Style, Ethnicity and the Archaeology of the Aramaeans: The Problem of Ethnic Markers in the Art of the Syro-Anatolian Region in the Iron Age

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Abstract

The history of archaeology is also the history of numerous attempts to correlate certain "styles" of material culture with certain "collectivities," be they defined as "races," "cultures," "spirits," or ethnicities. These attempts are largely characterized by two main premises: a) an understanding of material culture as a mere *reflection* of collective cognitive structures and unified mind-sets; b) presuppositions concerning the very existence of bounded, homogeneous "identities," which are articulated through fixed "markers." This paper focuses on the repercussions of these two premises on the studies of the sculptural art of Syro-Anatolian city-states in the Iron Age (ca. 12th to 7th centuries BCE). Along with the distribution of languages, scripts, and onomastica, "styles" of material culture have been frequently utilized to "map" the ethnicities of the region and to construct related historical narratives. Particularly, the way the term "Aramaean style" has been constructed and put into practice necessitates a closer look into the theoretical and methodological foundations of archaeological and art-historical classification, which leads not only to a reappraisal of the prevailing classifications of Syro-Anatolian art but also to a re-evaluation of the material correlates of an Aramaean ethnicity and of the ways in which past subjectivities are accounted for in archaeology and art history.

Zusammenfassung

Die Geschichte der Archäologie ist auch eine Geschichte zahlreicher Versuche, bestimmte „Stile" der materiellen Kultur mit bestimmten „Kollektivitäten" zu korrelieren, seien es „Rassen", „Kulturen", Ethnien oder der sog. „Volksgeist". Diese Versuche sind größtenteils von zwei Prämissen geprägt: a) einem Verständnis von materieller Kultur als reine *Reflektion* kollektiv-kognitiver Strukturen sowie einheitlicher Denkweisen; b) der Vorannahme, es gäbe eingrenzbare, homogene „Identitäten", die durch eindeutig bestimmbare Merkmale artikuliert werden. Der Fokus dieses Beitrags liegt auf den Auswirkungen dieser beiden Prämissen auf die Untersuchungen der skulpturalen Kunst der syro-anatolischen Stadtstaaten der Eisenzeit (ca. 12.–7. Jahrhundert v. u. Z.). „Stile" materieller Kultur wurden oft gemeinsam mit Sprachverteilung, Schrift und Herrschernamen verwendet, um Ethnien einer Region zu kartieren und damit verbundene historische Narrative zu konstruieren. Anhand der Konstruktion und praktischen Verwendung des Begriffs „Aramäischer Stil" erfolgt hier eine nähere Betrachtung der theoretisch-methodologischen Basis archäologischer und kunsthistorischer Klassifizierung, die letztlich zu einer Neueinschätzung der vorherrschenden Einordnung syro-anatolischer Kunst führt. Zudem führt diese Kritik nicht nur zu einer Neubewertung materieller Korrelate aramäischer Ethnizität, sondern auch des Ansatzes, vergangene Subjektivitäten in Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte einzubeziehen.

1. Introduction

This study investigates the relationships between style, ethnicity, and art historical and archaeological practice by drawing on the archaeological material from Syro-Anatolian city-states[1] in the Iron Age (ca. 12th to 7th centuries BCE).

The notion of style comes with a baggage of associations, which vary considerably not only across but also within disciplines. Yet there seems to be an almost overarching consensus on its central place in art historical and archaeological inquiry as well as its utility for the categorization of material culture. The stated variety manifests itself rather in the *ways* those categories are created, set in relation to each other, synthesized, and interpreted.

One particular line of interpretation that enjoyed an extensive popularity from the outset pertains to the acknowledgement of style as direct footprint of collectivities, which have, according to shifting trends and traditions, been encapsulated in "races," "cultures," "spirits," or ethnicities. In an understanding in which it was presupposed that ethnicity is articulated through fixed ethnic markers, certain "styles" of material culture have been identified as ethnic correlates. Resulting patterns, in turn, have been actively utilized to delineate spatial and temporal "boundaries" of ethnic groups, serving at the same time as direct evidence for the construction of broader historical narratives.

The material culture of Syro-Anatolian city-states in general and the archaeology of the Aramaeans in particular, provide apt examples to observe various stages of the above-sketched process. These city-states, stretching from the Anatolian plateau to the northern Levant and from Cilicia to the Khabur (Fig. 1), arose as independent political entities in late 2nd–early 1st millennium BCE, gradually being incorporated into the Assyrian empire in the course of the 9th and 8th centuries BCE.
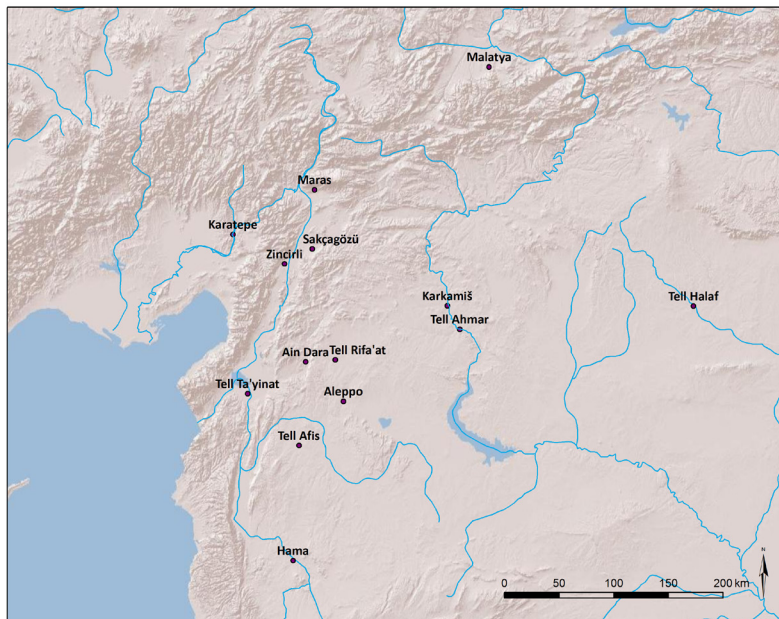

Figure 1. Syro-Anatolian region in the Iron Age (Base Map: ESRI World Shaded Relief; River Data from the European Commission and Natural Earth [Public Domain]).

The sculptural art of these city-states, primarily represented by large-scale orthostat relief programs, has been frequently subjected to categorizations carried out along ethnic lines. Specifically, the site of Zincirli (ancient Sam'al) has traditionally been the focus of a series of attempts to tease out "what is Aramaean" in the art of the Syro-Anatolian region, culminating in the widespread establishment of an "Aramaean style" in art historical

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[1]   See Osborne 2013 for arguments in favor of considering these political entities "city-states." These city-states have been labelled in the past as Late Hittite, Neo-Hittite, or Syro-Hittite, each designation highlighting a "Hittite" element and imposing further spatial or temporal limits. See Bonatz 2000a: 4 and Gilibert 2011: 2 for brief discussions. Throughout this paper, I opt for the ethnically neutral term, "Syro-Anatolian." For an overview of these designations within the context of sculptural art, see below p 30.

literature. Along with the distribution of languages, scripts, and onomastica, "Aramaean style" has been actively used to "map" the ethnicities of the Syro-Anatolian Iron Age.

A thorough reappraisal of this state of affairs is the main purpose of the present study. In order to have a grasp of the theoretical and methodological basis explicitly or implicitly adopted in studies on "Aramaean style," the variety of ways in which style has been conceptualized in archaeology and art history in the last two centuries will be discussed in the following section. Contested issues range from the relationship between post-hoc categorizations of objects and aesthetic historicism to the prevailing adherence to traditional separations of style/function/technology in archaeology as well as style (form)/content in art history.

Section 3 addresses the stated conceptual leap from "styles" to "collectivities," which is primarily due to the understanding of material culture as mere *reflection* of collective cognitive structures and unified mind-sets. This goes hand in hand with presuppositions concerning the very existence of bounded, homogeneous ethnicities ("identities," or "subjectivities" for that matter). Following a historiographical account of the related attempts at correlating certain aspects of material culture with certain collectivities, the concept of ethnicity as well as its relation with the written and archaeological record will be investigated by drawing on theories from sociology and anthropology.

Against the backdrop of these two sections, the question of "ethnic markers" in the art of Syro-Anatolian city-states will be discussed in the second part of this study. First, focusing on the orthostat reliefs from Zincirli,   "markers" that abound in the literature on "Aramaean style" will be revisited. In fact, although there exists an extensive body of art-historical work on the "styles" of Syro-Anatolian orthostat reliefs, these are almost exclusively devoted to imagery, while the "materiality" of the orthostats as architectural elements, materials, techniques, production sequences, and socio-economic contexts are predominantly omitted from "stylistic" analyses.[2] Hence, arguing for a broader conceptualization of "style" incorporating all those aspects, the orthostat reliefs from Zincirli will be subjected to a "stylistic" analysis in an attempt to place them in their social, ideological, and economic contexts within the broader setting of Syro-Anatolian relief production.

The results of this analysis will be further discussed in conjunction with the questions of ethnic identification and differentiation at Syro-Anatolian city-states, and in particular at Zincirli. Not only will the fundamental fallacies of the theory and methodology of "ethnic markers" be demonstrated, but also the widespread scholarly convention on the "Aramaeanness" of Zincirli will be called into serious question. It will be argued that the "Aramaean style" constructed in the literature eventually served to gloss over the fundamental issues concerning the material correlates of an "Aramaean ethnicity" in the Early Iron Age.

Finally, in recognition of the drawbacks of ethnic categorizations of the art of this region, an alternative methodology for the classification of Syro-Anatolian art and for the examination of past subjectivities will be proposed.

2. Theoretical Perspectives on Style in Art History and Archaeology

Der Begriff des Stiles ist eine der undiskutierten Selbstverständlichkeiten, von denen das historische Bewußtsein lebt.

H.-G. Gadamer (1960: 466)

2.1. Etymology – Contexts of Usage

Gadamer's remark cited in the epigraph to this section should not be understood as a total neglect of the concept of style by prior literature, but rather as a general dissatisfaction with the theoretical underpinnings of the term as well as with its various but vague usages across disciplines. In fact, the same dissatisfaction is echoed in numerous earlier studies, in the titles of which we frequently find the words "style" and "problem" coupled (e. g. Panofsky 1915; Frankl 1924; Passarge 1932).[3] Hence, I should start this section by emphasizing that style is a *problematic* concept.

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[2]   Özyar 1991 and Harmanşah 2013 are notable exceptions.

[3]   See also Dittmann 1967: 14, fn. 4 for a list of sources on style from early to mid-20th century.

The word itself is commonly acknowledged as derived from *stilus* in Latin, meaning writing instrument as well as "mode of writing, manner of expression, way, mode" (Skeat 1963 [1879–1882]: 611).[4] Earliest accounts are therefore in the fields of ancient rhetoric and literature, where *stilus* is utilized mostly as a normative term, referring to the compliance to a set of rules and norms for literary composition and expression (Sauerländer 1983: 254–255). A similar usage revolving around norms and principles is encountered in the French jurisprudence, specifying the *manière de procéder* (Gadamer 1960: 466).

From its very beginnings, style also involves the notion of "individual hand" (Gadamer 1960: 467),[5] i. e. originality of expression, which gives style its double meaning – principles of rule *and* originality – that has been preserved up until today (Gadamer 1960: 467; Sauerländer 1983: 256).[6] This meaning of style can be traced in the field of fine arts from the 16th century onwards, yet only during the second half of the 18th century do we come across the unification of style with aesthetic historicism (Sauerländer 1983: 257, 259 ff.).[7]

Although a derivation from the Greek word *stylos* (meaning column, pillar) is widely deemed a false etymology and completely rejected (e. g. Skeat 1963 [1879–1882]: 611; Klein 1967: 1530; Davey 1995: 177), it is yet intriguing to incorporate its possible implications from architectural history from the time of Vitruvius onwards into the theoretical scope of the term.[8] A transition from the rhetorical notion of style to a tool of historical classification also seems to occur in the field of architecture by the end of the 18th century (van Eck 1995: 97–100).

Despite their common origins, art history and archaeology parted their ways in the course of the 20th century with regards to how to conceptualize style theoretically and methodologically. Hence, in the following, I will provide an overview of various approaches on the concept of style in both of these disciplines separately.

2.2. Style in Art Historical Theory

> Because our image of style is not discovered but created by abstracting certain features and combinations from works of art for the purpose of assisting historical and critical activity, it is meaningless to ask, as we usually do, 'what is style?'; the relevant question is rather 'what definition of style provides the most useful structure for the history of art?' (Ackerman 1962: 227–228)

As implied above by Ackerman, the variety of definitions of style in the literature is directly related to the variety of understandings in the last two centuries of art-historical research on what that "most useful structure" might be.[9] In the following, instead of venturing into the impossible task of discussing those definitions one by one, I will attempt to cover that variety by concentrating on the most common elements or concepts employed by the majority of them. Hence, I would like to take the famous definition referred to by Schapiro as a starting point:

> By style is meant the constant form – and sometimes the constant elements, qualities, and expression – in the art of an individual or a group. The term is also applied to the whole activity of an individual or society, as in speaking of a 'life-style' or 'the style of a civilization'. (Schapiro 1994 [1962]: 51)

The first aspect concerns the distinction between the style of an individual and the style of a group/society. This was first pointed out by Wölfflin (1915: 1–14) and further elaborated by Wollheim (1987) under the headings *individual* and *general* style.

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[4]   For the history of various usages of the word *maniera*, and particularly for the transformation of its meaning around the 17th century, see Panofsky 1960: 114–115, fn. 244. For the term *modus*, and its relation to style, see Bialostocki 1981: 14–31.

[5]   Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from German texts are my own.

[6]   See also Gombrich 1968: 352–353; Bauer 2008: 169–170. The difference between these normative and descriptive usages of the term is evident in expressions such as "this artist has style," and "the style of this artist" (Sass 2014: 307).

[7]   Sauerländer (1983: 255–256) also discusses the entries on style in Zedler's *Universallexikon* and points out that the entry concerning "style in music" signals a clear change in the meaning of the term towards an emphasis on originality, when compared to the entries on style in literature, which are still predominantly prescriptive and normative.

[8]   Kubler (1987: 166 ff.) asserts quite convincingly that the etymological distinction between *stilus* and *stylos* serves solely to differentiate time (*stilus* referring to temporal arts) and space (*stylos* referring to spatial arts) within the *same* sphere of meaning. But see also Jodl 1920: 287–288; Olin 1992: 204, fn. 38.

[9]   See Elkins 1996: 876 for a list of most of the well-known definitions of style.

Individual Style

As noted earlier, the notion of the individual hand has always been a crucial component in the understanding of the term, reflected in Comte de Buffon's famous dictum *style is the man himself*.[10] This was particularly central for the development of connoisseurship, which can be defined as "the inference of an artifact's spatial and temporal point of origin on the basis of morphological ("stylistic") criteria" (Neer 2005: 3).[11] Those criteria primarily involved minutiae (e.g. the way an ear lobe or a fingernail is rendered), considered to betray the individual hand of the artist (Gombrich 1961: 365). Among the most famous examples of connoisseurial attribution are Beazley's work on Attic vases[12] and Morelli's (1892) and Berenson's (1902) analyses of paintings.

The role of individual style in historiography of art might also be reflected in the concept of artist biographies, the so-called *Geniegeschichte*. Systematically practiced at least from the time of Dante onwards (Siebenhüner 1940: XXIII) and exemplified later by the work of Vasari, this sort of art historical writing mostly lost its appeal with the rise of Heinrich Wölfflin's (1915: VII) "art history without names" [*Kunstgeschichte ohne Namen*]. Among its latest followers from the late 19th century were Herman Grimm and Karl Justi.[13]

General Style

Stylistic analysis in terms of general styles is traditionally traced back to Winckelmann (1764), who tied stylistic change to cultural and historical transformation in his survey of Greek and Roman sculpture. His historically contingent and descriptive use of style co-exists with one that has a fairly normative connotation, due to the fact that his theory and methodology were based on valuing works of art against the benchmark of a classical ideal (Elkins 1996: 879; Sass 2014: 308).[14] That ideal could only be realized in the appropriate political climate: "Finally, at the time when Greece attained its highest degree of refinement and freedom, art also became more unfettered and lofty" (Winckelmann 1764: 216, translation taken from Sauerländer 1983: 261).[15] This normative usage of style was in line with the very names of the period styles (Gothic, Baroque etc.), the origins and literary meanings of which basically "denote either the (desirable) dependence on a classical norm or the (condemned) deviations from it" (Gombrich 1968: 354).[16] Additionally, another characteristic of this scheme was the assumption that styles follow an inner logic of evolution, the patterns of which were explained, at least from the time of Vasari onwards, through tripartite biological analogies such as budding, flowering, decay, or childhood, maturity, old age.[17]

Becoming now "the keyword for the bridge leading from visual perception to historical insight" (Sauerländer 1983: 259), throughout the 19th century style began to be utilized as an instrument of identification, classification and periodization, all of which rested upon the idea of evolution. Within that methodology, "the historian act[ed] like the botanist" (Sauerländer 1983: 263).[18]

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[10] See Sauerländer 1983: 257–258, for an overview of Castiglione's and Bellori's uses of the word style, which suggest an individual, personalized notion of style in use from the 16th to 17th century. Goethe (1982 [1789]) had a rather different approach to the notion of individual hand. For him, style surpasses both imitation of nature and individual subjective interpretation of it (manner); it represents the highest stage of aesthetic achievement and has the potential to capture the essence of an object.

[11] See also Ebitz 1988 for a concise overview of the theory and methodology of the connoisseurial practice. History of connoisseurship can be traced back at least to the time of Vasari in the 16th century (Scallen 2004: 27).

[12] See Whitley 1997 for a discussion of Beazley's methodology as well as a list of his works.

[13] On Grimm and Justi, see Waetzoldt 1965: 213–277.

[14] See also Cassirer (1918: 200 ff., esp. 217–218), who situates the 17th–18th century emphasis on individuality (Leibniz, Hamann, Herder) against Winckelmann's adherence to classical norms (typicality) and argues for a profound break in the German *Geistesentwicklung*.

[15] This argument was subjected to an early critique by Christian Gottlob Heyne. See Potts 1994: 27–28 and fn. 32 for discussion and further references.

[16] Hence, the succession of period styles is practically "nichts anderes als eine Maskerade der zwei Kategorien des Klassischen und des Nichtklassischen" (Gombrich 1985: 110). It should be noted that already at the beginning of the 20th century, the arbitrary nature of the names of the period styles had been pointed out (see Möbius 2009: 126).

[17] Winckelmann (1764) defines the objective of his research as follows: "Die Geschichte der Kunst soll den Ursprung, das Wachstum, die Veränderung und den Fall derselben, nebst dem verschiedenen Stile der Völker, Zeiten und Künstler, lehren." On cyclical organic development, see Kubler 1962: 8–9; Gombrich 1968: 356–357; Schapiro 1994 [1962]: 69 and Elkins 1996: 876–877.

[18] This methodology is still to be seen in various "handbooks of styles and forms" (e.g. Amiet et al. 1981).

In this time period, the proponents of mechanistic models put forward a quite influential approach by stressing the role of function, raw material, and technique. For instance, von Rumohr defined style as "the successful accommodation of the artist to the inner demands of the material, by which the sculptor actually creates his forms, the painter makes visible his images" (von Rumohr 1920: 60, translation taken from Mallgrave 2005: 106).[19] Similarly, in the field of architecture, while Owen Jones (1856) pointed out the influence of materials and climate on style,[20] Gottfried Semper (1852) further elaborated on von Rumohr's ideas and developed a model that accommodated material and technical factors as well as local, temporal, and personal ones.[21]

By the beginning of the 20th century, art history attempted to become autonomous by parting ways with the *Kulturgeschichte* as propagated by Burckhardt (Sauerländer 1977: 126; Wind 1983 [1931]: 21–22). A much less normative and more descriptive use of style, which was understood as a "generating principle embracing all the arts and eventually even all other cultural phenomena of a given period or at a certain place" (Sauerländer 1983: 263), was adopted in the highly influential works of Heinrich Wölfflin and Alois Riegl, whose analyses of artistic change rest upon a pattern of polar development, rather than a tripartite organic one. In his study of Renaissance and Baroque art (1915), Wölfflin carried out a comparative analysis of stylistic change in terms of two sets of opposed categories, where a unidirectional transition from the first set to the second was considered to be valid for the time periods in question.[22] For him, this transition was determined by the changing optical *modes of representation*.[23] Riegl (1893; 1901) propagated a similar, continuous, polar development from the *haptic (tactical)* to the *optic* and explained stylistic change by the notion of *Kunstwollen*, a collective and individual, innate driving force for artistic change.[24] In the works of these two scholars, as well as of Riegl's colleagues from the *Wiener Schule* such as Wickhoff and von Schlosser, not only a departure from the mechanistic and materialistic models is evident,[25] but also one from the classical ideal.[26] For instance, in *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie*, Riegl argued

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[19]   Concerning this important quotation, Mallgrave mistakenly refers to the page number in the 1827 edition of von Rumohr's book, while actually citing the 1920 edition. Hence, the original sentence is to be found on p. 60 in von Rumohr 1920, not in p. 87 as noted by Mallgrave.

[20]   Jones (1856: 5) defines style as "... the peculiar form that expression takes under the influence of climate and materials at command."

[21]   See Semper 1852: 15. See also Olin 1992: 205, fn. 48 and Mallgrave 2005: 135. Although Semper is known predominantly as a materialist, recent studies seem to emphasize more the "ideal" elements of his framework, drawing on some of the arguments in his earlier work (1852) and on the assumption that Semper had intended to discuss those "ideal" elements in the never-written third volume of his 1860–1863 book.

[22]   Those categories were: linear vs. painterly; forms parallel to the picture plane vs. forms receding into distance; closed form vs. open form; multiplicity vs. unity; and absolute clarity vs. relative clarity (pp. 15–16). Although Wölfflin initially argued for the validity of that transition for other historical periods as well, he later revised his position in the preface to the fourth and fifth editions of his book (1921: XI).

[23]   Wölfflin's assumption regarding changes in *Darstellungsformen* (modes of representation) or *Sehformen* (modes of seeing), and his remarks such as "*das Sehen an sich hat seine Geschichte*" (seeing – or vision – in itself has a history) have aroused serious critique as to whether he meant that the human eye transformed physiologically through time. As Frankl (1960: 621) points out, what Wölfflin refers to is not seeing in the physiological sense, but the concept of *visualization*. Maybe that is the reason why Wölfflin decided to use the word *Vorstellungsformen* instead of *Sehformen* in the preface to the sixth edition of his book in 1922. Still, Wölfflin's understanding of style was based on a distinction between an epistemologically neutral "seeing" and an expressive, content-laden one. See also Dittmann 1967: 55 ff.; Podro 1982: 129 ff. and Schapiro 1994 [1962]: 72–74.

[24]   *Kunstwollen* translates variously as "will-to-form" (Gombrich 1961: 18), "stylistic intent" (Brendel 1979: 31), "autonomous formal impulse" (Wind 1983 [1931]: 23), "artistic volition" (Olin 1992: 130), or "will of art" (Binstock 2001: 220). See also Olin 1992: 72 for the history of usage of the concept *künstlerisches Wollen*, as well as Panofsky's (1920) attempt to clarify the various definitions of *Kunstwollen*. For general overviews of Riegl's work, see Podro 1982: 71–97; Olin 1992 and Iversen 1993.

[25]   Most clearly in Riegl 1893: vi–vii. Yet I find it important to note here that Riegl clearly differentiates Semper's moderately mechanistic theories from ones advocated by Semper's radical-materialist followers (see Riegl 1893: vii, 6, 32).

[26]   E. g. Wickhoff's study on the *Wiener Genesis* (Ritter von Hartel and Wickhoff 1895); von Schlosser 1901: 770–771. Dispensing with the normative usage of style should be seen in conjunction with the rejection of the separation of fine and applied arts at the turn of the 20th century (see Summers 2003: 67, for the background of that separation in antiquity). Riegl's study material (ornamental forms, textiles, and in general *Kunstindustrie*) is a further indicator in that direction. See Sauerländer 1977: 126 ff. for an overview of these changes within the context of the general trends at the turn of the 20th century. Additionally, it should be noted that Wölfflin's and Riegl's models are only two of the many others developed in this time period, which were almost always based on antithetical categories. See Hofmann 1960: 192 for a list of those models.

for evaluating all art solely on the basis of its "pure artistic character" (Riegl 1901: 4)[27] and specified as the main objective of his work to fight against the widely held opinion considering that time period in question *decadent*.[28] The great impact of these two scholars on the future of the notion of style and stylistic analysis throughout the 20th century stemmed primarily from two main characteristics of their theory and methodology, the hints of which are to be traced in the definition I took from Schapiro at the beginning. Those two characteristics will be examined in the following under two separate headings.

Constancy, Unity, and Spirit

In Schapiro's definition, constancy plays a crucial role. In order to be recognizable, those "elements, qualities, and expression" need to be constant through time. Yet controversy arises concerning what to do after that moment of recognition: Do they *reflect* that individual, group, society, or civilization? Would the supposed unity in period styles presuppose a unity in culture? If so, then how can stylistic change be explained in such a framework?

The first characteristic in Wölfflin's and Riegl's work that I would like to stress is related to the answers they give to these questions. First, they both provide certain autonomous underlying principles (*Kunstwollen* for Riegl, *Vorstellungsformen* for Wölfflin) that generate stylistic change through time. Second, they seem to regard culture as a unified entity and suggest that those principles are at work in other manifestations of that culture in that particular age as well (Riegl 1901: 215; Wölfflin 1888: 65). The hereby implied Hegelian notions have been the main points of a long-lasting discussion on the influence of Hegelianism in art history, particularly exemplified in several critiques by Gombrich (1983: 27–64; 1984).[29] Drawing on Karl Popper's readings of Hegel, Gombrich criticized generations of scholars (from Dilthey to Dvorak, Wölfflin and Riegl included) for being under the spell of Hegelianism, which he regarded as a combination of "historical determinism," "historical collectivism," "aesthetic transcendentalism," "metaphysical optimism," and "dialectical relativism" (Gombrich 1984: 52–55). His main argument might be best reflected by his famous warning: "By inculcating the habit of talking in terms of collectives, of 'mankind', 'races' or 'ages', it [reliance of art history on mythological explanations] weakens resistance to totalitarian habits of mind" (Gombrich 1961: 20).

Whether all those scholars deserve such an "accusation," or whether Popper's and Gombrich's readings of Hegel are one-sided and misleading, are now topics with their own history of research.[30] What I would like to touch upon instead is Gombrich's emphasis on the problematic nature of explaining material culture variation with unified mentalities or other collectivities. As Gaiger (2011: 181–182) points out, Gombrich's warning is partly formed by the events of the 20th century, the outcomes of which have dramatically demonstrated how prone those ideas of collectivities were to ideological exploitation. I refer here particularly to the doctrines of *Strukturforschung*, which will be discussed in detail in Section 3.2.

"Formalism" and Style

The second characteristic concerns Wölfflin's and Riegl's empirical-descriptive methodology focusing on the formal properties of the object itself. If we have a look at Schapiro's definition of style once more, form is explained as "elements, qualities, and expression."[31] A couple of pages later, he further claims that technique, subject matter, and material should not be included in this definition, as they are often "not so peculiar to the art of a period as the formal and qualitative ones" (Schapiro 1994 [1962]: 54).

In introductory books on art history, Wölfflin and Riegl are regarded to be among the foremost founders of the modern "formalist" approach to art (e.g. Kultermann 1990: 170; D'Alleva 2005: 17–20; Hatt and Klonk 2006: 65–95), which aims to examine those formal "elements, qualities, and expression" mentioned by Schapiro, and which was placed during the 20th century in opposition to the study of the subject matter, or content, represented by iconography and iconology.[32]

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[27]   This remark is followed by his famous definition of that "character": *als Umriss und Farbe in Ebene oder Raum.*

[28]   In the same paragraph, he acknowledges the relevance and importance of Wickhoff's aforementioned 1895 study. See also Brendel 1979: 15 ff. for an overview of the theories of growth and decay concerning Roman art.

[29]   See also Gaiger 2011: fn. 7, for a list of the recent studies on Hegel and art history.

[30]   Already in 1951, Kaufmann provided an elaborate critique of Popper's readings of Hegel, by pointing out the factual errors, omissions, and out-of-context composite quotations that abound in his work. For recent critiques of Gombrich, see Elkins 1988 and Gaiger 2011, with further references.

[31]   By "expression," he means "an all-over quality" of a work of art (Schapiro 1994 [1962]: 54).

[32]   See Elkins 1996: 880. See also Summers 1989: 374–375 for an overview of the transformation of the term "form" to be

The reason for this distinction should be looked for in the theoretical roots of formalism. For Immanuel Kant, judgement of taste was not a cognitive but rather a "contemplative" one, and it required being *disinterested* not only towards the functionality of the object but also towards its very existence – any *interest* could endanger the impartiality of a judgement (Kant 2004 [1790]: 113 ff.).[33] Kant's emphasis on ruling out everything other than the object itself from aesthetic experience laid the foundations for a formalist theory of art at the beginning of the 20th century (Gaiger 2002: 130).[34] The proponents of this approach focused primarily on harmonious formal qualities (Fry 1920: 22, 25), fundamental properties inherent in art objects ("significant form" – Bell 1914),[35] or concepts of "purity" and "flatness" (Greenberg 1989: 133 ff., 139–145).[36]

On the other hand, the very distinction between form and content has been questioned in various ways. Panofsky, in his early critique of Wölfflin (Panofsky 1915),[37] argued against the latter's concept of the pure eye (epistemologically neutral, content-less seeing) by stressing the role of the active intervening mind in a Kantian sense. By the same token, Gadamer (1960: 87) asserts that pure seeing and pure hearing are "dogmatic abstractions that artificially reduce phenomena," and that "perception always includes meaning." In that respect, they both claim that a pure formalist analysis – likewise a pure content analysis – is epistemologically impossible (Panofsky 1998 [1924]: 1046, fn. 19; 1998 [1932]: 1065; Gadamer 1960: 87–88).[38] In any case, the discussion oscillates between what Summers (1989: 377) calls "a weak formalist position" (according to which "form is simply the vehicle of content"), and "a strong formalist position" (according to which "form in some sense *is* itself a kind of content"),[39] while the terms "style" and "form" are mostly used interchangeably in the literature (e. g. Sontag 1978: 20; Elsner 2003: 107; Winter 2010 [1998]: 419). Nonetheless, art history as a history of styles has been largely abandoned in the later 20th century, not solely due to its Hegelian roots (Elkins 1996: 880), but also because of the increasing emphasis on the fact that style is "a highly conditioned and ambivalent hermeneutical 'construct'" (Sauerländer 1983: 254), a "rhetorical tool" (Elsner 2003: 106), or in Alpers' (1987) words: "style is what you make it."

2.3. Style in Archaeological Theory

By the beginning of the 20th century, increasing emphasis on chronology and stratigraphy in archaeology went hand in hand with the description of archaeological deposits in terms of styles, which was understood briefly as "formal variation in material culture over space" (Carr and Neitzel 1995: 3). Within the culture-history paradigm, "style became a diagnostic trait by which archaeologists identified/created 'archaeological cultures'" (Sanz and Fiore 2014: 7105), whereby typologies and the search for "homologous similarities" (Dunnell 1986: 31) were utilized for purposes of relative dating.[40]

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able to fit the objectives of formalism.

[33]   He further claims (p. 116): "Ein jeder muss eingestehen, dass dasjenige Urteil über Schönheit, worin sich das mindeste Interesse mengt, sehr parteilich und kein reines Geschmacksurteil sei."

[34]   See also Steinberg 1972: 64 ff. for a concise overview of the methodology of formalism and its drawbacks. I would also like to note that although not frequently mentioned in the surveys of art historical theory, Schopenhauer's emphasis on "stop considering Where, When, Why and Wherefore of things but simply and exclusively [to] consider the *What*" is also directly related with the objectives of modern formalist theory of art (Schopenhauer 2010 [1818]: 201).

[35]   "Significant form" refers to a fundamental property inherent in an object rendering it an object of art.

[36]   For Greenberg, a painting should exclude narrative, representation, and third dimension (in favour of "flatness") to be able to attain "purity," which is to be realized only by abstract art.

[37]   His critique was in response to an earlier talk Wölfflin had given in 1911 (Wölfflin 1912) on the concepts he was to publish in his 1915 *Grundbegriffe*.

[38]   Bauer (2008: 164) arrives at the same conclusion by stressing how "absurd" it is to try to isolate the form from the "message." But see also Jodl 1920: 96.

[39]   Schapiro (1994 [1966]: 42) conceives of unity of form and content on two levels. On the "theoretical" level, he is closer to the "strong formalist position" by claiming that form is a "constituting element of the content and not just a reinforcement." On the "practical" level, he assumes that it is possible to distinguish the two in order to judge if they fit each other. According to Winter (2010 [1998]: 407), form "play[s] an important role in complementing or even *activating* the more overt message(s) provided by content." Sontag (1978: 11) calls the form-content distinction an "illusion," yet she keeps on working within the same framework in her critique of the interpretation of the "content."

[40]   Just as in art history, classificatory schemes in archaeology operated initially in analogy to biology. For instance, American southwestern ceramics were classified as: "Kingdom: artifacts. Phylum: ceramics. Class: pottery ..." (Hargrave 1932: 8, cited in Shanks and Tilley 1988: 79–80).

Theoretical and methodological questions posed by New Archaeology broadened the range of interpretation resulting from analyses of style. First, style was not solely in the service of chronologies any more: Several case studies conducted in the 1960s and early 1970s attempted to combine stylistic analysis of pottery with inferences about social organization and interaction between social units.[41] Second, as culture came to be viewed as "the system of the total extrasomatic means of adaptation" (Binford 1965: 209), any analysis of this system needed to be based on "partitioning of demonstrable variability into a multidimensional framework" (ibid.: 209), which eventually necessitated isolating the variables that are causally relevant in terms of their functions. Hence, style began to be evaluated against this backdrop of assessing primary (utilitarian) and secondary (non-utilitarian) functions of the material and was defined by Binford (ibid.: 208) as "formal attributes which vary with the social context of manufacture exclusive of the variability related to the use of the item." As a result, style could have solely a secondary function in "promoting group solidarity and serving as a basis for group awareness and identity" (Binford 1962: 220).[42]

This emphasis on the question of whether style can have functional and adaptive significance dominated the majority of the succeeding studies and is referred to in the literature as the style/function dichotomy (e. g. Dunnell 1978; Shanks and Tilley 1992: 139; Carr and Neitzel 1995: 6; Sanz and Fiore 2014: 7106).[43]

According to one of the major proponents of this dichotomy, Robert C. Dunnell, style is not adaptive to the environment and expresses "those *forms that do not have detectable selective values*", whereas "[f]unction is manifest as those *forms that directly affect the Darwinian fitness of the populations in which they occur*" (Dunnell 1978: 199, emphases in original). In his neo-evolutionist framework, style could only be explained in non-evolutionary, stochastic (random) processes.[44] A similar approach was also promoted by Meltzer, in which he concluded that "style has a function because, by virtue of its independence from its environment, it can be employed to delineate spatial interaction and demarcate cultural boundaries" (Meltzer 1981: 314).

In contrast to these approaches, Wobst (1977) purported that style can convey *adaptive advantage* on its respective users and can be *actively* used in processes of information exchange. His analysis of male folkdress from former Yugoslavia demonstrated that stylistic behavior adapts to altering social, political and natural conditions, primarily for purposes of social integration and social differentiation.[45] He further posited a positive correlation between the visibility of the artifacts and the probability that they carry certain stylistic messages (Wobst 1977: 328–329). This understanding of the active role of style has been adopted and elaborated by several later studies,[46] among which I would like to briefly mention here the approach developed by Wiessner (1983; 1985; 1990). Based on her work on Kalahari San arrowhead morphology, she defined style as "formal variation in material culture that transmits information about personal and social identity" (Wiessner 1983: 256), whereby personal identity is communicated consciously or unconsciously through *assertive* style, while social identity is transmitted exclusively consciously through *emblemic* style.

An elaborate critique of the style/function dichotomy has been made by James Sackett (1977; 1982; 1985; 1990). For him, style "at least potentially, resides in *all* formal variation" (Sackett 1977: 378, emphasis in original).[47]

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[41] On these "ceramic-sociologists" (Sackett 1977: 376), see Plog 1978; 1983: 125 and Bernbeck 1997: 91–92, 248 with further references.

[42] His well-known debate with Bordes is an apt example of Binford's emphasis on functional explanations for material culture variation (see Bordes 1961; Binford and Binford 1966).

[43] It should be noted that this was not the first time that style was discussed in conjunction with function. See, for example, Kroeber 1919: 238. See also Lyman 2001 for an overview of the related literature. The difference in the nature of the discussion lies in the contrast between the research objectives as well as the methodology of the then-prevailing normative theory and those of New Archaeology.

[44] See Hurt and Rakita 2001, for a re-evaluation of this framework.

[45] In a reappraisal in 1999, Wobst argued that what he had meant was not the *reflection* of social affiliation through style but an active *interference* in social conditions (Wobst 1999: 120).

[46] For an overview of these studies, see Bernbeck 1997: 238–243. Further references can be found in Carr and Neitzel 1995: 6–7. For critiques of Wobst's model, see Plog 1980: 117 ff.; McGuire 1981: 19 ff.; Hodder 1982: 204–205; Shanks and Tilley 1992: 141–142; and Dietler and Herbich 1998: 240–242.

[47] However, it should be noted that Sackett did maintain a conceptual distinction between style and function – yet *not* as two separate, but as two complementary domains.

In that respect, stylistic (or as termed by Sackett, "isochrestic")[48] variation refers to the choices made from "a spectrum of equivalent alternatives, of equally viable options, for attaining any given end in manufacturing and/ or using material items" (Sackett 1990: 32–33). He further claimed that these choices are determined by the craft traditions within which the artisans are enculturated and acknowledged style as habitual, passive idiomatic of ethnicity (Sackett 1977: 370–371; 1985: 157; 1990: 33). The assumption by the "ceramic sociologists" that there exists a positive correlation between the intensity of social interaction and degree of stylistic similarity was also adopted by Sackett and interpreted as another indicator of ethnic affinity (Sackett 1977: 371).

Despite the fact that Hodder (1985: 9–10) shared the above conception of style as being present in every aspect of material culture,[49] he did not regard style as solely reflecting enculturation processes, but rather he argued that material culture is meaningfully constituted and primarily related to *internally* generated symbolic schemes (Hodder 1982: 186). Thus, active use of material culture for various purposes (e. g. for adaptive strategies, negotiation of power, defining boundaries) forms and is formed by those symbolic schemes. In that sense, in contrast to Wobst's approach, Hodder (1982: 54–56, 204–205) demonstrated that lowly visible, domestic aspects of everyday life such as hearth position might also carry important messages concerning social integration. Additionally, in line with the extensive critique by Plog (1978), Hodder's ethnoarchaeological studies showed that there is no direct correlation between social interaction and stylistic similarity, but rather there are various intervening factors such as "intentions, strategies, attitudes and ideologies" (Hodder 1982: 185). As for style itself, he later argued that style only exists in reference to other events, and defined it as "the referral of an individual event to a general way of doing" (Hodder 1990: 45). Shanks and Tilley also situated themselves firmly against the functionalist and evolutionist accounts:

> "The archaeological record is, primarily, a record of *style*, i. e. ways of acting or accomplishing ends according to varying orientations to the world and with reference to individual and group social strategies and power relationships, which may not be assimilated or reduced to functional or adaptive necessity." (Shanks and Tilley 1992: 56, emphasis in original)

In line with their view of material culture as *objectification of social being*, Shanks and Tilley (1992: 130, 155) further conceptualized style as a form of social practice. Drawing on Bourdieu (1977; 1990) and Giddens (1984), they attempted to transcend the separation of active and passive style by reframing the issue within practical and discursive consciousness (Shanks and Tilley 1992: 144–146).[50] In terms of artistic production, practical consciousness refers to unreflected, embodied practices of the artisans, constantly reproduced through repetition, while practices on the level of discursive consciousness involve reflection, being able to "give verbal expression to the promptings of action" (Giddens 1984: 45). Being on the level of practical consciousness does not render style "passive;" it might well actively transmit certain identities. Similarly, also based on Bourdieu's theory of practice, Feldman (2014: 65) recently considered style "physical embodiment of social practice" in her analysis of first millennium BCE Levantine ivories. She argues that style – specifically, animal markings attested on the ivories of the so-called "Flame and Frond" group as well as on several Tell Halaf orthostats – played a central role in keeping the past (Late Bronze Age) alive as "embodied history and collective memory" (Feldman 2014: 64).

Another important component of the discussion pertains to the relation between technology and style. As was the case with function, technology, too, was commonly considered to have its own independent domain *unrelated* to style, turning the style/function dichotomy into a style/function/technology trichotomy.[51] However, this standpoint has been subjected to two main critiques: First, the Greek word *techne*, which can be translated as "skill", incorporated in the past both what is called today "art" and "technology" (Summers 2003: 66–67; Ingold 2001: 17–18). Hence, the assumption that technology occupies a separate realm independent of society is a fairly modern phenomenon (Ingold 2000: 289 ff.). Second, increasing emphasis has been put on the premise that "technical relations are embedded in social relations" (Ingold 2000: 314) as well as on incorporating the role of the social and cultural context, including symbolic structures, power relations, and ideologies, into the studies of technology, leading to the coinage of the term *technological style*.[52] For Lechtman (1977: 10), "what lay behind the technological style

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[48]   "A neologism from the Greek which literally translates as 'equivalent in use'" (Sackett 1990: 33).

[49]   Hence, he clearly rejected the style/function dichotomy: "[E]conomy is as much stylistic as the decoration on a potsherd" (Hodder 1985: 10). The ubiquitous nature of style is also pointed out by Shanks and Tilley 1992: 147.

[50]   Giddens' (1984: xxii–xxiii, 49) original distinction is between unconscious, practical consciousness, and discursive consciousness. The boundaries between the latter two are not rigid but shifting.

[51]   See Dietler and Herbich 1998: 236 ff. for an overview and critique of those studies.

[52]   See the contributions in Lechtman and Merrill 1977. See also Dobres and Hoffman 1994, for an extensive review of the

were attitudes of artisans towards the materials they used, attitudes of cultural communities towards the nature of the technological events themselves, and the objects resulting from them."[53] In that regard, all stages of the *chaîne opératoires*[54] of production and consumption are laden with strategies and choices that are "aspects of social action and cultural concepts that result in the production of material style" (Dietler and Herbich 1998: 238).

Technique and technology have both generative and constraining influence on the production process of an artifact. As Summers (2003: 68) puts it, "[A]rtifacts […] are just as they are as a consequence of arbitrariness and authority within the limits set by technology, medium and technique." Leroi-Gourhan's concept of "functional approximation," which refers to the "response to the contradictory demands of mechanical appropriateness and the traditional aesthetics of the group" (Leroi-Gourhan 1993 [1964–1965]: 304–305), implies a similar understanding. In his approach, traditional aesthetics, also called "ethnic style" by him, works in the "narrow margin that function leaves to form" (ibid.: 306)[55] and is that which renders operational sequences culturally and ethnically conditioned (ibid.: 253). Similarly, for Boas (1955: 146), variations of form are "confined within the limits established by the fixed motor habits of the people", yet the reasons for the variation under the *same* technical conditions should be looked for in the complex "psychological and historical conditions that determine the development of language, social structure, mythology, and religion" (ibid.: 155). More recently, the relation between operational sequences, material culture patterning and social boundaries was discussed within a framework combining the French and Americanist traditions, particularly stressing the problematic nature of correlating styles with ethnicities (e. g. Dietler and Herbich 1994; contributions in Stark 1998).

Archaeological discussions of style in the last two decades either revolved around attempts to integrate these various models into a unified framework (e. g. Carr and Neitzel 1995: Ch. 6–7) or favored abandoning the concept of style altogether by acknowledging it as one of the numerous social categorizations of the world and an unresolvable product of Cartesian dichotomies (e. g. Boast 1997).[56] The latter attitude is also implied in the writings of the proponents of recent "symmetrical archaeology"[57] – although, to my knowledge, none of those studies has so far discussed style explicitly.

2.4. Discussion

I believe it has been obvious by now that any attempt to define "style" is destined to remain partial. Yet I would like to summarize in the following the position that will be taken in this study.

– Style, taken simply as a certain way of doing, is inherent in *every* aspect of material culture. Hence, it cannot be regarded as a residual category that is supposed to be accessed only when adaptive and functional properties have been sorted out. In that sense, attempts to locate style in non-functional and non-adaptive properties

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　　recent literature, and Lemonnier's (1986: 148–149) critique of Sackett's and Wiessner's models on style.

[53]　See also Lechtman 1993. Lechtman's emphases on internal dynamics and the reciprocal relationship between technology and society are extremely important, but I should note that I do not fully agree with her conclusion that technological style is the manifest *expression* of cultural patterning and behavior (see below sections 2.4 and 3.3).

[54]　*Chaîne opératoire* refers to the entire operational sequence from raw material procurement to finished product (Leroi-Gourhan 1993 [1964–1965]). In recent scholarship, this sequence is further extended to include "the archaeological discovery of the object, its post-excavation processing, its conservation, documentation, publication, storage and/or display, loan, repatriation and any further interactions between that object and people." (Brysbaert 2012: 258).

[55]　In that sense, a clear separation between function and style is evident.

[56]　The latter position can also be evaluated as part of similar post-structuralist movements in other disciplines. See also the contributions in Lorblanchet and Bahn 1993, according to which improvements in dating techniques will lead research into a "post-stylistic era," making "stylistic analysis" for dating purposes redundant.

[57]　E. g. Witmore 2007; Olsen 2007; Shanks 2007; and most recently discussed under "New Materialisms" by Witmore (2014). Based on the notion of ontological symmetry (see the contributions by Law, Latour, Callon in Law, ed. 1991; Latour 1993), proponents of symmetrical archaeology reject the ontological distinction between humans and non-humans and postulate a "full turn from the days when things were mere intermediaries to something else" (Witmore 2014: 3). They prefer to define archaeology as "the discipline of things, as an 'ecology of practices' that approaches the world with care and in wonder" (Witmore 2014: 2). In that sense, Gell's work (1998) on "object agency" could also be relevant here, but it is largely rejected by symmetrical archaeology due to the fact that in Gell's approach, things can have agency only when they interact with humans.

of material culture resemble the attempts in art history to equate style with form and situate it in opposition to content. Thus, I will follow neither style/function nor style (form)/content dichotomies.

– Style is also a discursive item, a rhetorical tool, when it comes to *articulating* that "certain way of doing." It gives an order to internal conflicts and contradictions embedded in a work of art, in the works of an individual, in a time period or a society, categorizes them, and makes them "accessible to aesthetic historicism" (Sauerländer 1983: 254). Methodologically, the dynamic and unexplainable nature of the objects that symmetrical archaeology asks us to wonder at[58] is illuminating, yet impractical, as the moment we begin to *talk about* objects (in terms of any description of a work of art) is the moment we abandon wondering at them and render them static, temporally and spatially. That acknowledged, a "stylistic" analysis of a work of art has to involve *all* aspects that are implied separately by the traditional categories of form, content, subject matter, iconography, etc. Additionally, the traditional separation of art and technology cannot be sustained, as technology is "the more or less immediate background for everything we call art" (Summers 2003: 67). In that respect, style resides in every single step of the process of production, hence, materials, production techniques, and the operational sequence itself need to be included in the analysis.

– Style, and material culture in general, cannot be regarded as a mere *reflection* of mentalities, collective cognitive structures, or social behavior. Material culture structures and is structured by social practices and is transformative in nature (Shanks and Tilley 1992: 116–134). Hence, instead of a causal one-to-one relationship, there can only be an *indexical* one (Davis 1990: 25), in which social practices, with their contradictions and unintended consequences, are *mediated* by style, yet always in reference to the transformative but also constraining role of social structures.[59] Those social practices mediated by style might express, distort, or hide certain identities through habitual (as Sackett suggests) or discursive (as Wobst and Wiessner suggest) processes. However, those identities do not need to be solely "ethnic," as Sackett assumes. This point will be further elaborated in the following section.

3. Style as a "Reflection of Collectivities" in Archaeological and Art Historical Practice

Attempts to correlate material culture with collective entities have a long history in archaeological and art-historical inquiry.[60] In this section, I will present a brief historiographical account of the best-known studies undertaken from the 19th century onwards.

3.1. Archaeology: Races, Cultures, Culture Areas

One of the most common ways of explaining collectivities has been to equate them with certain "races." Throughout the 19th century, the concept of biologically determined race remained a crucial parameter in various theories concerning the diversity of human groups. Race was often thought to refer to *discrete objective entities* and assumed the role of being "*the* primary basis of human differentiation" (Jones 2008: 321, emphasis in original). In disciplines such as physical anthropology, racial determinism "assumed a direct, fixed correlation between physical form and structure, and mental and cultural capabilities" (Jones 1997: 43). This correlation might be exemplified with an instance from the time of the rise of physical anthropology in Berlin, the age of colonial exhibitions and the *panopticons*, namely the institution of "exotic spectacles," where natives from the colonized countries would "perform" or would be "displayed" in public (Zimmerman 2001: 15–37). The "scientific" part of that spectacle would involve the physical measurements of the performers, which was at that time often a quite painful process.[61] In general, most of the natives were reported to have complied, but in one of those sessions, the rage of an Inuit woman who refused to be measured was interpreted by Rudolf Virchow, head of the Berlin

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[58] See fn. 57.

[59] Lack of emphasis on the role of social structures impinging upon agency was one of the main points of critique of Giddens' approach (e. g. Mouzelis 1995: 118 ff.; Barrett 2001: 154–155; Bernbeck 2008a: 396).

[60] See Hides 1996: 28–36 for an overview of those attempts from the Renaissance onwards.

[61] See Zimmerman 2001: 21, 34 for short descriptions of the measurement process. See also Jones 1997: 147, fn. 3. On the history of theory and methodology of craniometry as well as of biological determinism in general, see Gould 1996.

Anthropological Society,[62] as an indication of a shamanistic trance, a direct manifestation of primitive religion (Zimmerman 2001: 23). In fact, Virchow belonged to the "liberal" tradition of German anthropology, and, along with Johannes Ranke and Felix von Luschan, he fought outspokenly against the anti-Semitic turn of the discipline in the late 1880s.[63]

That turn and its consequences are particularly important for the purposes of this section, and it should be noted that it did not came all of a sudden but was embedded in the theoretical developments of the previous century. Johann Gottfried Herder's ideas on the "national character" of people forming an organic whole, which manifests itself along with environmental factors in all aspects of social production including art,[64] paved the way for the development of *Volkskunde* in German-speaking countries (Kossack 1992: 75; Gaiger 2011: 181).[65] Within that framework, concepts such as "nation" and "ethnic group" were often used interchangeably and regarded as representative of "bounded, homogenous entities that can be objectively defined on the basis of cultural, linguistic, and sometimes biological characteristics" (Jones 2008: 321). During the first half of the 19th century, together with the first systematic excavations of burials by Karl Wilhelmi, and later by Georg Ramsauer, the writings of Johann Gustav Büsching and Gustav Klemm aimed to differentiate German tribes from Celtic and Slavic ones on the basis of the spatial distribution of material culture (Kossack 1992; Sklenar 1983: 91ff.). In a similar vein, J. E. Vocel's formulation of "Czech national archaeology" in 1843 (see Sklenar 1983: 68), and some of the works of the Swedish archaeologist Oscar Montelius (e.g. Montelius 1888)[66] focused on the historical continuity of contemporary "nations" by tracing them back from the Middle Ages to prehistoric periods, a method known as the "direct historical approach."[67] Despite the fact that Herder himself was against the superiority of one "nation" over another,[68] his ideas, together with some aspects of the methodology used by Vocel and Montelius, were later adopted by Gustaf Kossinna (1911; 1926), whose work is the most notorious example of a discourse arguing for the supremacy of one "race" and "nation" over others.[69]

With Kossinna's work, the notions of race and ethnic group began to be discussed in conjunction with another highly popular way of describing collectivities: "cultures." The word culture, detached from its original meaning derived from *colere* (to cultivate) in Latin, is attested from the beginning of 18th century onward in the French and German literature.[70] There, culture was considered the opposite of "barbarism" and would include art, religion, education, and morals.[71]

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[62]   The Berlin Anthropological Society later evolved into the Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory, which became then a branch of the German Society for Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory, likewise founded on Virchow's initiative in 1870 (see Hachmann 1987: 17–18).

[63]   See Massin 1996: 89–91. However, von Luschan's later ambivalent attitude in questions of "race hygiene" should be noted here (see Massin 1996: 104–105).

[64]   For instance, concerning ancient Greece, Herder (1953 [1787]: 136) claims: "Wer gab nun diesen einst rohen Stämmen eine solche Sprache, Poesie und bildliche Weisheit? Der Genius der Natur gab sie ihnen, ihr Land, ihre Lebensart, ihre Zeit, ihr Stammescharacter." A similar idea, with a particular emphasis on language, is also echoed in the works of Wilhelm von Humboldt (see Bunzl 1996: 32–35 for a discussion).

[65]   Herder's ideas are considered to be part of a more general reaction to the French intellectual dominance in the 17th and early 18th centuries. See Berlin 1990: 34–40.

[66]   See Bernbeck 1997: 26 for an overview of the well-known seriation model developed by Montelius.

[67]   This method also enjoyed great popularity in the United States in the first decades of the 20th century. See Lyman and O'Brien 2001: 308ff. for an overview of the method and its applications in American archaeology.

[68]   Herder (1953 [1787]: 293) clearly rejects elevation of a nation to the status of "the chosen one", and condemns such attempts as "der unedle Stolz eines Barbaren." But see also Zimmerman (2001: 39–40), who discusses the limited nature of Herder's relativism by pointing out his negative remarks on non-European ethnic groups.

[69]   There seems to be more or less a consensus in the literature that it was not Montelius' method but Kossinna's application of it that proved to be highly problematic (e.g. McWhite 1956: 7, cited in Veit 1989: 35; Sklenar 1983: 148; Eggers 2004: 199–200).

[70]   Voltaire's usage of the term in *Henriade* is considered to be the first attestation (Hachmann 1987: 11). But see also Diaz-Andreu (1996: 51) who, following J.A. Maravall, traces the origin of the word to the 16th century.

[71]   There is an important difference between the French and German usages of the term. While in French, culture also involves laws, constitution, and science, in German-speaking areas those aspects are separated from culture and considered under the term "civilization." For the relation between culture and civilization, see Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952: 13ff. For overviews of various meanings attached to the word culture in the last two centuries, see Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952; Meinander 1981; and Hachmann 1987.

This was later re-conceptualized through the distinction between *Naturvölker* (peoples of nature) und *Kulturvölker* (peoples of culture).[72] Despite various critical voices suggesting that all human groups have the "potential" to possess "culture,"[73] this distinction was accepted in general terms and survived in the academic literature of the 20th century. As for the term "culture," although in use in various ethnological and anthropological studies (e. g. Klemm 1843–1852; 1854–1855), it was as late as 1871 when it was first defined by the cultural anthropologist E. B. Tylor:

> Culture or Civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. (Tylor 1871: 1, cited in Trigger 1978: 76)

From this general view of culture, an understanding of "individual cultures as ways of life transmitted by specific peoples from generation to generation" (Trigger 1978: 76) was to follow. German historian Eduard Meyer (1884) is among the first who divided world history into the deeds of individual cultures (Egyptian culture, Greek culture, Asian cultures, etc.), and applied the notion of culture areas [*Culturkreise*] (ibid.: 21; see also Meinander 1981: 101). The systematic application of culture areas in archaeological studies was popularized primarily through Kossinna's work. One of the basic premises of his "settlement archaeology" was that archaeological culture areas (or provinces – *Kulturprovinzen*) could be directly associated with specific "peoples" [*Völker*] or "tribes" [*Völkerstämme*] (Kossinna 1911: 3; 1926: 21). Through the "direct historical approach" that he had borrowed from Vocel and Montelius, he acknowledged material culture as a direct reflection of *Germani* itself, the history of which he claimed to have traced back to the Neolithic in northern Europe (see Klejn 1974: 18; Sklenar 1983: 149; Veit 1984: 339–340; Bernbeck 1997: 30). With him, the traditional separation of *Naturvölker* and *Kulturvölker* attained a clear racist connotation, where *Germani* has always been a creative *Kulturvolk* and had the unquestionable right to disseminate its *Kultur* to the various *Naturvölker* through invasions and conquests.[74] Not surprisingly, Kossinna's ideas were utilized by the Nazi regime as scientific legitimation for its expansionist aims (Arnold 1990), a practice reminiscent of the foundation of *Académie celtique* by Napoleon for basically similar purposes (Dietler 1994: 588). When one takes into account the manipulative references of the Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg to Herder's ideas,[75] Trigger's (1994: 101) following words do not seem at all far-fetched: "Dachau and Belsen had their origins not only in Nazism but also in over a century of European intellectual culture in which archaeology had played an important role".

This was in accordance with the already mentioned anti-Semitic turn in anthropology, which manifested itself particularly in the dissemination of Gobineau's ideas and the development of modern race theories at the turn of the century (Massin 1996: 80–82, 93 ff., 129–130) and was by no means limited to Kossinna himself. Even one of the opponents of Kossinna, Carl Schuchhardt (1944), found no problems in the basic tenets of the "direct historical approach." His revolutionary excavation methods just led him to utilize *fortification walls and settlements themselves* to trace back contemporary cultures, instead of concentrating solely on pottery, tools and weapons, as Kossinna had done.[76] Schuchhardt (1944: VIII–IX) rejected an equation of languages with races but still pursued a direct correlation of styles and archaeological cultures with certain ethnic groups.[77] A similar methodology was also adopted by Gordon Childe, whose definition of an archaeological culture is probably the most famous one: "certain types of remains – pots, implements, ornaments, burial rites, house forms – constantly recurring together" (Childe 1929: v–vi). Although his equation of those "types of remains" with "people" is reminiscent of Kossinna's ideas,[78] from 1933 onwards he was highly critical about racial explanations of archaeological cultures. Instead, his focus came to be more on the social aspects:

> Culture is a social heritage; it corresponds to a community sharing common traditions, common institutions and a common way of life. Such a group may reasonably be called a people […] It is then a people to which the culture of an

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[72]   The earliest usage of the words *Naturvolk* or *Naturvölker* is attributed to Herder (in 1777), while *Kulturvölker* is first attested in the second half of the 19th century (Grotsch 1984: 635).

[73]   Theodor Waitz, Adolf Bastian, and Franz Boas were among the critical voices (see Bunzl 1996: 45, 59, 68–69, with further references).

[74]   See Veit 1989: 39 ff. for a discussion concerning the contemporary critique of Kossinna's model.

[75]   See Bunzl 1996: 73, fn. 10, for one of the sentences Rosenberg quoted from Herder to back his own point.

[76]   On Schuchhardt, see Klejn 1974: 28 and Eggers 2004: 221–222.

[77]   See Klejn 1974: 28–29 for several references to Schuchhardt's works concerning his attitude towards race and ethnicity.

[78]   See Veit 1984: 339 ff. for an extensive discussion concerning the theoretical and methodological similarities and differences between Kossinna and Childe.

archaeologist must correspond. If ethnic be the adjective for people, we may say that prehistoric archaeology has a good hope of establishing an ethnic history of Europe, while a racial one seems hopelessly remote. (Childe 1935: 198–199, cited in Jones 1997: 17)

This shift rendered the concept of archaeological culture "a quasi-ideology-free substitute for the term 'ethnic unit'" (Veit 1989: 42). However, the framework itself, which became quite popular not only in Germany but also in Britain in the 1920s,[79] still presupposed a collective and homogenous mind-set behind all kinds of social production (Bernbeck 1997: 29). In this context, the long-lasting quest to "locate" the Dorians in the archaeological record is an excellent example, in which not only the terminological transition from "race" to "ethnic unit" and to "archaeological cultures" can be clearly observed, but also the recurring attempts to match the material culture with predefined collective mind-sets (a Dorian *Volksgeist*).[80] Although in his later works Childe himself became increasingly skeptical about equating an archaeological culture with "people," two premises in his work remained valid:

– "All the archaeologist can study is man's behaviour, the material expression of his spiritual experiences." (Childe 1971 [1944]: 78)

– "Types are found repeatedly associated together just because they result from the behaviour pattern standardized within one and the same society […] The prehistorian's business is to reconstruct the behaviour pattern that guarantees their association. Thereby this assemblage of archaeological data will come to life, and the culture-name applied to it will acquire an historical connotation." (Childe 1956: 112)

For Childe, cultures were "observed facts" (Childe 1935: 3, cited in Veit 1984: 342), and getting access to standardized behavior patterns necessitated a complex methodology, which ideally focused not on individual artifact types, but rather on *assemblages* of different find combinations (Härke 1991: 189). On the other hand, whether this aim was realized in practice is another story: His analyses often operated with a limited number of diagnostic artifacts, features or traits (see Trigger 1978: 83–84 for a discussion). This was often the case with other studies within the same culture-historical paradigm. For instance, Siân Jones (1997: 18) mentions the example of discussions about "Woodbury culture" from the British Iron Age, which was defined through three individual features: the permanent round house, the weaving comb, and the ring-headed pin.

Despite the apparent differences between his and Childe's models, Henri Frankfort (1956) likewise worked with the presupposition of collective mind-sets, especially evident in the way he conceptualized the "character of a civilization" (ibid.: 3). That character, or "form" (ibid.: 3, 25), as he preferred to name it, "is never destroyed although it changes in the course of time" (ibid.: 3). It takes its explanatory power from its all-encompassing nature: "We recognize it [the character, form of a civilization] in a certain coherence among its various manifestations, a certain consistency in its orientation, a certain cultural 'style' which shapes its political and its judicial institutions, its art as well as its literature, its religion as well as its morals" (ibid.).

Within this general framework, the role played by textual sources was certainly of crucial importance for studies of historical periods. It suffices here to mention the long-lasting debate concerning the identification of Sumerians and Akkadians in the written records and the theories about an "ethnic rivalry" between them. While F. R. Kraus (1970) persistently claimed that there is no secure basis to assume such an ethnic opposition and even challenged the existence of recognizable ethnic groups,[81] others (e. g. Wilcke 1975; Steinkeller 1993; Westenholz 1993) not only drew a parallel between ethnicities and social and political structure, but also attempted to differentiate them in terms of certain "traits." For instance, Westenholz (1993: 159–160), writing about the "differences of mentality between Sumerians and Akkadians,"[82] referred to the Akkadians as having "strong temperamental outbursts," while Sumerians were acknowledged as "a people of law and order."

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[79]　See Trigger 1978: 83 for several examples of such studies from Britain.

[80]　See Hall 1997: 4–16 for an overview of the related literature from the early 19th century onwards. He also gives several examples concerning the difficulties inherent in equating "archaeological cultures" with "ethnicities" for the case of the Dorians (Hall 2014: 48 ff., 292). See also Hall 1997: 13 for a brief discussion concerning the adoption of the rhetoric "Indo-germanic Dorians" by the Nazis.

[81]　See also Jacobsen 1939.

[82]　The quoted expression is part of the title of his article. Elsewhere, Westenholz claims that "the style of their letters was a natural expression of the mind-set of the Akkadians as a people, an attitude to the world that was quite different from that of Sumerians" (pp. 159–160).

Then he concluded that "the differences in mentality suggested here reveals themselves in many aspects of Sumerian and early Akkadian culture, such as social organization, religion, mythology, history, art" (ibid.: 160). Particularly in the first half of the 20ᵗʰ century, the integration of archaeological material into this scheme was characterized by reliance on the already-mentioned premises of physical anthropology, which is best demonstrated by the various studies aiming at a racial categorization of Early Dynastic sculpture as well as related skeletal remains by means of cranial analysis.[83]

3.2. Art History: Constants, Structures, Spirits

In the field of art history, the revolutionary contributions of Wölfflin and Riegl at the turn of the century and particularly Gombrich's lifelong critique of "Hegelianism" have already been discussed. Despite the previously-noted controversial character of that critique, Gombrich's emphasis on the problematic nature of utilizing art as explanation of collectivities surely deserves a closer look.

One of the main tenets of the approach propagated by Wölfflin and Riegl was that through the analysis of form, "it [was] possible to investigate the structures of human spirit itself" (Summers 1989: 374). Form, in other words style, was acknowledged as *expression* of spirit:

> We have, in thus sketching three examples of individual style, national style, and period style, illustrated the aims of an art history which conceives style primarily as expression [*Ausdruck*], expression of the temper [*Stimmung*] of an age and a nation as well as expression of the individual temperament. (Wölfflin 1915: 10)[84]

In that sense, the differences between German and Italian art could be explained by Wölfflin by means of long-term *constants* resulting from different national and psychological dispositions of those people (Wölfflin 1915: 248–251).[85] Yet it was particularly Riegl's *Kunstwollen*, which was later reinterpreted by the followers of *Neue Wiener Schule*, within a framework harmonized with right-wing Hegelian interpretations. In fact, these interpretations were the ones Gombrich took as *the* Hegel interpretation against which to fight (see Gaiger 2011: 179 ff.). Before turning to the works of those scholars, it should be noted that just as was the case with archaeology and anthropology, nationalist theories were already in place in art history during the first decades of the 20ᵗʰ century. For instance, while Gothic was being promoted as a German national style (Olin 2000: 156), scholars such as Sieveking and Weickert were attempting to reach the "Roman character" in art by teasing out specific "Roman traits and constants" (Brendel 1979: 47–68). An overtly racist model concerning early Christian art has been developed by Josef Strzygowski, in which stylistic differences were explained as a result of the "contrast of two races, that to which the Greeks and Romans belong, and the Semitic" (Strzygowski 1901: 39). Olin (2000: 164–165) reminds us that Strzygowski's narrative concerning the eastern influence on the "decadence" of late antique art included a presentation of "Hellas" as a beautiful maiden who sold herself to the harem of an "Old Semite," surrounded by a "Semitic pack" – which in the end led to "Hellas suffocat[ing] in the embrace of the Orient" (Strzygowski 1905: 23, cited in Elsner 2003: 104).

Through several articles, Hans Sedlmayr and Otto Pächt, leading figures of the *Neue Wiener Schule*, developed an influential theoretical and methodological model known as *Strukturforschung* or *Strukturanalyse*.[86] Clearly drawing on the principles of Gestalt psychology, they considered a work of art an ordered and organized whole, the analysis of which relied on acquiring access to the underlying structure (or constant) pervading every single part of that work of art including the seemingly insignificant details. Almost equivalent to Riegl's *Stilprinzip*, *structure* is that through which the *Kunstwollen* of "a certain group of people" (Sedlmayr 1929: XVII)[87] is articulated; it is what paves the way for intuitive assertions and interpretations revealing the relationship of a work of art to the worldviews and society at large.

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[83] A further step in this methodology involved physiognomic comparisons with modern living peoples. See Evans 2012: 15–56. I thank Reinhard Bernbeck for this reference

[84] Translation adapted from M. D. Hottinger's Dover edition (1950: 10).

[85] See also Schapiro 1994 [1962]: 86 ff. for a critique of those constants, which he regards as part of "the racial concept of style."

[86] Sedlmayr's reinterpretation of Riegl is presented in Sedlmayr 1929. See also Sedlmayr 1931; Pächt 1931; 1933. On *Neue Wiener Schule* and *Strukturforschung* in general, see Dittmann 1967: 142–216; Bernbeck 1997: 235–237; and Wood 2000.

[87] He rules out nations (*Völker*) and *Zeitgeist* as possible "carriers" of *Kunstwollen*.

The ambiguous nature of Riegl's *Kunstwollen* allowed Sedlmayr to interpret it in accordance with his general model as a *real* "supra-individual will" (Sedlmayr 1929: XVIII),[88] i. e. the "objective spirit" (ibid.). However, his interpretation of Riegl was open to sharp critique from the outset. In 1934, Julius von Schlosser, who was the supervisor for both Sedlmayr's and Pächt's dissertations, advised against Sedlmayr's interpretation of Riegl:

> Riegl was never able to bring his profound thoughts to a proper conclusion, and the danger exists, and it has already occurred, that they can disappear behind a 'system' and become 'mythological'. In spite of complete consciousness of the situation, and great care, one of my most gifted pupils, Hans Sedlmayr, has not been completely able to escape this in an exposition of the 'Quintessenz der Lehren Riegls'. (von Schlosser 2009 [1934]: 35)

The danger von Schlosser pointed out was soon to evolve into ideological mystifications. For instance, another follower of the same school of thought, Guido Kaschnitz von Weinberg often worked with *constants*, referring to "inherently different temper/predisposition [*Veranlagung*] of the Orientals" (Kaschnitz von Weinberg 1933: 9), or "'biodynamic' nature [*Wesen*] of the Nordic people" (Kaschnitz von Weinberg 1965 [1937]: 87). Additionally, although Riegl himself was clearly against pan-German nationalism,[89] the name of Sedlmayr is still remembered for his close affinity with the Nazis from 1930 onwards, culminating in his enthusiastic support for the *Anschluss* as well as his salutation of Hitler at the end of the preface to his contribution to the *Festschrift* for Wilhelm Pinder – another outspoken supporter of the Nazi regime (Sedlmayr 1938: 10).[90] On the other hand, Otto Pächt, a Viennese of Jewish origin, who eventually distanced himself personally from Sedlmayr, continued to support the main premises of *Strukturforschung* in his exile years in England.[91] Nonetheless, the passage below from Schapiro's critique in 1936 aptly describes the fundamental drawback of *Strukturforschung*:

> We do not reproach the authors for neglecting the social, economic, political and ideological factors in art, but rather for offering us as historical explanations a mysterious racial and animistic language in the name of a higher science of art. (Schapiro 1936: 260)[92]

This preoccupation with identifying certain *constants* and the tendency to acknowledge them as an expression of collective *temper* and individual *temperament* can be further exemplified by the art historical literature on wall paintings from Western Asia, Egypt, and the Aegean during the 2nd millennium BCE. Since the discoveries in Mari and Alalakh in the early 20th century, comparative studies of wall paintings were not only based on iconography, but also on the specific painting technique, whereby a supposedly geographical differentiation in terms of the latter has dominated the literature: *al fresco* in the Aegean, *al secco* in Western Asia and Egypt (e. g. Forbes 1965: 249; Stevenson Smith 1965: 104; Immerwahr 1990: 15; Niemeier 1991: 195). This tendency has only very recently been subjected to an extensive critique raised by Constance von Rüden (2013), on which the main points of the following discussion are based.

Ever since the discovery of the Knossos wall paintings, *al fresco* is presented as one of the primary features of Minoans, even as a Minoan ethnic marker. For instance, Schiering wrote: "Which technique would have been better suited to the mercurial Cretans than this fresco painting created completely out of the moment?" (Schiering 1960: 36, cited in von Rüden 2013: 69). Regardless of the fact that the fresco technique requires a complicated preparation and application process (von Rüden 2017; Brysbaert 2007: 343), equating certain techniques with certain ethnicities was not solely limited to art, but could be extended to other spheres of a society. For instance, Woolley (1946: 167) explains the "Minoan Thalassocracy"[93] with these words: "The Minoan thalassocracy was at its height,

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[88]   Cf. Panofsky 1920, for whom *Kunstwollen* was *not* a real entity but solely an abstract concept.

[89]   See Olin's (2000) discussion of Riegl and the internationalism of the Habsburg Empire.

[90]   Sedlmayr was a member of the Austrian NSDAP between 1930–1932. After the *Anschluss*, he joined the NSDAP and stayed a member until the end of the war. As a result of his membership, he lost his professorship in Vienna in 1945. In 1951, he was appointed as the chair of the Department of Art History in Münich. Ten years later, his old position in Vienna was offered to him despite protests from several art historians, but Sedlmayr declined the offer. He left Münich in 1964 to chair the Department of Art History of the re-founded University of Salzburg, where he taught until 1974. For an overview of art-historical theory and practice in Germany between 1933–1945, see Dilly 1988: 11–76. For art history in Germany after 1945, see Dilly 1988: 77–89 and Doll et al. 2006.

[91]   Pächt's appointment to a teaching position in Heidelberg was prevented by the Nazis in 1933. He emigrated to England in 1938, and eventually received a teaching position in Oxford. See Gaiger 2011: 182 for a brief discussion of Pächt's commitment to structural analysis, with further references.

[92]   See also Panofsky's (2001 [1927]: 961) very early critique of Pinder without specifically mentioning his name, as well as Gombrich's (1964) review of the *Festschrift* presented to Sedlmayr.

[93]   On "Minoan Thalassocracy," see von Rüden 2013: 63 ff. and Knapp 1993: 333–334.

and the Minoan seaman had none of that fear of the open sea which kept the Phoenician hugging a friendly coast."
Surely, this remark should be evaluated within the contemporary discussions concerning the directionality of the
knowledge transfer (the so-called East-West dichotomy)[94] through itinerant craftspeople, theories of which were
exclusively based on determining the "earlier" site and assuming a knowledge transfer disseminated from that
site to the "later" ones. For instance, dating the Level VII palace in Alalakh to the beginning of 18th century BCE,
Woolley (1946: 186–187; 1953: 74–75) asserted that itinerant craftspeople were sent from the East to decorate the
Minoan palaces, whereas Niemeier and Niemeier (2000: 792) and Bietak and Marinatos (1995: 60–61) considered
the wall paintings of Tell el-Dab'a and Tel Kabri "Minoan" and argued for Minoan craftspeople being at work in
these sites. Even the publications from the 1990s mirrored the tone of the 1960s:

> Thus true fresco painting apparently has been first invented on Crete, probably because it was suitable to the tempera-
> ment of the Minoan artists. (Niemeier 1991: 195)[95]

The shaky basis of these arguments is further demonstrated by recent discoveries at Tell el-Burak (Kamlah and
Sader 2003; 2010). German-Lebanese excavations revealed wall paintings *in situ* on the walls of the largest room
(Room 10, 14.6 × 6.5 meters) of the palace in Area 1, dated to the early 2nd millennium BCE[96] – thus antedating the
Minoan ones. There, Egyptian and local, i. e. "*sidonisch*" (Kamlah and Sader 2010: 111) motifs were executed *al
fresco*. As von Rüden (2013: 70) points out, especially the hunting scene depicted (Kamlah and Sader 2010: Plate
21) is a clear example of a representation of *movement* − another concept traditionally considered to be a "cultural
trait" of the Minoans (e. g. Groenwegen-Frankfort 1951: 197 ff.; Niemeier and Niemeier 2002: 281).[97]

I would like to conclude this section by emphasizing that the examples given above demonstrate practically what
Gombrich (1958: 345; 1960: 236) calls the "physiognomic fallacy": the idea that "the nature of the souls of indi-
viduals could be inferred directly from the characteristics of their appearance" (Summers 1989: 380).[98] When this
is projected from the individual to the society at large, it is assumed that certain worldviews [*Weltanschauungen*]
of ethnic groups, epochs and civilizations can be directly accessible:

> If nothing were left of an extinct race but a single button, I would be able to infer, from the shape of that button, how
> these people dressed, built their houses, how they lived, what was their religion, their art, and their mentality. (Kulka
> 1931: 25, cited in Gombrich 1968: 358)[99]

3.3. Discussion: Style, Ethnicity, and Archaeological Practice

This brief overview of archaeological and art-historical practice reveals several common assumptions concerning
the use of style:

– Styles, and art in general, are frequently regarded as direct reflections of collective mind-sets, standardized
 behavior patterns, psychological dispositions, "national characteristics," "spirits," "constants," "tempers," or
 "temperaments" of individuals or collectivities.

– With altering theoretical trends and traditions, those collectivities are encapsulated in races, ethnic groups, na-
 tions, cultures, or culture provinces, which are merely different denotations for the very same normative entity,
 in which social practices are expected to conform to unified ideational and behavioral norms.

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[94] See von Rüden 2013 for various examples in this regard from the beginning of the 20th century.

[95] At the end of this sentence, Niemeier cites Schiering's aforementioned remark.

[96] See Kamlah and Sader 2003: 163; 2010: 98 ff., Figs. 2–3 for brief discussions of the wall paintings and their architectural
   contexts.

[97] See also Unger (1938: 5–6), who claimed that "movement" is a trait of the "*Indogermanisches Kunstwollen*", not to be
   found in the "*semitisch*" artistic production.

[98] One of the most concrete examples of "physiognomic fallacy" was the usage of "composite photographs" in the 19th century
   criminology in order to determine a "criminal biotype". The culmination of this trend was probably the Galtonian "Jewish
   Type". See Sekula 1989.

[99] The author of the sentence is the famous Austrian architect Adolf Loos.

– In accordance with the above two assumptions, styles, techniques, and technologies act as "markers" and are counted among the "trait inventories" of collectivities, which are then actively used by scholars to delineate their spatial and temporal boundaries. In such a framework, semantic differences between the terms "style" and "culture" (and even "ethnicity") suddenly disappear; they practically act and mean the same.

On the other hand, an extensive body of research has been conducted in sociology and cultural anthropology on the problematic nature of essentialist (i. e. primordialist) considerations of collectivities. At least since Leach's (1970 [1954]) and Moerman's (1965) fieldwork in Burma (Myanmar) and Thailand, respectively, it has become clear that "cultural groups" simply cannot be equated with "ethnic groups": "Since language, culture, political organization, etc. do not correlate completely, the units delimited by one criterion do not coincide with the units delimited by another" (Moerman 1965: 1215). Consequently, the reliability of *trait inventories* (which predominantly included "races", physical traits, languages, personal and group names as well as social and political organizations) in attempts to delineate ethnic boundaries has been sharply criticized.[100] Instead, following the examples set by Leach and Moerman, as well as earlier social constructionist models of ethnicity developed in sociology (e. g. Weber 1922: 216), Barth (1969) put forward an instrumental model focusing on ascription and self-ascription as well as on social and ecological setting in which the groups interact with each other.[101] His approach, which enjoyed an extensive popularity from the 1960s onwards, demonstrated that interaction between different groups does not necessarily lead to the extinction of cultural differences – instead, numerous factors (economic, political, etc.) intervene in the determination and maintenance of ethnic boundaries. Hence, ethnicity is relational and processual, "it exists *between* and not *within* groups" (Eriksen 2010: 68). On the other hand, instrumental models presuppose that humans are *rational actors*, who act solely to maximize their self-interests within stable social environments.[102] Another problem concerns how to differentiate ethnic groups from other collective interest groups. To that purpose, real or putative *common descent* is largely regarded as *the* aspect that is exclusively associated with ethnicity (e. g. Emberling 1997: 302–303, 305; Hall 1997: 25; Keyes 1981: 5; van Driel 2005: 5; Brown 2008: 111–112; Eriksen 2010: 41–42; Mac Sweeney 2014: 2519). Still, we should not take the importance or relevance of ethnicity for granted, under certain circumstances, class, religion, or gender might be more relevant (Okamura 1981: 454; Eriksen 2010: 37).[103] In fact, ethnicity is mostly treated as a "cross-chronological and cross-cultural reality" (Bahrani 2006: 53),[104] and in the end, "our categories also run the risk of being incongruent with past classifications, by cutting up the world in ways that do not represent the interests of people in the past" (Pollock and Bernbeck 2010: 40). In other words, rather than by imposing our essential categories of difference, we can account for past subjectivities only by examining their immediate historical, social, and political production processes (Smith 2004).

In the last decades, while several studies aimed to reconcile the primordialist and instrumental poles by borrowing concepts from both,[105] others (Bentley 1987; Jones 1997: 87 ff.) incorporated practice theory into analyses of ethnicity, emphasizing common life experiences and shared *habitus* as being decisive for "sensations of ethnic affinity" (Bentley 1987: 32). These models have been aptly criticized for their neglect of the role of status and class, as "it is hard to believe that a peasant and a king from the same ethnic group actually share many 'common life experiences'" (Brown 2008: 105).[106] However, they also provide some useful insights that might be relevant for the interpretation of ethnic groups in archaeology. I believe that the most crucial one is the explicit separation of discursive literary representations of ethnicity from the praxis of ethnicity (Jones 2010). Representations of ethnicity in textual sources are mainly *abstract categories of difference*, mostly presenting seemingly coherent, bounded and homogeneous entities. Praxis of ethnicity, on the other hand, is the product of "the intersection of the

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[100]   See the references in Emberling 1997: 297–299. Barth (1969: 14) was one of the first who argued systematically against trait inventories. See also Kamp and Yoffee 1980: 88. Hodder's (1982) work also reaches a similar conclusion. Similar critiques have also been raised in studies on "Romanization" (e. g. Jones 1997: 129 ff. and on early Middle Ages (e. g. Geary 1983: 16; Pohl 1991; 1998: 64).

[101]   See also Cohen 1974. See Jones 1997: 72–79 and Jenkins 1997: 44 ff. for an overview of the related literature.

[102]   See Bourdieu 1990: 46 ff. for a critique of the rational action theory. In fact, Bourdieu's position on the matter has also been subjected to extensive critique (e. g. Connell 1983: 150).

[103]   The multi-faceted relationship between ethnicity, nationalism, and class struggle has been discussed by Balibar (1991).

[104]   In this context it should be noted that the earliest attestation of the word "ethnicity" in a dictionary was in 1972, although the Greek word *ethnos*, meaning pagan or heathen, is of course much older (see Eriksen 2010: 4–5).

[105]   See Jones 1997: 79–83 for an overview of those studies.

[106]   See also the critique by Yelvington (1991) and Bentley's (1991) response.

perceptual and practical dispositions of the people concerned and the interests and oppositions engendered in a particular social context" (Jones 2010: 307). As those contexts are always dynamic and transient, so should be the practices involved in the signification of ethnicity. Hence, expecting to trace homogenous entities based on written sources in the archaeological record is largely a misconception:

> Rather than neat, coherent cultural entities, the resulting pattern is more likely to be a complex web of overlapping styles of material culture relating to changeable expression of ethnicity in different social contexts. (Jones 2008: 327)

In fact, acknowledging the dynamic nature of the practices as well as social contexts should lead us to question the very existence of stable ethnic (or other) identities. An extensive amount of research has been carried out in that direction in the last decades, from which I will briefly discuss two main lines of thought.

Following Fanon's works (2008 [1952]) on colonial alienation, Homi Bhabha (1994) developed the concept of cultural hybridity as part of post-colonial theory. He asserted that the inhabitants of colonized countries are in a process of constant interaction and change, i.e. in an "interstitial passage between fixed identifications" (ibid.: 4). Although "an important feature of colonial discourse is its dependence on the concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of otherness" (ibid.: 66), identities themselves are never fixed. In stark contrast to dualistic perceptions such as colonizer/colonized, they are subjected to a process of hybridization; they are neither colonial nor indigenous but reflect an ambivalence to both and eventually create something new.

Likewise, emphasizing the fact that "every identity is relational and that the condition of existence of every identity is the affirmation of a difference" (Mouffe 1993: 2), Laclau and Mouffe (2014 [1985]: 97–100) argued that there is *no underlying principle* fixing and constituting the field of differences. There is no ultimate fixity of meanings but solely temporary, partial fixings, the so-called "nodal points", reminiscent of Lacan's anchoring points, "by which the signifier stops the otherwise endless moment of the signification" (Lacan 2005 [1966]: 231).[107] If there are only partial fixings of meaning, then there is no "essential" identity to be found but only multiple and conflicting "subject positions,"[108] making it "impossible to speak of the social agent as if we were dealing with a unified, homogenous entity" (Mouffe 1993: 77).

To summarize, particular social practices mediated by certain aspects of material culture (or certain "styles") on levels of practical or discursive consciousness might take part in processes of ethnic identification and differentiation. However:

– Boundaries of ethnic groups cannot be delineated by "objective" trait inventories formed by "ethnic markers" derived from those social practices. Although discursive representations of ethnicity might suggest the opposite, ethnic groups are not bounded, monolithic socio-cultural entities with unifying and homogeneous "identities" that can be "mapped" in the archaeological record.[109] In that sense, the very usage of the word "boundary" as a fixed notion is also problematic.

– As is the case for all human practice, practice related to ethnicity is always in flux, and the meaning of a particular practice is dependent upon its social conditions. A practice (or a "marker") that is considered to have been associated with ethnic differentiation might have entirely different meanings in a different spatial or temporal setting. Similarly, the same ethnicity might be articulated through different social practices in different social contexts (Jones 1997: 128).

In addition to the above, two other basic premises need to be taken into account. The first has already been stated once: Material culture is *not* a passive reflection of collective mind-sets; it both structures and is structured by the articulation and negotiation of ethnicity. The second is more general but equally important: The view of history as a continuous teleological process articulated in the "deeds" of certain ethnic groups or certain "spirits" is simply misleading. As much as there are continuities, history is also full of discontinuities and ruptures (Foucault 2002 [1969]: 23 ff.).

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[107] Non-fixity of meanings is also a main theme in Derrida's works, sometimes expressed as "indefinite referral," "infinite equivocality" (Derrida 2002 [1967]: 29).

[108] See the discussion in Laclau and Mouffe 2014 [1985]: 101 ff. On subject positions, see also Foucault 2002 [1972]: 55–61 and Althusser 2003 [1966]: 33–84, esp. 47 ff.

[109] Surely, this is valid not only for ethnic groups, but for the very notion of "society". See Rowlands 1982: 162–164; Laclau 1990: 89–92; Laclau and Mouffe 2014 [1985]: 97.

4. The Archaeology of the Aramaeans

4.1. "Aram" and Aramaeans in the Iron Age

The word "Aram" and its various forms as toponyms appear as early as the 3rd millennium BCE,[110] while the etymology of the word is not yet established (see Zadok 1991: 106; Lipinski 2000: 51–54). The earliest attestation of the name "Aramaeans" occurs in the annals of the Middle Assyrian kings Tiglath-Pileser I (1114–1076 BCE) and Aššur-bēl-kala (1073–1056 BCE), where various military conflicts along the Middle Euphrates and the Khabur are reported with groups called "aḫlamû-Aramaeans".[111] Here, the geographical designation "Aram" seems to refer to the territory extending from the Khabur to Mount Lebanon (Sader 2014: 15; see also Dion 1997: 16–18; Lipinski 2000: 35–38). While the designations "Upper and Lower Aram" in the 8th century BCE Sefire inscription (KAI 222–224) are interpreted to be referring to North and South Syria respectively (Sader 2014: 15),[112] Beidj (KAI 201) and Afis (KAI 202) inscriptions as well as various Biblical references refer to south Syria, predominantly to the territories of Aram-Damascus (Sader 2010: 276–277).

The earliest mention of the term "aḫlamû" is from the second half of the 18th century BCE (Zadok 1991: 105; Lipinski 2000: 37), and considered to be a designation for nomadic groups (Lipinski 2000: 37–38). Due to the appearance of this term along with the appellation "Aramaeans," together with the characteristics of the physical environment referred to in the Assyrian sources, it has been suggested that "[…] the term Aramaean was simply a new ethnic designation for sheep/goat nomadic pastoralists operating in the Euphrates and Habur regions in patterns comparable to the nomadic pastoralists of preceding centuries" (Schwartz 1989: 283; see also Dion 1997: 240–24; Lipinski 2000: 38, 491 ff.; Niehr 2014: 5–6).

Similarly, in the earlier literature, Aramaeans were conceived of as nomadic invaders sweeping in from the Syro-Arabian desert to sedentary zones (e. g. Dupont-Sommer 1949: 15; Albright 1975: 532).[113] Drawing heavily on the information derived from textual sources, which were predominantly written by members of the sedentary populations with external, urban standpoints (Bernbeck 2008b: 48), this view mainly conceptualized the relation between mobile and sedentary groups as "mutual antagonism with little contact other than expressions of hostility between the two groups" (Schwartz 1995: 250). Along with this "sedentarocentrist" (Bernbeck 2008b: 44) perspective, the concept of nomadism, together with pastoralism as a subsistence strategy, was mostly regarded as a "default mode only coming to the fore in time of stress" (Porter 2007: 108). Yet a framework consisting of two opposite poles of "sedentary agriculturalists" and "nomadic pastoralists" is impossible to maintain, due to the varying degrees of mobility and related subsistence tasks and ways of life between those poles (Schwartz 1989: 281; Bernbeck 2008b). Mobility does not stem exclusively from economic, environmental, or political conditions, but at times is a socially constructed "long-term way of life, without any inherent undesirability" (Bernbeck 2008b: 44). Likewise, a narrative focusing exclusively on hostilities is misleading; interaction between those groups was also one of symbiosis, involving the exchange of goods and services (Schwartz 1995: 250; Wawruschka 2014: 14, with further references).

In line with these critiques, recent studies (e. g. Schwartz 1989: 284; Sader 2014: 19) propose a more differentiated view of the subsistence strategies practiced by Aramaeans, including a mixture of mobile and sedentary ways of life, as was the case for the Amorites of the late 3rd millennium BCE.[114] Additionally, as the great bulk of available textual evidence stems from others writing on Aramaeans (i. e. Assyrian sources, Luwian inscriptions, and biblical

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[110] See the discussion in Lipinski 2000: 26 ff. However, the relevance of these geographical names to the Aramaeans of the late 2nd millennium BCE is contested (Schwartz 1989: 277).

[111] See RIMA 2, text A.0.87.1, lines 44–63; text A.0.87.3, lines 29–35; text A.0.87.4, lines 34–36; text A.0.89.9, lines 3–10. On the "Broken Obelisk" of Assur-bel-kala, the appellation "ahlamû" is absent.

[112] See also the discussion in Fitzmyer 1995: 65 ff. Lipinski (2000: 214) suggests that Upper and Lower Aram might refer to the influence spheres of Arpad and Damascus, respectively.

[113] Among the recent studies, Bryce (2012: 163) likewise favors such a view.

[114] On "resident" Amorites from Ur III texts, see Buccellati 1966: 339 ff. A comparison with the Amorites can only be made on a general level in terms of similarities in overall subsistence strategies and the geographical area occupied – no ethnic continuity can be inferred from the sources (see Dion 1997: 18 and Lipinski 2000: 38–40; but see also Kupper 1957: 107; Albright 1975: 532). For the influence of Amorite on Aramaic, see Zadok 1991: 107.

accounts concerning Aram-Damascus),[115] undifferentiated and simplified constructions of the *Other* should be taken into account (Brown 2008: 190–191). By the same token, the idea of "invading nomads" has been now largely abandoned. This is in part related to the increasing consensus on the nature of the transition to the early Iron Age, where the focus has shifted from incoming population groups responsible for the disintegration of complex political and economic networks, to internal socio-economic factors (e.g. Liverani 1987; Klengel 2000). Thus, Aramaeans are now considered to have played their role in the transition, constituting even "the larger segment of the local Syrian population" (Sader 2010: 279; see also Bunnens 2000: 16; Klengel 2000: 25–26; Masetti-Rouault 2009: 143; Sader 2014: 18–20; Gzella 2015: 57).

4.2. Continuity and Change: Classification of Syro-Anatolian City-States

This shift of focus concerning the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the early Iron Age should be discussed within the broader context of continuity supported by increasing archaeological and epigraphic evidence in the last decades. It has been established that the rulers of Karkamiš and Malatya, two cities that apparently survived the destructions associated with the demise of the Hittite empire, both claimed descent from the "Great King" Kuzi-Te-shub of Karkamiš, a direct descendant of the Hittite king Suppiluliuma I (ca. 1350–1322 BCE) (Hawkins 1988; 1995). A similar situation might also be the case for the land of Tabal on the Anatolian plateau, where inscriptions in Hieroglyphic Luwian from Karadağ and Kızıldağ from the Konya Plain and from Burunkaya close to Aksaray mention a "Great King" named Hartapu, together with his father "Great King" Mursili, apparently linked to the Hittite dynasty through Kurunta of Tarhuntassa (Hawkins 2000: 429).[116] Additionally, a reinterpretation of several old and recently excavated inscriptions demonstrates that a ruler named Taita, king of *Palistin/Walistin*, possibly based at Tell Ta'yinat in the Amuq, controlled a political unit of considerable size (extending to Hama in the south and Aleppo, perhaps even Karkamiš, in the east – see Fig. 1) in the 11th century BCE, in the middle of the "Dark Age" (see Harrison 2009; Hawkins 2009; 2011; 2013: 496 ff.; Weeden 2013).

In terms of the sculptural art of this region, to the "Dark Age" are now assigned the sculptures from Tell ʿAin Dāra, PUGNUS-mili reliefs from Malatya, two fragmentary lion protomes and "Water Gate" reliefs at Karkamiš, and reliefs associated with Taita at Aleppo.[117] These works belonging to Iron Age IA and IB – following Mazzoni's (2000) periodization, the 12th–11th centuries BCE – are considered to be "characterized by the continuation and gradual renewal of the Hittite artistic techniques, genres and traditions in monumental stone sculpture" (Mazzoni 2013: 470).

A further link is demonstrated by the distribution of the inscriptions in Hieroglyphic Luwian. Apart from Karkamiš and Malatya, those have been found in a wide geographical area extending from the territories of Gurgum (modern Maraş), Kummuh (classical Commagene), Cilicia and the Amuq (Assyrian Unqi), to North Syria (Aleppo, Tell Ahmar), and as far south as Hama (Hawkins 2000). In addition to monumental stone inscriptions, letters and economic documents written in Hieroglyphic Luwian on lead strips prompted Hawkins (2000: 3) to suggest that, contrary to Sader, "the bulk of the population, not only the ruling dynasties of the Neo-Hittite states, was Luwian-speaking." Similarly, theories of movements of Luwian-speaking groups from central Anatolia into north Syria during the Late Bronze Age and/or early Iron Age have been put forward (e.g. Klengel 2000: 25; Wartke 2005: 57), yet it should be noted that there is no concrete evidence for such a mass migration (Bunnens 2000: 16–17). In any case, the geographical designation "Hatti" appears to have indeed "migrated," as Assyrian records from Tiglath-Pileser I (1114–1076 BCE) onwards occasionally refer to the city-states in southeast Anatolia and north Syria in conjunction with that designation (Hawkins 1972–1975).

From Adad-Nirāri II (911–891 BCE) onwards, we encounter references in Assyrian records to polities and rulers

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[115] See Sader 2014: 13 for related references to each of these sources.

[116] Also in Cilicia, the recently discovered 8th century BCE Çineköy Bilingual indicates that the author, Warika, king of Hiya-wa, claimed descent from Muksa (MPŠ), i.e. Mopsos of the Greek legend, who wandered around the Mediterranean coast after the Trojan War, founding cities. For a discussion and the connection of the toponym *Hiyawa* with the Hittite *Ahhiya-wa*, see Hawkins 2009: 165–166.

[117] See Brown 2008; Novák 2012: 50–51; Mazzoni 2013: 472 ff.; and Orthmann 2014: 525–527, for discussions as well as references to primary sources.

in the Syro-Anatolian region identified by the expressions "*bît*-PN" (House of PN) and "*mār*-PN" (Son of PN).[118] These polities include Bît Baḫiani (capital at Tell Halaf/Gūzānā), Bît Adini (capital at Tell Ahmar/Til Barsib), Bît Agusi (capital at Tell Rıfa'at/Arpad), and Bît Gabbāri (capital at Zincirli/Sam'al).[119] The designations *bît*-PN and *mār*-PN are interpreted as denoting large, kin-based groups with tribal social relations, and often evaluated as an indicator of the "Aramaean" nature of that polity (e. g. Postgate 1974: 234–235; Sader 2014: 21–22). However, as Brown (2008: 190) aptly notes, there are also several instances of Assyrians using these appellations for supposedly "non-Aramaean" entities such as Gurgum (*bît pa'alla*) and Tabal (*bît burutas*). Hence, it should be taken into account that such designations might have to do with Assyrian attempts to construct a "generic enemy 'other'" (Brown 2008: 191), rather than denoting something specifically "Aramaean."[120] Additionally, the rulers of these city-states never referred to themselves by those designations, or by the appellation "Aramaean" for that matter (Sader 2010: 277; Kühn 2014: 40).[121] Instead, they simply used the *geographical* names of their territories. For instance, rulers of Zincirli referred to their land as *Y'DY*[122] and to their capital city as "Sam'al", meaning "left hand" in Semitic and indicating the "North" (Lipinski 2000: 235). Therefore, the available evidence concerning an Aramaean ethnic identification suggests a process of *ascription by others* rather than *self-ascription*.

On the other hand, from the mid–9th century BCE onwards, inscriptions in the Aramaic language began to appear in the territories of these city-states. The earliest examples are the Tell Fekheriye Aramaic-Akkadian bilingual inscription (*KAI* 309; see Abou-Assaf et al. 1982; Millard 2003) and the short inscription on a small limestone "altar" from Tell Halaf, now interpreted as the pedestal of a statue (*KAI* 231; see Friedrich et al. 1967 [1940]: 69–70, pl. 29; Dankwarth and Müller 1988). Aramaic remained consistently in use afterwards, and by the mid-8th century BCE it became established as a common language in the Assyrian empire and was the official language of the western part of the Persian empire at the end of the 6th century BCE (Parpola 2004: 9; Merlo 2014: 111).

Classification of the Syro-Anatolian city-states into "Luwian" and "Aramaean" is predominantly carried out on the basis of the distribution of the languages and scripts adopted by these city-states together with the linguistic classifications of the onomastica of the rulers. The results obtained then serve as a further basis for the classification of related archaeological remains (e. g. Aro 2003; but see also the critique in von Dassow 1999: 248–249).

On the other hand, as mentioned before on a general level, language is not necessarily an ethnic marker, and recent studies on Aramaeans and Luwians focus more on the role of cultural and political choices in the adoption of languages and scripts as well as throne names (e. g. Bunnens 2000: 16–17; 2006: 97 ff.; Dalley 2000: 80). Additionally, determining the ethnic affiliation of a ruling dynasty does not inform much about the demographics of the population, especially given the fact that the ethnic composition of the Syro-Anatolian region is far from certain.

Indeed, that a clear-cut differentiation of "Aramaean" and "Luwian" city-states is not as straightforward as it sounds becomes apparent when certain aspects of material culture, such as sculptural art, contradict the initial, already shaky categorizations. In the following, I will take the sculptural art of Zincirli as a starting point for the elaboration of the related discrepancies. Rather than presenting another attempt to "reconcile" the textual and the archaeological evidence, I will address some fundamental problems concerning correlating ethnicities with material culture, which go hand in hand with the formation of related categorizations such as "Aramaean style."

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[118] The earliest usage of the expression *bît*-PN is attested in the 13th century BCE from a Middle Assyrian text from Tell Billa referring to Bît Zamāni (Lipinski 2000: 45).

[119] Bît Baḫiani and Bît Adini were incorporated into the Assyrian empire around the middle of the 9th century BCE, while Bît Agusi and Bît Gabbāri survived until the latter part of the 8th century BCE. See Parpola 2004: Appendix II.

[120] This process might resemble the initial usage of the term "Celtic" by the ancient Mediterranean states, largely "projecting an outsider's sense of uniformity upon diverse peoples" (Dietler 1994: 586).

[121] The sole exception would be Bar-Hadad, king of Arpad, son of Attarsumki I, who used the title "king of Aram" on the Melqart stele (*KAI* 201). Other rulers from Arpad such as Attarsumki II and Mati'el were titled "king of Arpad" (*KAI* 222). In Biblical accounts and others (e. g. stele of Zakkur – *KAI* 202), the rulers of Aram-Damascus were typically referred to as kings of "Aram."

[122] Linguistic classification of this word is unclear. While Starke (1999: 525) suggests a Luwian origin and proposes "Yādiya" as a possible vocalization, Dion (1974: 372, fn. 2) and Lipinski (2000: 235) argue that Y'dy is a Semitic tribe name of unclear origin and suggest "Ya'udi" and "Yu'addi" instead. For a discussion and a list of earlier arguments, see Tropper 1993: 7–8 and fn. 28).

4.3. Zincirli and its Orthostat Reliefs

Zincirli (ancient Sam'al) is a ca. 40-ha site located in the Karasu valley at the eastern edge of the Amanus mountain range (Nur Dağları), controlling a strategic pass (Amanic Gates – Bahçe Geçidi) into Cilicia (Fig. 1). It was a fortified city, with a citadel and an encircling lower town (Figs. 2 and 3), which yielded palaces, works of sculptural art and several inscriptions during the German excavations at the end of the 19th century (*AiS I–V*). Since 2006, renewed excavations are being carried out by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (Schloen and Fink 2009a; 2009b).
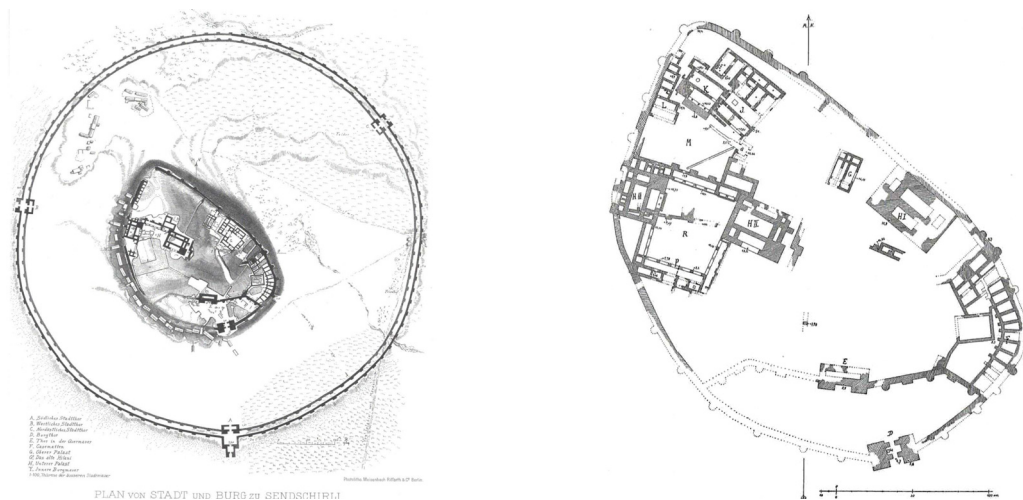

Figure 2. (*left*) Zincirli, general plan, as drawn by Koldewey after the 1894 campaign (from AiS II, Tafel XXIX); **Figure 3.** (*right*) Zincirli, plan of the citadel, as drawn by Jacoby after the last campaign in 1902 (from AiS IV, Abb. 175).

History of occupation at the site goes back to the Early Bronze Age, with a possible settlement hiatus in the Late Bronze and early Iron Ages.[123] It is assumed that sometime in the late 10th–early 9th century BCE, a Semitic-speaking dynasty under the leadership of the eponymous ancestor Gabbār seized control of the territory and made the site of Zincirli its capital (Schloen and Fink 2009a: 7; but see also Brown 2008: 493). The construction of the citadel and the fortification walls is attributed either to Gabbār or to a later king of the 9th century BCE (see Schloen and Fink 2009a: 8; Pucci 2015: 57–59; Herrmann and Schloen 2016). A list of the known rulers and their synchronism with the Assyrian kings is given below (Tab. 1).[124]

There is no evidence exactly when the reign of Barrākib, the last known king of Sam'al, came to an end. The city is considered to have become an Assyrian province at the end of the 8th century BCE, while the earliest mention of an Assyrian governor at Sam'al is in 681 BCE (Lipinski 2000: 244–246; Hawkins 2006–2008: 604). In the literature, the dynasty itself is predominantly designated as an Aramaean one, and the city is consistently referred to as an Aramaean city (e. g. Dupont-Sommer 1949; Moscati 1961: 103; Schwartz 1989: 279; Sader 1987; Sader 2000: 72; Lipinski 2000: 233 ff.; Novák 2005: 253; Wartke 2005; contributions in Niehr, ed. 2014).[125] This designation is largely based on the following points:

– The inscriptions discovered at the site, the languages of which demonstrate a transition from Phoenician in the second half of the 9th century BCE (*KAI* 24–25), to Sam'alian in the 8th century BCE (*KAI* 214–215) and finally to Aramaic in the late 8th century BCE (*KAI* 216–221). The relation of Sam'alian to Aramaic is still a matter of

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[123] See Schloen and Fink 2009b: 207 for a brief discussion. But see Brown (2008: 491–492), who argues against a settlement hiatus by pointing out the appearance of Late Bronze Age pottery identified by Lehmann (2006). Schloen and Fink (2009b: 207) base their argument on the scanty amount of this LBA pottery.

[124] This list is adapted from Tropper 1993: 19 and Schloen and Fink 2009a: 7. A brief historical overview of the city can be found in Tropper 1993: 9–19.

[125] But see also Hawkins (1974: 6), who counts Sam'al among "states of mixed population", and Klengel (2000: 27), who includes Sam'al in the "predominantly Hittite" group.

debate, where three main standpoints can be recognized: Sam'alian is an early form of Aramaic; it is a hybrid of Aramaic and Canaanite; it is a separate Northwest Semitic language.[126]

– Linguistic classification of the names of the rulers. Names such as Gabbār, Ḥayyā, Ša'il, Barṣur and Barrākib are considered to be of Semitic origin (Tropper 1993: 30–33, 102). Yet the king list also includes non-Semitic names. For instance, Ḥayyā's son and Ša'il's brother, Kilamuwa, has an Anatolian name. Other Anatolian names include QRL and Panamuwa (Tropper 1993: 11, fn. 43, 60; Lipinski 2000: 243).[127] It has been suggested that this mixture of Semitic and non-Semitic names could be the result of intermarriages (e. g. Lipinski 2000: 242), however, as noted earlier, intentional selection of throne names should also be taken into account.

– Assyrian references to "Bît-Gabbāri".[128] That the expression "*bît*-PN" does not necessarily imply something specifically "Aramaean" has already been pointed out. It should also be noted that relationships between the early rulers (particularly between Gabbar and BN/MH, and between BN/MH and Ḥayyā) are not yet established (Tropper 1993: 10).[129]

In this designation of Sam'al as Aramaean, the role of material culture in general and sculptural art in particular was also of great importance, as will be discussed in the following section.

Ruler	Dating	Synchronism
Gabbār	ca. 920 BCE	Aššur-dan II. (934-912 BCE)

BN / MH		

Ḥayyā	ca. 870/860 BCE	Salmanassar III. (858-824 BCE)
Ša'il (son of Ḥayyā)		Salmanassar III. (858-824 BCE)
Kilamuwa (brother of Sa'il)	ca. 840/835 – 815/810 BCE	Šamši-Adad V. (823-810 BCE)

QRL		Adad-nirāri III. (809-782 BCE)
Panamuwa I. (son of QRL)	until ca. 745 BCE	
Barṣur	(murdered before he could assume the throne in a revolt in ca. 745 BCE)	
Panamuwa II. (son of Barṣur)	743? – 733/732 BCE	Tiglatpilesar III. (745-727 BCE)
Barrākib (son of Panamuwa II.)	733/732 – ca. 720 BCE	Tiglatpilesar III. (745-727 BCE) Salmanassar V. (726-722 BCE) Sargon II. (722-705 BCE)

Table 1. Sequence of known kings of Zincirli (Sam'al) listed with contemporary Neo-Assyrian kings.

Orthostat reliefs from Zincirli

The term orthostat, meaning "one who stands upright" in ancient Greek, is used to refer to the carved or uncarved upright stone slabs or blocks placed on the lower courses of walls to protect them against the effects of weathering and other sorts of physical damage (Naumann 1971: 75; Harmanşah 2013: 158). In addition to this primary function, they might further claim particularly decorative or structurally supportive roles.[130] In stone-rich parts of the Syro-Anatolian region, the typical method was to extend the stone foundation upwards to the dado level, but there

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[126] The literature on this issue is extensive, but see Noorlander 2012 for a detailed overview.

[127] The reading of the name of the ruler BN/MH mentioned in the Kulamuwa inscription is not clear due to a possible faulty engraving in either line 3 or line 16. Tropper (1993: 32) interprets it as an Anatolian name, while Lipinski (2000: 239–240) considers it Semitic.

[128] See *RIMA* 3, text A.0102.2, line 24, line 83.

[129] The reference to Ḥayyā as "son of Gabbār" in the annals of Shalmanesser does not necessarily indicate a direct genealogical link; that designation might "simply allude to the founder of the state" (Lipinski 2000: 239). See also Kühn 2014: 40.

[130] In this context, Gerlach (1999: 61) uses the differentiation *additiv* (primarily decorative) and *konstruktiv* (primarily supportive).

were also quite a number of cases where thinner stone slabs were placed against the bottom of a mudbrick wall (Naumann 1971: 75–86, Harmanşah 2013: 159; see also below Section 4.5.2). Orthostats were typically attached to the timber frame of the structures by means of dowel-holes on their top faces, but there were exceptions.[131]

I will present below an overview of the relief orthostats excavated at Zincirli to date,[132] with special emphasis on their architectural contexts as well as technical details concerning their system of fastening, offering as much detail as is presented in the excavation reports.

Southern City Gate

Several plain orthostats, together with 8 orthostats carved with relief (Zincirli 3–10)[133] were recovered not *in situ* but in the "immediate vicinity" (*AiS III*: 204)[134] of the eastern tower of the southern inner city gate (Fig. 4), hence the original order of the reliefs is largely unclear.[135]

They had a standardized height of ca. 1.30 m and were resting on roughly hewn, 63-cm-high limestone socles (*AiS II*: 113),[136] possibly rendering them highly visible (Gilibert 2011: 60). The timber frame of the structure would be anchored to the orthostats through square dowel-holes (*AiS II*: 113).

They depict composite beings (Zincirli 3–4, 6), battle and hunting scenes (Zincirli 5, 8–10), interpreted as images of possible "ritual spectacles" taking place in the gate area (Gilibert 2011: 60–61). The construction and decoration of the gate are commonly dated to the second half of the 10th century BCE (Mazzoni 1997: 318–319; Gilibert 2011: 60; Bonatz 2014: 211; Pucci 2015: 59; but see also Brown 2008: 495–497; Herrmann and Schloen 2016). Whether these orthostat reliefs were re-used in the southern city gate is still a matter of debate (see Pucci 2015: 57–59 for a discussion of the main arguments).
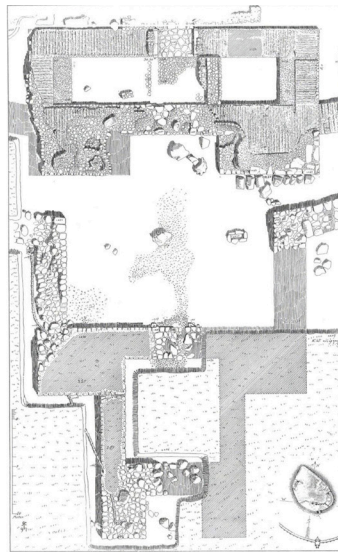

Figure 4. Zincirli, southern city gate (from AiS II: Tafel X).

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[131] E. g. "small orthostats" at Tell Halaf had no dowel holes; orthostats at Malatya had dowel-holes on both of their top and bottom faces. See below Section 5.5.2 for a discussion of the systems of fastening.

[132] The orthostat found south of the South Gate (Area 7) in 2008 by the renewed excavations by the University of Chicago will not be included here, as the final report was still in preparation at the time of the publication of this paper. For a very brief report on this important find, see Schloen and Fink 2009b: 216.

[133] In the numbering of the orthostat reliefs from Zincirli, I follow the recent catalogue published by Gilibert (2011: 191–221), which also provides cross-references to Orthmann 1971.

[134] Only one of the plain orthostats on the eastern side of the wall was still standing in its original place (*AiS II*: 113).

[135] Only three orthostats are interpreted as iconographically related (Orthmann 1971: 474; Gilibert 2011: 58), representing a hunting scene (Zincirli 8–10). But see also the reconstructions in Pucci 2015.

[136] These stone blocks that are liberally called "socle" here are originally referred to as "stretcher" [*Läufer*] by Koldewey. See Aurenche 1977: 132, "*panneresse.*"

Figure 5. (*left)* Zincirli, outer citadel gate (from AiS II: Tafel XIII); **Figure 6.** (*right*) Zincirli, cross-section of an orthostat block from the outer citadel gate (from AiS II: Abb. 31a).

Outer Citadel Gate

Basalt orthostats recovered at the outer citadel gate (Fig. 5) were placed on very roughly hewn limestone socles against the stone fill of the structure (*AiS II*: 122–124; Pucci 2008: 18). Their structurally functional placement and their dimensions reveal that they were designed in advance in accordance with the form of the gate (Gilibert 2011: 61–64).[137] Still, a couple of slabs were clearly re-used (e.g. Zincirli 12, the rounded top of which indicate that it had once been used as a stele; see Brown 2008: 484). A longitudinal timber beam placed on top of the orthostats connected them through round dowel-holes (4 cm in diameter, 6 cm deep) to the timber frame and the mudbrick superstructure (*AiS II*: 123; Fig. 6).
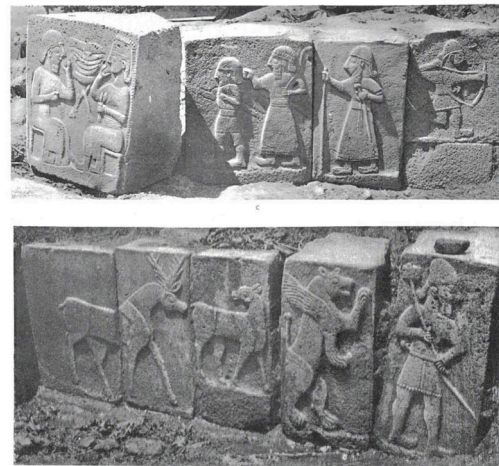

Figure 7. (*left)* Zincirli, outer citadel gate, eastern side of the inner court (from AiS II: Abb. 30); **Figure 8.** (*right*) Zincirli, orthostat reliefs from the western side of the outer citadel gate, Basalt, max. D. 0.77 m, late 10th–early 9th century BCE (from AiS III: Tafel XXXVII, c, d).

Not all of the orthostats were carved in relief; the entire inner court had plain orthostats (*AiS II*: 123; Fig. 7). The reliefs (Zincirli 12–51; Figs. 8 and 9) demonstrate a thematic order, with themes from the divine world on the eastern side of the gate, those from the human world on the western side, and a symmetrical order, with several instances of imagery replicated on both sides of the gate (e.g. Zincirli 22–24 on the western side, corresponding to Zincirli 39–41 on the east; see Brown 2008: 482; Gilibert 2011: 64–65; Bonatz 2014: 211).

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137   This is also supported by the thematic arrangement of the reliefs.

These reliefs are acknowledged as being slightly later than those at the southern city gate, dated to late 10th–early 9th centuries BCE (Orthmann 1971: 65; Mazzoni 1997: 318–319; Gilibert 2011: 64; Bonatz 2014: 211).

Figure 9. Zincirli, orthostat reliefs from the eastern side of the outer citadel gate, Basalt, late 10th–early 9th century BCE (from AiS III: Tafel XXXVIII, a).

"Upper Palace"

Several relief orthostats were reused at the "Upper Palace" (Building G). For instance, in the threshold of the passage from Room A to Room C, two relief orthostats were placed face down as paving (*AiS II*: 143).[138] Both of the reliefs have been chiseled off, yet traces of the depiction of a lion were still visible on one of the blocks (*AiS II*: 144, Fig. 51). On their once top faces, they had 6-cm-deep, square dowel holes (*AiS II*: 143).

Building J

Both sides of the main entrance of Building J were covered with a single basalt orthostat, from which only the one on the northwestern side was carved with an inscription and a relief (*AiS IV*: 246, 374 ff.; Kilamuwa orthostat, Fig. 10). This orthostat, measuring 1.56 m in height, 1.30 m in width, rested on a stone socle and had two round dowel holes (4.5 and 6 cm in diameter, 5 and 5.5 cm deep) on its top face (*AiS IV*: 272–273).

The inscription is in the Phoenician language and relates to the political deeds of the ruler Kilamuwa (ca. 840/835–815/810 BCE; see Tropper 1993: 27–46). The ruler is depicted in profile on the upper left corner of the inscription, with his arm bent upwards pointing to a row of divine symbols.[139] No other carved orthostat has been found at Building J or the adjacent Building K.
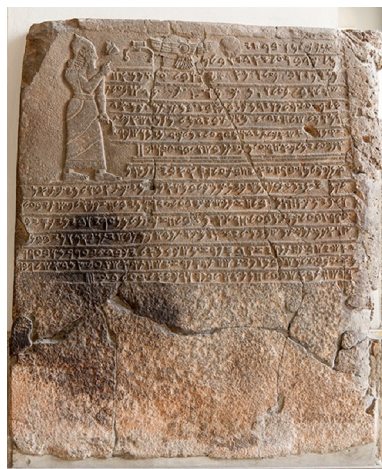

Figure 10. Zincirli, Kilamuwa orthostat, Basalt, H. 1.56 m, W. 1.30 m, D. 0.37 m, ca. 830 BCE (© Vorderasiatisches Museum, SMB. Photo: Olaf M. Teßmer. CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 DE).

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[138] Another example of relief orthostats used in thresholds in Building G can be seen in *AiS II*: 150, Fig. 60.

[139] This depiction will be further discussed below on p. 47.

"Lower Palace" Area

From the "Lower Palace" area,[140] both sides of the entrance of Hilani IV were decorated with orthostats (*AiS IV*: 345–349, 350–358). On the eastern side, four plain orthostats were discovered *in situ*, together with a corner block depicting the enthroned ruler Barrākib (733/732–ca. 720 BCE) receiving his scribe (*AiS II*: 162–163; Figs. 11 and 12).[141] Across this relief, on the other side of the entrance, another corner block of similar size showed Barrākib in a banquet scene.[142] Other reliefs from the western side of the entrance include depictions of courtiers and musicians (Voos 1985: Abb. 15; Gilibert 2011: Fig. 48).

Figure 11. (*left*) Zincirli, eastern side of the entrance of Hilani IV, with orthostat block *in situ* depicting Barrākib (from AiS IV: Taf. LX); **Figure 12.** (*right*) Zincirli, corner block from the eastern side of the entrance of Hilani IV, depicting King Barrākib (733/732–ca. 720 BCE), Basalt, H. 1.13 m, W. 1.15 m, D. 0.4 m (© Vorderasiatisches Museum, SMB. Photo: Olaf M. Teßmer. CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 DE).

The orthostat blocks were placed on stone socles, had square dowel holes on the corners of their top faces, and were laid on a thin layer of bitumen (*AiS II*: 163).

23 basalt orthostats were recovered on the eastern façade of Hilani III. Ten or 11 of them have been transported to Istanbul and Berlin, of which only eight (Zincirli 78–85) have been published (Gilibert 2011: 88–89). They were placed on a 20–25 cm high socle, thus reaching a total height of ca. 1 m (*AiS II*: 155), and were connected to the timber frame by means of square dowel holes of 5 cm width and 7 cm depth on their top faces (*AiS II:* 155, Abb. 63). They depict a procession of officials walking towards the entrance of the Hilani III (Fig. 13). The orthostats on the short sides of the building were all left plain (*AiS II*: 155).

Figure 13. Zincirli, orthostats from Hilani III, Basalt, H. 0.77 m, W. 1.10 m, late 8th–early 7th century BCE, Vorderasiatisches Museum Berlin (from AiS IV: Taf. LVIII).

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[140]   "Southwestern area" in Gilibert 2011.

[141]   The person in front of Barrakib has also been interpreted as a "priest" (Gerlach 1999: 57).

[142]   This highly fragmented orthostat (Zincirli 69) was first reconstructed and published by Voos (1985).

Figure 14. (*left*) Zincirli, stele found next to a cist grave southeast of Hilani I, Basalt, H. 1.52 m, W. 1.20 m, D. 0.16 m, late 8th–early 7th century BCE (© Vorderasiatisches Museum, SMB. Photo: Olaf M. Teßmer. CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 DE); **Figure 15.** (*right*) Zincirli, stele found near the southeastern corner of Hilani II, Basalt, H. 0.57 m, early 8th century BCE, Vorderasiatisches Museum Berlin (from AiS IV: Taf. LXVI).

Stelae

To date, three stelae have been excavated in Zincirli. Next to a cist grave immediately southeast of Hilani I, a stele showing a woman in a banquet scene was discovered (*AiS II*: 140–141; Fig. 14). Another stele of 57 cm height, depicting two figures holding lotus flowers was found near the southeastern corner of Hilani II (*AiS IV*: 372–373; Fig. 15).[143] In 2008, a third one was discovered *in situ* in a small room (3.75 x 3 m) in the northern lower town (Struble and Herrmann 2009). The person shown on this stele in a banquet scene is identified as "KTMW, servant of Panamuwa" in the accompanying 13-line Aramaic[144] inscription carved in raised relief. Interestingly, it is explicitly stated in the inscription that the soul of the deceased abides in the stele itself (Pardee 2009).[145]

Categorization of Zincirli reliefs

In art historical literature, sculptural art from Zincirli has been predominantly discussed within the context of "Late Hittite" (e.g. Akurgal 1949; 1968; 1976; Orthmann 1971; Bittel 1976: 235–299; Darga 1992; Gerlach 1999), "Neo-Hittite" (e.g. Vieyra 1955), or "Syro-Hittite" (e.g. Ussishkin 1970; Mazzoni 1981; Voos 1989; Bonatz 2000a; 2000b; Gilibert 2011) art, sometimes under a separate sub-section entitled "Aramaean art" (e.g. Akurgal 1949; 1968; 1976). Despite some voices claiming that "[i]n no sense [...] can the Hittite invaders be regarded as what German scholars are fond of calling *Kulturträger*" (Vieyra 1955: 3, emphasis in original), the idea of the continuation of the imperial Hittite art in the Iron Age, together with a mixture of certain "Assyrian and Aramaean" elements, has been promoted from the outset (e.g. Woolley 1921: 48–49; von Bissing 1930/1931: 198; Bossert 1942: 68–69; Akurgal 1949: XIV, 139).[146] A notable exception was Henri Frankfort (1969: 165), who argued against any continuation from the 2nd millennium BCE, and categorized the related sculptural art simply under "North Syrian Art." Frankfort was also skeptical about the very category "Aramaean art," just as he was about the existence of "Phrygian" and "Hurrian" art (ibid.: 186). In the same vein was the argument of Viktor Christian, who claimed that Aramaeans cannot be treated as the "spiritual creator" (Christian 1933/1934: 28) behind the art of the Iron Age. Although following an entirely different line of thought, Millard (1991: 201) likewise eventually arrived at the same conclusion that Aramaeans simply "absorbed the products of others, like a sponge."

In studies devoted exclusively to the history and culture of the Aramaeans, art is either discussed in separate sections (Dupont-Sommer 1949: 105–106; Bonatz 2014) or is solely referred to when "the need arises" – in order to support certain datings arrived at through philological analyses (e.g. Lipinski 2000).

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[143] This stele is not included in Gilibert's catalogue; therefore, it will be referred to hereafter as "Zincirli J/2" after Orthmann 1971.

[144] The dialect attested in this inscription is classified as "archaic Aramaic" (Pardee 2009: 68).

[145] The belief of an immortal soul independent of the body is also attested in Hittite texts (see Melchert 2010).

[146] See also Genge 1979: 2–18 for an extensive review of the earlier literature concerning the usage of the term *hethitisch* to denote the sculptural art in question. Pottier (1926–1931) discusses the sculptural art of Zincirli simply under "Hittite art."

In terms of the stylistic analysis of the material from Zincirli, already at the end of 19th century Otto Puchstein (1890: 7, 9) asserted that they were of "pure Hittite style." Yet as early as 1911, D. G. Hogarth raised some doubts: "Indeed one may doubt whether Sinjerli was occupied by Hatti at all. All its inscriptions are Cuneiform or Aramaic, and its art appears to be of a derived type, not true Hittite" (Hogarth 1911: 6, cited in Genge 1979: 7). More comprehensive studies on style for the purposes of dating were later carried out by Herzfeld (1930) and von Bissing (1930/1931). While Herzfeld (1930: 144) acknowledged these artworks as expressions of "a distinctive Kunstwollen" and dated most of the sculptures of the southern city gate and outer citadel gate to the 3rd millennium BCE,[147] von Bissing (1930/1931: 200) suggested 11th and 10th centuries BCE for the same material. Although the discrepancy between these two datings raised some serious doubts about the reliability of stylistic analysis (e. g. Bossert 1947: 106–108), it was Ekrem Akurgal (1949; 1968; 1976; 1981) who "reinstated" its reputation by introducing a tripartite system through an extremely elaborate "stilkritische Methode" (Akurgal 1949, XIII), which provided the groundwork for later adaptations and revisions by Orthmann (1971), Genge (1979), and Mazzoni (1981). Therefore, a closer look at Akurgal's methodology and conclusions is of vital importance.

4.4. The "Aramaeanness" of "Aramaean Art"

Nikolaus Pevsner began his 1955 book *The Englishness of English Art* with the following paragraph:

> "The following pages are an essay in the geography of art. … [T]he question asked by a geography of art is what all works of art and architecture of one people have in common, at whatever time they may have been made. That means that the subject of a geography of art is national character as it expresses itself in art." (Pevsner 1955: 11)[148]

A crucial point in his methodology was to find out "what is English" (Pevsner 1955: 18) in art in order to demonstrate that an underlying harmony exists even in the seemingly most contradictory aspects (which he calls "polarities") of an artistic tradition. A certain congeniality with the doctrines of the already mentioned *Strukturforschung* is here apparent, especially when he makes the English language and the misty weather responsible for forming the "Englishness" of English art.

Roughly speaking, the case of "Aramaean art" could likewise be acknowledged as series of attempts to tease out "what is Aramaean" in the art of the Syro-Anatolian region in the Iron Age. Already in 1949, Ekrem Akurgal (1949: 135) claimed to be the first one to venture into such a task, and in his classification, the art of Zincirli was of utmost importance, often considered to present "the best representatives of the new Aramaean style of the Neo-Hittite art" (Akurgal 1981: 133). Below, I will provide an overview of the various features that, according to Akurgal, make up that "Aramaean style." Those features can be roughly separated into physical attributes, iconographic features, and general cultural traits.

4.4.1. Physical Attributes

Physical attributes discussed by Akurgal are predominantly related to facial characteristics. While discussing the figures on Zincirli J/2 (Fig. 15), Akurgal identifies the curved noses of the figures as being "of Semitic type" (Akurgal 1968: 55; see also Darga 1992: 281). Based on this general rule, he seems to pursue a further ethnic allocation depending on the degree the nose is crooked. For instance, the "strongly curved noses" on Karatepe reliefs (Fig. 16) are suggested to represent the Phoenicians, whereas the nose shapes of the Aramaean figures are thought to be "less pronounced" (Akurgal 1968: 137). Yet elsewhere, for example, concerning the İvriz rock relief in "Aramaeanizing-Hittite style" (Akurgal 1968: 130; Fig. 17), "strongly curved noses" of the depicted figures identify the monument as "an Aramaean work" (ibid.: 135). It should also be helpful to remember here Frankfort's (1969: 185) remark on the İvriz monument, where he suggested that "[b]oth figures have the stocky build, the curved nose, fleshy nostrils, large eyes, and abundant hair which distinguish the Assyrians, and suggest a strong Armenoid strain in the population".

Other attributes frequently mentioned in Akurgal's works are the "Aramaean spiral curls" (Akurgal 1949: 27) used in the rendering of the hair, as well as the single spiral curl by the ear (Akurgal 1949: 27–30; 1968: 53; e. g. Figs.

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[147]　See the chronological table attached to p. 165 in Herzfeld 1930.

[148]　A quite similar study on English art had also been carried out by Dagobert Frey (1942).

12, 18). Sometimes the hair ends at the nape of the neck in so-called corkscrew curls (Fig. 19), which are likewise considered Aramaean (Akurgal 1968: 56). Various forms of spiral curls are to be seen on depictions from Maraş (e. g. Orthmann 1971: Maraş A/1, C/1), Sakçagözü (e. g. Orthmann 1971: Sakçagözü B/1, B/2), Malatya (Orthmann 1971: Malatya A/12), and Karkamiš (Orthmann 1971: Karkemis G1–G7). Akurgal (1949: 137) mentions some of these examples, and explains the appearance of similar forms in Maraş and Sakçagözü by suggesting that those cities were under Aramaean influence. Malatya and Karkamiš, on the other hand, are considered to be void of any such influence, and the spiral curls are thought to have followed the Assyrian examples appearing from Sargon II. (722–705 BCE) onwards (Akurgal 1949: 134, 144). His associated late dating for the related Karkamiš sculptures has been contested on stylistic and epigraphic grounds (Orthmann 1971: 221; Genge 1979: 155 ff.; Hawkins 2000: 79). A critique in the same direction has also been raised concerning his datings of funerary stelae from Maraş, all of which he regarded as belonging to the same time period (late 8th–early 7th century BCE) and "radiat[ing] the same spirit" (Akurgal 1968: 132). Among them, the stele of the "wine merchant" (Fig. 20), on which the rendering of the spiral hair locks of Akurgal's late dating was largely based (Akurgal 1968: 127–132), is now dated to the 9th century BCE (Genge 1977: 114; Bonatz 2000: 19; but see also Orthmann 1971: 89).

Figure 16. (*left*) Karatepe, orthostat relief from the South Gate, Basalt, H. 1.36 m, W. 1.48 m, late 8th–early 7th century BCE (Photo: Panegyrics of Granovetter. CC BY-SA 2.0); **Figure 17.** (*right*) İvriz rock relief, H. 4.20 m, late 8th century BCE, (Photo: Klaus-Peter Simon. CC BY 3.0).

Figure 18. (*left*) Zincirli, orthostat from Northern Portico depicting King Barrākib (733/732–ca. 720 BCE), Basalt, H. 1.31 m, W. 0.62 m, Istanbul Archaeological Museums (from AiS IV: Taf. LXVII); **Figure 19.** (*center*) Zincirli, portal figure from Hilani II, Basalt, H. 0.90 m, W. 1.20 m, late 8th century BCE, Istanbul Archaeological Museums (from AiS IV: Taf. LV); **Figure 20.** (*right*) Maraş, funerary monument, Basalt, H. 1 m, W. 0.56 m, D. 0.13 m, 9th century BCE, Adana Museum (Photo: Verity Cridland, CC BY 2.0).

A spiral curl by the ear and the corkscrew curl at the nape of the neck can be seen on orthostats from Sakçagözü (e. g. Orthmann 1971: Sakçagözü A/5 [curl by the ear]; A/1, A/4 [corkscrew curl]), while the latter is also to be found on ivory plaques discovered in Room SW7 of Fort Shalmanassar (Winter 2010 [1976]: 235, Figs. 2, 14, 24). Additionally, Akurgal compares the corkscrew curls with those on an Ammonite limestone statuette,[149] and claims that the Aramaeans "seem to have brought it from their original homeland" (Akurgal 1968: 59).

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[149]   Yerah 'Azar statuette, dated to the end of 8th century BCE. See Zayadine 1991: Pl. 38.

Another attribute concerns the appearance of a moustache or lack thereof. In the earlier literature, Unger (1923: 49–50) and Christian (1933/1934: 9) had interpreted bearded figures without moustache as Aramaeans. Akurgal (1949: 26), on the other hand, asserts that the lack of moustache is "an indication of the Hittites, not Aramaeans," drawing on examples from imperial Hittite art. It is true that bearded figures without moustache are attested on several Iron Age reliefs from Karkamiš (e. g. Orthmann 1971: Karkemis C/7, E/3, F/17, K/28), yet this form is also to be seen on the "wine merchant" stele from Maraş that Akurgal considered to be under strong Aramaean influence[150] as well as on those Karatepe orthostats (Group B; see e. g. Orthmann 1971: Karatepe B/1), that he regarded as "standing more or less in the tradition of the Aramaean Hittite art of Zincirli and Sakçagözü" (Akurgal 1968: 137). At Zincirli itself Kilamuwa (Fig. 10) is depicted *with* a moustache, while Zincirli J/2 (Fig. 15), which is considered to represent the same ruler, bears no moustache.[151]

4.4.2. Iconographic Features

Kilamuwa was depicted with a conical cap reminiscent of Assyrian royal headdress, with a double band falling down his back (Fig. 10). A rounded form of this headdress, without the bands on the back, is seen later on Barrākib (Fig. 12), as well as on several other figures from Zincirli (e. g. Zincirli 79–82; Zincirli 90, here Fig. 14), and is referred to by Akurgal (1968: 56) as the "Aramaean tiara." He compares this cap with those on the aforementioned İvriz monument (Fig. 17), the Karadağ relief (see Bossert 1942: Fig. 761), as well as "Phoenician style" ivories from Kalhu and again suggests that "the Aramaeans brought this head-dress with them from the south" (Akurgal 1968: 53; see also Akurgal 1949: 137, fn. 281).

Additionally, a specific type of dress with diagonal folds, with one side draped over the shoulder, is seen on several orthostats dated to the reign of Barrākib (733/732–ca. 720 BCE (Fig. 12).[152] Particularly the shoulder folds of this garment are regarded as an "invention of Aramaean artists" (Akurgal 1968: 55; see also Darga 1992: 279). The same type is also to be found at Sakçagözü (Fig. 21) and Malatya (Fig. 22). Concerning the Malatya statue, in 1949 Akurgal ruled out an Aramaean influence and kept Assyrians responsible for the appearance of this mantle, although in his next sentence he admits that diagonal folds of that sort are not attested at all in Assyria (Akurgal 1949: 33, fn. 20a). He revised his rather odd standpoint in 1968 and suggested that, "Malatya also had come into the hands of the Aramaeans at the end of the 8th century" (Akurgal 1968: 59) – although he had denied above any Aramaean influence at this site in terms of spiral curls. That quite similar shoulder folds also appear on several figures from Karkamiš (e. g. Orthmann 1971: Karkemis Ba/1, J/1, K/33) is not addressed by Akurgal.
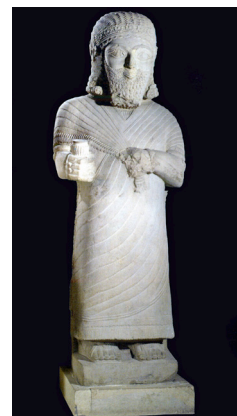

Figure 21. (*left*) Sakçagözü, orthostat relief from the western side of the palace entrance, Basalt, H. 0.90 m, W. 0.48 m, late 8th century BCE, Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara (Photo: Tayfun Bilgin); **Figure 22.** (*right*) Malatya, statue from the Lion Gate, limestone, H. 3.80 m, late 8th century BCE, Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara (Photo: Gary R. Caldwell. CC BY-ND 2.0).

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[150] Other examples include Orthmann 1971: Maraş B/17, C/1.

[151] Yet it should be taken into account that hair and beard styles are often indicators of social difference, being subject to change with altering norms (see Firth 1973: 271). In that sense, potential differences in the beard style of Kilamuwa might be related to this or simply to a symbolic field beyond our knowledge. I owe this argument to a suggestion from Reinhard Bernbeck.

[152] Other examples include Zincirli 80–82.

Lastly, the sandals with a slightly raised tip, first seen on Zincirli J/2 (Fig. 15), are also acknowledged as "Aramaean inventions" (Akurgal 1968: 59; see also Darga 1992: 277). The same footwear occurs on several stelae from Maraş (e. g. Orthmann 1971: Maraş B/17, D/4) and on orthostats from Sakçagözü (e. g. Orthmann 1971: Sakçagözü A/13), Karkamiš (e. g. Orthmann 1971: Karkemis G/5), and Karatepe (e. g. Orthmann 1971: Karatepe B/1).

4.4.3. Cultural Traits

Akurgal considers stelae with the motif of a funerary repast (e. g. Fig. 14) "a specifically Aramaean practice" (Akurgal 1968: 54; see also Akurgal 1981: 133), which was in fact regarded as "non-Semitic" in the earlier literature (e. g. Unger 1938: 9). Akurgal's view seems to be quite common, not solely among the earlier generation of scholars (e. g. Speiser 1952: 105; Potratz 1961: 359) but also in quite recent publications, among which I would like to discuss briefly Schachner and Schachner's (1996) article on a funerary stele from Maraş. They claim that:

> "The fact that all hints concerning the practice of funerary stelae stem from a relatively small area in North Syria and Southeast Anatolia demonstrates that funerary stelae were primarily an Aramaean tradition. This becomes clear also due to the fact that all stelae, which are to be understood as funerary stelae, were executed in Aramaean style." (Schachner and Schachner 1996: 213)

It is worth discussing these sentences in detail. Concerning the first sentence, it should be noted that funerary monuments are attested within a wide geographical area, including the territories of Gurgum (Maraş), Kummuh, Melid (Malatya), Que, Sam'al (Zincirli), Karkamiš, Bît Adini, Bît Agusi and Bît Baḫiani (Bonatz 2000a; 2000b). The majority of the corpus is dated to the 9th and 8th centuries BCE (see the catalogue in Bonatz 2000a: 13–23). As for the second sentence concerning "Aramaean style," one expects to see in their article those particular "stylistic" aspects that they regard as "Aramaean." Yet, in a short section entitled "Style," the only relevant sentence they offer is the following: "… the style, iconography and the conception of human [*Menschenbild*], as it is the case with all funerary stelae of the Maraş-Group, are characterized by Aramaean elements" (Schachner and Schachner 1996: 211). After this sentence, they cite the section on "Aramaean art" in Akurgal's 1949 book, as well as a footnote from an article by Czichon (1995) on Kilamuwa depiction(s) in Zincirli, where he states that he prefers to use the word "Aramaean" to refer to the milieu [*Umfeld*] of the artisans who carved the Kilamuwa depiction(s). Even if we deduce from the latter citation that Schachner and Schachner likewise use the word "Aramaean" in the same sense, the fact that they never define that "milieu" as well as those "Aramaean elements" leads to an inevitable circularity in their arguments.

Another collective trait Akurgal refers to is the "profane worldview [Weltanschauung] of the Aramaeans, which is to be felt very clearly in their artistic monuments" (Akurgal 1976: 100). He never specifies what he means by that expression, but it might be inferred from his following discussion that he refers to the "worldly themes" depicted on the western side of the outer citadel gate at Zincirli, as well as the emphasis on the ruler and the court on depictions from Hilani IV and III.

4.4.4. Ethnic Markers and the Formation of an "Aramaean Style"

In a recent article, almost 50 years after Akurgal, Hélène Sader (2010) brings almost all of Akurgal's arguments once more to the fore and argues against the designations "Syro-Hittite" or "Luwian-Aramaean" for the entities of the Iron Age by claiming that:

> [T]his [North Syrian] culture can be safely labeled Aramaean in all the states dominated by Aramaean speaking rulers; and … that in spite of reciprocal influence, there are clear distinctions in the material culture between states which were dominated by Luwians and those ruled by Aramaeans. (Sader 2010: 288)

She bases her arguments on the standpoint that "Aramaeans were the direct descendants of the Bronze Age Syrian population and the heirs of its culture" (ibid.: 289). Then, she directly associates the material culture of Syria in the Bronze Ages with the Aramaeans of the Iron Age. In such a framework, the aspects she regards as "Aramaean" range from general forms concerning city planning such as a fortified acropolis with a lower town, to specific

architectural forms such as *bit-hilani* and temple *in antis*.[153] I believe all those points deserve extensive discussions, but I will confine myself here to issues related to sculptural art, as Sader also associates the practice of carved orthostats decorating the gates exclusively with Syria (and with Aramaeans of the Iron Age) and specifically reminds us of Akurgal's "Aramaean features" (ibid.: 291, 293). She further asserts that "those [Aramaean] features do not appear on the reliefs of the Luwian sites like Carchemish" and that "they remain restricted to sites belonging to Aramaean territory" (ibid.: 293). A similar view, expressed in general terms, can be seen in Kepinski and Tenu (2009: 7), where it is argued that "[h]allmarks of Aramaean groups show an original and varied economy, shifts in settlement patterns, and a strong identity which is mainly perceptible in the artistic field."[154]

Most of the theoretical issues discussed in the first two sections are at play in these studies on the art of the Aramaeans. First, interesting to note is the way the word "ethnicity" is employed. As mentioned earlier, this term was barely in use at the time Akurgal wrote his first major book in 1949, where he mostly employed the term "people" [*Volk*, or sometimes *Volkselemente*] when referring to Aramaeans or Luwians. But in his later works (e. g. Akurgal 1981: 132) as well as in Sader's article from 2010, we frequently come across the terms "ethnic" and "ethnicity" in those contexts.

Second, we should have a brief look at their methodology. For each of the city-states, these authors begin with a preconception regarding the ethnicity of the ruling dynasty and/or of the city population, derived primarily from extremely fragmented discursive representations in historical sources. Then a limited number of "diagnostics" in the material culture that serve as "ethnic markers" is sorted out, by means of which a "trait inventory" for the ethnicity in question is gradually constructed. Degrees of conformity between this trait inventory and the archaeological material from other sites are then interpreted as representing varying intensities of "influence" of one over the other. That "influence," and stylistic change in general, are ultimately explained as consequences of political takeover, population movements, or acculturation processes.

In such a model, the procedure as well as the theoretical conceptualization of an ethnic group is mainly essentialist. As already discussed, ethnicity is not a phenomenon to be explained with the help of "trait inventories," i. e. physical attributes, iconographic features, or cultural traits. As demonstrated above, almost all of those "markers" of the "Aramaean style" are also to be seen in "non-Aramaean" sites including Karkamiš, Malatya, and Maraş, clearly in contrast to Sader's arguments. Yet according to the style and ethnicity model I attempt to employ here, this variation does not say anything at all by itself concerning ethnicities. Any possible relationship between the social practices involved in the production of those "markers" and the processes of ethnic identification and differentiation can only be examined by a *contextual* study incorporating the social conditions involved in those practices, not by merely comparing "trait inventories."

In addition to an understanding of a bounded, homogeneous Aramaean ethnicity, it is implied and sometimes explicitly stated that art is the expression of the "Aramaean spirit" or "worldview," which is supposed to be reflected in various kinds of material culture from city planning to the rendering of a hair curl. The presupposition of a homogenous mind-set behind that "spirit" goes hand in hand with supposedly homogenous material remains. For instance, Sader bases her article on the homogeneity of Syrian "culture" throughout the Bronze and Iron Ages, and for the Iron Age she attempts to differentiate the "foreign influence" (i. e. Luwian and Hittite, see Sader 2010: 289) in Aramaean sites accordingly. As for "Aramaean art," she points out that certain Zincirli and Tell Halaf orthostats are "totally different" (ibid.: 291) than those from Karkamiš. However, there is no mention of the unavoidable "difference" between the art of Zincirli and Tell Halaf, which would have been a disturbing feature for an essentialist approach, in which ethnicity is supposed to be articulated by fixed ethnic markers. Nonetheless, as already mentioned in the discussion of the discursive aspect of style, such an approach conceals the internal contradictions inherent in the art of a given group, time period, or region. Additionally, both Akurgal and Sader mainly regard stylistic differences as resulting from habitual enculturation processes, and style is utilized as a passive idiom of ethnicity, in a way quite similar to Sackett's model. Again, whether "homogeneity" or "heterogeneity" between particular sets of material culture is related in any way to ethnic identification and differentiatiation, and if so, how they are related, cannot be examined using such a methodology.

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[153] Only pottery is acknowledged as a "common denominator" and a "major unifying cultural trait" (p. 297). The idea of *bit hilani* as an Aramaean architectural form was postulated by Akurgal (1968: 66, 69–80) and seems to be supported by Niehr (2014: 4) as well. Likewise, according to Dion (1995: 1287–1288), Aramaeans transmitted *bit hilani* to the Assyrians.

[154] See also the other contributions in that volume. I thank Dominik Bonatz for this reference.

In Akurgal's work, there are only a few exceptions where styles are adopted for instrumental purposes. One of them concerns the sculptural art of Zincirli, where he states, "In order to show the people that indigenous customs were respected, the Semitic princes had the entrances and the orthostats of citadel gates decorated with carvings in the Hittite manner" (Akurgal 1968: 54). Here, the textual reference to two separate (ethnic?) groups in Zincirli, *b'rrm* and *mskbm*,[155] is incorporated into the analysis, and stylistic differences between the reliefs from the time of Barrākib and those from the southern city gate and outer citadel gate are explained in ethnic terms:

> Aramaeans [*b'rrm*] were the ruling class; their court art is elegant and graceful. The indigenous Luvians [*mskbm*], whose culture had been shaped by the Hittite tradition, were their subjects, but they continued to prefer their own ruggedly old-fashioned art. (Akurgal 1968: 54)

This argument is not only based on an anachronistic comparison of two sets of artworks, but also on the assumption that the meanings assigned to them stayed fixed throughout the centuries. In any case, rather than adopting Akurgal's explanation that revolves around instrumental concerns of Semitic-speaking rulers, Sader (2010: 291) proposes that the "builders" of the fortifications of Zincirli "might very well be of Luwian descent."

For both Akurgal and Sader, *common descent* seems to be the most frequently pronounced element in support of their arguments. For Akurgal, as Aramaeans were an invasive group, it is more than natural that the features identified as "Aramaean" were brought by them from their "original home in the Arabian desert" (Akurgal 1968: 80). Contrary to Akurgal, Sader regards Aramaeans as part of the indigenous population of Syria and as direct descendants of the Bronze Age population, and this assumption of a common Syrian descent forms the backbone of her argumentation.

Overall, Akurgal's works laid the foundations for stylistic analysis of the art of the Syro-Anatolian region and, except for a couple of serious errors,[156] proved to be extremely useful for dating purposes. Focusing on his works, I have attempted to demonstrate how the "Aramaean style" was defined and put into practice, rendering "Aramaean art" accessible to aesthetic historicism. It might be already recognized that no mention whatsoever has been made of technological aspects, production sequences, and socio-economic contexts of these artworks. It has been already noted that both art and technology are not transcendent entities independent of society, but products of specific social and historical practices. Thus, in the following section, I attempt to carry out a "stylistic" analysis of Zincirli orthostat reliefs within the broader context of Syro-Anatolian relief production, in line with the definition of style adopted earlier.

5. A Stylistic Analysis of the Orthostat Reliefs from Zincirli

This section on orthostat reliefs from Zincirli will incorporate aspects that might seem out of place in a traditional stylistic analysis. Yet, the theoretical basis already outlined, which argues against the separation of style, function, and technology, as well as of form and content, necessitates such a broad approach. Hence, my stylistic analysis will be roughly separated into four elements:

• materials, tools, division of labor
• architectural functions and systems of fastening
• execution and iconography
• reception.

I will attempt to place all of these individual elements in their social, economic and ideological contexts. Frequently, comparative material from other sites of the Syro-Anatolian region as well as Assyria are incorporated into the analysis. Such an approach will offer the opportunity to investigate the relevance of "ethnic markers" in any of those contexts of the Syro-Anatolian region.

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[155] Lipinski (2000: 236) suggests that the word *b'rrm* was derived from b'r (to roam), and *mskbm* from skb (to settle). Therefore, *b'rrm* is regarded as representing the nomadic or semi-nomadic Aramaeans, while *mskbm* the sedentary earlier Luwian population. But see also Schmitz 2013.

[156] E. g., his extremely low datings for "Suhi-Katuwa style" and Tell Halaf sculptures (see Akurgal 1968: 110, 114–116).

5.1. Materials, Tools, and Division of Labor

All of the orthostats from Zincirli were of basalt, a dark-coloured igneous rock, the durability of which renders it suitable for outdoor works. Another material commonly used in the Syro-Anatolian region was limestone, a calcium-based,[157] light-colored[158] sedimentary rock. Compared with basalt, the predominant mineral contents of which have a hardness of 6 on the Mohs scale, limestone is easier to work in terms of the execution of fine details (Gerlach 1999: 49).

Often these two stones were used for adjoining orthostats, creating a "staccato effect of light-and-dark" (Mellink 1974: 208). This is first attested on a building from Alacahöyük (see Mellink 1974: 208, fn. 21), later seen at several places in Karkamiš[159] and on the southern orthostats of Tell Halaf (Orthmann 1971: 146).[160] At Tell Halaf, limestone slabs seem to have been further painted over in red, creating a grey-red alternating effect (Özyar 1991: 178). Despite its role in isolating and framing individual scenes (Mellink 1974: 208), this practice was not confined solely to carved reliefs, but was also seen on the plain orthostats at the Scorpion Gate at Tell Halaf (Brown 2008: 372–373). Likewise in the temple at Tell 'Ain Dārā, tectonic elements were of limestone, while sculptural elements were of basalt (Harmanşah 2013: 180–181). Last but not least, long before the gypsum (hydrated calcium sulphate) orthostat reliefs of Assurnasirpal II (883–859 BCE), Tiglath-pileser I (1114–1076 BCE) claimed to have had the walls of several rooms in Assur and Nineveh covered with basalt and limestone slabs.[161]

Both of these stones were abundant in the region (see Moorey 1994: 335 ff.). About 300 unfinished sculptures have been found at Yesemek, a basalt quarry and workshop situated 21 km south of Zincirli, which was discovered by von Luschan (*AiS I*: 14; *AiS II*: 177)[162] and later excavated by U. Bahadır Alkım (1957; 1974). Despite the existence of other basalt sources in the vicinity of İslahiye, Yesemek basalt comes to the fore with its extremely fine-grained texture (Alkım 1957: 367–368; 1974: 11),[163] and it is considered to have supplied many of the sites in the region, including Zincirli, Gerçin, and Sakçagözü (Alkım 1974: 79).[164] Half-finished sphinx and lion protomes found out of context in Zincirli were also possibly products of this workshop (Alkım 1957: 366; for the protomes, see Özyar 1991: 32).

Although iron objects are attested from the Chalcolithic period onwards,[165] it was not until the end of the 10th century BCE that smelted iron became a common material for everyday tools and equipment (Waldbaum 1980: 87; Philip 1991: 99).[166] The wealthiest iron deposits in Anatolia are in Divriği (southeast of Sivas) and in Feke-Mansurlu (northwest of Maraş), while the Taurus and Amanus mountains as well as the region around İslahiye is rich with small to medium-scale iron ore deposits.[167] Which of the available sources were exploited in the Iron Age is far from certain, yet the references to Que, Sam'al, Karkamiš, and Til Barsib in Assyrian tribute lists as

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[157]   In rare cases, limestone may also be dolomite-rich (Sanderson 1996: 700).

[158]   Pure limestone is white. Impurities lead to various tints of colour – e. g. grey or green (iron oxides or hydroxides), dark bluish grey (iron sulphide), or black (bitumen). See Sanderson 1996: 701.

[159]   E. g. reliefs from Long Wall of Sculpture, Processional Entry, and Herald's Wall. See Orthmann 1971: 31; Gilibert 2011: 33, 40, 43. But see also Özyar (1991: 81–82), who argues against the use of this technique on the Long Wall of Sculpture.

[160]   It should be noted that the re-used orthostats with the inscription "temple of the storm god" at Tell Halaf were all of basalt, and possibly showing no alternating color effect in their initial arrangement (Mellink 1958: 439).

[161]   See the references in Kertai 2014: 690. Those slabs are considered to have been plain. See also Lundström and Orlamünde 2011.

[162]   Von Luschan refers to the quarry at Yesemek as "the quarry by Nurhanlı" or "the quarry to the south of Nurhanlı in Kurd-Dağ".

[163]   For other sources in the region, see Alkım 1957: Map 1. Another quarry investigated in the 1970s and thus not shown on that map is the one at Sıkızlar, a village 30 km north of el-Bab, close to the Turkish-Syrian border, where three sphinx heads, a lion figure and two worked blocks were discovered (Mazzoni 1986–1987).

[164]   Other finds from Hacıbebekli (around Maraş), Karaburçlu, Elbistan Höyük, Pancarlı Höyük, and Ördekburnu might also be associated with the quarry and workshop at Yesemek.

[165]   Apart from the meteorites containing iron, iron as a by-product of copper smelting has been increasingly taken into consideration to explain the processes of early iron production (Moorey 1994: 279–280; Waldbaum 1999: 30; Yener 2010).

[166]   See also the discussion in Moorey 1994: 291, where the 9th century BCE is proposed as an alternative.

[167]   See the maps prepared by MTA of Turkey (General Directorate of Mineral Research and Exploration), http://www.mta.gov.tr/v2.0/images/turkiye_maden/maden_yataklari/b_h/demir.jpg as well as Maxwell-Hyslop 1974: Plate XX.

having supplied large amounts of iron (mostly as raw material, i. e. smelted blooms of iron,[168] and rarely as finished artifacts) suggests intensive iron production and trade in the region (Maxwell-Hyslop 1974: 148–149; Pleiner and Björkman 1974).

It has been argued by Harmanşah (2013: 156, 165) that the spread of iron technology led to more effective stone-working tools and thus had a profound positive impact on the development of orthostat carving and stone masonry in the Iron Age. Indeed, iron tools seem to gradually replace the bronze ones in the stonemason's toolkit (Moorey 1994: 291; Gunter 1995: 1543; Reade 1995b: 39).[169] It is not until Achaemenid times that tools have been recovered from the workshops themselves, but tools that might be associated with stone carving have been attested in other archaeological contexts (see Moorey 1994: 31–33, 291; Russell 1991: 103–105, Fig. 52; Thiemann 2009: 43–45).[170] Moreover, iron tools are occasionally mentioned in textual records[171] and illustrated on reliefs.[172]

Still, a couple of points should be made in terms of the characteristics of iron and bronze as well as their performance as tools for carving stones of varying hardness (in our case, basalt and limestone). First, wrought iron is superior to bronze only when its mechanical properties are improved by means of carburising (incorporation of carbon within iron), quenching (rapid cooling of a hot-forged artifact by plunging it into water), and, when necessary, of further tempering (reheating) to reduce brittleness and to achieve an optimum combination of hardness and ductility (Philip 1991: 98; Moorey 1994: 278 ff.; Waldbaum 1999: 28).[173]

Proper carburizing and quenching of iron tools would be particularly essential for their use on harder stones such as basalt, as given the existence of work-hardened bronze (not to mention stone) tools, the introduction of iron was not a technological necessity in order to work softer stones (Mohs hardness 3 and below, e. g. limestone and gypsum). As indicated by experimental studies (e. g. Stocks 2003: 63–64, 78),[174] even steel tools of VPN 800 that are used on igneous stones had to be re-sharpened quite frequently due to wear, which may suggest a regular cooperation with blacksmiths.[175] It should also be noted here that iron tools could be reshaped and re-sharpened relatively easily when compared to bronze ones, which had to be recycled and recast.

On the other hand, these completely new metallurgical processes necessitated much technical expertise, and the deliberate and consistent application of carburizing and quenching in the early Iron Age is still a matter of debate.[176] As no metallographical analysis has been conducted on the few iron tools excavated in Zincirli[177] (or in

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[168]   This is due to the fact that smelting needed to take place in close proximity to the mines where sufficient supplies of fuel (charcoal) were available – eight tons of charcoal were required to smelt one ton of iron ore (Moorey 1994: 282).

[169]   For a brief treatment of the hypotheses concerning the reasons for the large-scale establishment of iron, see Waldbaum 1999: 39–43.

[170]   No tools have been recovered from Yesemek (Alkım 1974: 59 ff.).

[171]   E. g., references to iron picks in Sennacherib's annals (see http://oracc.org/rinap/Q003475).

[172]   E. g., illustrations of picks, saws and shovels on Slab 53 of Court VI at Southwest Palace in Nineveh (Reade 1998: Figs. 18, 55). But see Russell 1991: 103, who interprets those saws as woodcutting tools.

[173]   See Williams 2003: 6 for a discussion on how air-cooled or quenched carburized irons (or "steels" when the amount of carbon incorporated exceeds 0.6 %) are superior to annealed or work-hardened tin- and arsenic-bronzes in terms of their Vickers Diamond Pyramid Hardness (VPH or VPN). In Vickers Diamond Pyramid Hardness test, a pyramidal diamond indenter is pressed onto the material for a given duration under a given load. Calculations based on the size of the indentation on the material lead to the Vickers hardness number.

[174]   The stone selected in Stocks' study was granite (Mohs 6–7). His emphasis on the continuing use of stone tools on hard stones in ancient Egyptian sculpture (even after the appearance of iron tools) is worth mentioning here. Today, mostly carbide-tipped tools are employed.

[175]   Surely, the same goes for modern sculpture workshops as well. See for instance Peter Rockwell's (1990: 353) anecdotes concerning the divergence between his and his blacksmith's preferences on the name and the ideal shape of a chisel. Humann and Puchstein (1890: 166) report the difficulties their crew faced in re-sharpening their tools while slicing off the backs of an orthostat from Sakçagözü. On cross-craft interaction in the Late Bronze Age Aegean, see the important study by Brysbaert (2007).

[176]   See Waldbaum 1999: 32–37, for an overview of the available metallographical analyses performed on the archaeological material from several early Iron Age sites. See also Moorey 1994: 284. Maddin, Muhly, and Stech purport that these iron-working processes were fully understood and applied already by the 12th century BCE (see Muhly 2006 for an overview of their work).

[177]   A few iron tools have been excavated in Building G ("Upper Palace") and Hilani IV (*AiS V*: 104, 107).

other Syro-Anatolian sites),[178] it is not possible to comment on their mechanical properties.

In general, the sculptures would be roughly given shape with picks and rough points (in conjunction with a heavy hammer) already in the quarry, possibly different teams of artisans being responsible for different phases of initial cutting.[179] Minor differences in *individual styles* of different teams working on the same phase of cutting have also been observed at Yesemek (Alkım 1974: 67). Half-finished sculptures would then be transported to their assigned destination and finished there, first with toothed chisels and then with flat chisels and roundels (hit with a mallet), together with drills fitted with stone bits for fine details.[180] On harder stones such as basalt and granite, chisels of greater widths were generally employed, together with more frequent usage of bush hammers (*boucharde*) to pulverize the stone (Rich 1947: 251–252, 258, 270), while toothed chisels[181] and roundels were almost never used.

Teams of artisans collaborating within the site itself – and sometimes on the very same reliefs – has been long suggested for Assyrian reliefs (see the discussion and references in Reade 1979: 23–24) and are most clearly documented in Persepolis (Roaf 1983; 1990; see also Garrison 1988 for a comprehensive analysis of seal workshops). There is no reason not to suggest a similar division of labor and overall production procedure for orthostat reliefs of Syro-Anatolian region as well.[182] In fact, although no comprehensive study has been devoted to this issue yet, in a few Syro-Anatolian sites different individual artisans' styles have already been recognized and discussed in passing.[183] At Zincirli, Orthmann (1971: 61–62) mentions the differences in terms of the treatment of the body between two depictions on two sides of a corner block (i. e. two figures from the "triad of gods", Fig. 23), indicating most probably two different artisans at work.[184]

Figure 23. Zincirli, orthostat reliefs from the eastern side of the outer citadel gate, Basalt, H. 1.37 m, W. 1.12 m, late 10th–early 9th century BCE, Vorderasiatisches Museum Berlin (from AiS III: Taf. XL–XLI).

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178 From the metal workshop recently excavated at Tell Tayinat, only slag and metal samples have been analyzed. It is reported that a few iron tools (a chisel, a needle, and a nail) and weapons (projectile points and armor scale) have been recovered from the workshop (Roames 2011).

179 See Alkım 1974: 17–19 for a discussion of the phases of quarrying and initial cutting. In Assyria, the process of roughing out the colossi at the quarry is to be seen in the depictions from Court VI of Sennacherib's Palace at Nineveh (see Moorey 1994: 31 ff.; Reade 1995a: 34; Reade 1998: Figs. 17, 18, 54). On the other hand, orthostat reliefs from Assyria are regarded to have been carved after being placed in position (Reade 1979: 17). The same has been specifically put forward concerning the Karkamiš orthostats (Woolley 1921: 145–146; Woolley and Barnett 1952: 201; Alkım 1974: 7).

180 Drilling for dowel holes was executed at the final destination. None of the half-finished sculptures found at Yesemek bore dowel holes (Alkım 1974: 64).

181 The date of the earliest occurrence of the toothed chisel remains contested. There are clear indications of its usage from Achaemenid Iran and contemporary Greece, while theories concerning its application on Assyrian reliefs have been traditionally approached with caution. See Nylander 1970: 53–56 for an overview of the main arguments.

182 Possible differences might exist in the *scale* of the organization and production.

183 See, for example, the discussion concerning the Groups A and B at Karatepe (Çambel 1949: 23 ff.). However, it should be noted that the contemporaneity of the two groups is still a matter of debate. See Winter 2010 [1979]: esp. 488–489 and Brown 2008: 441–444.

184 Another example that could betray different *hands* from Zincirli could be the slight differences in the rendering of the figures depicted in the procession on the eastern façade of Hilani III (see Fig. 13).

On the other hand, no explicit reference to the socio-economic setting of the artisans exists in textual sources of the Syro-Anatolian region in the Iron Age. As for the other time periods and regions, it has been documented that artisans from Old Babylonian Mari were classified in terms of the *material* they worked, not the product they manufactured (Gates 1990: 30). Another example from India demonstrates that on certain occasions, ivory carvers could be employed for large-scale stone sculpture (see Porada 1995: 2708–2709). There is also evidence from both Mari texts and Hittite laws that craftspeople (in this case, carpenters and metalworkers) had to carry out further agricultural and military duties (Matthews 1995: 463). Surely, to what extent these analogies might be relevant for the time period in question cannot be ascertained, not to mention the possibly changing socio-economic conditions of the artisans after the collapse of Bronze Age palace bureaucracies.[185]

Overall, the production of a single orthostat relief was a substantial economic effort based upon institutional foundations, necessitating the collaboration of several different specialties such as extractors and stonecutters at the quarry, transporters, masons, and artisans working at the final destination, as well as scribes for inscriptions (see Brown 2008: 172–173). To those should be added those who took part in the organization and running of the entire operation and, of course, the commissioners, whose influence on the production sequence was not only limited to organizational issues, but also included a direct involvement in the execution and iconography of the reliefs, particularly exemplified in Neo-Assyrian records.[186]

5.2. Architectural Functions and Systems of Fastening

As mentioned earlier, orthostats of the Syro-Anatolian region were often structural elements, integral components of the construction. However, art historical analyses of orthostat reliefs have been largely confined to issues of pictorial representation, especially of iconography, which led to a disregard of their materiality or their "ontological quality" as Harmanşah (2013: 161) puts it. In addition to scholarly preferences, this was also due to the fact that the ontological quality of the orthostats simply cannot be examined in museums. Almost all of the material brought to European museums has been reduced in size for easier and cheaper transportation. Mostly the uncarved backs of the orthostat blocks were cut off, thereby destroying extremely valuable information on tool marks and systems of fastening, transforming "solid architectural members [...] into thin pictorial plaques" (Harmanşah 2013: 161). This had been already practiced by Layard in Nineveh (Layard 1867: 106),[187] and by Humann in Sakçagözü (Humann and Puchstein 1890: 164–167),[188] and Zincirli was no exception. It is reported that many of the orthostats of the southern city gate and outer citadel gate, which may have had an original thickness up to 1 m,[189] have been reduced to 15 cm thin slabs (*AiS II*: 98).[190] The actual materiality of some of the orthostats can be seen in a couple of excavation photos (Fig. 8).

In this context, it should be noted that the earliest orthostats *with* imagery are dated to the Late Bronze Age – much later than the use of plain orthostats as *architectural elements*. Hence, I believe it is necessary to go back to the earliest known attestations of this technique, not only to do justice to the materiality of the orthostats but also to attend to their radical increase as pictorial fields in the Iron Age.

Uncarved orthostats in gate structures, palatial and temple contexts are attested as early as the beginning of 2nd millennium BCE in sites from northwestern Syria such as Tell Mardikh, Aleppo, Tell Atchana, and Tilmen Höyük.[191]

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[185] On possible effects of those changes, see below pp. 44–45.

[186] See for example, Winter (2010 [1997]: 81–83), who discusses two letters in this regard, written to Esarhaddon asking him to select the image he prefers from several alternatives. The same goes for Sargon II, whose opinion on certain details, such as hands, elbows, and the drapery of a sculpture, was sought by the artisans (Matthews 1995: 464).

[187] Not only the parts onto which the "Standard Inscription" was carved have been cut off, also substantial parts of the backs as well as the uncarved bases of the blocks were sliced off. See also Harmanşah 2013: 166.

[188] At Sakçagözü, 50 cm thick reliefs were reduced to 15 cm.

[189] Concerning the reliefs of the outer citadel gate, Humann (*AiS II*: 92) states in passing that their thickness reached up to 1 m. Elsewhere, on a figure given by Koldewey (here Fig. 6), the thickness of the orthostat on the section ED (see *AiS II*: Fig. 31) is around 60 cm. Lastly, the measurements taken by Humann and Puchstein (1890: 381) of the orthostats from the western side of the outer citadel gate range from 20 to 77 cm.

[190] As the orthostats are further embedded in the walls in museum settings, the maximum depth in display at the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin is 11 cm.

[191] See Harmanşah 2013: 170 ff. for an extensive discussion on Middle Bronze Age orthostats. At Tell Atchana, the only ortho-

In these sites common practice was to place finely dressed orthostat slabs against the lower courses of walls as revetments. There, orthostats were not an integral part of the stone foundation, but still played an important role in protecting the wall against weathering (Naumann 1971: 82). A similar system of construction is attested for the possibly re-used ashlar orthostats found in Late Bronze Age contexts in Hazor (Hult 1983: 39). In Iron Age Tell Halaf, lower faces of mudbrick walls without a stone foundation were covered with orthostat slabs at ground level (Naumann 1971: 83; Mellink 1974: 209; Özyar 1991: 176).

In Anatolia, orthostat *blocks* (rather than *slabs*) were practically part of the stone socle of the walls, therefore playing a structurally supporting role. Uncarved ashlar orthostats in a number of different forms are attested in several temples from Boğazköy, dated to the 13th century BCE (see Hult 1983: 42–43 for a list of the architectural contexts). Reliefs on the ashlar blocks of the Sphinx Gate at Alacahöyük are considered to be the earliest examples of the combination of this architectural technique with imagery.[192] There, the blocks were such structural elements of the gate that even their classification as orthostats is contested.[193] At the West Tower, a second, superimposed row of ashlar blocks was attested, at least two of which bore reliefs.[194] In the Iron Age, orthostats as part of stone socles were found in most of the sites of the Syro-Anatolian region including Karkamiš, Sakçagözü, Hama, and Karatepe (Naumann 1971: 83).[195] The orthostats of Zincirli, all of which likewise rested on stone socles, are also in this tradition. Solely the orthostats of Malatya seem to have been designed in a slightly different manner, where orthostat blocks were placed on a stone socle of 1.60 m, elevating them significantly from the base level (Mellink 1974: 207; Özyar 1991: 134).

The most common method of fastening was the usage of dowels, rather than clamps. Wooden dowels, stabilized by molten lead, would attach the orthostats to the timber beams placed above – or rarely below (e.g. orthostats from Malatya) – them (Hult 1983: 79; Harmanşah 2013: 174).[196] The high frequency of *round* dowel holes on 2nd millennium BCE orthostats has been regarded by Özyar (1991: 102, 105) as a dating criterion; however, several scholars either see the type and hardness of the stone used as responsible for this feature (e.g. Hult 1983: 79), or the building technique employed for determining the shape of the hole (e.g. Naumann 1971: 111–114; Harmanşah 2013: 221, fn. 62). The fact that round dowel holes were used at the outer citadel gate at Zincirli, while square ones were found at the similarly built southern city gate, further demonstrates the problematic nature of chronological considerations based on this feature.

Both round and rectangular dowel holes are attested in Karkamiš, solely round ones in Malatya and rectangular ones in Sakçagözü (Naumann 1971: 113–114; Özyar 1991). There is also one instance in which two different fastening techniques were used within the same city: "Small orthostats" of the southern front of the West Palace at Tell Halaf bore no dowel holes,[197] while orthostats on the northern façade of the same building had rectangular ones (Özyar 1991: 176). The bases of the orthostat slabs would sometimes be set upon a bitumen surface, acting as a waterproofer, as exemplified in Northwest Palace at Kalhu (see Harmanşah 2013: 164). As mentioned above, this was also the case for the orthostats of Hilani IV at Zincirli.[198]

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stat *with* a relief (see Bossert 1942: 138, Abb. 576, or Yener and Akar 2013: Fig. 3) was found reused in the Level I temple, so its original context is unknown. The depicted figure was originally interpreted as Tudhaliya IV (1227–1209 BCE), but is now considered to be a governor from Level III or Level II (Yener and Akar 2013: 267).

[192] To my knowledge, Bittel's latest opinion on the datings of the reliefs was "before 13th century BCE" (1976: 205). Mellink traditionally supported an earlier date (see Mellink 1970: 18).

[193] See for instance Bittel (1976: 199), who in general acknowledges orthostats mainly as revetment slabs placed against the lower courses of walls. But see also Güterbock (1957: 64), who refers to these sculptures as "rows of orthostats."

[194] Blocks 14 and 15, see Fig. 67 in Naumann 1971: 80. See also Güterbock 1957: 64; Mellink 1974: 203; Bittel 1976: 201. Both Naumann (1971: 81) and Mellink (1974: 205) suggest the existence of further superimposing layers due to the uneven finishing of the upper joints of second layer blocks.

[195] In Karkamiš, there are also cases where orthostat slabs are placed against the wall like revetments (e.g., orthostats of the Herald's Wall and King's Gate, see Özyar 1991: 41, 59). For a good view of the socle, stone fill, mudbrick wall, and the orthostats from the North Gate at Karatepe, see Çambel and Özyar: 2003, Fig. 21.

[196] Woolley's (1921: 149) suggestion that the holes on the Karkamiš orthostats were solely lewis holes for maneuvering is largely rejected (see Naumann 1971: 114, Özyar 1991: 60; Harmanşah 2013: 221, fn. 61).

[197] Those orthostats were fixed by transverse beams. See Naumann 1971: 94 and Özyar 1991: 176 for detailed descriptions of the procedure.

[198] Otherwise in Anatolia and North Syria, bitumen was almost exclusively used in conjunction with bathrooms, including the bathrooms 6 and 7 of Building J in Zincirli (Naumann 1971: 53–54).

Briefly, apart from confirming the tendency of using orthostat *blocks* rather than *slabs* in stone-rich areas of the region, this analysis of architectural functionality and systems of fastening particularly demonstrates the striking discrepancy between the "Aramaean" Zincirli and Tell Halaf on the one hand; and between the "Luwian" Karkamiš and Malatya on the other. This discrepancy not only points to the variety of the practices employed by local artisanal traditions but also exemplifies the flaws inherent in ethnic classifications that are based on the homogeneity of the archaeological material.

5.3. Execution and Iconography

After the orthostats were placed in position, carving of the relief would be finished, fine details and inscriptions executed. The final stage would comprise polishing and painting.

At Zincirli reliefs from the southern city gate and outer citadel gate mostly depict individual, self-contained scenes carved on single blocks, which is often the case for the reliefs of the Syro-Anatolian region.[199] There are a couple of instances of a scene stretching over two blocks as well as of independent units of "vignettes" covering up to four blocks (see Gilibert 2011: Fig. 30).

Orthmann (1971: 60–62) categorized the reliefs of the southern city gate and outer citadel gate into two distinctive groups (Zincirli I and Zincirli II, respectively). Overall, reliefs of the outer citadel gate are distinguished from those at the southern city gate by more detailed articulation of the faces, better modeling of the body parts as organic forms, and a more pronounced verticality of the figures on the relief space (Orthmann 1971: 60–62; see also Brown 2008: 480; Bonatz 2014: 211). However, it should be noted that there are several cases where considerable similarities exist between depictions from these two separate groups, as well as significant differences within the same group.[200] Additionally, in terms of the thematic repertoire, there is a "fluid transition" (Bonatz 2014: 211; see also Orthmann 1971: 462) between the groups.

Motifs depicted include composite beings such as winged griffins, sphinxes, and chimaera (Zincirli 6, 37, 38, 49), winged bird-headed geniuses with upraised arms (Zincirli 3,4, 28), club-wielding, lion-headed geniuses holding a reversed animal (Zincirli 24, 41), rampant winged lion (Zincirli 21), hunting scenes (Zincirli 8–10, 17–20, 45, 46, 51), chariot riding over a fallen enemy (Zincirli 12–13), horse rider holding a severed head (Zincirli 5), a banquet scene (Zincirli 14), and a musician playing a string instrument, together with a dancer/singer (Zincirli 31–32). A comparative overview of these scenes with those of other sites in the Syro-Anatolian region is provided in the table below (Table 2). I included here only exact parallels in form and composition. Yet it should be taken into account that this list would be much more exhaustive if other forms of the scene in question were included, or other gestures of the individual figures.

The first conclusion to be drawn from this table is that each of these motifs depicted in Zincirli has at least one parallel in Karkamiš. Likewise, similarities between these two sites in terms of the *execution* of these motifs have already been discussed by Orthmann (1971: 133–134). On the other hand, despite those similarities several details in the rendering of the individual figures and features[201] suggest that Karkamiš served solely as a model for iconography and that Zincirli reliefs were the work of local artisans, rather than that of the Karkamiš workshops (Orthmann 1993: 249; Winter 2010 [1983]: 567–568). As already pointed out by Winter (2010 [1983]: 570), an exception in that sense could be the almost identically rendered heads of two statues that once stood on double-lion bases in these two sites (see Orthmann 1971: Karkemis F/17 and Zincirli E/1).

In fact, Karkamiš is considered to have been a major production center for ivory and stone carving in the Early Iron Age (Winter 2010 [1983]). Its primary role in the elaboration and diffusion of iconographical motifs at the end of the Late Bronze Age has also been argued (Mora 1992: 242). Artisans from Karkamiš were possibly at work in

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[199] A notable exception in terms of thematic connections between adjoining slabs are depictions of processions. For a general treatment of this topic, see Mellink 1974.

[200] See Brown 2008: 481 for a couple of examples. Orthmann himself (1971: 62) mentions the peculiarities of Zincirli 16 and 31 (Orthmann's B/5 and B/18).

[201] See Akurgal 1968: 100–101 and Orthmann 1971: 134, for possibly "misunderstood" technical details by the Zincirli artisans concerning the harness depicted in the chariot scene (Zincirli 12–13). See also Orthmann 1971: 466, fn. 1, for further examples. A very similar "misunderstanding" is also to be seen on an orthostat from Tell Halaf (Moortgat 1955: A3/56).

the nearby site Tell Ahmar (*Til Barsib*).[202] A collaboration of workshops has also been suggested for Zincirli and Sakçagözü due to a number of similarities in terms of the execution of the lions and sphinxes (Akurgal 1968: 60; Winter 2010 [1976]: 250). On the other hand, the variety of the motifs and their execution has also been taken as an indication for the existence of separate "regional and even city workshops" (Mazzoni 2013: 468). I believe it is not contradictory to assume *both* the existence of workshops working under a city-state on a long-term basis *and* of workshops that traveled – either sent out by a ruler to another city-state as part of a reciprocal relationship or operating independently by means of project-specific employment.[203] The latter option might be especially possible after the collapse of the large-scale palace bureaucracies and related changes in socio-economic conditions of the artisans (see Zaccagnini 1983: 264; Gunter 1990: 12–13).

	Winged griffin	Winged sphinx	Chimaera	Winged bird-headed genius	Lion-headed genius	Winged lion	Hunting scenes (on foot)	Chariot riding over fallen enemy	Soldier holding a severed head	Banquet scene[1]	Musician & dancer
Karkamiš	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis Ab/1,[2] D/2,[3] H/8	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis E/10	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis E/8, F/6, H4	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis E/5	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis H/3	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis Aa/2	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis H/6-7	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis C/5, C/6, C/7, C/8, C/9	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis C/11, 12, 14a	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis Ab/4	Orthmann 1971: Karkemis F/5
Tell Halaf	Moortgat 1955: A3/55, 154-157, Bb/1, Bb/3	Moortgat 1955: A3/150-151, Ba/7, Bb/1	Moortgat 1955: A3/152-153			Moortgat 1955: A3/149, 158, Bb/2, Bb/5-6	Moortgat 1955: A3/52, Ba/1, Ba/6, Bc/2	Moortgat 1955: A3/59			
Sakçagözü		Orthmann 1971: Sakçagözü A/4, A/8									
Malatya					Orthmann 1971: Malatya C/3[4]					Bonatz 2000a: Abb. 17	
Karatepe		Orthmann 1971: Karatepe A/9-10		Orthmann 1971: Karatepe A/7			Orthmann 1971: Karatepe A/3, A/29			Orthmann 1971: Karatepe B/2, B19	Orthmann 1971: Karatepe A/27, B/1
Tell Tayinat		Orthmann 1971: Tainat X/1						Orthmann 1971: Tainat 2[5]	Gerlach 1999: Taf. VII-VIII		
Tell 'Ain Dārā		Orthmann 1971: Ain Dara Ba/4		Orthmann 1971: Ain Dara D/5							
Tell Ahmar	Orthmann 1971: Til Barsib A/8								Orthmann 1971: Til Barsib A/5, 6		
Aleppo	Gonnella et al.: Abb. 149	Gonnella et al.: Abb. 133	Gonnella et al.: Abb. 148								

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[1] Here, only the banquet scenes on *orthostats* are taken into account. For a brief discussion of banquet scenes on funerary monuments, see above Section 4.4.3.
[2] Head of the figure is not preserved, but other parts and attributes highly suggest such an identification.
[3] Head of the figure is not preserved, but other parts and attributes highly suggest such an identification.
[4] With sword on the belt, club in the hand. Reversed animal missing.
[5] It should be noted that the provenance of this orthostat is not secure. See Brown 2008: 463, n. 186.

Table 2. Comparative overview of Zincirli motifs and themes with other Syro-Anatolian sites.

Another conclusion derived from Table 2 is the distribution of most of the themes and motifs across a wide geographical area. In terms of the thematic repertoire, what Winter (2010 [1983]: 568) has proposed for the sculptural art of Zincirli and Karkamiš as products of a "common cultural environment" can be extended to the region itself. It is impossible to distinguish between the "Aramaean" and "Luwian" city-states in terms of the motifs depicted on the reliefs. The same appears to be valid for seal iconography as well (Bonatz 2014: 243). Despite the changes in the political and economic structures in the early Iron Age, many of the themes found on Iron Age reliefs are also seen on the glyptic and ivory carving from the 2nd millennium BCE.[204] This seems to be the case even for the exceptionally varied themes of Tell Halaf orthostats, many of which are attested in the Mitannian and Middle Assyrian glyptic (Orthmann 1971: 470–471; Özyar 1991: 183–218).

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[202] This argument is based on the similarities between the storm god stelae as well as other relief fragments from Tell Ahmar and several depictions from Karkamiš. See Woolley and Barnett 1952: 263; Orthmann 1971: 48; Winter 2010 [1983]: 568–569. But see also Bunnens 2006: 47.

[203] Apart from those, some of the artisans mentioned in Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Achaemenid records are considered to have been subjected to forced employment and/or deportations

[204] See Orthmann 1971 for parallels from the 2nd millennium BCE for most of the discussed themes. See also Gilibert 2004.

Reliefs of the Hilani III and IV dated to the reign of Barrākib (733/732–ca. 720 BCE) demonstrate a different execution as well as thematic scope.[205] They are still quite flat, but in comparison with the earlier reliefs, the faces and heads of the figures as well as their clothing are rendered in a more detailed way. On some of the orthostats, the relief space is bordered by a frame (e.g. Zincirli 66, 71–72). No composite beings or hunting scenes are depicted; the thematic focus is the king and his court, showing him enthroned in front of a scribe or in a banquet scene and his courtiers (including musicians) in processions. The theme itself in general, and the enthroned representation of the king with a lotus blossom in the hand in particular, are reminiscent of the depictions of Tiglath-Pileser III (e.g. Barnett and Falkner 1962: plates VIII, XVIII, LXIII), but it should be noted that lotus blossoms were already seen at Zincirli on the Kilamuwa depiction (Fig. 10) and possibly indicate a local Syrian and Phoenician tradition going back to the 2nd millennium BCE (Orthmann 1971: 292–297; Bonatz 2000a: 100–102).

5.4. Reception

In stark contrast with the Assyrian practice of decorating the interiors – and sometimes entrances[206] – of palaces, reliefs from the Syro-Anatolian sites were predominantly associated with exterior walls of temples,[207] palaces,[208] and, most frequently, with city and citadel gates.[209] Particularly concerning the gateways, a relatively large audience having visual access to the reliefs might be surmised. In addition to providing physical access, gateways were also "ceremonial passage[s]" (Mazzoni 1997: 310),[210] "platforms for ritual performances" (Gilibert 2011: 24), the boundary between "chaos" and "order" (Mazzoni 1997: 315), and places of public execution and judicial activities (May 2014: 95–104). Equally important is the fact that they were also "very visible architectural embodiments of royal power to harness and command human and material resources" (Brown 2008: 32).[211] In this context, the imagery associated with these structures was also actively taking part in the reproduction of that social space as both "perceived" and "lived" spaces (Lefebvre 1991: 38 ff.)[212] as well as serving as cues for "appropriate" movements and behavior (Rapoport 1990).[213] This might have been the case also for relatively more secluded areas within the citadels, where for instance the directions of processions would guide the audience towards entrances (e.g. Hilani III at Zincirli), stairways (e.g. reliefs of the Processional Way converging on Stairway Recess at Karkamiš), or other distinctive features such as inscriptions (e.g. Royal Buttress at Karkamiš).[214] In addition to the already entitled persons, a large number of people could have been gathered in the open spaces *within* the citadels on certain occasions such as festivals (Gilibert 2012; Harmanşah 2013: Chap. 4). At other times, people might solely have heard various descriptions of the details of the sculptures, which could well be the case for instance for Tell Halaf, where the monumental façade of West-Palace was oriented not to the city itself but to the river. On a different scale, I believe it is reasonable to assume that the rulers of the city-states were aware of the sculptural programs carried out in other cities, an awareness that possibly even culminated in the exchange of artisans.

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[205] Orthmann (1971: 63–66) groups these reliefs into two categories: Zincirli III (Hilani IV) and Zincirli IV (Hilani III), on the basis of slight differences in execution. See also Brown 2008: 484–486; Gilibert 2011: 85 ff.; Bonatz 2014: 212–215.

[206] E.g., entrances and the façade of the throne room of the Northwest Palace, see Meuszynski 1981: 31–34, "Räume D, ED, E". For a brief discussion of the potential audience of the Assyrian reliefs, see Lamprichs 1995: 315–317.

[207] E.g., Tell 'Ain Dārā (both on interior and exterior walls of the temple); Karkamiš (if the Long Wall is regarded as a part of the temple itself). To this list might be added Tell Halaf, depending on the function of the "*Tempel-Palast*" (referred to as *West-Palace* throughout this paper). A notable exception is the temple at Aleppo, where the reliefs were found in the *cella* of the temple.

[208] E.g., Zincirli, Sakçagözü. And again, perhaps Tell Halaf (see the previous note).

[209] E.g., Karkamiš, Zincirli, Sakçagözü, Karatepe, Malatya, Tell Halaf.

[210] For a discussion of monuments intentionally buried in and around gateways, see Mazzoni 1997: 330–331.

[211] Surely, this argument is valid not only for monumental gateways, but for monumental architecture as a whole.

[212] Lefebvre's other category, "conceived space," would also be relevant here, when one considers the initial planning, conceptualization, and commissioning of the structures as well as of the imagery carved on them. See also Harmanşah (2013: 104 ff.), who discusses Lefebvre's ideas within the context of ceremony, performance, and the production of urban space in the Iron Age.

[213] In Rapoport's terminology, it is rather the "semi-fixed" elements that have significant effects on behavior. As Brown (2008: 130) also notes, orthostat reliefs can be considered both "fixed" (as architectural members) and "semi-fixed" (as decorative) elements.

[214] See Gilibert 2011: 107 ff. for a general discussion of processional imagery at Zincirli and Karkamiš.

A similar kind of interaction is traditionally suggested for Assurnasirpal II, whose stop at Karkamiš during his 6th year campaign to the eastern Mediterranean[215] presumably provided the "inspiration" (Russell 1998: 245; see also Winter 2010 [1982]; cf. Hrouda 2003: 5) for his own relief programme later implemented in Kalhu, the inauguration of which envoys from most of the Syro-Anatolian sites including Karkamiš are reported to have attended.[216]

Turning to the reception of the themes depicted, frequent references to 2nd millennium BCE iconography have already been mentioned, yet this does not necessarily mean that the *meanings* attached to the individual figures or themes remained the same. Still, it is clear that the commissioners and executers of the reliefs in question largely grafted onto the existing repertoire prevailing in their respective regions.[217] It has been suggested that the depicted themes could refer to certain mythical discourses (Brown 2008: 157 ff.) or serve as mnemonic aids acting on collective memories (Bonatz 2001). As mentioned before, Feldman (2014) recently discussed the animal markings found on first millennium BCE ivories ("Flame and Frond" group) and Tell Halaf reliefs in conjunction with similar markings on artworks from the Late Bronze Age and acknowledged those as part of the material practices "engender[ing] collective identity" (ibid.: 57) in the Iron Age and "enhancing a shared memory of a Bronze Age heritage" (ibid.: 47). In any case, reception is always historically contingent, and therefore was directly related to representational conventions, cultural norms, and experiences of the audiences (Baxandall 1972) as well as to their social status (Clark 1984).

Frequently, inscriptions appear either on the reliefs or in direct association with them. Roughly we might divide those into longer commemorative texts, historical narratives, building inscriptions, and shorter ones comprising of a few sentences in the form of captions giving information on the depicted person or the related building. The level of literacy of large population groups is still a matter of debate,[218] but the profound role of the interplay of text and image in the reception of an object has already been discussed in detail (Winter 2010 [1981]). Additionally, before the ultimate phoneticization of the alphabetic script (i. e. specifically in cuneiform and hieroglyphic scripts), the relation between the signifier and signified was not arbitrary but closely linked; therefore, the inseparability of text and image is directly related to the inseparability of the realms of *the representation and the real* (Bahrani 2003: 96–120). As to the narrative itself, a common motif frequently used by the rulers of the city-states is an explicit understatement of the deeds of their ancestors followed by an overemphasis of their own. This is the case for Kilamuwa of Zincirli (Tropper 1993: 27–46), Kapara at Tell Halaf (Meissner 1933),[219] Katuwas at Karkamiš (Hawkins 2000: 103–122), and Halparuntiyas II at Gurgum (Hawkins 2000: 256–258).

6. Conclusion and Outlook: Beyond Ethnicity-based Categorizations of the Art of the Syro-Anatolian Region in the Iron Age

I believe the above discussion further reinforces what had been argued before on a theoretical level concerning the fallacy of style/function and style (form)/content dichotomies: The "functions" of the orthostats simply cannot be separated from their "styles." Their functionality as an architectural technique protecting the walls against weathering was further enhanced when they were transformed into "surfaces of performativity" (Harmanşah 2013: 183) on a large scale during the early Iron Age. Yet this radical increase in carved orthostats should not lead us to give priority to the imagery only; all of the choices made in every step of the production sequence, ranging from the selection of the stone, combination of different stones (e. g. basalt-limestone alternation), to systems of fastening and placement (e. g. at ground level against mudbrick walls as revetment slabs [Tell Halaf], or on high stone socles

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[215] See *RIMA* 2, text A.0.101.1, lines 65–70. He received tribute from Karkamiš probably in his 9th year. But see also Aro (2009: 14), who argues against the idea that Assurnasirpal II *entered* the city of Karkamiš during that campaign. An alternative assumption concerns an earlier "inspiration" during the reign of Tiglath-Pileser I (1114–1076 BCE). See Aro 2009 for a brief discussion and further references.

[216] See *RIMA* 2, text A.0.101.30, lines 102–154.

[217] Among the scenes that are newly added to the repertoire are depictions of camel riders at Karkamiš (Orthmann 1971: Karkemis E/13) and Tell Halaf (Moortgat 1955: A3/34), which might be related to the increasing importance of camel transport and associated incense and spice trade from south Arabia in this period (see Schwartz 1989: 282 and Magee 2015).

[218] Briefly, the traditional view that the vast majority of the population was illiterate has now been rather revised in favor of a more widespread literacy across different professions. See Charpin 2010: 8–24 for a discussion of the relevant arguments, including those on reading texts aloud.

[219] Those inscriptions were found not on the orthostat reliefs but on the eastern sphinx and caryatids of the monumental entrance of the Westpalace.

elevating them from the ground level [Malatya]) in the end not only determined the "materiality" of the orthostats, but also had direct influence on the execution and reception of the imagery commissioned to be carved. Chosen themes and iconography added another layer of functionality on top of this. If we are to talk about their "style," it is all of the above that comprises it.

Accordingly, the stylistic analysis carried out here indicates first and foremost that the production and consumption of carved orthostats should be seen as part of shared social practices among the Syro-Anatolian city-states of the Iron Age. Large-scale orthostat programs were located at the intersection of social and economic structures capable of controlling sufficient material and human resources, ideological propaganda rendering the very technique of orthostat carving and ashlar masonry a "royal insignia" (Harmanşah 2013: 157) as well as possible impact of certain technological developments such as the introduction of iron tools. Hence, in contrast to Sader's already mentioned arguments, neither the very practice of conceiving, making, and using orthostats, nor other aspects of material culture that display continuity from the Bronze Ages can be attributed to the deeds of a single ethnicity. This leads me to confidently reject Sader's main premise that "the Iron Age culture of North Syria can be safely labeled Aramaean" (Sader 2010: 289).[220]

Then how to account for the *differences* attested between these city-states in terms of this shared practice? It has been shown that considering them a passive idiomatic of ethnicity in a Sackettian way simply does not explain the complexity of the phenomenon we are faced with. First, ethnic "boundaries" themselves are far from certain for Syro-Anatolian city-states of the Iron Age, delineated by means of the distribution of languages and scripts as well as of discursive representations of ethnicity derived from partial textual sources.[221] It is worth noting again that the distribution of material culture does not necessarily coincide with that of language groups (Emberling 1997; Hall 1997: 143–181; Bahrani 2006: 54).

Second, "ethnic markers" (e.g. "Aramaean features") mentioned in the literature simply crosscut those "boundaries." It has been demonstrated that Zincirli and Tell Halaf, both considered "Aramaean" sites by Akurgal, Sader and many other scholars, have almost nothing in common in terms of the technical features (e.g., architectural functionality and placement of the orthostats, systems of fastening) as well as the execution and iconography of the reliefs. Instead, "Luwian" Karkamiš has considerably more parallels with Zincirli in all of those aspects. The fact that this discrepancy is not related to the *material* but to the *methodology* itself is further demonstrated by the example of Karkamiš and Malatya, two "Luwian" sites with rulers originating from the same dynastic family (Hawkins 1988; 1995), where significant differences exist in placement, execution, and iconography of the orthostats. It is therefore affirmed that homogeneity or heterogeneity between the archaeological remains of two sites does not necessarily indicate their ethnic affiliation or ethnic difference – which is, practically speaking, the main drawback of a methodology based on "markers" and "trait inventories."

In fact, because "identities" should be understood not as bounded, monolithic entities but as only temporarily fixed *subject positions*, their archaeological correlates are more likely to present irregular, overlapping patterns rather than unified, coherent groups of "markers." Only looking at the social conditions of the practices associated with those patterns might help to figure out how relevant ethnic identification was in that particular context. I would argue that none of those patterns (e.g., architectural functions, systems of fastening and placement, techniques and execution, compositional and iconographical elements as well as certain cultural practices such as erecting funerary stelae) that have come to be associated with "Aramaean style" can be securely connected with the articulation of an *Aramaean* ethnicity. Instead, they seem to follow general trends and already existing carving and architectural traditions in their particular regions.

Yet, this account of historical continuity should be supplemented with an awareness of historical breaks and ruptures. Shifting political, economic, and social conditions of the early Iron Age necessarily paved the way for new processes of identification and differentiation, including the "invention of traditions" (Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983). I illustrate this point by discussing a monument generally regarded as representing a "clear break […] with earlier artistic practice" (Brown 2008: 247), the Kilamuwa inscription (Fig. 10). The "Aramaean" king Kilamuwa of Zincirli, bearing a Luwian throne name, commissioned a carved orthostat comprised of a depiction showing him like an Assyrian king and an inscription in Phoenician language with letters rendered in relief reminiscent of

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[220] See also Bunnens 2000: 9–12, who argues against explaining long-term continuities in the history of Syria in terms of ethnicities.

[221] Surely one should also take into account that those textual sources mainly represent the points of view of certain sections of a society, mostly the "urban, upper-class scribal perspective" (Bernbeck 2008b: 48). See also Jones 2010: 302–303.

Hieroglyphic Luwian monuments.[222] Apparently, a process of identification and differentiation was taking place here, and I agree with Brown (2008: 245 ff.) when he identifies this as an *ethnic* one, especially if we put emphasis on the *common descent* pronounced in the inscription.[223] On the other hand, although Brown (2008: 243) acknowledges that the relief lacks "a distinctively 'Aramaean' aspect," he nonetheless argues that the Kilamuwa relief, along with the Tell Fekheriye statue and Kapara sculptures from Tell Halaf, represents the beginning of "distinctive visual expressions, and indeed any kind of really distinctive material culture, produced by individuals from an 'Aramaean' background" (ibid.: 246–247). Hence, he concludes that "the Kilamuwa relief is not simply an opportunistic combination of various symbolic elements to provide a visual statement of political policies, it is also an index of group identity creation, in this case of one understanding of 'Aramaeanness' on the part of the ruling class of Sam'al" (ibid.: 244).[224]

What exactly qualifies this monument as an index of the formation of one understanding of *Aramaeanness*? Since there is no *self-ascription* by Kilamuwa concerning his *Aramaean* ethnicity (or *ascription by others*, for that matter), the only possible answer to this question is the indisputable use of Aramaic by king Barrākib of Zincirli around 100 years after Kilamuwa, together with the related scholarly convention on the "Aramaeanness" of Zincirli. Yet, the problems of equating languages with ethnicities have been pointed out throughout this paper as well as the fallacies of designating languages as "markers" to map ethnicities. In fact, recent excavations have begun to take into account the possibility that Aramaeans never occupied the site of Zincirli, but rather a Semitic-speaking dynasty seized power through an indigenous political revolution, adopting Imperial Aramaic much later in the second half of the 8th century BCE, "under the influence of the Neo-Assyrian Empire and its Aramaic-speaking administrators" (Schloen and Fink 2009a: 9; Pardee 2009: 69).

Given the recent discoveries in Zincirli of a biconvex stamp seal and a lead strip inscribed in Hieroglyphic Luwian (Schloen 2014: 105; Herrmann et al. 2016: 65, fn. 54)[225] as well as the discovery of a presumably royal two-line Hieroglyphic Luwian inscription on a fragment of an anthropomorphic statue from Pancarlı Höyük (Herrmann et al. 2016),[226] this situation might get even more complicated should further Hieroglyhic Luwian inscriptions be recovered in the İslahiye Valley in the future.

In that sense, as a result of the "stylistic" analysis of the orthostat reliefs of Zincirli, i.e. the "hallmark" of "Aramaean art," it can confidently be concluded that the "Aramaean style," in the manner conceptualized by Akurgal and recently by Sader, is simply an illusion. The scholarly construction of an "Aramaean style" served to attribute a material presence to a people (and a language) well known from later historical sources.

Beyond ethnicity-based categorizations – to an archaeology of subjectivities

That the Kilamuwa orthostat (and the site of Zincirli, for that matter) simply should not be classified as "Aramaean" is also due to the fact that an explanation of that kind is actually a non-explanation. Assigning "authorship" to collective mind-sets encapsulated in ethnicities does not really say much about their social conditions of production, including the social, economic, and political structures, not to mention context-specific meanings.

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[222] Various aspects of this monument have already been extensively discussed in the literature. See Brown 2008: 235–250 for a recent treatment of the object with further references. A similar mixture of various traditions is also to be seen in the recently discovered KTMW stele dated to the mid-8th century BCE (see Struble and Herrmann 2009).

[223] As Brown (2008: 249) also notes, the fact that Kilamuwa mentions his ancestors only in conjunction with their inefficacies does not mean that he denied any common descent. On the contrary, the presence of the ancestors in the inscription indicates the profound role they may have played in the self-definition of Kilamuwa and his rule.

[224] Brown (2008: 248) further suggests that "[…] this kind of depiction was an upper class view of regional processes of definition, redefinition, and development of new social identities, including ethnic ones. In a counter-process to the Assyrian use of "Aramaeans" in the material culture as an "other" against whom they partially redefined their identity in the early Iron Age, the Kilamuwa relief embodied Aramaean use of "Assyrians" to help create theirs."

[225] Only one other object inscribed in Hieroglyphic Luwian was found previously in Zincirli: a gold signet ring bearing a four-sign inscription mentioning the name of Barrākib (see Hawkins 2000: 576).

[226] According to Herrmann et al. (2016: 70), the discovery of this monument, tentatively dated to the 10th or 9th century BCE, has the potential to "further blur the lines between the so-called Neo-Hittite and Aramaean kingdoms, whose frequent separation in secondary literature can be attributed more to disciplinary boundaries between Anatolian and West Semitic philology than to real differences in material culture, architecture, urban planning, monumental practice, religion, or sociopolitical structure."

Frequently, single artworks or cities as a whole are placed in their social and historical settings only *after* and *as a result of* their initial ethnic categorizations. For instance, the "Aramaeanizing Hittite style" (Akurgal 1968: 130) of the aforementioned İvriz rock relief (Fig. 17) is taken as *the* evidence to claim that "the Aramaean donor erected this monument for his Luvian-Hittite subjects" (Akurgal 1968: 135). That historical account would surely be called into question by Genge when he categorized the same monument as "anatolisch-spätluwisch, mit hethitisierender und assyrisierender Tendenz" (Genge 1979: caption to Abb. 76), or by Barnett (1948: 8–9), who rather saw in the İvriz relief the beginnings of Phrygian art. In the same vein, two almost identical winged, bird-headed geniuses (Figs. 24–25) from Zincirli and Karkamiš are classified by Genge (1979: captions to Abb. 98–99) as "frühara-mäisch in südluwischer Umwelt" and "südluwisch" respectively, apparently not due to the differences between these objects themselves but due to the initial ethnic categorization of the related cities.

Figure 24. (*left*) Zincirli, orthostat relief from the outer citadel gate, Basalt, H. 1.18 m, W. 0.60 m, late 10th–early 9th century BCE, Vorderasiatisches Museum Berlin (from AiS III: Taf. XLII); **Figure 25.** (*right*) Karkamiš, orthostat relief from Herald's Wall, Basalt, H. 1.17 m, W. 1.39 m, Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara (Photo: Tayfun Bilgin).

Indeed, it was famously argued that the notion of authorship "characterize[s] the existence, circulation, and operation of certain discourses within a society" (Foucault 1977 [1969]: 124):

> [A]n author's name is not simply an element of speech […] Its presence is functional in that it serves as a means of classification. A name can group together a number of texts and thus differentiates them from others. […] [T]he fact that a number of texts were attached to a single name implies that relationships of homogeneity, filiation, reciprocal explanation, authentification, or of common utilization were established among them. (Foucault 1977 [1969]: 123)

"Ethnicity" and "style" function in art-historical and archaeological discourse of Syro-Anatolian Iron Age just as the "author" and her "name" function in literature and philosophy of knowledge. In fact, such a discourse over-shadows or even hinders a thorough analysis of the practices of the artisans and/or commissioners themselves, as it frequently diverts the discussion toward the assessment of their level of "Aramaeanness," "Luwianness," or "foreignness." This is not to say that the role ethnicity might play in artistic production is not a legitimate line of research.[227] On the contrary, all of the choices made in the production sequence of an artifact might well provide valuable insights in the processes of ethnic identification – but only when such research starts from the practices themselves, the social, ideological, and economic conditions of those practices, together with the possible venues in which those conditions and ethnic identification might overlap. They should certainly not begin from top-down presuppositions about the ethnicity of dynasties or population groups and the existence of an associated homogeneous artistic style, as employed in the majority of the studies critiqued here.

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[227] But see the reservations already expressed on p. 19 about imposing our essential categories of difference on past subjectivities without taking into account their immediate and shifting socio-political settings.

Hence, rather than relying on already established categorizations based on ethnicity, the current state of affairs of the art of the Syro-Anatolian Iron Age necessitates first and foremost the reversal of the process of "context follows classification." Only by starting from the context itself can we not only do justice to the potential impact of ethnic identification on art, but also, and more importantly, build up a much sounder foundation for the construction of broader historical narratives that are inevitably based upon the ways in which we account for past subjectivities and categorize related material remains. And only then could the orthostat reliefs from Zincirli be classified (for now) plainly as "orthostat reliefs from Zincirli" and not as best representatives of an overarching but non-existent "Aramaean style."

Such an understanding inevitably leads to the recognition that as long as we do not have evidence of ethnic self-ascription and ascription by others as well as of concrete ties between social, cultural, and political practices and the articulation of an *Aramaean* ethnicity, all narratives based on an Aramaean presence at the site of Zincirli and in the İslahiye Valley in the Early Iron Age need to be called into question. Neither the assumption of Gabbār being an "Aramaean or North-Arabian chieftain whose clan seized power in this predominantly Luwian or Neo-Hittite area" (Lipinski 2000: 239) can be sustained, nor the existence of a *local Aramaean* dynasty under Gabbār coming to power (Sader 2010; 2014). With the evidence at hand, the issue of the ethnic affiliation of the dynasty in question has to remain open.

This uncertainty arising from leaving aside assigning authorship to ethnicities is not necessarily something to be scared of, as it provides us the opportunity to turn to the fundamental question of how the archaeologists and art historians account for past subjectivities. For instance, are we satisfied with an investigation of ethnic affiliation through an etymological analysis of the throne names in Gabbār's dynasty? My critique here is not really related to the disregard of deliberate choice of throne names,[228] but rather to the very *objective* of an archaeological analysis of subjectivities. If the objective is to attempt to account for past subjectivities through "exposing the apparatus that inscribes subjects within a historically created field of difference" (Smith 2004: 13), then the choice of throne names is nothing more than a *single* thread in the complex web of practices involved in the formation of related subjectivities. As noted earlier, those practices never remain fixed, and starting from the context requires the acknowledgment of the fluidity of the subjectivities formed through those practices. Hence, even if we had the evidence to designate a dynasty or a population group as "Aramaean," we would still need to use that designation by paying attention to the processes of its social, cultural, and political production through time and space, and not as an essential category of difference. For instance, what did it mean to be "Aramaean" to Gabbār from the late 10th century BCE and to Kilamuwa from the late 9th century BCE? Or to an official with the Luwian name of KTMW from the late 8th century BCE, whose mortuary inscription in Archaic Aramaic[229] referred both to Hadad and Kubaba? Or to a resident of Zincirli after the provincialization of the city by the Assyrians at the end of the 7th century BCE, or to those "Aramaeans" of the Syro-Anatolian region who were subjected to mass deportations?[230]

What were the socio-political factors at play in each of these situations, how did they redefine and reshape subject positions? Which discourses were brought along through social, cultural, and political practices, which were left behind? Through which institutions and mechanisms were continuities and ruptures in discourse (e. g. in the definition of being an "Aramaean") called forth? It is not enough to evaluate artistic production as one of those mechanisms, the objective should be to explain *how* subjectivities were produced and re-produced, imposed, and negotiated in that historically-specific, socio-political matrix with which art was intertwined. Confining subjectivity to a fixed category of ethnicity, and art to a *reflection* thereof, cannot answer any of these questions.

An objection might be raised that the extent of the evidence we have from this region is simply not sufficient to accommodate such research objectives at the moment. I believe that even acknowledging that insufficiency would be more productive than pretending to have found all our answers in the illusionary comfort of fixed categories of difference.

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[228] As noted earlier, this point has already been taken into account in the recent literature (e. g. Bunnens 2000: 16–17; 2006: 97 ff.; Dalley 2000: 80; Brown 2008: 244, fn. 94, 249).

[229] See fn. 144.

[230] The majority of the Syro-Anatolian city-states were subjected to Assyrian mass deportations. Sam'al is one of the few cities not mentioned in this context in the Assyrian records. See Parpola 2004: Appendix II for a list of the related references. Cf. Schloen and Fink (2009b: 218), who do not rule out the possibility that mass deportations were carried out during the Assyrian takeover of Sam'al.

7. Acknowledgments

8. Bibliography

List of Abbreviations

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AiS II　　Felix von Luschan, Carl Humann and Robert Koldewey. 1898. *Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli, Vol. 2. Ausgrabungsbericht und Architektur.* Berlin: Spemann.

AiS III　　Felix von Luschan. 1902. *Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli, Vol. 3. Thorsculpturen.* Berlin: Georg Reimer.

AiS IV　　Felix von Luschan and Gustav Jacoby. 1911. *Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli, Vol. 4.* Berlin: Georg Reimer.

AiS V　　Felix von Luschan and Walter Andrae. 1943. *Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli, Vol. 5. Die Kleinfunde von Sendschirli.* Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co.

KAI　　Herbert Donner and Wolfgang Röllig. 1961–1964. *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften 1–3.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

RIMA 2　A. Kirk Grayson. 1991. *The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods, Vol. 2. Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC, 1* (1114–859 BC). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

RIMA 3　A. Kirk Grayson. 1996. *The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods, Vol. 3. Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC, 2* (858–745 BC). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

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