17; 47:20; 48:1); Zechariah (9:2); Amos (6:14). See Na'aman 1999, 417-41.

**18** A quote in 2 Chronicles (8:3-4) regarding an apparent military action by King Solomon towards Hamath could partly contradict what has been said above; however, the celebratory and glorifying context of this passage seems to serve purely a literary purpose to raise this sovereign in an anachronistic and artificial way compared to the territory conquered, according to the Bible, by his father David. Cf. also 2 Kings (14:28) which almost seems to contradict the previous verse (14:25) in which Hamath was once again clearly recognised as an extremity of the border and certainly not a territory subject to conquest.

**19** 1 Kings (19:15); 2 Kings (8:7-15; 12:17-18; 13:24).

**20** In central-western Syria Mishrifeh/Qatna was already active in the middle and late Bronze Age; in the Iron Age it became an important urban centre, under the influence of Hamath, of textile production and connected to various agricultural settlements. Furthermore, the site has yielded a statue of considerable size. Cf. Morandi Bonacossi 2019, 179-207.

**21** Kohlmeyer 2009, 190-202; Harrison 2009a, 174-89; 2009b, 171-84.

**22** Hawkins 2009, 164-73; Pucci 2019, 169-94

**23** The archaeological site of Tell Tayinat is located in southern Turkey in the province of Hatay and was the main Syro-Anatolian centre of the Amuq plain and the northern Orontes valley. See Osborne et al. 2019, 261-312; Welton et al. 2019, 325.

stood the renowned sanctuary of Aleppo, where in 2003 the Luwian hieroglyphic inscription was found which commemorates a ruler Taita (I) who describes himself as "King and Hero of the country of Palistin".[24] The inscription, laudatory in nature, contains accurate instructions for religious ceremonies and cultic offerings to the god.[25] The highly important temple dedicated to the Storm God of Aleppo was a sanctuary of considerable size and decorated with splendid reliefs;[26] carefully restored and renovated, it endured as a cultic location until after the conquest by the Hittite empire, after the end of the Bronze Age.[27] The excavations have in fact highlighted the recovery of a certain well-being and stability during the Iron Age, which allowed further restructuring at least until around 900 BCE, among which we can include King Taita's restorations of the eleventh century.[28]

A ruler named Taita appears in two other inscriptions from Meharde and Sheizar north-west of Hama on the Middle Orontes,[29] dating, however, to a much later period. We must, therefore, be dealing with a second sovereign who bears the same name – more precisely with Taita II king of *W/Palistin* and his wife Kupapiya.[30]

It can therefore be assumed that this state of *Palistin* had extended to control the Amuq plain[31] and the city of Aleppo up to Hamath,[32] and that it still maintained a strong component of the Hittite Syro-Anatolian tradition. This could also be indicated by a line of rulers who succeeded one another on the throne and who bear typically Hittite names that refer to the imperial dynasty and seem to have more or less direct ancestral ties with it. Furthermore, two Luwian-hieroglyphic inscriptions from Arsuz[33] mention a Suppiluliuma son of Manana,[34] as king of *Walistin*, which could be evidence of an extension of the kingdom towards the north-west and an increased political importance which perhaps became comparable to that of the kingdom of Karkemiš. The latter, for a certain period, would therefore have been hypothetically partly subjugated or at least in competition with the kingdom of *Palistin* itself.[35]

Furthermore, the inscription on a throne found in Tell Tayinat during the excavations of the 1930s is rather interesting. In this inscription the ethnic adjective *w/palistin* appears, apparently associated with a ruler with the significant name of Halparuntiya.[36] Also on the site of Tell Tayinat, a further Luwian-hieroglyphic inscription was found in 2012 on a splendid basalt statue. It perhaps belonged to a second ruler who bore the name of Suppiluliuma and was found near fragments on which the same toponym *Walistin* reappeared.[37]

**24** Cf. Galil 2014, 75-104; Sass 2010, 169-74; Weeden 2013, 1-20.

**25** Hawkins 2011, 41-54.

**26** A demonstration of the basic role played by the storm god of Aleppo in the religion of the Near East can be traced back to cultic offerings by the kings of Ebla as far back as the mid-third millennium. Furthermore, about 40 km north-west of Aleppo stands the temple of 'Ain Dara which similarly presents architectural evidence and sculptures that date back to both the Hittite imperial period and the reign of King Taita I. Cf. Kohlmeyer 2008, 119-30; 2010, 255-80; Knitter et al. 2014, 107-27.

**27** A second, very fragmentary inscription (Aleppo 7) is found near the portal of the temple dating back to the Hittite imperial period, also restored and inscribed later by Taita I, Hawkins 2011, 46-51.

**28** These renovations included new orthostats in relief and new figures on the entrance, as well as the engraved depiction of this ruler placed significantly on the eastern wall opposite the pre-existing figure of the storm god from the imperial era. In the inscription (ALEPPO 6) Taita requires ritual sacrifices for all levels of Aleppo society whenever they go to the temple, thus linking kingship to the cultic institution towards the Halabite Storm god. See D'Alfonso, Lovejoy 2023, 177-214, with previous bibliography.

**29** Hawkins 2000, 399; Singer 2012, 463; Giusfredi 2018, 163-9.

**30** Cf. Hutter 2004, 429-30.

**31** The Amuq area was mentioned until the ninth century BCE in Assyrian sources as the land of Unqi, becoming an integral part of the Assyrian empire at the end of the eighth century. Cf. Pucci 2019, 169-94.

**32** Therefore, the reign of Taita I, king of Palistin, under his descendant Taita II had probably extended to include Meharde-Sheizar near Hamath and was now evidently written with the toponym *Walistin*, which, as we will see, also appears in Arsuz (although in this text we will generally continue to refer to the initial name of the eleventh century kingdom ruled by the first Taita "King and Hero of Palistin").

**33** To the south on the Turkish coast in Iskenderun Bay. See Dinçol et al. 2015, 59-77; D'Alfonso, Lovejoy 2023, 200.

**34** According to Giusfredi, the palaeographically most plausible sequence for the rulers of *W/Palistin* mentioned above would be the following Taita I (eleventh century) / Suppiluliuma son of Manana (tenth century) / Taita II (early ninth century), Giusfredi 2018, 163-9. Alternatively see Harrison 2019, 219-31.

**35** The aforementioned ALEPPO 7 inscription, in a very fragmentary context, seems to hint at political relations in the north-east with Karkemiš (which may have in fact undergone a temporary political-economic contraction) and, furthermore, on a much broader international scale at relations with Egypt as well. See Hawkins 2011, 44-51; Weeden 2013, 12-13; Simon 2017, 317-30. Cf. also Mora 2023, 185; 2024, 121-34.

**36** See in regard Hawkins 2000, 365-7; 2009, 166-7; Harrison 2009b, 179. Halparuntiya is probably mentioned in Assyrian sources as king Qalparunda.

**37** The later dating of this inscription was suggested by Hawkins, who identified this ruler Suppiluliuma (II) with Sapalulme, mentioned by Shalmaneser III in the mid-ninth century. Cf. also Weeden 2013, 12; Morandi Bonacossi 2019, 181-2; Harrison 2017, 286-8.


e-ISSN 2036-5845

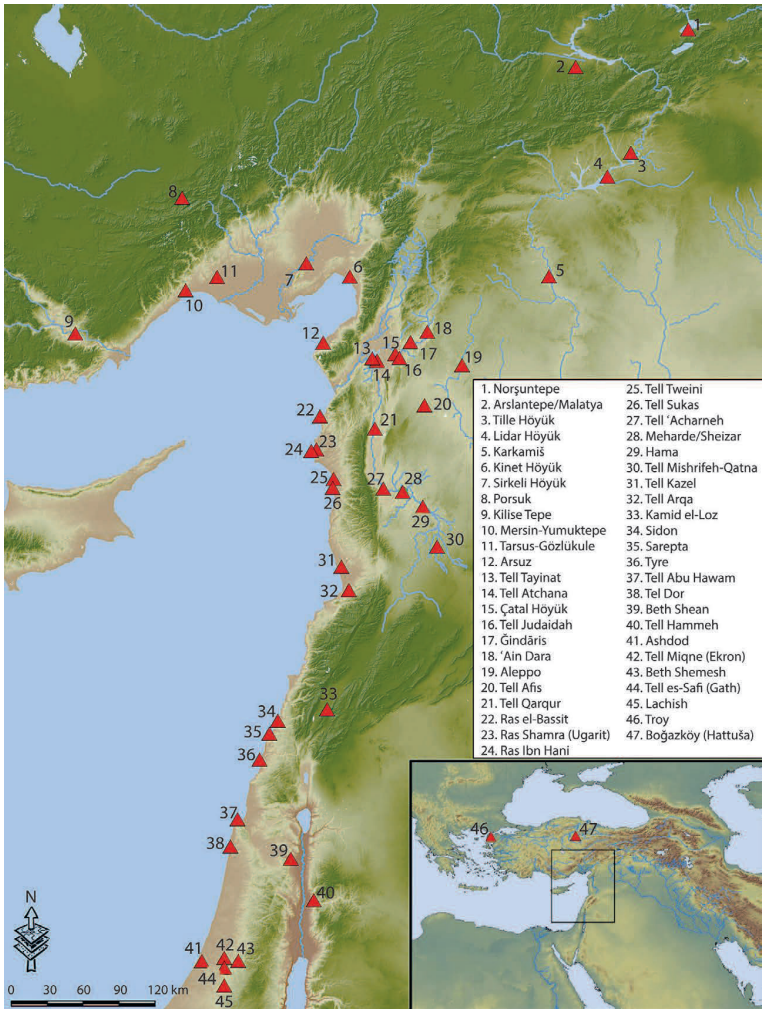



**Figure 1**
Map of the Amuq Plain showing the location of Tell Tayinat and other settlements mentioned (Welton et al. 2019, 293)

These evident references to the Hittite cultural heritage which turns up in inscriptions, names and titles of rulers of W/*Palistin*, despite the lack of precise evidence, could connect directly with the Mishrifeh-Hama region.[38] The future kingdom of Hamath could, in fact, have benefitted precisely from a weakening of the kingdom of *Palistin* to progressively extend its power starting from the last quarter of the ninth century – a period to which three basalt heads from Mishrifeh date back, which present significantly stylistic and iconographic characteristics that seem to connect them to the findings of Tell Tayinat and Arsuz.[39]

We would, therefore, be entitled to assume that the reign of a king Taita II attained as early as the tenth century BCE (or at the beginning of the ninth century) a notable political power combined with a vast territorial extension in the Syrian region of the Orontes. Could, therefore, the ruler mentioned in 2 Samuel (8:9-10) as a contemporary of King David be defined by the biblical authors as king of Hamath rather than *Walistin*?[40]

**38** Welton et al. 2019, 291-333.

**39** These similarities thus seem to connect some artistic creations from Tayinat with other later ones found in Mishrifeh during the reign of Hamath, whose capital Hama was only about thirty km north of Mishrifeh. See in regard Morandi Bonacossi 2013, 121-46.

**40** Cf. Steitler 2010, 81-99. Also, Galil 2013, 159-74, supports the hypothesis that King David had realistically managed to create a state powerful enough, capable of retaliating, and counting itself among the powers of the time, taking advantage of the ongoing clash between the Arameans and the Sea Peoples for the control of the territories once dominated by the Hittite and Egyptian empires. Therefore the epigraphic testimonies of Taita found in the temple of Aleppo would confirm what is reported in 2 Samuel regarding the diplomatic and military power enjoyed by David in that particular time.

It poses the problem of a possible connection of the kingdom of *Palistin* with the subsequent biblical Philistines and with one of the Sea Peoples (prst/plst) defeated by Ramesses III at the beginning of the twelfth century.[41]

The origins of this population and their cultural and material tradition, as well as their location according to the biblical account and Assyrian sources, along the southern coastal strip (up to Gaza) with continuous friction with the Israelites, seem to place them somewhere other than the kingdom of *Palistin*.[42] This potentate, as far as it has been possible to ascertain thus far from various excavations,[43] beyond an actual similarity in the name (later modified, as mentioned, to Walistin),[44] does not seem to differ much from other neo-Hittite states. We find, in fact, the use of Luwian-hieroglyphic inscriptions by its rulers with significant real names and of some architectural and decorative elements (such as false windows and lion figures) taken directly from the Luwian-Hittite tradition.[45] This culture seems to have been particularly resilient, as it was capable of transmitting itself, at least in part, to the subsequent kingdom of Hamath[46] which was being established around the ancient city of Hama.[47]

The kingdom of Hamath extended east and west of the Orontes River and included important territories that had been part of key kingdoms in the political-economic balance of Late Bronze Age Syria such as Ugarit, Amurru and Nuḫašše. The power vacuum created in the following centuries due to the presumed decline of the kingdom of *Palistin* evidently made the creation of the prosperous influential kingdom of Hamath possible. At the current point of research we have no hint as to who may have founded this potentate. However, the first rulers who in the second half of the ninth century began to explicitly define themselves in their Luwian-hieroglyphic inscriptions as rulers of Hamath were Urḫilina[48] and his son Uratami.[49]

Urḫilina, according to Assyrian royal sources, allied himself with Ahab of the kingdom of Israel for the first time in 853 BCE[50] to halt a military campaign undertaken by Shalmaneser III towards Syria. The first dynasty of Hamath, despite probably ruling over a kingdom with growing multi-ethnic characteristics, appears historically to continue in the wake of the Luwian-Hittite tradition[51] at least until the accession to the throne of Zakkur, a parvenu originally from Anah on the Euphrates.[52]

We do not exactly know whether or not the good relations between Hamath and Israel were maintained during the reign of Zakkur. However, the conquests of this sovereign, who retained his power for more than twenty years from the beginning of the eighth century BCE, seem to concern mainly the territories located to the north of his kingdom.[53] This seems possible with a pacified southern border and an Israel which was not hostile towards it, as Israel's failure to participate in the coalition against Hamath organised by the King of Damascus Bar-Hadad seems to confirm.[54]

The choice of the Aramaic language for the inscription of Zakkur could also indicate, in addition to an effective and progressive change in the new elite of Hamath compared to that of previous centuries,[55] the desire of the new sovereign to present himself as the progenitor of a generation more representative

**41** Knapp, Manning 2016, 99-149.

**42** See Görg 2005, 526-8; Harrison 2006-2007, 85-8; Emanuel 2015, 11-40.

**43** Cf. Janeway 2017, 115-23; Osborne et al. 2019, 261-312.

**44** Weeden 2015, 65-6.

**45** The renovations of the temples of Aleppo and 'Ain Dara, both dating back to the reign of Taita I, hark back, albeit with some imperfections, to the Hittite imperial period. See Aro-Valjus 2010, 1-9; Harrison 2017, 277-99.

**46** See also the previous footnote 15 in this regard.

**47** However, some studies seem to favour a hypothetical connection of the kingdom of Palastin with the Philistines and other sea peoples. See in particular Venturi 2007, 297-300; Galil 2014, 79-80. For Hawkins 2011, 53, this connection remains only a possibility without any concrete proof. Put more categorically, Singer 2012, 468, asserts: "In short, the hastily generated association between the Neo-Hittite Kingdom of Taita and the Philistines in the northern Levant is misleading".

**48** Attested as "Irḫulēni" in the royal inscriptions of Shalmaneser III in the period 853-845 BCE, the first references to Hamath in Assyrian texts date back to the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta II (890-884), while the city of Hama has been mentioned in the Ebla archives since the third millennium.

**49** Uratami can instead be identified with "Rudamu". Hawkins 2000, 403-23; 2016, 183-90.

**50** Cf. Grayson 2001, 185-7; Dion 2006, 43-8; Younger 2007, 243-71; Payne 2012, 63-4.

**51** Bryce 2012, 133-8; Hawkins 2016, 183-90. Cf. also Mazzoni 2014, 44-52; Cecchini 2014, 58-63.

**52** The latter managed to usurp the throne from a legitimate descendant of Uratami by exploiting a change already underway in the Hamatian ethnic-political balance in favour of the Aramean component.

**53** Amadasi Guzzo 2009, 336-47; D'Alfonso, Lovejoy 2023, 202-3.

**54** In fact, at that moment Israel seemed to fear Damascus's expansionism more after the past aggressiveness of King Hazael, than the neo-Assyrian forces that supported Zakkur.

**55** Niehr 2020, 76.


e-ISSN 2036-5845

of the now preponderant Aramaic component of the population. Even if the actual importance of the Luwian-Hittite cultural and historiographical heritage[56] still partially shines through in the Zakkur inscription itself and is documented throughout the existence of the kingdom of Hamath.[57]

This kingdom, in fact, could have proved favourable, during the course of its history, as we will see later, to the transmission of some concepts and traditions from the Hittite and Luwian worlds to Israel.[58]

During the reign of Adad-nirari III, two Assyrian military campaigns against Damascus in 803 and 796 BCE allowed Zakkur to consolidate his power, creating the opportunity for a parallel strengthening of the kingdom of Israel.[59] These events most likely favoured the political consolidation and expansion of the kingdom of Jeroboam II (787-747 BCE) as the biblical writers also seem to confirm, despite the recurring malicious description of this Israelite ruler as "a sinner in the eyes of the Lord".[60]

We do not know for certain who was Zakkur's successor to the throne of Hamath. However, we know that the Syrian kingdom, after reaching its fullest height around the second half of the eighth century, began a slow political and economic decline. Again Tiglath-pileser III (745-727) managed to progressively conquer part of the territories of Hamath, while Sargon II in 720 definitively put an end, as previously mentioned, both to the kingdom of Hamath by repressing the rebellion of its last sovereign Yahu-bihdi, and to the kingdom of Israel, which had once again decided to join its historic ally in an anti-Assyrian function.[61] The two kingdoms, whose history appears to be inextricably linked to each other and to that of the Assyrians, were thus both finally destroyed and eradicated, going on to constitute the nucleus of the two richest provinces of the empire.[62]

In 2 Kings (17:24; 17:30-33; 18:34) the deportation of the population of Hamath is mentioned. It was forced, with its divinities, to settle in the cities of Samaria in place of the Israelite inhabitants who themselves were evidently obliged through a forced migration to move elsewhere, most likely south to the kingdom of Judah. Here we do in fact have archaeological evidence of a population growth towards the end of the eighth century, accompanied by the appearance of objects typical of Northern Israelite culture.[63]

## 4 Conclusion

Returning to the hypothesis that "Toi king of Hamath" can be identified with Taita king of *Palistin*, we can affirm that, given the great importance of the close relations between Israel and Hamath and the latter subsequently occupying a territory almost coinciding with the kingdom of *Palistin* of which it was part,[64] Toi may have been cited incorrectly by the biblical editors, more or less knowingly, as king of Hamath.[65]

**56** See Dion 2006, 43-8; Archi 2016, 25-30; Simon 2019, 127-48.

**57** In fact, precisely from the analysis of extrabiblical sources, in particular from the Luwian-hieroglyphic inscriptions of the first millennium relating to the kingdom of Hamat, alongside a certain discontinuity with respect to the great Hittite cultural and linguistic heritage of the previous centuries, some imperial traditions, even after the end of the Hittite kingdom in Anatolia, were maintained and constituted an important unifier in various Syrian potentates, with different characteristics and forms especially compared to the Aramaic component. Cf. in general Hawkins 2000; Payne 2012; Niehr 2020, 61-78.

**58** Cf. Mazzoni 1987, 35-6; Hutter 2004, 425-42; Singer 2005, 430-51.

**59** In this regard, see Weippert 1992, 42-67.

**60** See 2 Kings (14:25-28), where, however, the story clearly overstates a hypothetical reconquest and expansion into territories that never actually belonged to the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Cf. Blum 2016, 50-1.

**61** King Yahu-bihdi of Hamat therefore tried in vain to oppose Sargon II with a new anti-Assyrian alliance which Israel had eventually joined.

**62** In particular, the excavations at Mishrifeh have highlighted a rich and vast artisan district active especially during the Iron Age II, specialized not only in the wool and textile industry, but also in the storage of various agricultural products and controlled by a centralised administration. See Morandi Bonacossi 2006, 73-114. Also cf. Na'aman 2005, 220-37.

**63** Cf. Na'aman 2014, 1-14; Finkelstein 2015, 188-206.

**64** Steitler 2010, 90-1; Hawkins 2016, 183-90.

**65** As mentioned, the temporal correspondence with David and in certain aspects also the very historicity of the Davidic kingdom remains problematic, precisely due to the actual uncertainty surrounding the events of this character, probably mythologised and overstated like the reign of his son Solomon to the detriment of others Israelite rulers considered less central to the biblical epic. See Liverani 2006, 109-13; Lipinski 2010, 251-72. Cf. also Niehr 2019, 376-7; Faust 2023, 67-82.


e-ISSN 2036-5845

In summary, in the first half of the eighth century some Assyrian military campaigns led to the progressive nullification of the military push of the Damascene king Hazael and to the subsequent new political and economic recovery of the kingdom of Israel, especially with Jeroboam II.[66]

Precisely to this sovereign, in our opinion, they could perhaps refer to the military successes and diplomatic contacts with Hamath described in 2 Samuel.[67]

Therefore, the biblical authors may have preserved the memory of the two important rulers named Taita who reigned over *Palistin*, calling this territory by the name of Hamath, whose kingdom, in a later era closer to the same authors, bordered the kingdom of Israel for a significant period.[68]

The kingdom of Hamath therefore appears, according to the biblical text, to border northern Israel. This northern border, which was evidently also recognised in the divine historical plan, although not achieved, as previously mentioned, in the first Davidic-Solomonic monarchy, was part of YHWH's promise and blessing to David.

Furthermore, as is evident in the biblical text, there is a continuous respect towards this Syrian state which, despite a context of strong regional political instability, never seems to have constituted, unlike other potentates, a threat to the Israelites. Indeed, we can hypothesise that the close commercial, cultural, military and perhaps even partly religious contacts, supported by a likely political equality, were actually more profound than those we can deduce from both biblical and extra-biblical sources, including archaeological.

Hamath, therefore, both for its geographical proximity and for the historical-military events, as well as for the final forced resettlement of its population in Samaria, may have played a role of mediation and, therefore, transmission towards the Israelite world of some elements of the ancient and rich Syro-Anatolian Hittite cultural tradition, which from the great empire managed to be passed down and preserved through the centuries in some states such as the kingdom of *Palistin* and in particular subsequently in the kingdom of Hamath.[69]

As highlighted, some linguistic clues, although not definitive, could confirm the identification of King Toi of Hamath with King Taita of *Palistin*, who would more likely coincide with the later sovereign Taita II.[70] It is in fact possible that at the time of Taita II and his successors the centre of "Hama" had acquired an important function in the political-administrative organisation of the powerful kingdom of *Palistin*, a position that gradually increased with the subsequent decline of the latter, remaining imprinted in the historical memory of the Israelites who, later, perhaps mistakenly, identified Toi/Taita as the ruler of what would then be, with a chronological gap of several decades, the autonomous potentate of Hamath, with which Israel had continuous and profitable direct contact.

To conclude, none of the rulers of Hamath that we know of seem to recall, even vaguely, the name of the ruler "Toi" mentioned in the Bible. The name Taita of *Palistin*, documented in various Luwian-hieroglyphic inscriptions, remains the most historically plausible candidate at the current point of scholarly research.

**66** Cf. Sergi 2017, 329-53; Römer 2020, 127-40.

**67** Israel and Hamath had actually both managed, thanks to the downsizing of Damascus, to expand and consolidate their territories to the point of becoming two neighbouring powers with close good relations, a political reality which, in terms of territorial size and international prestige, hardly seems to be able to date back to the modest and limited Davidic kingdom. Therefore, in a chronologically altered historical perspective, aimed at glorifying and exalting the figure of David and his political influence, the direct and equal relations with King Taita mentioned in 2 Samuel were incorrectly traced back to his reign.

**68** Certainly the kingdoms of Hamat and Israel, in addition to excellent political relations, also had profitable and strong commercial exchanges, of which unfortunately we do not have extensive archaeological evidence, but which also appears to be benefit from the fact that both were strategically located at a crossroads of communication routes between Egypt, Assyria and Anatolia. Cf. Heltzer 2001, 133-5; Simon 2014, 732.

**69** From various parallels between the Hittite and the biblical world, significant similarities can be identified in various architectural, religious and legal fields, which may have reached Israel through a means of transmission perhaps represented precisely by the close and continuous relations with the Hamathite state. Cf. Warburton 2007, 310-28; Christiansen 2013, 131-53; Taggar-Cohen 2019, 27-37; Bemporad 2023, 129-71.

**70** The reign of Taita II appears to have been more extensive and important than that of the previous Taita I. Furthermore, the closer chronological proximity to Taita I may have influenced the memory of the biblical writers who had more direct knowledge of their allied kingdom of Hamath, compared to the previous reign of Palistin. But that could represent a further indication against a possible connection of the kingdom of Palistin with the people of the Philistines, well known and mentioned hundreds of times in the Bible.


e-ISSN 2036-5845

## Bibliography

Amadasi Guzzo, M.G. (2009). "Un fragment de stèle araméenne de Tell Afis". *Orientalia,* n.s., 78, 336-47.
Archi, A. (2016). "Luwian Monumental Inscriptions and Luwians in Northern Syria". Velhartická, Š. (ed.), *Audias fabulas veteres. Anatolian Studies in Honor of Jana Součková-Siegelová*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 16-47.
Aro-Valjus, S.P. (2010). "Luwians in Aleppo?". Singer, I. (ed.), *Ipamati kistamati pari tumatimis: Luwian and Hittite Studies Presented to J. David Hawkins on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday*. Tel Aviv: Institute of archaeology, 1-9.
Bemporad, A. (2023). "Risarcimento e pena di morte nel diritto biblico-ebraico e ittita". *Rivista Biblica*, 71(2), 129-71.
Blum, E. (2016). "The Relations between Aram and Israel in the 9th and 8th Centuries BCE: The Textual Evidence". Sergi, O.; Oeming, M.; de Hulster, I.J. (eds), *Search for Aram and Israel: Politics Culture, and Identity*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 37-56. Orientalische Religionen in der Antike 20.
Bryce, T. (2012). *The World of the Neo-Hittite Kingdoms*. New York: Oxford University Press
Cecchini, S.M. (2014). "Tell Afis in the Iron Age: The Official Buildings on the Acropolis". *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 77, 58-63.
Čech, P. (2015). "What if Goliath were David? Taita, the King of the Palestinians". *Beiträge zum Verstehen der Bibel,* 28, 63-73.
Collins, B.J. (2007). *The Hittites and Their World*. Atlanta. Society of Biblical Literature 7.
Christiansen, B. (2013). "Reinheitsvorstellungen und Entsühnungsriten der Hethiter und ihr möglicher Einfluss auf die biblische Überlieferung". *Biblische Notizen. Neue Folge*, 156, 131-53.
D'Alfonso, L.; Lovejoy, N. (2023). "Rulership and the Gods: The Role of Cultic Institutions in the Late Bronze to Iron Age Transition in Anatolia and Northern Syria". Mora, C.; Torri, G. (eds), *Administrative Practices and Political Control in Anatolian and Syro-Anatolian Polities in the 2nd and 1st Millennium BCE*. Firenze: University Press, 177-214. Studia Asiana 13.
Dalley, S. (1990)."Yahweh in Hamath in the Eighth Century BC: Cuneiform Material and Historical Deductions". *Vetus Testamentum*, 40, 21-32.
Dinçol, B.; Dinçol, A.; Hawkins, J.D.; Peker, H.; Öztan, A.; Çelik, Ö. (2015). "Two New Inscribed Storm-God Stelae from Arsuz (İskenderun): ARSUZ 1 and 2". *Anatolian Studies*, 65, 59-77.
Dion, P.E. (2006). "Tell 'Acharneh in the Kingdom of Hamath". Fortin, M. (ed.), *Tell 'Acharneh 1998-2004. Rapports préliminaires sur les campagnes de fouilles et saison d'études*. Brusells: Brepols, 43-8. Subartu 18.
Emanuel, J.P. (2015). "King Taita and his 'Palistin': Philistine State or Neo-hittite Kingdom?". *Antiguo Oriente*, 13, 11-40.
Faust, A. (2023). "Between the Biblical Story and History: Writing an Archaeological History of Ancient Israel". Keimer, K.H.; Pierce, G.A. (eds), *The Ancient Israelite World*, New York: London; New York: Routledge, 67-82.
Finkelstein, I. (2015). "Migration of Israelites into Judah after 720 BCE: An Answer and An Update". *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 127, 188-206.
Frame, G. (2021). *The Royal Inscriptions of Sargon II, King of Assyria (721-705 BC).* Pennsylvania: University Press, Eisenbrauns. The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period 2.
Frevel, C. (2019). "State Formation in the Southern Levant – The Case of the Arameans and the Role of Hazael's Expansion". Berlejung, A.; Maeir, A.M. (eds), *Research on Israel and Aram. Autonomy, Independence and Related Issues.* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 347-72.
Galil, G. (2013). "King of Israel, between the Arameans and the Northern and Southern Sea Peoples in Light of New Epigraphic and Archaeological Data". *Ugarit-Forschungen*, 44, 159-74.
Galil, G. (2014). "A Concise History of Palistin / Patin / Unqi / '*mq* in the 11th-9th Centuries BC". *Semitica*, 56, 75-104.
Garfinkel, Y. (2011). "The Davidic Kingdom in Light of the Finds at Khirbet Qeiyafa". *Studies of Ancient Jerusalem*, 6, 13-35.
Garfinkel, Y. (2017). Khirbet Qeiyafa in the Shephelah: Data and Interpretations, *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis*, 282, 5-59.
Giusfredi, F. (2018). "Sulle nuove (e vecchie) cronologie degli stati neoittiti alla luce dei nuovi testi e dell'annalistica neoassira". Betro, M.; de Martino, S.; Miniaci, G.; Pinnock, F. (a cura di), *Egitto e Vicino Oriente antichi: tra passato e futuro. Studi e Ricerche sull'Egitto e il Vicino Oriente in Italia, I convegno nazionale* (Pisa, 5-6 giugno 2017). Pisa: Pisa University Press, 163-9.
Görg, M. (2005). "Philister". *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und vorderasiatischen Archaologie*, 10(7-8), 526-8.
Grayson, A.K. (2001). "Assyria and the Orontes Valley". Fortin, M. (ed.), *Recherches Canadiennes sur la Syrie antique / Canadian Research on Ancient Syria.* Toronto: The Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies, 185-7.
Harrison, T.P. (2006-07). "Cyprus, the Sea Peoples and the Eastern Mediterranean: Regional Perspectives of Continuity and Change". *Scripta Mediterranea*, 27-8, 85-8.
Harrison, T.P. (2009a). "Neo-hittites in the Land of 'Palistin'. Renewed Investigations at Tell Tayinat on the Plain of Antioch". *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 72(4), 174-89.
Harrison, T.P. (2009b). "Lifting the Veil on a 'Dark Age': Ta'yinat and the North Orontes Valley during the Early Iron Age". Schloen, J.D. (ed.), *Exploring the Longe Durée: Essays in Honor of Lawrence E. Stager*. Pennsylvania: State University Press, 171-84.
Harrison, T.P. (2017). "Royal Self-Representation and the Legitimation of Authority at Tayinat (Ancient Kunulua)". Levin, C.; Müller, R. (Hrsgg), *Herrschaftslegitimation in vorderorientalischen Reichen der Eisenzeit*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 277-99. Orientalische Religionen in der Antike 21.
Harrison, T.P. (2019). "Tell Tayinat (anciennement Kunulua). Les Néo-Hittites du Palastin/Walastin". Blanchard, V. (éd.), *Royaumes oubliés. de l'empire Hittite aux Araméens*. Paris: Louvre; Liénart, 219-31.
Hawkins, J.D. (2000). *Corpus of Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions, Inscriptions of the Iron Age I-III*. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter.
Hawkins, J.D. (2009). "Cilicia, the ʿAmuq, and Aleppo: New Light in a Dark Age". *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 72(4), 164-73.
Hawkins, J.D. (2011). "The Inscriptions of the Aleppo Temple". *Anatolian Studies*, 61, 35-54.
Hawkins, J.D. (2016). "Hamath in the Iron age: The Inscriptions". *Syria*, 4, 183-90.
Hawkins, J.D.; Weeden, M. (2016). "Sketch History of Karkamish in the Earlier Iron Age (Iron I-IIB)". Wilkinson, T.; Peltenburg, E.; Barbanes Wilkinson, E. (eds), *Carchemish in Context. The Land of Carchemish Project*, *2006-2010*. Oxford; Philadelphia: British Association for Near Eastern Archaeology, 9-21. BANEA 4.

Heltzer, M. (2001). "A New Weight from Hamath and Trade Relations with the South in the Ninth-Eighth Centuries BCE". Daviau, M.; Wevers, J.W.; Weigl, M. (eds), *The World of the Aramaeans II. Studies in History and Archaeology in Honour of Paul-Eugène Dion*. Sheffield: Academic Press, 133-5.

Hutter, M. (2004). "Widerspiegelungen religiöser Vorstellungen der Luwier im Alten Testament". Novák, M.; Prayon, F.; Wittke, A.M. (Hrsgg), *Die Außenwirkung des späthethitischen Kulturraumes. Güteraustausch – Kulturkontakt – Kulturtransfer.* Münster, 425-42. Alter Orient und Altes Testament 323.

Janeway, B. (2017). *Sea Peoples of the Northern Levant? Aegean-Style Pottery from Early Iron Age Tell Tayinat*. Leiden: Brill. Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant 7.

Janzen, D. (2008). "An Ambiguous Ending: Dynastic Punishment in Kings and the Fate of the Davidides in 2 Kings 25.27-30". *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 33, 39-58.

Knapp, A.B.; Manning, S.W. (2016). "Crisis in Context: The End of the Late Bronze Age in the Eastern Mediterranean". *American Journal of Archaeology*, 120, 99-149.

Knitter, D.; Nakoinz, O.; Del Fabbro, R.; Kohlmeyer, K.; Schütt, B.; Meyer, M. (2014). "The Centrality of Aleppo and its Environs". *eTopoi. Journal for Ancient Studies*, 3, 107-27.

Kohlmeyer, K. (2008). "Zur datierung der Skulpturen von 'Ain Dara". Bonatz, D.; Czichon, R.M.; Kreppner, F.J. (Hrsgg), *Fundstellen: Gesammelte Schriften zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altvorderasiens ad honorem Hartmut Kühne*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 119-30.

Kohlmeyer, K. (2009). "The Temple of the Storm God in Aleppo During the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages". *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 72(4), 190-202.

Kohlmeyer, K. (2010). "Building Activities and Architectural Decoration in the 11th Century B.C". Strobel, K. (ed.), *Empires after the Empire: Anatolia, Syria and Assyria after Suppiluliuma (ca. 1200-800/700 B.C.)*. Firenze: LoGisma Editore, 255-80. Eothen. Studi sulle Civiltà dell'Oriente Antico 17.

Lipinski, E. (2010). "Hiram of Tyre and Solomon, in The Books of Kings. Sources, Composition, Historiography and Reception". *Vetus Testamentum. Supplement*, 129, 251-72.

Liverani, M. (2006). *Oltre la Bibbia. Storia antica di Israele*. Roma: Laterza.

Mazzoni; S. (1987). "Lo scavo dell'edificio del Settore D, Tell Afis Archaeological Mission". *Egitto e Vicino Oriente ,* 10(2), 25-83.

Mazzoni; S. (2014). "Tell Afis in the Iron Age: The Temple on the Acropolis". *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 77, 44-52.

Mora, C. (2023). "Barley and Sheep in Kululu (Central Anatolia, Late Eighth Century BC)". Di Filippo, F.; Milano, L.; Mori, L. (eds), *I Passed over Difficult Mountains. Studies on the Ancient Near East in Honor of Mario Liverani*. Münster: Zaphon, 181-95.

Mora, C. (2024). "The Kingdom of Karkemish Between the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age: Politics and Culture in a Border Area". *News from the Lands of the Hittites*, 8, 121-34.

Morandi Bonacossi, D. (2006). "Un centro amministrativo nel regno di Hamath. Tell Mishrife e la sua regione nella seconda età del Ferro (IX–VIII secolo a.C.)". Morandi Bonacossi, D.; Rova, E.; Veronese, F.; Zanovello, P. (a cura di), *Tra Oriente e Occidente. Studi in Onore di Elena di Filippo Barlestrazzi*. Padova: Sargon Editore, 73-114.

Morandi Bonacossi, D. (2013). "The Crisis of Qatna at the Beginning of the Late Bronze Age II and the Iron Age II Settlement Revival. A Regional Trajectory towards the Collapse of the Late Bronze Age Palace System in the Northern Levant". Yener, K.A. (ed.), *Across the Border: Late Bronze-Iron Age Relations between Syria and Anatolia*. Leuven; Paris; Walpole: Peeters, 113-46. Ancient Near Eastern Studies. Supplement Series 42.

Morandi Bonacossi, D. (2019)."Iron Age Mishrifeh. An Aramean Specialized Production Center in the Hamath Kingdom?". Berlejung, A.; Maeir, A.M. (eds), *Research on Israel and Aram. Autonomy, Independence and Related Issues*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 179-207.

Na'aman, N. (1999). "Lebo-Hamath, Ṣubat-Hamath, and the northern boundary of the land of Canaan". *Ugarit-Forschungen*, 31, 417-41.

Na'aman, N. (2005)."Province System and Settlement Pattern in Southern Syria and Palestine in the Neo-Assyrian Period". *Ancient Israel and Its Neighbors. Interaction and Counteraction*. Pennsylvania: State University Press; Eisenbrauns, 220-37.

Na'aman**,** N. (2014)."Dismissing the Myth of a Flood of Israelite Refugees in the Late Eighth Century BCE". *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 126, 1-14.

Niehr, H. (2019)."The Relations between the Kingdoms of Hamath and Israel". Berlejung, A.; Maeir, A.M. (eds), *Research on Israel and Aram. Autonomy, Independence and Related Issues*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 373-94.

Niehr, H. (2020). "Royal Inscriptions from Sam'al and Hamath as Sources for the History of Anatolia and Syria in the First Half of the 1st Millennium B.C". Kalimi, I. (ed.), *Writing and Rewriting History in Ancient Israel and Near Eastern Cultures*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 61-78.

Osborne, J.F; Harrison, T.P.; Batiuk, S.; Welton, L; Dessel, J.P.; Denel, E.; Demirci, Ö. (2019). "Urban Built Environments in Early 1st Millennium BCE. Syro-Anatolia: Results of the Tayinat Archaeological Project 2004-2016". *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 382, 261-312.

Payne, A. (2012). *Iron Age Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions*. Ed. by H.C. Melchert. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. Writings from the Ancient World 29.

Pucci, M. (2019). "Cultural Encounters During the LBII and IAI: Hittites and 'Pelesets' in the Amuq (Hatay) Turkey". *Asia Anteriore Antica*, 1, 169-94.

Römer, T. (2019). "The Strange Conversion of Naaman, Chief of the Aramean Army". Berlejung, A.; Maeir, A.M. (eds), *Research on Israel and Aram. Autonomy, Independence and Related Issues*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 105-19.

Römer, T. (2020). "Jeroboam II and the Invention of Northern Sanctuaries and Foundation Stories". *Periods of the Formation of the Bible*, 3, 127-40.

Sass, B. (2010). "Four Notes on Taita King of Palistin with an Excursus on King Solomon's Empire". *Tel Aviv*, 37(2), 169-74.

Sergi, O. (2017)."The United Monarchy and the Kingdom of Jeroboam II in the Story of Absalom and Sheba's Revolts (2 Samuel 15-20)". *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel*, 6, 329-53.

Simon, Z. (2014). "Remarks on the Anatolian Background of the Tel Reḥov Bees and the Historical Geography of the Luvian States in the 10th c. BC". Csabai, Z. (ed), *Studies in the Economic and Social History of the Ancient Near East in Memory of Pèter Vargyas*, Budapest, University of Pécs, 715-38. Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean Studies 2.

Simon, Z. (2017). "What did Taita import from Egypt? Hieroglyphic Luwian ASINUS$_{2(A)}$ Reconsidered". Németh, B. (ed.), *Studies Presented to Zoltán Imre Fábián On the Occasion of His 63rd Birthday*. L'Harmattan Kiadó Budapest, 317-30.

Simon, Z. (2019). "Aramaean Borders: the Hieroglyphic Luwian Evicence". Dušek, J.; Mynařova, J. (eds), *Aramaean Borders. Defining Aramaean Territories in the 10th-8th Centuries B.C.E.* Leiden: Brill, 127-48.

Singer, I. (2005). "On Luwians and Hittites". *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 62, 430-51.

Singer, I. (2012). "The Philistines in the North and the Kingdom of Taita". Galil, G.; Gilboa, A.; Maeir, A.M.; Kahn, D. (eds), *The Ancient Near East in the 12th-10th Centuries B.C.E.: Culture and History*. Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 451-72. Alter Orient und Altes Testament 392.

Steitler, C. (2010). "The Biblical King Toi of Hamath and the Late Hittite State P/Walas(a)tin". *Biblische Notizen*, 146, 81-99.

Stoebe, H.J. (1994). *Das zweite Buch Samuelis.* KAT, 7(2). Gütersloh Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn.

Taggar-Cohen, A. (2019). "Religious Restrictions in the Bible and Hittite Cultures: On Holiness in Both Cultures". Taggar-Cohen, A. (ed.), *Judaism in Modern Era: Interpretative Studies of Ancient and Current Texts = Proceedings of the Third International Symposium on Jewish Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem* (19 August 2018). Kyoto: Doshisha University, 27-37.

Venturi, F. (2007). *La Siria nell'età delle trasformazioni (XIII-X sec. a.C.). Nuovi contributi dallo scavo di Tell Afis*, Bologna: CLUEB. Studi e Testi Orientali 8.

Warburton, D.A. (2007). "The Architecture of Israelite Temples". Grabbe, L.L. (ed.), *Ahab Agonistes*, London, 310-28. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament 421.

Wazana, N. (2016). "Ahaz and the Altar from Damascus (2 Kings 16:10-16): Literary, Theological, and Historical-Political Considerations". Sergi, O.; Oeming, M.; de Hulster, I.J. (eds), *Search for Aram and Israel: Politics, Culture, and Identity*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 379-99. Orientalische Religionen in der Antike 20.

Weeden, M. (2013). "After the Hittites: The Kingdoms of Karkamish and Palistin in Northern Syria". *Bulletin of The Institute of Classical Studies*, 56, 1-20.

Weeden, M. (2015). "The Land of Walastin at Tell Tayınat". *NABU*, 2(44), 65-6.

Weippert, M. (1992). "Die Feldzüge Adadnararis III. nach Syrien. Voraussetzungen, Verlauf, Folgen". *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins,*, 108, 42-67.

Welton, L.; Harrison, T.; Batiuk, S.; Ünlü, E.; Janeway, B.; Karakaya, D.; Lipovitch, D.; Lumb, D.; Roames, J. (2019). "Shifting Networks and Community Identity at Tell Tayinat in the Iron I (ca. 12th to Mid 10th Century B.C.E.)". *American Journal of Archaeology*, 123, 291-333.

Younger, K.L. (2007). "Neo-Assyrian and Israelite History in the Ninth Century: The Role of Shalmaneser III". Williamson, H.G.M. (ed.), *Understanding the History of Ancient Israel*, Oxford: The British Academy, 237-71. Proceedings of the British Academy 143.