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PAGES: 203-211

ORIGINAL PDF URL: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/2158992>

## TWO YEARS OF EXCAVATIONS AT ARSLANTEPE (MALATYA)

Dr. ALBA PALMIERI

The excavations at Arslantepe carried out by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Eastern Anatolia, sponsored by the University of Rome, Istituto di Paletnologia, with the financial support of CNR and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were continued during the years 1969 and 1970. The staff included prof. Salvatore M. Puglisi, director of the Mission, doct. Alba Palmieri, vice-director, doct. Isabelle Caneva, doct. Paolo Marassini, doct. Alberto Palmieri, Miss Silvia Ferranti, Mr. Renato Medini, Mr. Cesare Placidi and Mr. Luciano Narisi. Doct. Yüksel Taş was in charge, for the year 1969, as representative of the Department of Antiquities of the Turkish Government and doct. Ahmet Bal for the year 1970. Both were very helpful to the Mission and contributed largely to the general organization of the work.

During the campaigns 1969 and 1970 investigations were continued in the northern slopes of the hüyük, in the area partially excavated in 1968 (A. Palmieri, *Excavations at Arslantepe, Malatya*, 1968, *Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi* XVIII, 1, 1969) and further data were acquired concerning the new-recognized periods V, VI and VII in the stratigraphy of Arslantepe (A. Palmieri, *Recenti dati sulla stratigrafia di Arslantepe*, Origini III, 1969).

The observations carried out on the level Vb (a fire level) made clear the character of stone and mud-brick walls recognized in 1968 together with a large heap of soil and fragments of clay rock

apparently related to the walls. More parts of the same structures were indeed discovered (figs. 1 and 2) which made possible the identification of the complex as a town gate flanked by two buildings each provided with two rooms; on both sides of the road underground channels occur, built with slabs for drainage purpose (see tentative reconstruction in fig. 3). The plan of the gate being identical to of level IOT at Alişar (H. H. von der Osten, the Alişar Hüyük, seasons of 1930-32, fig. 83) gives important evidence of uniformity of architectural conceptions in addition to other cultural affinities during the formative period of the Hittite power. Around the structures of the gate, stone wall must have been built in order to contain the accumulation of soil and pieces of clay rock in which the gate is placed. This accumulation, standing up to 5 mt., clearly reveals itself as remains of an embankment surrounding the town. Owing to the alternation of the slopes of the hüyük in this area due to the removal of soil effected in the past, it is impossible at the moment to establish what kind of face the embankment would originally have shown.

At the time that a great fire destroyed the structures of the gate, they had been already re-used for domestic purpose, as shown by the discovery of several pots and one horseshoe-shaped hearth. Moreover, three rooms close to the south-western corner of the gate proved to have been made out by digging a cavity in the embankment during the same

phase of re-utilization of the gate (figs. 4 and 5). The three rooms, nearly rectangular in plan, were also burnt; they were separated by mud and stone walls covered with plaster, apparently without doors. The middle room was provided with clay features, i.e. a double horseshoe hearth close to a kind of bin and a fire-screen.

More pots, in addition to those already known, confirm that the level belongs to the Middle Bronze Age. Besides large storage jars, hydriai, cooking-pots and one funnel found in 1968, the wheel-made pottery of level Vb now include jugs with trefoil-mouths, a bowl with grooved and perforated pedestal (fig. 6) and a two-handled bowl ornamented with knob and crescent in relief (fig. 7), a decorative motif known at Kültepe on some pottery from Karum Ib (K. Emre, *The pottery of the Assyrian Colony Period*, Anatolia VII, 1963, fig. 12, kt. e/k100) and at a site so far in the west as Beycesultan in the level V (S. Lloyd and J. Mellaart, *Beycesultan II*, London 1965, p. 88, fig. P. 3, 13). The decoration of the pottery from level Vb consists mainly of grooves and ribs, but a peculiar class of painted pottery, although represented by few specimens, also occur. To that class belongs a fragment of two-handled hydria with red-painted checkboard design and a globular jar with everted neck and red-band decoration (fig. 8).

The embankment of level Vb, as it is possible to observe in different points of its extension, stands upon a black thin stratum, 1-2 cm. thick, which probably represents a period of abandon of the hüyük starting at the end of the Early Bronze Age.

The latest phases of the E.B.A. at Arslantepe are represented by the levels of period VI and are characterized by typical East-Anatolian black-burnished ware and by peculiar painted pottery well-known in the Malatya-Elâzığ area (C.A. Burney, *Eastern Anatolia in the Chalco-*

*lithic and Early Bronze Age*, *Aan natoli Studies VIII*, 1958, p. 195 ss; and 205 ss.). This aspect can be exactly compared with that of Norşun-Tepe, near Elâzığ (H. Hauptmann, *Die Grabungen auf dem Norşun-Tepe* 1969, *Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi XVIII*, 2, 1969, p. 113, fig. 8-9; Id., *Norşuntepe*, *Anatolica III*, 1969-1970, p. 31, fig. 7). A remarkable object has been found in one of the levels belonging to period VI: it is an incomplete clay idol which attests an ideology shown in the same age by various Anatolian cultures.

Few architectural remains could be referred to period VI; on the contrary, in the levels below of period VII (fig. 10) houses built of mud-bricks, sometimes with stone foundations, consisting of one or more rectangular rooms have been found. A characteristic architectural unity is represented by front- and main room. The walls are often covered by white plaster showing in some cases traces of red and black paint. One of the walls is partially decorated with a geometric pattern (fig. 11). Round-planned ovens are usual in period VII.

The pottery, mostly wheel-made, shows close affinities with that belonging to phase F of the Amuq and to related aspects of Syria, Cilicia and Northern Mesopotamia.

Therefore, a chronological gap seems to exist between periods VII and VI at Arslantepe, as far as we can see at the present moment.

Below the various floors of period VII eith burials (simple inhumation) have been found, with skeletons usually laying on the right side, the head facing East and having arms and legs flexed. In one case it is attested the use of red ochre which evidently covered the body. Furniture frequently appeared, consisting both of pottery and beads. Burial n: 1 (fig. 12) was supplied with shells, stone and bone beads (fig. 13) and with a spool-shaped seal (fig. 14) similar to a specimen from

the Amuq (R. J. and L. S. Braidwood, *Excavations in the Plain of Antioch*, Chicago 1960, p. 330, fig. 253, 6).

Further elements such as a stone "stud" (see R. J. and L. S. Braidwood, *op. cit.*, p. 254, fig. 192), a terracotta object (fig. 15) of the type known as "hut symbol" at Tepe Gawra (A.J. Tobler, *Excavations at Tepe Gawra II*, Phila-

delphia 1950, p. 171, Pl. LXXXVI) and recalling the "spectacle idols" from Tell Brak (M. E. L. Mallowan, *Excavations at Brak and Chagar Bazar*, Iraq IX, 1, 1947, Pl. XXV-XXVI), a fragment of a stone mace-head and a marble pendant figuring a lion (fig. 16), emphasize the Syro-Mesopotamian affinities of the period VII at Arslantepe.

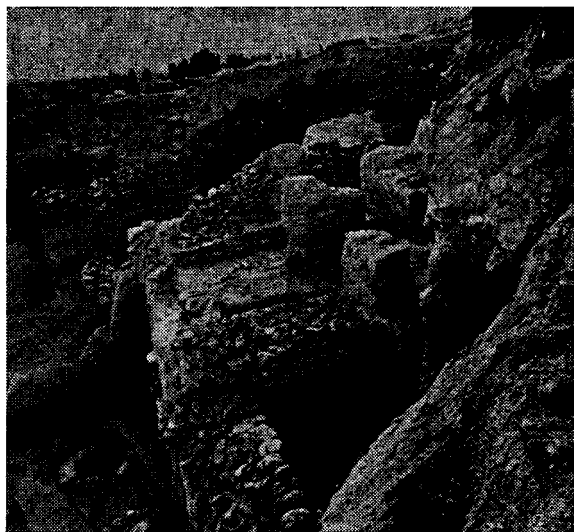


Fig. 1

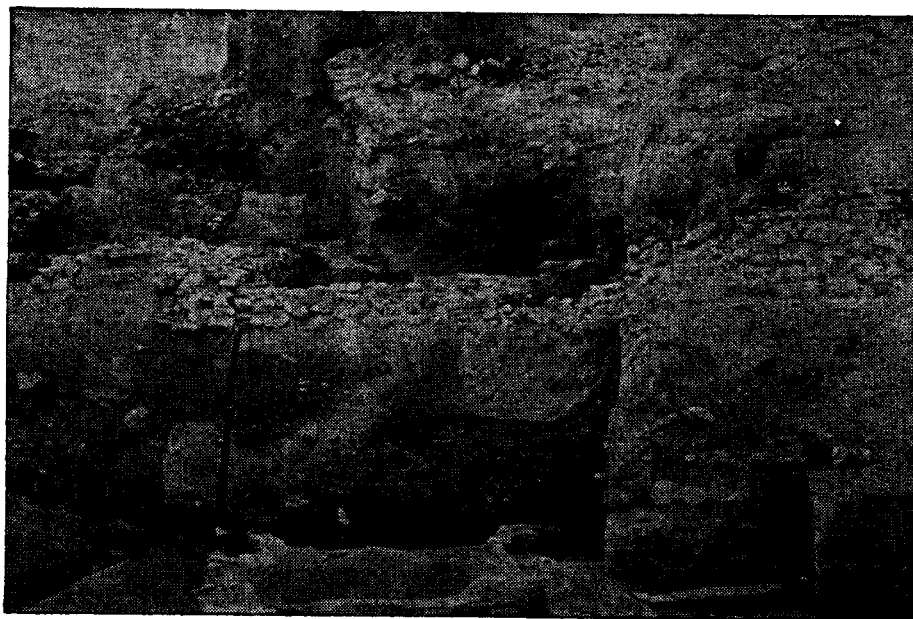


Fig. 2

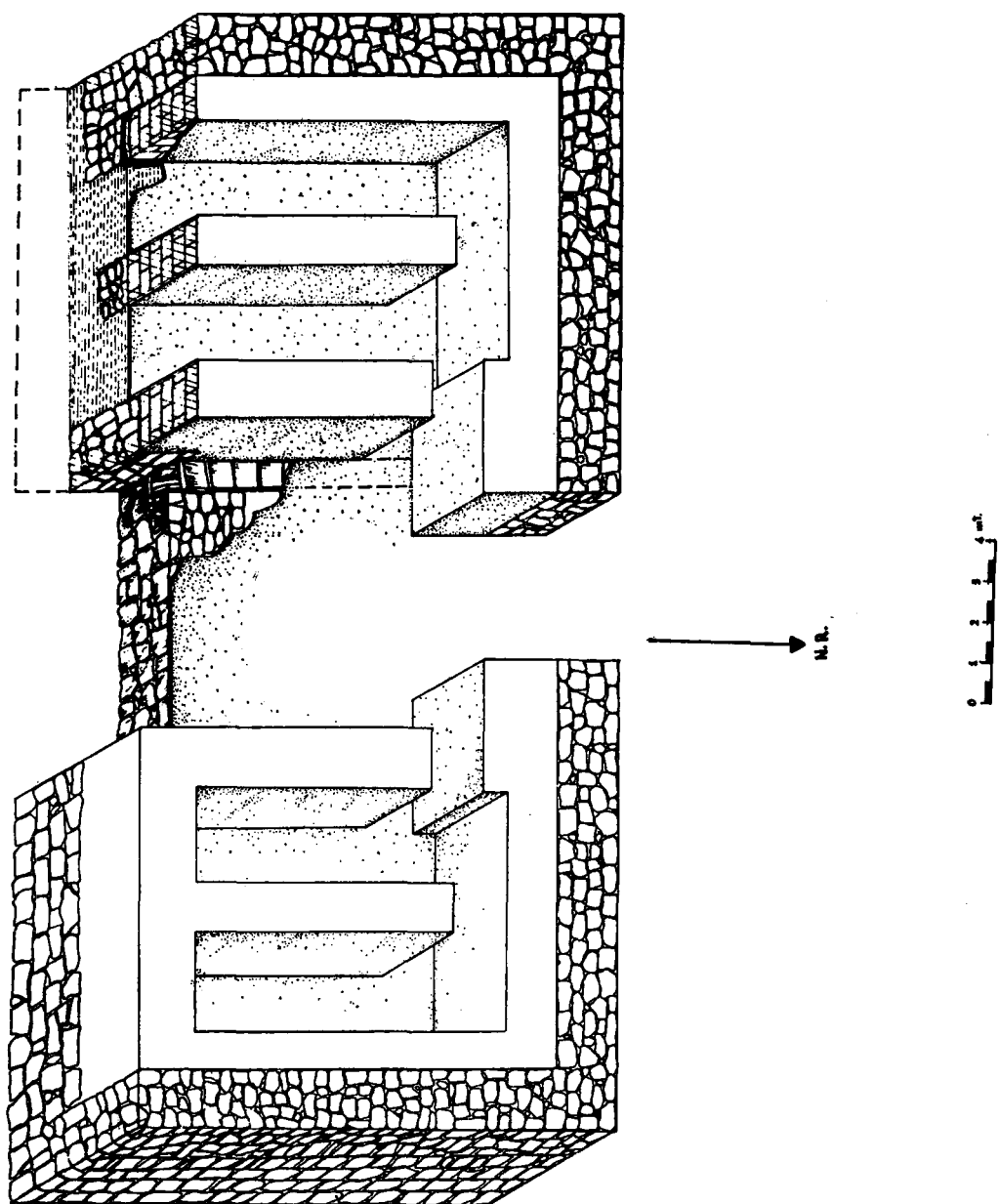


Fig. 4

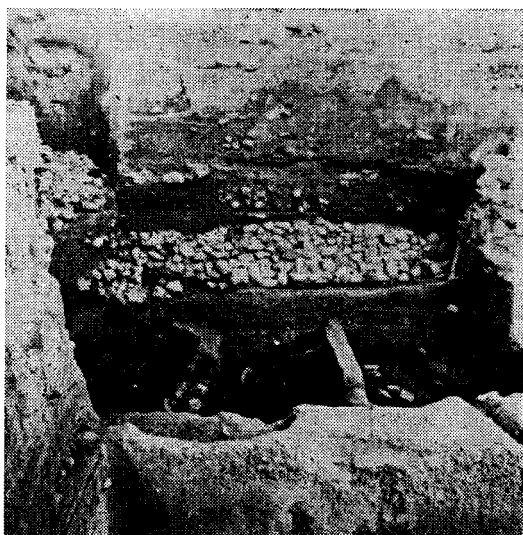


Fig. 5

Fig. 6



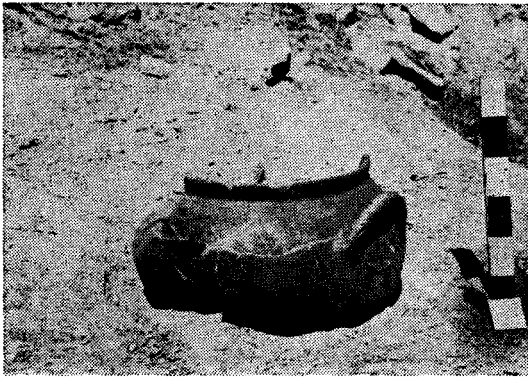


Fig. 7

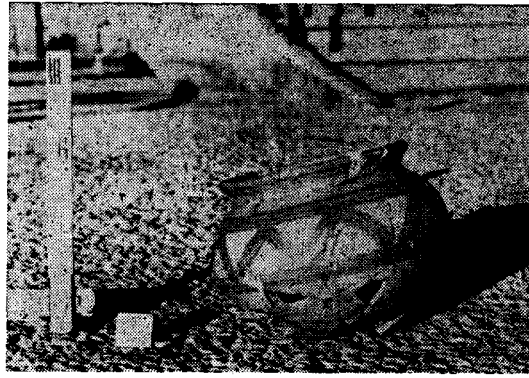


Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



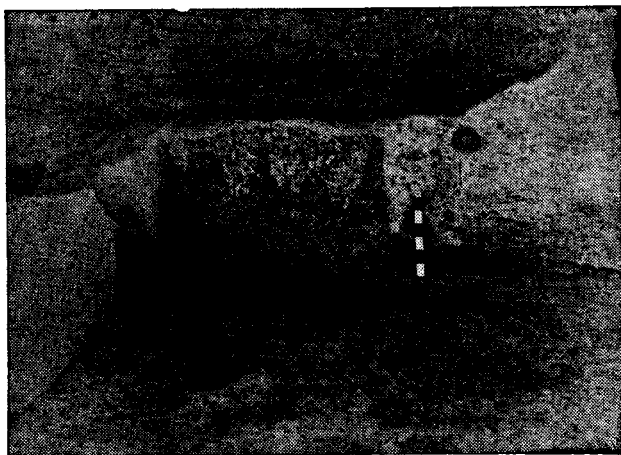


Fig. 11



Fig. 12

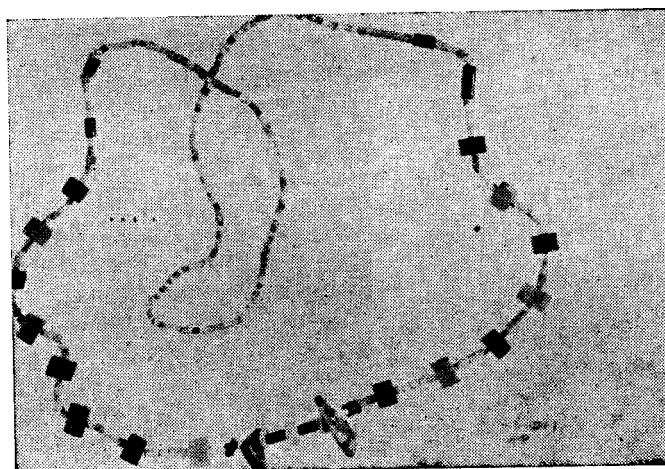


Fig. 13

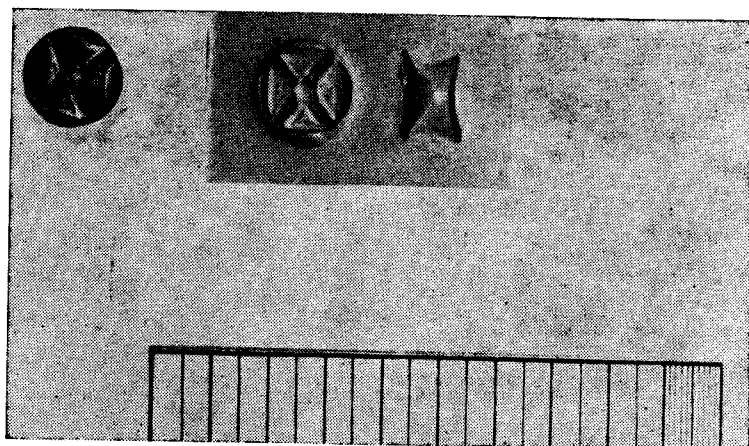


Fig. 14

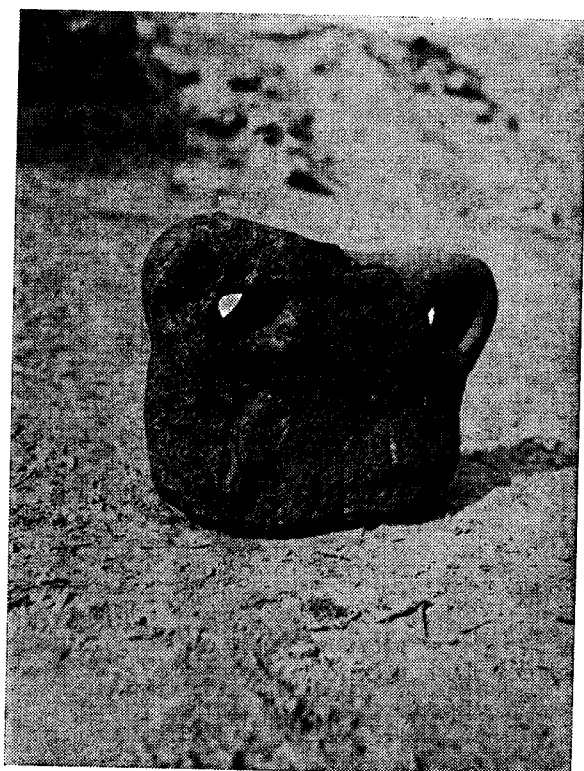


Fig. 15

Fig. 16

