



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

The Stele of Sargon II at Kition: Abandonment or Appropriation

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Abstract

Around 707 BCE, a stele depicting the Assyrian king Sargon II (721-705) was erected on the island of Cyprus. An example of a known type of royal Assyrian monument set up around the empire, this stele is the farthest distant from the Assyrian core in northern Iraq. It has been taken as evidence for the island's asymmetrical relationship to the Assyrian empire. Its inscription details an account during which the seven kings of the land of "Yadnana" or Cyprus brought tribute to Sargon II as an act of submission, after which the stele was erected to commemorate the occasion. According to the inscription, the monument was intended to be erected above the city-kingdom of Kition on Mt. Ba'al-harri (possibly Mt. Stavrovouni). However, the monument was excavated in 1844 in Kition proper, near a sanctuary dedicated to the Phoenician goddess Astarte. This paper considers how the people of Kition may have appropriated the monument to symbolize a new era in diplomatic relations that would have lent power to the city-kingdom within the contentious geopolitical landscape of Iron Age Cyprus.

Keywords

Sargon II, Assyria, Cyprus, Stele, appropriation

Session

4. The materiality of inscribed and figurative objects

Workshop

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Type of paper

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