

An Urartian Bronze Statue(?) from Ayanis Fortress

Oğuz Aras – Ardahan University, Ardahan/Türkiye
oguzaras@ardahan.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0001-9291-1597

[This study examines two bronze fragments unearthed from the Ayanis Fortress, a prominent site of the Urartian Kingdom, situated near Lake Van in Eastern Anatolia. The fortress was built by King Rusa, son of Argishti, between 685 and 650 BCE, and reflects the architectural and religious sophistication of the Urartian period. The Temple of Haldi within the fortress features unique elements such as onyx-covered floors, intricate mythological motifs, and a prominent podium whose function remains debated. The fragments, discovered in the temple's storage rooms, exhibit floral and rosette decorations comparable to artifacts from other Urartian sites like Toprakkale. Technical analyses indicate the use of the lost-wax casting technique, suggesting the fragments belong to a three-dimensional portable bronze sculpture, possibly about 60 cm in height. This hypothesis is consistent with the theory that the podium may have supported a cult statue used in religious ceremonies. Despite the absence of a complete statue, the fragments provide critical insights into Urartian religious practices, artistic traditions, and the symbolic role of portable statues in rituals.]

Keywords: Urartu, Temple, God, Podium, Statue.

1. Introduction: Urartian Kingdom and Ayanis City

The Urartian State emerged as a powerful centralized kingdom in the mountainous region of Eastern Anatolia around the mid-9th century BC. This was a distinct development from the urban centres of Mesopotamia. The Urartian kings were aware of the potential of the fertile plains for agriculture and the rich pastures for livestock, as well as the strategic importance of the mountains. They established their state around Lake Van, with Tuşpa as its capital. The 9th-century BC saw the Urartian Kingdom unify the mountainous region through diplomatic means, possibly supplemented by military force, thereby bringing diverse rulers and communities under a single authority while preserving the existing economic foundation. The implementation of reforms aimed at strengthening this foundation is indicative of a growing kingdom.

During its most expansive phase, the kingdom's dominion encompassed the Euphrates River in the west, Lake Urmia in the southeast, the Erzurum-Kars plateau in the north, and Lake Sevan in the northeast (Salvini 2006: 24-25). Over a period of three centuries, Urartian kings reigned across this challenging terrain, erecting imposing castles, outer cities, flourishing vineyards and gardens, and impressive dams to solidify their central authority (Çilingiroğlu 1997: 4-8; Salvini 2006: 24-25; Köroğlu 2011:12). Five of these castles were built by Rusa, son of Argishti, who is considered

the last great king of the kingdom. Three of the five great castles constructed under Rusa's rule (Ayanis, Kef, and Toprakkale) are situated on the shores of Lake Van, while the remaining two (Bastam and Karmir-Blur) are located within the Aras River basin, a region of significant political and cultural importance within the kingdom's domain. Undoubtedly, the most renowned of the castles built by Rusa is Ayanis Castle, which has been excavated for over 35 years (Çilingiroğlu/Salvini: 2001; Işıklı/Akın Aras: 2021) (fig.1).

Ayanis city, where the source materials for this article were found, was built on a natural rocky hill near the village, today called Ayanis, on the eastern shore of Lake Van, 38 km north of Tuşpa, the capital of the kingdom (Çilingiroğlu 2012:338). Written evidence and dendrochronological data indicate that the city was constructed by Rusa, son of Argishti, between 685 and 653/650 BC (Manning et al. 2011: 1-3; Akın Aras/Sezer 2023: 282).

Excavations at Ayanis Castle, which have been ongoing since 1989, have resulted in the discovery of a substantial and varied inventory reflective(?) of the range of Urartian material culture. Archaeological investigations centred on two primary areas – the citadel and the outer city – have unearthed a diverse array of structures, including a temple area, domestic spaces, a “Pillared Hall”, a monumental gate, east and west storage rooms, the south, north, east, and west fortification walls, and a portion of the sprawling 80-hectare outer city extending eastward from the citadel (Çilingiroğlu/Işıklı 2014: 310) (fig.2). The most remarkable of these building groups is undoubtedly the Temple Complex, including the Temple of Haldi, where the bronze statue fragments that are the subject of this article were discovered.

Despite the extensive artistic legacy of the Kingdom of Urartu, which includes numerous works of art, it is noteworthy that, in contrast to its contemporaries, particularly the Late Hittite and Assyrian civilisations, it exhibited a relative paucity in the production of sculptures and figurines (van Loon 1966; Akurgal 1968; Azarpay 1968; Piotrovsky 1970; Wartke 1993; Seidl 2004; Konyar 2022). Nevertheless, examples of Urartian sculptures and figurines made of metal and stone have been documented (Akurgal 1968; Derin/Saglamtimur 1999: 22; Sevin 1993: 565; Işıklı/Aras 2016; Işıklı/Özdemir 2019). There is evidence of ivory sculptures (Özgüç 1969: 38; Barnett 1950: 53; Piotrovsky 1967: 58) and clay (Piotrovsky 1967: 75; van Loon 1966: 19; Batmaz/Uhri: 2008;). The majority of metal sculptures and figurines in Urartian art were used as an ornamental element of another object, which could be a piece of furniture or a candlestick (Merhav 1991). However, the details of these artefacts will not be discussed in this article. The aim of this study is to discuss whether the two decorated bronze fragments recovered from the temple storerooms of Ayanis Fortress could belong to a portable sculpture. It is imperative to begin with a discussion of the Ayanis Temple Complex and the Temple of Haldi, where the two bronze fragments under scrutiny were retrieved and presumably utilised.

2. The Ayanis Temple Complex and Haldi Temple (Cella)

As elucidated by the Ayanis Temple inscription, Rusa, son of Argishti, dedicated this edifice to the chief deity Haldi (Salvini 2008: A12-1). The Temple Complex, where various religious ceremonies were conducted, primarily comprises the Temple Courtyard, the Core Temple, the Temple Storage Rooms, the North Rooms and the Hall with Podium. The Ayanis Temple Courtyard has facilitated the understanding of Urartian religious ceremonies beyond the architectural features of Urartian temples. The in situ finds recovered from the temple courtyard were evaluated according to the architectural order in which they were recovered, allowing the

capture of the fine details of Urartian religion (Çilingiroğlu/Salvini 2001: 15-25). The temple courtyard, which covers an area of approximately 1200 m², is entered through a courtyard with stone(?) piers set in front of mudbrick walls measuring approximately 5 m in height and 4 m in width. The mudbrick walls of the courtyard are believed to have been painted with a blue pigment, known as 'Egyptian Blue' in the literature (Çilingiroğlu 2014: 139), to a height of approximately 1 m. The area contains a total of 12 piers and is characterised as a courtyard with piers. Two of these piers are located adjacent to the cella, while the remaining 10 piers are arranged independently on three sides of the temple in a symmetrical manner. The temple structures that rise on the foundations of faith are considered to be among the most significant architectural works bequeathed to us by the Urartu Kingdom. The cella structures, distinguished by their distinctive styles, are generally square in layout with rizalit corners, i.e., protruding from the main body of the temple (Çilingiroğlu 2012: 340). Access to the cella is gained through a corridor inscribed on both sides with the words of Rusa son of Argishti. The walls of the cella, which are decorated with a technique hitherto unprecedented in Urartian art, are of particular interest (Çilingiroğlu 2012: 341). The olivine basalt (Şengül/Akın Aras 2026) stone blocks forming the foundations of the cella were carved and filled with gypsum. The details of the mythological creatures and floral motifs created with this technique were elaborately carved on the gypsum and then coloured. (fig. 3). In contrast to the floors of other Urartian cellas identified thus far, the floor of the Ayanis cella was covered with approximately 90 onyx slabs. The distinguishing features of the temple of Ayanis from other Urartian temples are not limited to these; the decorated podium built adjacent to the eastern wall of the cella is unique to Ayanis. The podium, measuring 170 cm in length, 145 cm in width, and 70 cm in height, was constructed using thick onyx blocks, and is adorned with a variety of mythological creatures, including sphinxes, griffins, winged lions, and tree of life motifs.

3. *Function of the Podium*

The function of the podiums discovered within Urartian temple cellas remains ambiguous. While some theorists propose that these podiums served as thrones, others suggest they were positioned to house statues, either of a deity or of a mortal ruler. Additionally, the podiums have been proposed to have been utilized during ceremonies for the presentation of offerings to the divinity (Tarhan/Sevin 1975: 409; Çilingiroğlu 2008). Çilingiroğlu has argued unequivocally that the podium in the temple cella of Ayanis could not have been used for the throne (Çilingiroğlu 2008), and he considers Rehm's attempt to reconstruct the Urartian cellas to be fictitious (Rehm 2004). The archaeological evidence from the new podium unearthed during the recent excavations at Ayanis Fortress (2017) in the area designated as the 'hall with podium' corroborates this assertion (Işıklı/Aras 2018; Işıklı et al. 2019). The hypothesis that this new podium, which is identical to the podium in the temple cella but larger, was built for a throne is substantiated by the evidence (Işıklı et al. 2019). Therefore, it can be deduced that the podium in the cella must have had another function. Another use of the podium in the temple cella may have been to hold the weapons dedicated to the temple, providing a place to consecrate them during various religious ceremonies. The weapons dedicated to the god Haldi, who is associated with the identity of a victorious warrior, would have been the focal point of the rituals performed in the temple courtyard (Aras/Köse 2021). Most of the weapons unearthed during the excavations bear inscriptions stating that these artefacts were presented to the god Haldi. Following their triumphant return from military campaigns with the god Haldi, it is hypothesised that the kings may have presented these

weapons to temples as a gesture of gratitude. The majority of these offerings were comprised of shields, helmets, quivers, swords, spears and arrowheads, and were initially positioned on temple walls and pillars for display after their dedication to the god Haldi (Çilingiroğlu 2011: 345-346). It is theorised that these weapons, which adorned the pillars and temple walls, remained in situ until the next victory or festival, at which point they were removed to the storerooms with the arrival of new weapons dedicated to the deity Haldi. It is postulated that these offerings may have been made personally by the king or the temple priest on the podium inside the core temple.

As previously mentioned, the intention of these proposals about Urartian religious practices, and the interpretation that is pertinent to the present article, is that there may have been a portable statue on the podium in the cella (Tarhan/Sevin 1975). Given the orientation of the figures carved on the podium towards the eastern wall of the temple (i.e., facing the back wall and not the door), it can be hypothesised that the figures were looking at an object or a cult statue standing on the podium rather than at the official/king standing in front of the podium. (fig. 4) However, no cult object or statue that could have been used for this function has been found during the excavations of Ayanis Fortress, which have taken place without interruption for more than 35 years. If we accept the existence of a cult statue in the cella, two reasons can be suggested for the failure to uncover this cult statue so far. Firstly, the cult statue may have been taken by robbers during looting of the temple following the destruction of Ayanis Fortress. The second possibility is that there was not a fixed statue on the cella, but rather a portable statue used only during ceremonies. In this case, the portable statue may have been kept in the temple storage rooms like other artefacts offered to the gods, where it would have been destroyed by the earthquake that brought the end of the Ayanis Fortress.

4. *Bronze Sculpture Fragments and Discussion on Reconstruction*

The primary focus of this article is two decorated fragments recovered from the temple storage rooms (Batmaz 2015: Fig. 30). The similarity of the incised decoration indicates that they are components of a single artifact. The first piece (No. 1) (Fig. 5) measures 8.8 cm by 14 cm. It displays three rows of bands with carved floral and rosette depictions. Similar motifs appear on a belt disc of Argishti I (Piotrovsky 1967: Fig. 25), on reliefs from Carchemish (Akurgal 1995: Fig. 95), and Nimrud (Madhloom 1970: Plt. LXVII). However, there is an absence of clear evidence that would suggest that these motifs were transmitted through intercultural interaction, suggesting they were indigenous to Urartu. Another decorative element present on the artefact is the rosette decoration with bud-shaped leaves, which, on occasion, can be observed on arches of unknown provenance found within the limits of the Urartian kingdom(?) (Kellner 1991: 25/105; Çavuşoğlu 2014: plt. XXIX No.9).

A notable parallel to the decoration of the first fragment is the rosette decoration with bud-shaped leaves seen on the side faces of the Ayanis podiums (Çilingiroğlu/Salvini 2001; Işıklı/Akın Aras 2021). The fragment also features a repeated wavy line motif with circular ends along one edge. It has been established that these motifs are, on occasion, used as a hair detail for human figures (Tanret 1983: 1-4; Merhav 1991: 83; Seidle 2004: plt. 4e), as a detail of the hair of animal motifs (Wartke 1990: fig. 4b), and as a clothing detail (Piotrovsky 1967, Plate 8,12; Seidle 2004: plt. 38).

The larger second piece measures 27.4 cm in length and 12.5 cm in width. (Batmaz 2015: fig. 30) (No.2) (fig. 6). The ornamentation schemes encountered in the first example are also used in

this artefact, with rosette motifs placed in two registers bounded by two rows of parallel lines at the top and bottom. Each rosette is separated from the next by two vertical bands. In between of these two registers of rosettes there is a register of floral motifs, which alternates between freestanding flowers and others that are framed within double rows of lines forming a square. It is notable that the lowest rosette motif extends downwards, while the others are broken and missing, suggesting a potential alteration in the original design. The middle part of the fragment features waves, formed by sets of 10 lines each, extending perpendicularly away from the rows of rosettes, and the decorations are terminated with spiral lines on the back side. This section exhibits a flattened extension area measuring approximately 1 cm. The decoration of these two fragments bears a striking resemblance to bronze artifacts from Toprakkale, traditionally interpreted as throne fragments (Wartke 1990: 166-169). Specifically, the ornamentation of a deity standing on a bull and lion from Toprakkale (Barnett 1950: 14, Fig. 8) mirrors the Ayanis fragments. However, a comparative analysis suggests the Ayanis pieces are likely part of a statue rather than furniture.

5. Hypothesis of Reconstruction

Proportional Analysis: The floral motifs on the Toprakkale specimen measure approximately 5 mm in its maximum dimension, whereas those on the Ayanis artifact are 12 mm wide. Using this ratio ($12 \div 5 = 2.4$), and given that the Toprakkale god figure is 25 cm high, we can estimate the Ayanis statue would have been approximately 60 cm in height and 18 cm in width ($25 \times 2.4 = 60$) (Fig. 8).

Technique: Archaeometric studies indicate that the fragments were produced using the lost-wax technique (Reindell 2001: 382). This technique is specifically utilized for complex, three-dimensional artifacts that are difficult to cast solid. Decorative cladding for furniture was often hammered or cast in simpler molds. The lost-wax method strongly suggests a freestanding, hollow sculpture.

Contextual Synthesis: The hypothesis of a 60 cm bronze statue fits perfectly with the dimensions of the podium in the Haldi Temple cella (170x145 cm). A statue of this size would be visually proportionate and imposing without overwhelming the space. The existence of such a portable sculpture explains the absence of a fixed cult statue in the cella and provides rare evidence of Urartian craftsmanship in creating medium-scale divine effigies.

6. Conclusion

Excavations carried out at Ayanis Fortress, dating to the late period of the Urartian Kingdom, continue to offer unique findings that deepen our understanding of Urartian religious rituals and art. The two decorated bronze fragments examined within the scope of this study, which were recovered from the storage rooms of the Haldi Temple, make a significant contribution to the limited evidence regarding three-dimensional sculpture production in Urartian art.

Technical analyses performed on these fragments have revealed that they were produced using the “lost-wax” technique. Unlike techniques used for simple plating, the preference for this method proves that the pieces in question belong to a hollow, three-dimensional, and independent statue. Comparative analyses with similar deity figurines known from Toprakkale, along with proportional calculations, indicate that this artifact could be a portable cult statue approximately 60 cm in height

and 18 cm in width. These dimensions suggest that the artifact was a medium-scale work of art used for ceremonial purposes rather than a monumental statue.

Another significant result of the study is the relationship between this statue and the enigmatic podium located in the cella of the Ayanis Haldi Temple. The dimensions of the podium (170x145 cm) and the orientation of the figures upon it suggest that this structure was designed to display a worshipped object rather than serving as a throne base. The proposed reconstruction of the 60 cm bronze statue is highly compatible, both visually and volumetrically, with placement on this podium (fig.9).

The fact that the statue was not found in a fixed position within the cella but rather recovered in fragments within the storage rooms offers a new perspective on Urartian religious practices. This confirms that the cult statue in the temple was not fixed; it was likely a “portable” object placed on the podium only during specific religious ceremonies and rituals. It is understood that, apart from its use in ceremonies, the statue was securely kept in the temple storerooms, much like the weapons and other votive items dedicated to the god.

In conclusion, these finds dating to the period of Rusa II (son of Argišti) reveal the mastery of the Urartian Kingdom in metal art and the organic link between religious architecture and ritual objects. These data obtained from Ayanis Fortress provide a strong archaeological basis for discussions in the literature regarding the existence and usage of a central cult statue in Urartian temples.

7. Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Dr. Mehmet IŞIKLI (Atatürk University), head of the Ayanis Castle excavations, and his team for their support regarding the artifacts discussed in this study. Special thanks are also due to Braden W. Cordivari (New York University) for his insightful comments on the manuscript and for his invaluable assistance with language editing.

8. References

- AKIN ARAS, A./SEZER, V. (2023), “Archaeometric Studies in Eastern Anatolia”, In A. Batmaz and A. Erdem (eds.), *Archaeology of Eastern Anatolia I From Prehistoric Times to the End of the Iron Ages*, Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement 60, Peeters, Leuven: 25-36.
- AKURGAL, E. (1968), *Urartäische und Altiranische Kunstzentren*, TTK, Series 6, Ankara.
- AKURGAL, E. (1995), *Hatti ve Hitit Uygarlıkları*, Yaşar Eğitim ve Kültür Vakfı. İzmir.
- ARAS, O./KÖSE, S. (2021), “Ayanis’te Urartulu Tanrıların Kutsal Alanları: Tapınak Kompleksi”, In M. Işıklı and A. Akın Aras (eds.), *Tanrı Eiduru’nin Gölgesinde Bir Urartu Kenti Ayanis 30 Yılı Aşan Bir Arkeolojik Serüven*, Ege Yayınları. İstanbul: 79-107.
- AZARPAY, G. (1968), *Urartian Art and Artifacts. A Chronological Study*, Berkeley, Los Angeles.
- BATMAZ, A. (2015), “Votive Objects and their Storage Areas in Urartian Fortresses”, *Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 52: 127-205. Doi: 10.2143/ANES.52.0.3082868.
- BATMAZ, A./UHRI, A. (2008), “Urartu Kültüründe Balık Betimlemesi ve Ayanis Kalesi’nden Tunç Bir Balık Figürini Üzerine Düşünceler / Representation of Fish in Urartian Culture and Thoughts on A Bronze Fish Figurine from Ayanis Fortress”, *Ege Üniversitesi Arkeoloji Dergisi* 11: 65-82.

- BARNETT, R.D. (1950), "The Excavations of the British Museum at Toprak Kale Near Van", *Iraq* 12: 1-43.
- ÇAVUŞOĞLU, R. (2014), *Urartu Kemerler, Rezan Has Museum, İstanbul*.
- ÇİLİNGİROĞLU, A. (1997), *Urartu Krallığı: Tarihi ve Sanatı*, İzmir.
- ÇİLİNGİROĞLU, A. (2008), "Urartu Tapınaklarında Taht Var mıdır?", In D. İnci, S. Çokay Kepçe, A. Özdzibay and Ö. Turak (eds.), *Prof. Dr. Haluk Abbasoğlu'na 65. Yaş Armağanı/Euegrete Festschrift für Prof. Dr. Haluk Abbasoğlu Zum 65. Geburtstag*, Suna ve İnan Kıraç Akdeniz Medeniyetleri Araştırma Enstitüsü, İstanbul: 1-6.
- ÇİLİNGİROĞLU, A. (2011), "Ayanis Fortress," In K. Köroğlu, and E. Konyar, (eds.), *Urartu: Transformation in the East*, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul, 338-365.
- ÇİLİNGİROĞLU, A. (2014). "Ayanis Kalesi'nde Mısır Mavisi (Egyptian Blue)", Aynur Özfirat Arkeolojiyle Geçen Bir Yaşam İçin Yazılar Veli Sevin'e Armağan, İzmir: 137-142.
- ÇİLİNGİROĞLU, A./SALVINI, M., (2001), *Ayanis I: Ten Years' Excavations at Rusahinili Eiduru-Kai 1989-1998*, Roma.
- ÇİLİNGİROĞLU, A./IŞIKLI, M. (2014), "25. Yılında Ayanis Kalesi Kazıları-Dün, Bugün ve Gelecek", In H. Kasapoğlu and M.A.Yılmaz (eds.), *Anadolu'nun Zirvesinde Türk Arkeolojisinin 40. Yılı*, Bilgin Kültür Sanat, Ankara: 309-324.
- DERİN, Z. /SAĞLAMTİMUR, H. (1998), "Alaköy Kalesi ve Kale'de Bulunan Urartu Heykelleri", *Belleten* LXII/233: 15-24.
- IŞIKLI, M./ARAS, O. (2016), "Ayanis Aslanı", In Ş. Aktaş, E. Dündar, S. Erkoç and M. Koçak (eds.), *Havva İşkan'a Armağan Lykiarkhissa / Festschrift für Havva İşkan*, Zero Books, İstanbul: 120-140.
- IŞIKLI, M./ÖZDEMİR, M.A. (2019), "Ayanis Kalesinden Ünik Bir Eser: Ayanis Koçu", In V. Keleş, H. Kasapoğlu, H.E. Ergürer, E. Çelikbaş and A. Yılmaz (eds.), *Cevat Başaran'a 60. Yaş Armağanı*, Zero Books, İstanbul: 499-510.
- IŞIKLI, M. et al. (2019), "A New Space the Ayanis Citadel: The Hall with Podium. A Preliminary Report on the Excavations Of 2014–2018", In S.R. Steadman and G. McMahon (eds.), *The Archaeology of Anatolia Volume III, Recent Discoveries (2017–2018)*, Cambridge, 84-98.
- IŞIKLI, M./AKIN ARAS, A. (2021) (eds.), *Tanrı Eiduru'nun Gölgesinde Bir Urartu Kenti Ayanis- 30 yılı Aşan Bir Arkeolojik Seriven*, Ege Yayınları, İstanbul.
- KELLNER, H.J. (1991), *Gürtelbleche Aus Urartu*, (=Prähistorische Bronzefunde Abt.XII Bd.3), Stuttgart.
- KONYAR, E. (2022), *Urartu Aşiretten Devlete*, Homer Kitabevi, İstanbul.
- KÖROĞLU, K. (2011), "Urartu: Krallık ve Aşiretler", In K. Köroğlu and E. Konyar (eds.), *Urartu Doğu'da Değişim*, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul 2011: 12-56.
- MADHLOOM, T.A. (1970), *The Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, London.
- MANNING, S.W. et al. (2001), "Anatolian Tree Rings and New Chronology for the East Mediterranean Bronze-Iron Ages", *Science* (21 Dec.) 294/5551: 2532-2535.
- MERHAV, R., (1991). *Urartu. A Metalworking Center In The First Millennium B.C.E.*, Jerusalem.
- ÖZGÜÇ, T. (1969), *Altıntepe II: Mezarlar, Depo Binası ve Fildişi Eserler / Tombs, Storehouse and Ivories*, TTK, V/27, Ankara.
- PIOTROVSKY, B.B. (1969), *Urartu* (Archaeologia Mundi), Genf.
- PIOTROVSKY, B.B. (1967), *Urartu. The Kingdom of Van and its Art*, London.
- PIOTROVSKY, B.B. (1970), *Karmir Blur*, Aurora Art Publishers, Leningrad.

- REHM, E. (2004), “Hohe Türme und goldene Schilde-Tempel und Tempel-Schatze in Urartu”, *MDOG* 136: 173-181.
- REINDELL, I. (2001), “Conservation of Bronzes and Technical Remarks”, In A. Çilingiroğlu and M. Salvini (eds.), *Ayanis I, Ten Years, Excavations At Rusahinili Eidurukai 1989–1998*, Documenta Asiana VI, Roma: 381-390.
- SALVINI, M. (2001), “The Inscriptions of Ayanis: Royal Inscriptions on Bronze Artifacts”, In A. Çilingiroğlu and M. Salvini, *Ayanis I (Ten Year’s Excavation at Rusahinili Eiduru-Kai 1989-1998)*, CNR Instituto per gli Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici, Roma: 271-278.
- SALVINI, M. (2006), *Urartu Tarihi ve Kültürü*. (Trns.) Belgin Aksoy, Arkeoloji Ve Sanat Yayınları, İstanbul.
- SALVINI, M. (2008), *Corpus dei testi Urartei, Vol. I. Le iscrizioni su pietra e roccia: I Testi*, Docas VIII/I, Roma.
- SEIDL, U. (1994), “Der Thron von Toprakkale, ein neuer Rekonstruktionsversuch”, *Archäologischer Mitteilungen Aus Iran* 27: 67-84.
- SEIDL, U. (2004), *Bronzekunst Urartus*, Mainz.
- SEVIN, V. (1993), “An Urartian Lion from Gevaş,” In T. Özgüç (ed.), *Aspects of Art and Iconographi. Anatolia and its Neighbors. Studies in Honor of Nimet Özgüç*, Ankara: 565-567.
- ŞENGÜL, M.A/AKIN ARAS, A. (2026) “A Geoarchaeological Analysis on the Identification and Origin of Volcanic Rocks used in Monumental Architectures in Ayanis City” *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 69: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2025.105489>
- TANRET M. (1983), “Un nouveau roi urartéen?”, *Akkadica* 32: 1-4.
- TARHAN, T./SEVIN, V. (1975), “Urartu Tapınak Kapıları İle Anıtsal Kaya Nişleri Arasındaki Bağlantı”, *Belleten* 39: 389-412.
- VAN LOON, M.N. (1966), *Urartian Art. Its Distinctive Traits in The Light of New Excavations*, Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut, İstanbul.
- WARTKE, B.R. (1990), *Toprakkale. Untersuchungen zu den Metallobjekten im Vorderasiatischen Museum zu Berlin*, Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients 22, Berlin.
- WARTKE, B.R. (1993), *Urartu. Das Reich am Ararat*, Mainz.

9. Figures

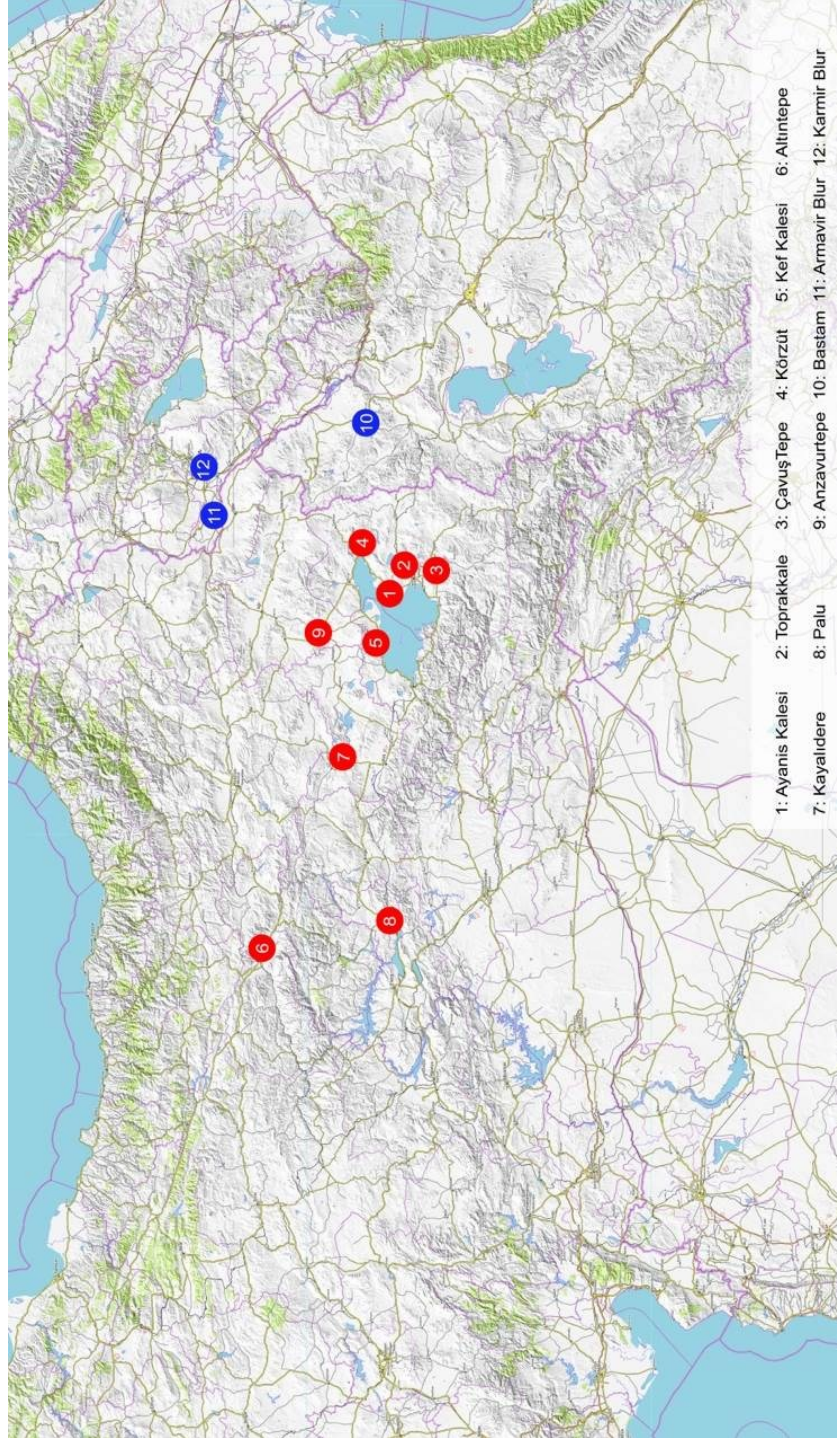


Figure 1: Map of Urartian Fortresses and Cities

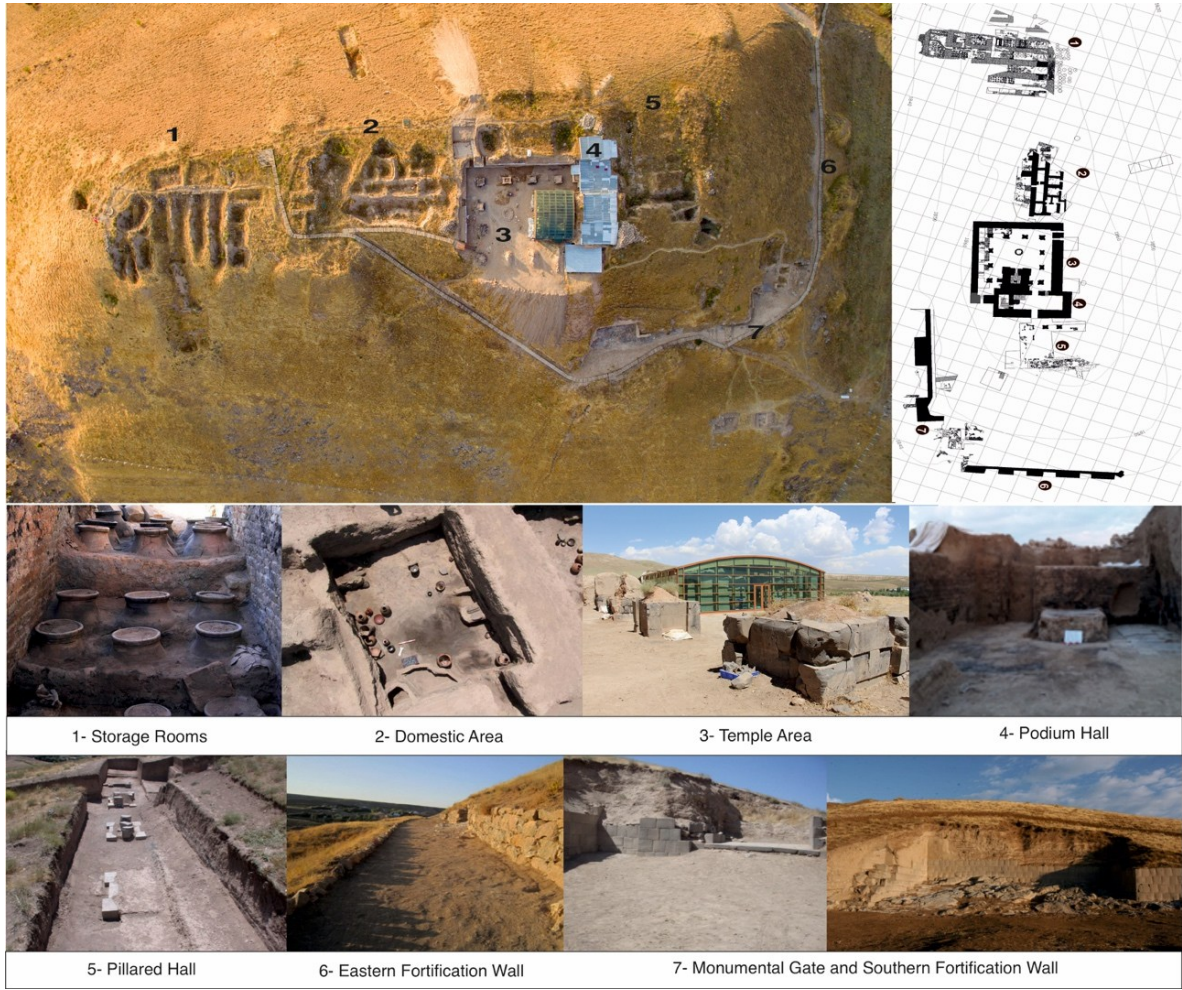


Figure 2: Ayanis Castle Excavated Areas (Ayanis Castle Excavation Archive)



Figure 3: The Temple Excutioner of Ayanis Castle (Ayanis Castle Excavation Archive)



Figure 4: Ayanis Castle Podium (Ayanis Castle Excavation Archive)



Figure 5: Decorated Bronze Piece (No. 1) (Ayanis Castle Excavation Archive)

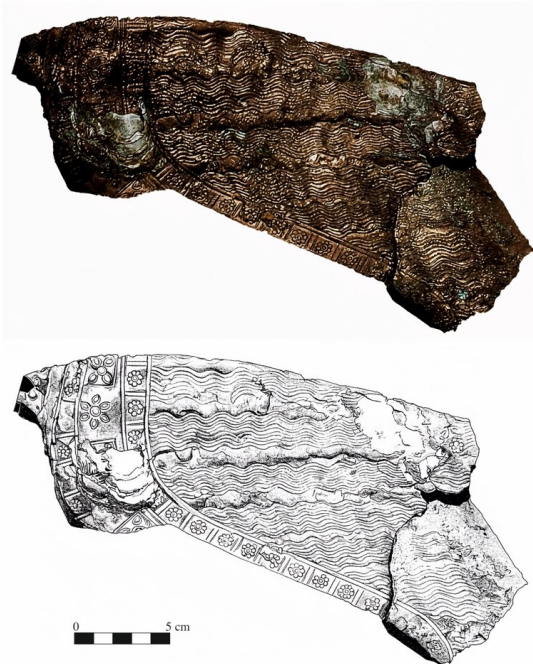


Figure 6: Decorated Bronze Piece (No. 2) (Ayanis Castle Excavation Archive)

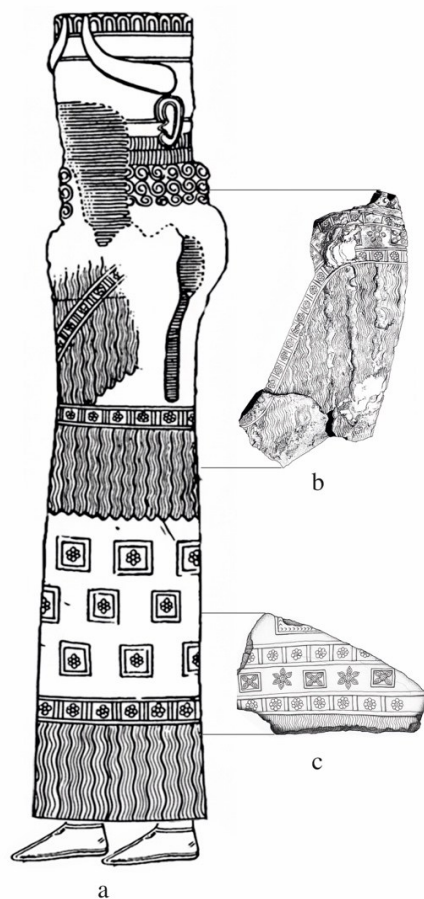


Figure 7: An experiment on the combination of bronze sculpture from Toprakkale excavations and bronze fragments from Ayanis Fortress
(a: Wartke 1990: 166-169 b: Ayanis No. 1 c: Ayanis No. 2)

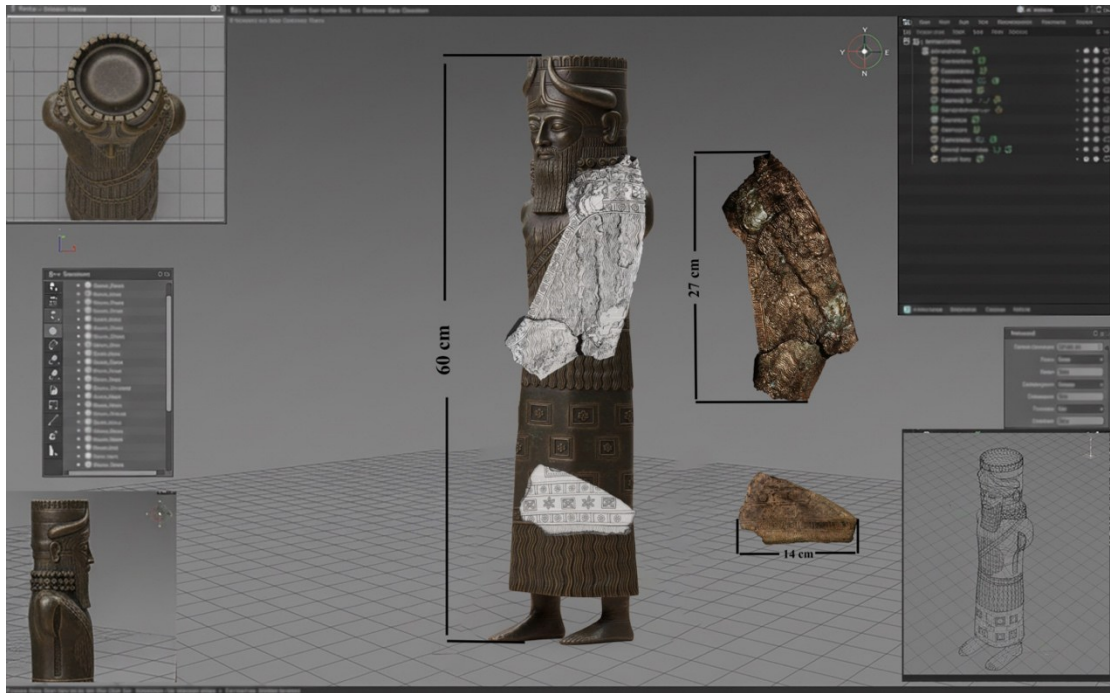


Figure 8: Calculation of the possible statue size by dimensioning the fragments recovered from Ayanis Fortress



Figure 9: 3D test of a possible sculpture at the Ayanis Temple cella (the sculpture size is configured as 60 cm)