SYMPOSIUM I

URARTIANS

A CIVILIZATION IN THE EASTERN ANATOLIA

RHM
REZAN HAS MUSEUM

URARTIANS: A Civilization in the Eastern Anatolia
The Proceedings of the 1st International Symposium held at İstanbul in 13-15 October, 2014.

1st Edition, April 2018, Printed 1000 copies

This book has been prepared for the "Urartians: A Civilization in the Eastern Anatolia The Proceedings of the 1st International Symposium" held at Rezan Has Museum on 13-15 October, 2014.

ISBN:.....

© Rezan Has Museum, Kadir Has Cad., Cibali, 34083 www.rhm.org.tr

Texts
Prof. Dr. Kemalettin Köroğlu
Doç. Dr. Rafet Çavuşoğlu
Mehmet Ayrancı

Coordinator
Zeynep Çulha

Restoration and Conservation Team
Mehmet Ayrancı
Irmak Güneş Yüceil
Dilek Dil

Translation
Günşıl Öncü

Photographs
Reyhan Ekşi (www. randsagency.net)
Ulaş Tosun

Photography Assistant
İzzet Akgün

Color Separation
Mustafa Güldağ

Graphic Design and Coordination
Selen Baycan Patır (kalembiti d&e)
Fatih Gül (We Creative)

Color Separation and Printing
MAS Matbaacılık A.Ş.
Hamidiye Mah. Soğuksu Cad. No. 3
34408, Kağıthane-İstanbul
(Sertifika no. Certificate no. ??????)

SYMPOSIUM I

URARTIANS

A CIVILIZATION IN THE EASTERN ANATOLIA

Editors:
Altan Çilingiroğlu-Kemalettin Köroğlu
Zeynep Çulha-Günşıl Öncü

The Proceedings of the 1st International Symposium held at İstanbul 13-15 October, 2014

RHM
REZAN HAS MUSEUM

Contents

Introduction

Ahu Has

Since the day of its founding, our Museum has upheld its mission and worked effortlessly to preserve, remember, and transmit to future generations the assets and values of our land, which has housed countless civilizations throughout history. Comprised of 1100 pieces of jewelry and belts from the Urartu period, our main collection not only reflect the rich intellectual repertoire of Urartian masters, but also demonstrates that the Urartians were incomparably superior to contemporaneous civilizations, particularly in terms of iconography. In 2014, we organized an international symposium in order to understand and appreciate the creators of these works that have been brought down to us after a journey of thousands of years and to open the door to the undiscovered treasures of this amazing civilization in light of new archaeological studies.

I am thrilled to share with you the publication of the symposium entitled, “Urartians: A Civilization in Eastern Anatolia” we brought to life as Rezan Has museum on October 13-15, 2014. Designed with a view to introduce studies on the Urartian period to larger audiences and to encourage the work of young Urartu researchers, the symposium was carried out over three days with 21 participants.

I would like to extend my appreciation and respects to our editors, members of the Symposium Academic Advisory Board, all academics who shared their invaluable ideas with us through their papers, and to all of our colleagues for their patient commitment and dedicated work in bringing both the symposium and this publication to life.

Foreword

Editors
Prof. Altan Çilingiroğlu - Prof. Kemalettin Köroğlu

The Urartians produced unique and innovative solutions and reigned for nearly 250 years in Eastern Anatolia and environs, a considerably difficult region to administer and supervise. Separated by deep valleys and high mountain ranges, the geographic units were home to semi-nomadic groups/tribes, most of which were engaged in animal husbandry. The Urartians succeeded in uniting these groups under a state organization and develop irrigated farming. They founded cities with citadels and new settlements for the public. They administered the rich mines in the region. With the help of iron tools, they exceeded boundaries in stone masonry and the shaping of rocks. They produced characteristic wares for daily life and luxury goods for the elite class. In the important settlements they built around the region, the scribes systematically taught locals how to read and write. Cuneiform was used for the first time in Eastern Anatolia during this period. Recognized as Urartian today and most unfortunately acquired through illegal excavations, many works of this kind are displayed in almost all the leading museums across the world.

Although they have not reached the anticipated level yet, studies on Urartians in Turkey and abroad are still underway. The number of books and articles written on Eastern Anatolia and the Urartians since the 19th century, the period in which research on this civilization began, has reached nearly five thousand today. Archaeological excavations and restoration works, on the other hand, are currently underway in the capital city Van (Tushpa), Ayanis (Rusahinili), Erzincan Altıntepe and Çavuştepe (Sardurihinili). Surveys also yield new fortresses and other Urartian ruins that have never been discovered before. However, it is quite difficult to say that these studies are sufficient to fully understand this civilization with all its aspects. The roundtable discussion and symposiums on finds discovered in excavations should be organized on a regular basis. In that regards, we must note that the "Anatolian Iron Ages" conventions organized seven times between 1987 and 2012 in Turkey, which we hope will be continued in the upcoming years, have contributed significantly towards these studies.

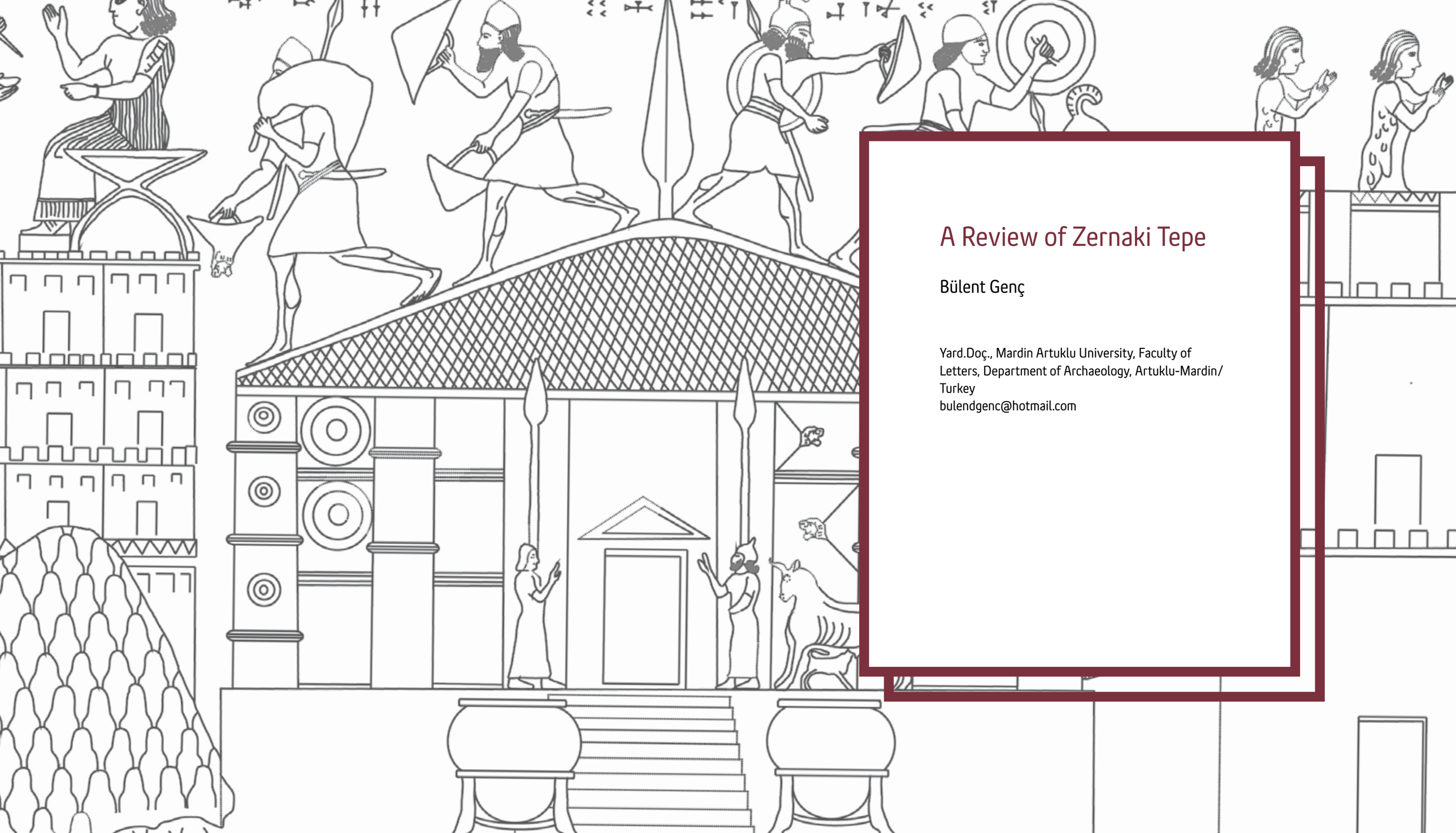
The international symposium entitled, "Urartians: A Civilisation in Eastern Anatolia" held on October 13-15, 2014 in Istanbul was organized by Rezan Has Museum. After the Museum of Van, Rezan Has Museum holds the second largest Urartu collection comprised largely of metal works and supports efforts to publish and bring to light these works.

"Urartians: A Civilisation in the Eastern Anatolia" was organized with the objective of bringing together Urartu specialists, discuss new finds from recent excavations and surveys, and increase awareness on cultural inheritance by presenting them to the academic world through publications. In line with this vision, 21 papers were discussed and 16 of these were published in the conference hall of Kadir Has University between October 13 and 15, 2014.

In creating the symposium book, the most widely recognized and accepted forms were opted in terms of places and terminology used in the articles. However, it should be noted that it is rather difficult to establish a single common language on this subject, both in Turkish and in English. A certain degree of consistency was maintained as much as possible in references and in the bibliography.

Acknowledgements

We are indebted to Rezan Has Museum Advisory Board Chair Ahu Has for her support in the organization of the symposium and the publishing of the book. We are also thankful to Kadir Has University president Mustafa Aydın for letting use the space for the symposium. Without their support, this book could never have come to life. We would also like to extend our thanks to Assistant Professor Ali Çiftçi for his contributions to the preparation of the book.



A Review of Zernaki Tepe

Bülent Genç

Yard.Doç., Mardin Artuklu University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Archaeology, Artuklu-Mardin/ Turkey
bulendgenc@hotmail.com

A Review of Zernaki Tepe

Bülent Genç

Özet

Van Gölü'nün kuzey kıyısında ve Erciş ilçesinin hemen kuzeyinde yer alan Zernaki Tepe/Zırnaqol, yaklaşık 2,5 km. uzunluğunda ve 1,5 km. genişliğinde kireçtaşından oluşan bir tepe üzerinde kurulmuştur. Özellikle ızgara planlı tasarımıyla dikkati çeken bu yerleşim, 19. yüzyılın ilk yarısından itibaren çeşitli araştırmacılar ve gezginler tarafından incelenmiş, birçok yayın ve rapora konu olmuş ve genellikle Urartular ile ilişkilendirilmiştir.

Önceden tasarlanmış ızgara planlı sokakları ve evleriyle bu yerleşimin ağırlıklı olarak Urartularla bağdaştırılması nereden kaynaklanmaktadır? Urartu başkenti Tuşpa'da dahi örneğine rastlanmayan ızgara planlı kent modeli gerçekte hangi dönemde inşa edilmiş olabilir?

Bu makale yukarıdaki sorular çerçevesinde Zernaki Tepe'nin literatürde nasıl değerlendirildiğine ve bu değerlendirmelerin sonraki incelemeleri nasıl etkilediğine odaklanmaktadır. Zernaki Tepe'nin inşa sistemi, taş-duvar işçiliği ve sitadelde yer alan duvarların görülebilen kısımlarındaki bazalt blokların birbirine kırlangıçkuyruğu şeklindeki kenetlerle tutturulması gibi karakteristik özellikleri ele alınarak yerleşimin dönemi anlaşılmaya çalışılmaktadır. Bu kapsamda Zernaki Tepe'de uygulanan ızgara plan ve inşa tekniğinin Urartu merkezleri ve sitadellerinde benzerlerinin olup olmadığı da sorgulanmaktadır. Yerleşimde yüzeyden görülebilen kalıntıların Urartu sonrasına ilişkin merkezlerle karşılaştırılmakta, özellikle Armavir'deki Hellenistik yapı katından elde edilen veriler ve kenetlerin Zernaki Tepe'deki kenet tipi ve inşa sistemiyle benzerliği üzerinde durulmaktadır.

Early Reports and Subsequent Studies

Zernaki Tepe was included in the reports of numerous travelers visiting the area from the first half of the 19th century onwards. Schulz was one of the first to visit Zernaki Tepe (Schulz 1840: 322). Schulz locates the settlement to the east of Akantz, near Haydar Bey road. Later, Cuinet defines the hilly terrain of Zernaki Tepe as a wide plateau and speaks of the presence of an ancient city named Zernak with wide roads intersecting at right angles (Cuinet 1892: 710–711).

Today, references to Zernaki Tepe in the literature often begin with Lynch. Yet Lynch is known to have complained about his lack of opportunity to study the area known as Zernak, Zerin or Zernişan. Lynch relates that during the time he spent in Akantz, Belck and Lehmann visited him, brought along some bronze objects, one of which depicted a serpent, whereas the other contained cuneiform characters. He notes that these finds were discovered by the locals among the Zernak ruins (Lynch 1901: 28). Belck states that these finds may have come from another settlement named Sirnakar, which was possibly near Erciş (Belck - Lehmann-Haupt 1898: 591) (Fig. 1).

Towards the late 1950s, Zernaki Tepe was studied once again through the surface research of Burney, who published detailed reports of his work. Noting that Zernaki Tepe has a neat grid plan urban design, Burney (Burney 1957: 49–50) observes that the construction of the settlement may not have been completed. He associates the lack of earthenware on the surface with this observation. Burney notes that among the few earthenware he collected are red, wheel-made Urartian objects.

Burney offers an idea on how the plan of Zernaki Tepe was conceived: Each architectural unit in Zernaki Tepe is designed as a square. The dimensions of each unit vary between 35 and 37 m. depending on the uneven structure of the terrain. Two main streets intersect at the center of the settlement (Burney - Lawson 1960: 186; Lampl 1968: 113; Sevin 1997: 173). The walls are between 1.40 and 1.50 m. There are four houses in each block. Each house has a spacious living area. The thickness of the walls suggests that there may have been an upper storey (Burney 1957: 49; Burney - Lawson 1960: 186; Nylander 1965–66: 150; Lampl 1968: 113; Zimansky 1985: 65). Similar to Burney, Lampl also believes that Zernaki Tepe should be dated to the Urartu period (Lampl 1968: 113). Based on Sargon II's account, Nylander argues that Zernaki Tepe was an important Urartu settlement with a grid plan possibly inspired by Assyrian military architecture (Nylander 1965–66: 153–154) (Fig. 2-3).

It is estimated that seven thousand or twice as many people may have lived in Zernaki Tepe. The only water source is in the skirts of the hill and it is quite difficult to transport water from here to the settlement (Burney - Lawson 1960: 188).

Fig. 1 Zernaki Tepe

Fig. 2 Grid plan
settlement and Erciş

Fig. 3 View of Zernaki
Tepe from the North

Sevin regards the settlement in two parts: The citadel and the grid-plan settlement. He also notes that the citadel is distinct in terms of its layout. The presence of black basalt blocks with russet used in certain walls supports this view. Plaster fragments made of limestone are also observed here (Sevin 1997: 173–174). Here, Sevin found several Urartian earthenware fragments with red slips and several fragments he dates to the Late Iron Age (Burney - Lawson 1960: 186) (Sevin 1997: 174). Sevin has noted that the masonry in Zernaki Tepe and the nogging used in stone walls are not typically Urartian. The dovetail brackets used in the basalt blocks of the citadel have no counterparts in Urartu (Nylander 1970). Furthermore, the presence of dovetail brackets in certain blocks suggests that the citadel may belong to the post-Urartu period (Sevin 1997: 175) (Fig. 4–5).

In dating Zernaki Tepe, Sevin refers to the Roman-Sassanid relations in 3rd century AD. He reminds readers that after capturing 70,000 Roman legionaries, King Shapur I of the Sassanian Empire had settled them in planned cities. He thus suggests that Zernaki Tepe may be one of the cities built by Shapur I (Sevin 1997: 176). Today, a very limited number of earthenware fragments are encountered on the surface in Zernaki Tepe. It is difficult to date the settlement to the Urartu period based on several ceramics with red slips (Genç 2012: 85–86).

As mentioned earlier, the remains in Zernaki Tepe are spread across a vast area of 230-240 hectares. Certain parts of this vast settlement may have been inhabited at different times. Assessments that the settlement was left without being entirely completed have no substantial basis. The surviving mudbrick walls with measurable dimensions may be proof that a superstructure was built. Had this area comprised of stone foundations and mudbrick buildings not been destroyed by construction equipment, it would have greatly contributed towards a better understanding of Zernaki Tepe .

Fig. 4 Dovetail clamps on the basalt blocks

Fig. 5 Dovetail clamps on the basalt blocks

Fig. 6 Remains in Döşkaya-Dučgagi

Fig. 7 Area destroyed by work machines in the citadel

Fig. 8 Remaining section of the mudbrick walls

Çilingiroğlu argues that the data on the settlement's connection with the Achaemenid is incomplete, that the walls directly feature Urartian characteristics, and that they should be dated to the reign of Rusa II (son of Arghisti). Çilingiroğlu also embraces the idea that it may have not ever been completed. Çevik shares Çilingiroğlu's view as well (Çevik 2013: 76).

However, unlike Zernaki Tepe, dovetail is not used to connect stones in Urartian centers such as Van Fortress, Aznavurtepe, Anzaf, Arin-berd, Çavuştepe, Ayanis, Karmir-blur, Kef Kalesi, and Bastam. Conversely, dovetail is quite common in Zernaki Tepe. The length, width, and depth of the brackets are 10 – 13 cm., 4–9 cm., and 8–9 cm., respectively. In terms of plan type, none of the Urartian settlements demonstrate a grid-system.

The details observed in Zernaki Tepe ruins can also be compared with the settlements from the Persian Era. In Achaemenid architecture, stone blocks are attached with metal connectors (Fig. 10). Horizontal connections are made with iron and lead clamps. Most of the Achaemenid clamps are derived from the ancient dovetail form (Nylander 1970: 42-43) and closely resemble the Zernaki Tepe connectors in terms of size and type (Fig. 11–12).

In the Persepolis palace, the construction of which began during the reign of Darius, and in some of the basalt blocks used for the floor to the west of the apadana, as well as is Pasargat, we find the use of dovetail clamps (Nylander 1965-66: 140, 143-145, Fig. 1). The hook-shaped connectors, on the other hand, are encountered on some of the columns. Moreover, the pedestal of an ibex sculpture in Persepolis contains the sockets for the metal dovetail clamps (Kawami 1986: 259–267). Similar clamps can also be seen on some of the reliefs and columns in Persepolis.

Fig. 10 Clamp examples from Persepolis.

The clamps system, which appears to have been utilized for an extended period of time, remained in use after the Persians as well. The clamps system seen in the blocks of the Tigranakert citadel dated to the Hellenistic and post-Hellenistic period strongly resembles the clamps in Zernaki Tepe (Petrosyan - Muradyan 2012: 228, Fig. 9) (Kroll 2012: 220).

Figs. 11-12 Clamps demonstrating the connection of blocks in Persepolis

Fig. 9 Stone and brick walls created by mortar from Khosrow's palace in Kermanşah

The excavations conducted on the Urartian temple courtyard at Armavir in 2011 have revealed a building stratum from the Hellenistic period. The blocks are connected by "dovetail" clamps used widely during the Hellenistic period (Figs. 13–14).

Conclusion

It appears difficult to consider Zernaki Tepe as an area that was inhabited in a single period. It must have been inhabited during a number of periods following the Urartians. Beginning with Burney and often repeated by a number of researchers, the hypotheses that it was some mysterious settlement that had never been completed are merely based on consecutive and repetitive observations. The remains of the mudbrick walls demolished by work machines can still be observed at the citadel and thus render obsolete the argument that the settlement was never completed. The rampart walls surrounding the citadel also point to the continuity in this settlement. The mudbrick remains that appear to have been discovered in the soil currently used as a field also strengthens this assessment.

Figs. 13-14 Clamps demonstrating the connection of blocks in Armavir (M.Badalyan)

It is difficult to date Zernaki Tepe to the Sassanid Era. The mortar and brick we know existed in Sassanid architecture is not present in Zernaki Tepe. In that case, can we claim that the buildings in Zernaki Tepe do not contain mortar? Naturally, archaeological excavations are required to provide a definite answer to this question. However, the absence of mortar in the area in question can still be used as a clue.

The grid plan design and clamp system of Zernaki Tepe point to a different culture in the region. We believe that such implementations may belong to the Persian period and afterwards and that the Hellenistic period holds more evidence in that respect. Particularly the data obtained from the Hellenistic building stratum in Armavir and the resemblance of the clamp type and construction system to their counterparts in Zernaki Tepe constitute one of the premises of our assessment.

REFERENCES

Belck, W., Lehmann-Haupt, C. F.
1898 "Entdeckungen in Armenien", Zeitschrift für Ethnologie (Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft fur Anthropologie, Ethnologie, und Urgeschichte) XXX: 568–591.

Burney, C. A.
1957 "Urartian Fortresses and Towns in the Van Region", Anatolian Studies 7: 37–53.

Burney, C. A., Lawson, G. R. J.
1960 "Measured Plans of Urartian Fortresses", Anatolian Studies 10: 177–196.

Cuinet, V.
1892 La Turquie d'Asie: géographie administrative, statistique, descriptive et raisonnée de chaque province de l'Asie-Mineure., Paris: Leroux.

Çevik, Ö.
2013 "An Intervening Phenomenon in a Non-Urban Environment: Iron Age Cities in Eastern Anatolia", Ancient Near Eastern Studies 40/Leuven-Paris-Walpole: 67–80.

Genç, B.
2012 "Urartu Yerleşmesi Olarak Bilinen Kuzeybatı İran'dan Notlar: Ducgagi, Gushchi, Kazımbaşı, Evoğlu", Toplumsal Tarih 221: 84–89.

Kawami, T.
1986 "Greek Art and Persian Taste: Some Animal Sculptures from Persepolis", American Journal of Archaeology 90: 259–267.

Kroll, S.
2012 "Ancient Armenian sites in Armenia and north-western Iran: Hellenistic period", P. Avetisyan, A. Bobokhyan (eds.), Archaeology of Armenia in Regional Context: Proceedings of the International Conference dedicated to the 50th Anniversary of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography Held on September 15-17, 2009 in Yerevan, Gitutyun, Yerevan: 219-222.

Lampl, P.
1968 Cities and Planning in the Ancient Near East, London: Studio Vista.

Lynch, H. F. B.
1901 Armenia Travels and Studies II: London, New York, Longmans, Green, and Co.

Nylander, C.
1965–66 "Remarks on the Urartian Acropolis at Zernaki Tepe", Orientalia Suecana 14–15: 141–154.

Nylander, C.
1970 Ionians in Pasargadae: Studies in Old Persian Architecture: Uppsala, Universitetet, Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell (distr.).

Petrosyan, L., Muradyan, F.
2012 "Excavations of the cemetery of Aghavnatun: Preliminary results", P. Avetisyan, A. Bobokhyan

(eds.), Archaeology of Armenia in Regional Context: Proceedings of the International Conference dedicated to the 50th Anniversary of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Held on September 15–17, 2009 in Yerevan, Gitutyun, Yerevan: 126–132.

Schulz, F. É.
1840 "Memoire: Sur le lac de Van et ses environs", Journal Asiatique 9/3: 257–323.

Sevin, V.
1997 "Van/Zernaki Tepe: On the Urartian Grid Plan Once Again", Anatolica 23: 173–180.

Zimansky, P. E.
1985 Ecology and Empire: The structure of the Urartian State, Chicago: The Oriental Institute Press.