THE EARLY IRON AGE CEMETERIES OF THE LAKE VAN BASIN: AN OVERVIEW OF BURIAL TRADITION OF PRE-URARTIANS

VAN GÖLÜ HAVZASI ERKEN DEMİR ÇAĞ MEZARLIKLARI: PRE-URARTU DÖNEMİ GÖMÜ ANLAYIŞININ GENEL BİR DEĞERLENDİRMESİ

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Nairi, Uruatri, Erken Demir Çağ, pre-Urartu, Urartu, Van Gölü Havzası, Doğu Anadolu, Mezar

ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to evaluation of the burial tradition of pre-Urartians in the basin of Lake Van. After the Middle Bronze Age, which had a strong pastoral character, and towards the end of the Late Bronze Age, new pottery, architectural and metallurgical traditions, new settlement pattern and new burial customs emerged in the highland of eastern Anatolia in the Early Iron Age. One of the most remarkable changes is the settlement system, great numbers of fortresses and their cemeteries in the highlands and foothills have been recorded in eastern Anatolia which is also the case southern Caucasia and northwestern Iran. A ruling elite together with a hierarchical social structure and the steps towards the sedentary life started to form around the socio-economic centers, a lifeway between pastoralism and sedentary had taken place in the whole region. Lake Van Basin is the most investigated area, excavations at cemeteries of Ernis (Ünseli) Karagündüz, Yoncatepe, Dilkaya, and a great number of cemeteries which is mainly connected with the highland fortresses found in the survey represent the Early Iron Age burial tradition in the basin. The graves and stelae from Hakkari are quite remarkable finds of the pre-Urartian elite, or the rulers of Uruatri and Nairi lands. This paper also emphasizes the role of Early Iron Age investigations in the basin which is important for the foundation period of the Urartian Kingdom as well as understanding the local polities of pre-Urartians.

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ÖZET

Makalede Van Gölü Havzasında Erken Demir Çağ (pre-Urartu) gömü anlayışının genel bir değerlendirmesi yapılmıştır. Doğu Anadolu yüksek yaylasında, pastoral karakteri oldukça güçlü olan Orta Tunç Çağı'nın ardından, Son Tunç Çağı içinde gelişerek dönemin sonunda ortaya çıkan yeni çanak çömlek, metal, mimari, yerleşim sistemi ve gömü geleneği Erken Demir Çağı'nı temsil eder. Bu dönemin yenilikleri arasında en dikkat çekici olanlarından biri yerleşim sistemidir. Doğu Anadolu bölgesinde, Güney Kafkasya ve Kuzeybatı İran'da olduğu gibi yüksek alanlarda ve dağ eteklerinde çok sayıda kale ve mezarlık ortaya çıkar. Hiyerarşik bir yapıya sahip yönetici sınıf ve yerleşik yaşama doğru atılan adımlar sosyo-ekonomik merkezler etrafında toplanma şeklinde kendisini gösterir. Tüm bölgede pastoralizm ve sedentar hayat arasında bir yaşam tarzı görülür. Van Gölü havzası bu dönem gömü geleneği için en fazla araştırma yapılmış alandır. Ernis (Ünseli) Karagündüz, Yoncatepe ve Dilkaya kazıları ile yüzey araştırmasında bulunmuş ve genellikle yüksek alanlarda ve dağ eteklerinde yer alan çok sayıdaki kale-mezarlık havzada Erken Demir Çağ gömü geleneğini temsil eder. Hakkari mezarları ve stelleri ise pre-Urartu ya da Uruatri ve Nairi ülkeleri yönetici sınıfı için oldukça dikkat çekici bulgulardır. Makalede ayrıca, havzadaki Erken Demir Çağ araştırmaları, pre-Urartu yerel güçlerini anlamanın yanısıra Urartu Krallığı kuruluş evresi içindeki etkileri açısından da ele alınmıştır.

INTRODUCTION

Archaeological information on the cemetery of Early Iron Age (EIA, c. 1300/1200-900 BC) in the highland of eastern Anatolia comes only from the excavations at cemeteries of Hakkari, Lake Van basin and some in northeastern Anatolia. Burial context was a significant element of the pre-Urartian landscape. A large number of EIA fortresses and their cemeteries in the highlands and foothills have been recorded in eastern Anatolia which is also the case southern Transcaucasia and northwestern Iran. The cemeteries which are located at the major fortresses or settlement complexes contain hundreds of graves.

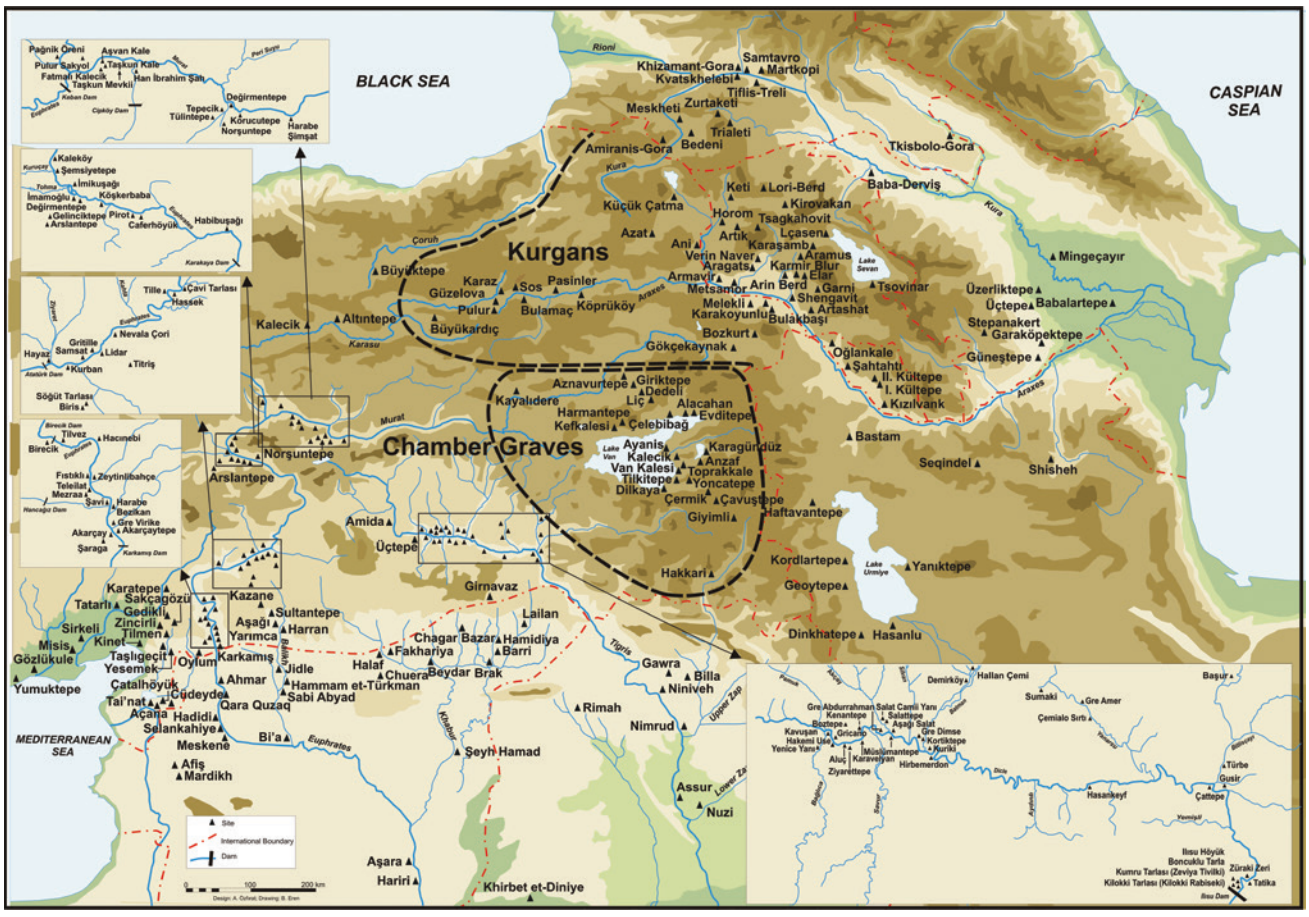
Radical changes came up towards the end of the Middle Bronze Age (MBA, *c*. 2300/2200-1500 BC) which has strong pastoral character associated with wide range of highland cemeteries with no considerable settlement traces, new culture being formed in the Late Bronze-Early Iron Age (LBA-EIA) in these vast grazing lands of the highland of eastern Anatolia. The characteristics of the EIA in the region are the emergence of highland fortresses-cemeteries; chamber graves and multiple burials; the disappearance of the 'Araxes painted ware' of the MBA; the appearance of new monochrome pottery (grooved ware); and the iron weapons-ornaments. A large number of the fortresses and cemeteries of pre-Urartians found widespread on the high pastures, foothills and lower areas imply the existence of a considerable population. A ruling elite together with a hierarchical social structure and the steps towards the sedentary life started to form around the socio-economic centers, as indicated by the large number of fortresses-cemeteries and fortress-cities. On the other hand, semi-nomadism and transhumanism based on animal husbandry survived. It seems that, in the EIA, a lifeway between pastoralism and sedentary had taken place in the region. Basically, there were no major changes in the socioeconomic system based on animal husbandry and transhumance in the Urartian Kingdom as shown by some of the highland fortresses of pre-Urartians and seasonal settlements have been used in Urartian period.

Landscape of pre-Urartians appears to have shared a common culture and by numerous local polities, which could be named as fortress-state, small kingdom, chiefdom or regional confederacies in tribal structure. State formation of these small highland polities marked by the appearance of local states centered in major fortresses or fortress-cities with urban character. Hakkari chamber graves and stelae of EIA is the most prominent evidence of this strong ruling elite. Highland of eastern Anatolia, southern Caucasia and northwestern Iran were divided among a great number of local polities in the EIA according to written sources. Assyrian epigraphic records starting from king Shalmanasar I (1274-1244 BC) reported under the name of Nairi and Uruatri lands ruled by the kings or chiefdoms reaching in the number to 60 and afterward Urartian written sources give information about these independent local polities. Many kings, countries, cities, fortresses and people of these territorial highland polities of pre-Urartian landscape are mentioned in the Assyrian and Urartian texts. Information on the territories of these local states or small kingdoms in eastern Anatolia is extremely limited. It seems that the region was divided into numerous geographical small units ruled by a central fortress-city. EIA is also accepted as a period in the basin of Lake Van that these small kingdoms prepared the foundations of the Urartian Kingdom. Later, central fortes-cities of these local polities or local fortress-states of pre-Urartians became provinces or major cities of Urartu.

CEMETERIES

Highland of eastern Anatolia is characterized by high plateaus with the great range of high volcanoes of Bingöl, Nemrut, Süphan, Aladağ, Tendürek and Ağrı. Lake Van is a depression basin surrounded by these volcanoes and Mt Southern Taurus. It has a special role in the region not only for its geography and also being the central area of the Urartian Kingdom. The main feature of this high and extensive volcanic terrain is fertile pastures which is better suited for animal husbandry than for agriculture. River valleys-plains and the highland pastures have been the living spaces between these high mountain ranges. As well as the archaeological sites concentrated in the lowlands which include river valleys-plains, the fortresses-cemeteries situated on the mountain slopes and highlands create the settlement system of the region in the EIA-MIA. Although the highland of eastern Anatolia having a homogeneous culture, it is divided three geographical and cultural sub-regions which is mainly identified by the burial tradition, pottery, metal and chronology: Lake Van basin, Northeastern Anatolia (Mt. Ağrı and Erzurum Kars Plateau) and Mt Southern Taurus-Hakkari (Fig. 1). The chronological and archaeological distinctions of sub regions are clearly seen in the pottery and grave types. The monochrome pottery tradition of EIA in eastern Anatolia which is also known as 'Grooved or Nairi ware' shows a homogeneous character with its regional variations, from the Upper Euphrates in the west, to the southern Caucasus in the east, to the behind of Mt Southern Taurus in the Upper Tigris Valley in the south[1]. This monochrome pottery

[1] Grooved ware have been continued decreasingly into the Urartian Period (Middle Iron Age) with some changing in form and technic as suggested by Sevin 1986: Sevin 285-286; 1989: 453-454; Sevin 1995: 26-3; Sevin 1996: 445; Sevin 2005a: 380, Harita 2;



Figür 1: Highland of Eastern Anatolia: Bronze-Iron Age Sites and Burial Traditions of Early Iron Age / *Doğu Anadolu Yüksek Yaylası: Tunç-Demir Çağ Yerleşimleri ve Erken Demir Çağ Mezar Gelenekleri.*

which is mainly decorated with grooves, notches and triangles dominated the eastern Anatolia with variations in color in sub-regions, such as, black burnished ware in northeastern Anatolia, pinkish-buff, red slipped and red-brown wares in the basin of Lake Van, red-brown ware in Upper Euphrates Valley.

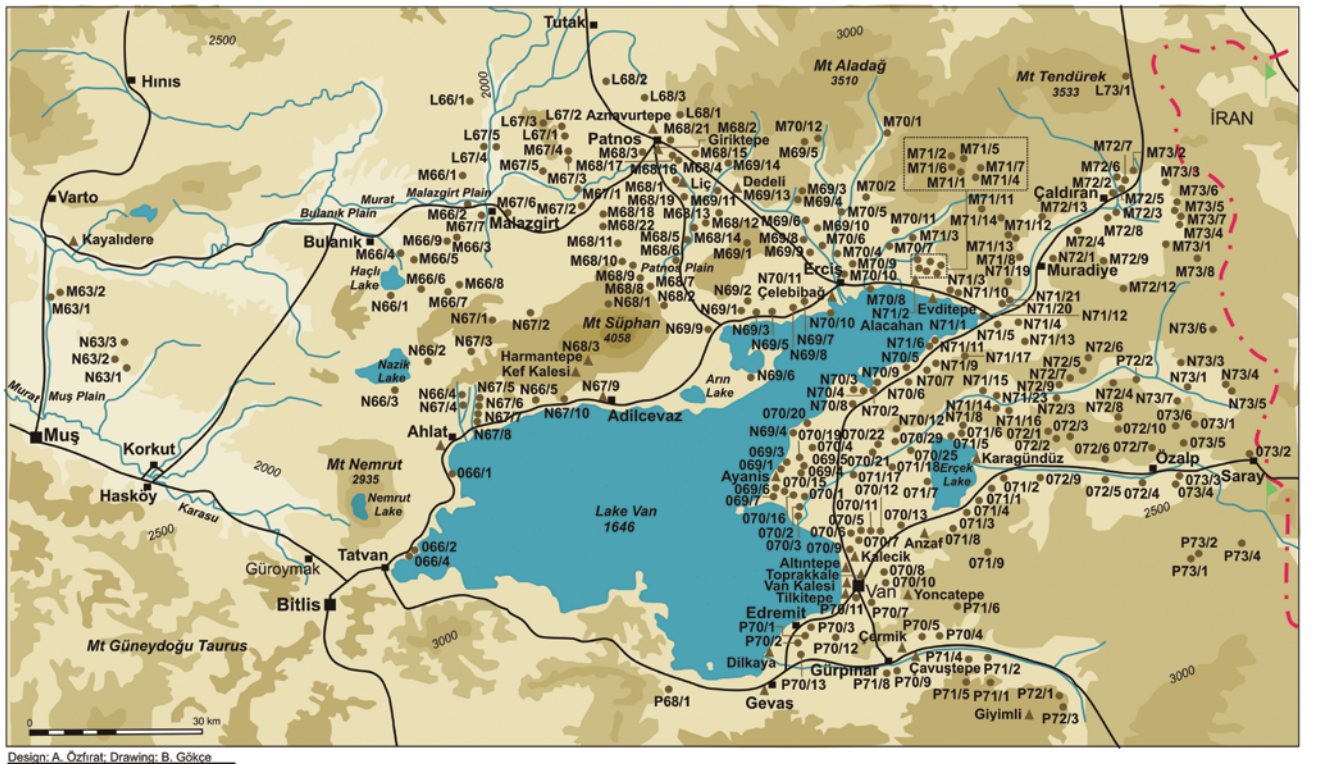
The most striking difference between sub-regions were seen in the burial traditions, northeastern Anatolia was in the borders of kurgans-cromlechs and the related cultures. On the contrary, Lake Van basin and Hakkari remains outside of the kurgan zone. Kurgans-cromlechs are a few, only to the north of basin, there are some on the slopes of Süphan and Tendürek and Aladağ volcanoes which were geographically connected to Mt Ağrı and at the same time to a large barrier separating Lake Van basin and northeast Anatolia. In spite of a large number of kurgan cemeteries found in northeastern Anatolia, investigations are limited. Except for the Mt. Ağrı-Bozkurt kurgan cemetery, the cemeteries of Köprüköy, Ani, Küçük Çatma and Gökçekaynak were short term excavations and there is insufficient data (Fig. 1)[2]. Chamber graves and stelae from Hakkari are quite remarkable discoveries of the EIA in the region**,** and also they are discussed in this article due to their connection with the basin (Fig. 1). Lake Van Basin is the most investigated area for the EIA burial tradition represented by stone lined and chamber graves. Excavations of the EIA cemeteries in the basin of Lake Van were carried out at first at Ernis (Evditepe and Alacahan) on the northern shore of lake, mound-cemetery at Dilkaya on the southeastern shore of lake, mound-cemetery at Karagündüz on the eastern shore of Lake Erçek and finally cemetery at Yonca Tepe on the eastern slope of Mt Erek overlooking to the Van Plain (Figs. 1-2).

Ernis-Ünseli

The settlement complex at Ernis (the town of Ünseli) is located at a small coastal plain between the plains of Muradiye and Erciş on the northeastern shore of Lake Van (Figs. 1-3). This small coastal plain (former Kanikan) is sheltered area bordered from south by the shore of Lake Van and from the other directions by the Mt Esruk. It contains settlements which cover separate units in a vast area within a long time, related to each other. Settlements at Ernis span from the EBA-Kura-Araxes to the LIA-Achaemenid periods, except for an interruption in the

Sevin 2015: 91-92; Erdem 2009; Erdem 2012; Özfırat 2018. For the Upper Tigris Valley material see Brancato 2017; Guardicci 2012, 2016; Okse 2014; Okse *et al.* 2014.

[2] Özfırat 2014a; Özfırat 2014b; Özfırat In press a.



SURVEY SITES

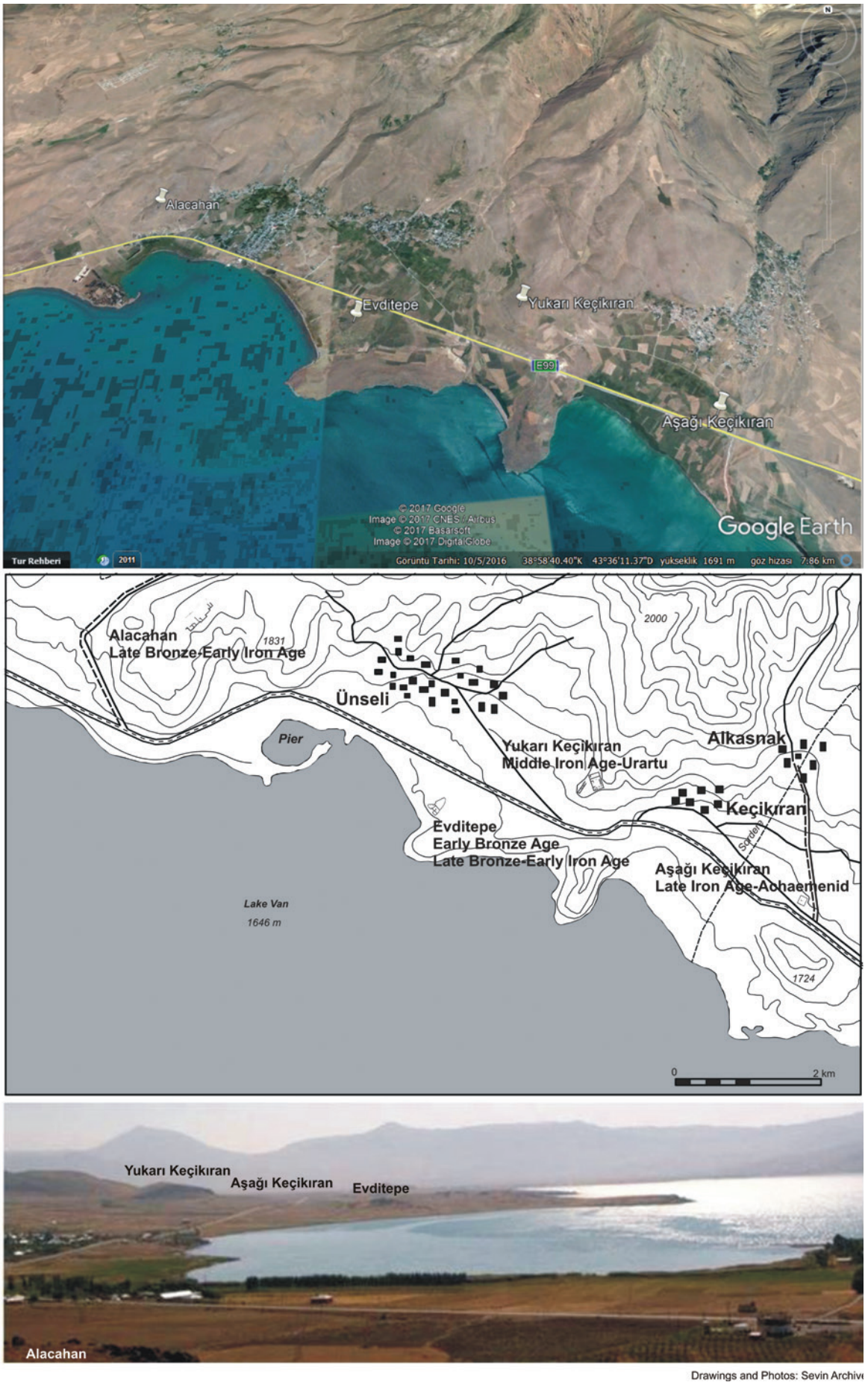
L66/1	Tıkızlı	M69/4	Meydantepe-Meydan	N69/7	Mino-Bayramlı
L68/1	Yukarı Göçmez	M69/9	Toptepe-Kocapınar	N69/8	Zinarızer-Bayramlı
L73/1	Tahttepe-Somkaya	M69/13	Dedeli	N70/7	Aliler-Tutumlu
M66/1	Nurettin	M69/14	Hazinetepe-Orta Damla	N71/5	Üzerliktepe-Ovapınar
M66/2	Okçuhan	M70/1	İn Mevkii-Şehirpazar	N71/6	Çolpan
M66/3	Toptepe/Dereboğazı-Hasretpınar	M70/2	İt Kalesi-Çakırbey	N71/8	Beyaztaş-Yukarı Gölalan
M66/6	Kırkgöze	M70/5	Köşkköprü-İncesu	N73/1	Eski Karakol-Dorutay
M66/7	Çaygeldi	M70/6	Kengerkor-Uncular	N73/6	Aşağı Koçkıran
M66/8	Elmakaya	M70/12	Şekerbulak-Evbeyli	N73/7	Hato Göleti-Çubuklu
M67/1	Düzceli	M71/3	Tırmıklı	070/5	Siyahtaş-Aşıt
M67/2	Grebudo-Doğansu	M71/5	Bakırtas	070/8	Kıratlı
M68/1	Konakbey	M71/6	Zirçlitaş-Topraklı	070/11	Ciyayesor-Alabayır
M68/3	Bağdişan-Patnos	M71/7	Teketaş-Deredam	070/12	Ağazik-Alabayır
M68/5	Gönlüaçık	M72/3	Büyük Gır-Avcıbaşı	070/13	Keklikbulak-Şahbağı
M68/6	Esenbel	M72/7	Yukarı Mutlu	070/17	Gülsünler
M68/7	Büyük Taştepe-Çaputlu	M72/9	Hacı İbrahim-Aşağı Çanak	071/1	Abdullah Çeşmesi-Erçek
M68/10	Şato Çeşmesi-Köseler	M73/7	Çubuklu	072/1	Harabekale-Yatıksırt
M68/14	Duloz	N63/1	Graaver-Sürügüden	072/10	Kırkbulak-Boğazkesen
M68/16	Akçaören	N63/2	Gre Mezra-Sürügüden	073/1	Dağdeviren
M68/18	Kamışlı	N63/3	Yılankale-Sürügüden	073/2	Şehitlik/Usobiti-Saray
M68/19	Gavurkale-Tepeli	N66/3	Segran-Burcukaya	073/4	Şehitler-Tepedam
M69/1	Ganiyi Neso-Duracak	N66/4	Yuvadamı	P70/4	Eski Norgüh-Yolaşan
		N67/3	Haydarkale-Develik	P70/9	Otbiçer-Gürpınar
		N68/1	Dizginkale	P70/12	Kurubaş-Ayazpınar

Figür 2: Sites of EIA in the Basin of Lake Van: Survey and Excavations / *Van Gölü Havzası Erken Demir Çağ Yerleşimleri: Yüzey Araştırması ve Kazılar.*

MBA (Figs. 3-4): Kura-Araxes settlement at Evditepe; EIA fortresses-cemeteries at Evditepe and Alacahan; Urartian road station (?) and a cult building at Yukarı Keçikıran; small LIA (Achaemenid) fortress at Aşağı Keçikıran.

First excavation at Evditepe (Varşak Tepe) cemetery was undertaken during the First World War by N. J. Marr, then a short trip in 1938 by K. Lake. The cemeteries at Evditepe and Alacahan which named as Ernis excavated by A. Erzen and E. Bilgiç in 1962-1964. V. Sevin (1997) and author (2002-2008) conducted surveys at the site. Records of A. Erzen and E. Bilgiç excavations and their findings in the museums of Van and Anatolian Civilizations together with material from our survey were studied by V. Sevin[3]. The information on cemeteries at Evditepe and Alacahan excavated by A. Erzen and E.

[3] Sevin's study based on the excavation reports given to him by A. Erzen and materials in Van and Ankara Anatolian Civilizations museums with survey material.



Figür 3: Ernis-Ünseli Settlement Complex / *Ernis-Ünseli Yerleşim Kompleksi.*

Bilgiç is limited to a few published excavation reports. The number of the graves and their finds, detail on locations and types of the graves are largely in the dark. There were finds from 8 or 9 graves from Evditepe and 4 graves from Alacahan according to records of the Van Museum while more graves were excavated, and since the finds in the Anatolian Civilizations Museum were largely recorded as Ernis it is impossible to separate two different cemeteries.

The EIA settlements of Ernis are fortresses-cemeteries at Evditepe and Alacahan (Figs. 4-7). Evditepe fortress-cemetery is situated on a low rocky at the southern edge of plain and on the shore of lake (former Varşak Tepe)[4]. Early Bronze Age-Kura-Araxes settlement and a fortress of EIA lies on a rocky surrounding EIA cemetery. This large cemetery covers an area of approximately 1 km. K. and S. Lake, which gave information on the first excavation at the cemetery of Evditepe-Varşak Tepe by Marr, report that more than 500 graves were excavated[5]. The investigation of Marr, excavation of Varşak Tepe and the other settlements on the plain were only reported in the visit of Lake's. Later, in the excavations of Erzen and Bilgiç 20 graves excavated out of 100 around the fortress at Evditepe[6]. Alacahan fortress-cemetery is located on the north western edge on the plain and on a rocky hill extending to the lake[7]. The fortress overlooks the plain and the lake, and the cemetery located at the western and southwestern slopes. 6 tombs are excavated by Erzen and Bilgiç at Alacahan. But, the number of the graves and their finds, detail locations and types of the graves are largely in the dark. There were only finds 8 or 9 graves from Evditepe and 4 graves from Alacahan according to records of the museums.

The graves of Ernis divided into three groups according the ones excavated by Erzen and Bilgiç and the ones examined by Sevin in survey (Figs. 5-7): Stone lined graves, chamber graves and chamber graves with cromlech. They built in roughly or regular rectangular plan with uncut stones and covered by heavy roof stones. Outline of graves are oval at the floor level, narrows to its edges. The walls are built into a false arch, the roof was sealed by heavy cover stones. All of them have multiple burials. The relation between the burial tradition, small finds and pottery cannot be determined because of the lack of systematic records of excavation.

Stone-lined graves are the most common ones and comprise the first group (Fig. 7: 1-4). The entrance to the graves was provided by removing one of the cover stones. But, in one of the graves (No 7 and possibly No 6) there is an entrance space on one of the narrow sides, and additionally a step leading to the inside of the grave 6. The skeletons were found superimposed one upon another, separated by layers of earth. In one of the graves (No 8) 40 to 50 pieces, in two of them over 30 pieces and in another one of them around 80 pieces of pottery were found. Dimensions of graves are No 6 (3.85 x 1.25 m, at the ends 0.70 m), No 7 (width 1.70 m, at the ends 0.65 m); No 8 (1.30 m height); No 3 (1.10 x 0.65 m) in Evditepe. Stone-lined graves are divided into two types in Alacahan cemetery, first one are three tombs and one of these are rectangular in plan, approximately in 1.00 x 1.50 x 1.50 m in dimensions. No iron objects could have been recovered and only ten pieces of pottery were found in these graves, no information about skeletons. Second type of stone lined graves are square planned and 0.50-0.60 m in height. It suggest that it can be children's graves.

Chamber graves constitute the second group (Figs. 6; 7). They show differences in planning and burial tradition to the first group. Chamber graves can be classified in two groups, as with dromos and simple entrance, they are longer and higher than the stone lined tombs. The entrance to chambers is a low door on the narrow sides, and to some have a simple shaft dromos and in one example (no 4) the burial chamber is reached by the steps. The bodies were gathered on a pile on the floor by the back wall of the grave. Again, different from the first group, there are no iron objects found in these graves. One of these tombs (Evditepe No 4) had fifteen and the second one (Evditepe no 5) had sixteen pieces of pottery. Dimensions of graves are No 4 (4.50 x 1.30 m, at the ends 0.70 m, height 1.25); No 5 (4.20 x 1.10 m, at the ends 0.50 m); some of the grave which is investigated in survey are those: M2 (4,60 x 1,20 x 1.00 m); M15 (4,60 x 1,50 x 1.00 m, height of dromos 0.60 m, Fig 6: 1); M20 (3,70 x 1,40 x 1.40 m, height of dromos 0.50 m). The original height of both chambers and dromoi were not determined. A chamber grave with dromos in Alacahan has a rectangular plan 6.60 x 3.25 x 2.80 m. This large burial chamber has a stepped entrance. The roof were covered by pebble stones in shape of a herringbone pattern at the top. Dimensions of some of the grave in Alacahan which is investigated in survey are those (Fig. 7: 2-3): M2 (2.50 x 1.20 x 1.00 m); M3 (3.20 x 1.20 x 1.30 m), M4 (3.30 x 1.80 x 1.90 m, Fig. 7: 3). Their original height and if they have dromos were not determined.

Graves with cromlech are the third group, they are located on the northern edge of the cemetery. In one of them, in an approximately 12 m wide cromlech there are two graves in north-south direction[8]. One of the graves are

[4] Özfırat 2013; Özfırat In press b; Sevin 1987; Sevin 1996; Sevin 2003; Sevin 2005; Sevin 2014.

[5] Korfmann 1982: 188-189.

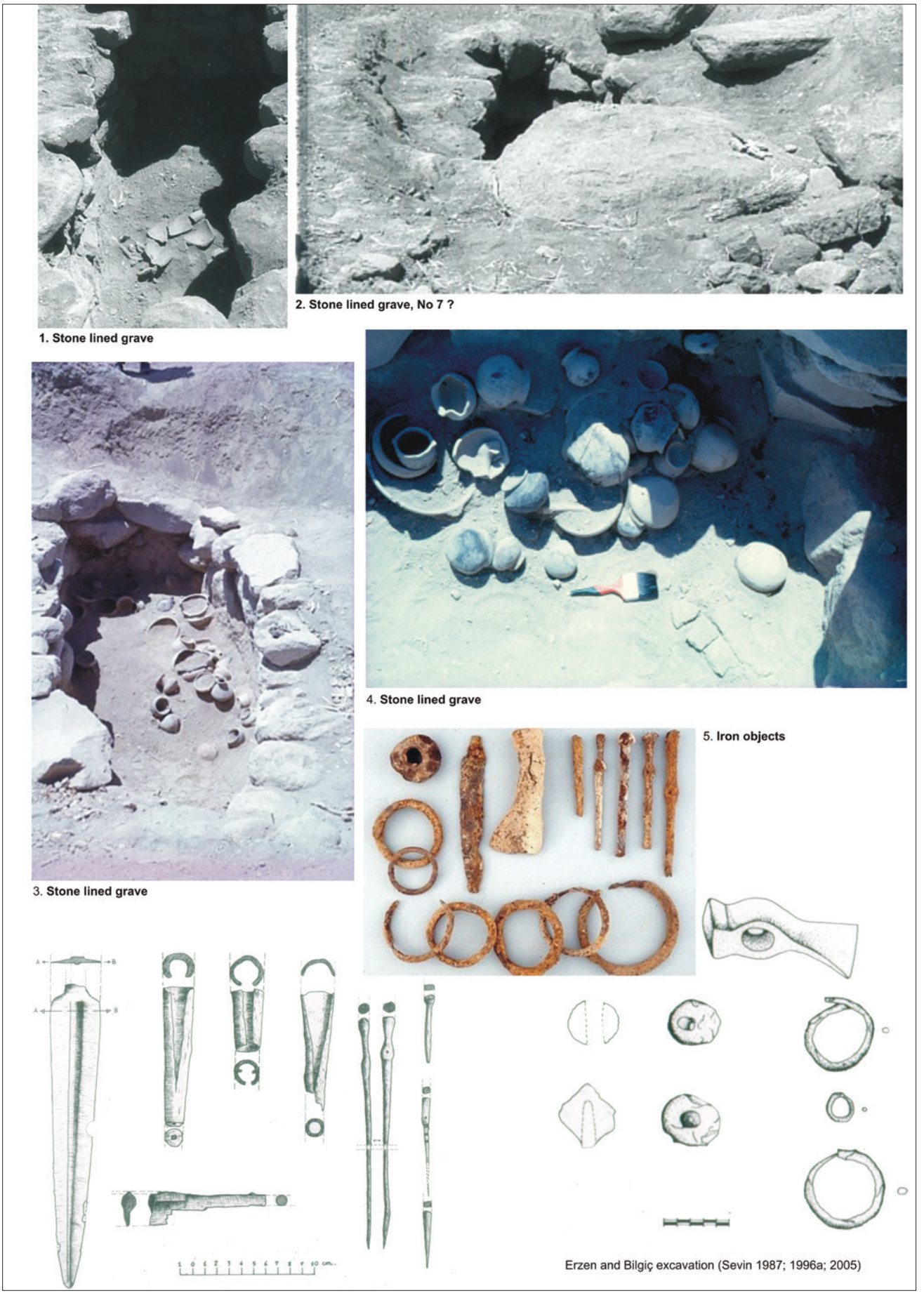
[6] Erzen 1963: 542; Erzen 1964: 570-572; Erzen/Bilgiç/Boysal/Öğün 1962 (1964): 20; 1963 (1965): 34. For detailed information for the cemetery see Sevin 1987; Sevin 1996; Sevin 2005a; Sevin 2014.

[7] Bilgiç 1964: 20; Bilgiç 1964: 570-572; Erzen/Bilgiç/Boysal/Öğün 1963 (1965): 34; Sevin 2014; Marro/Özfırat 2004; Özfırat 2013.

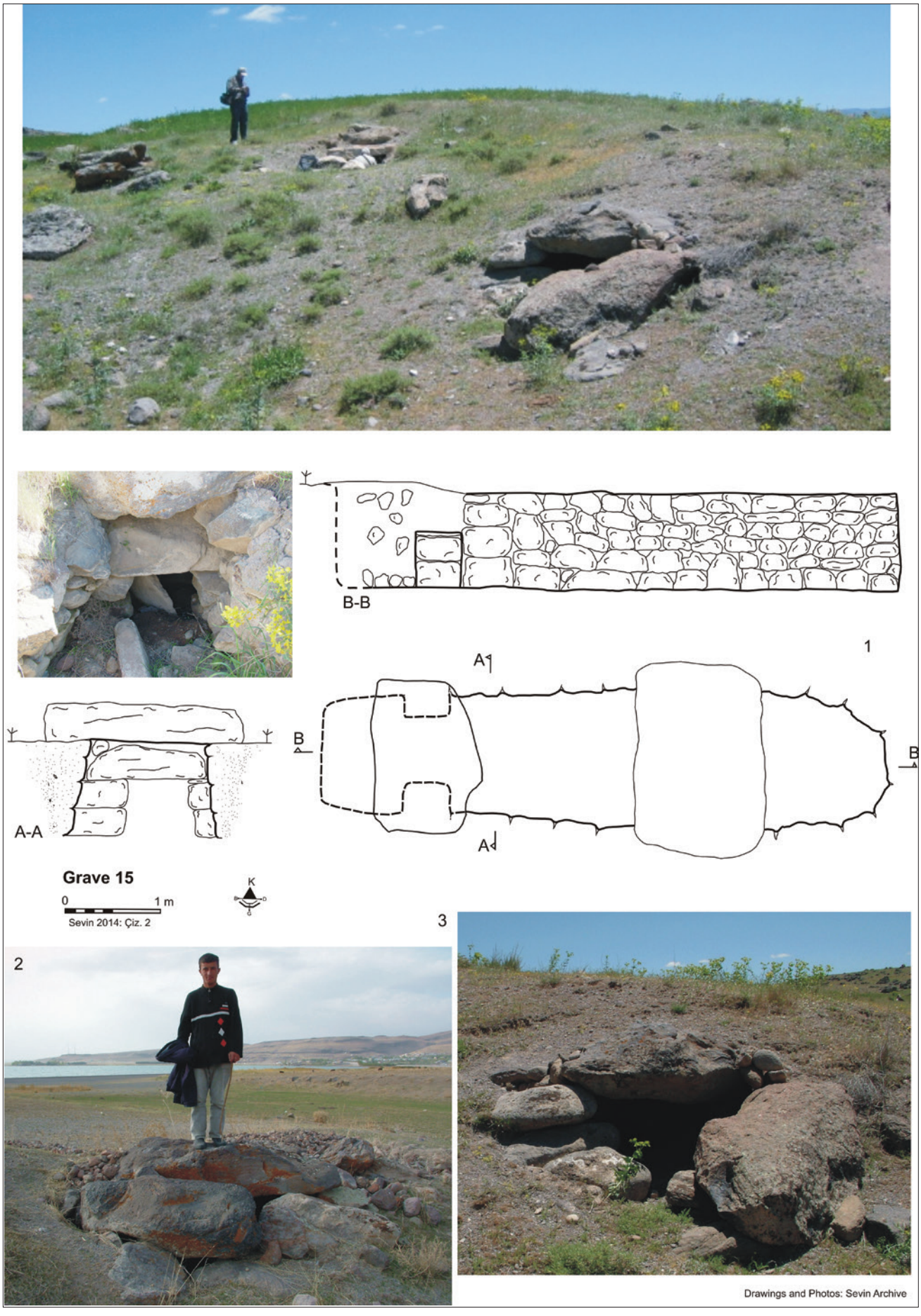
[8] Sevin 2014: Çiz. 7



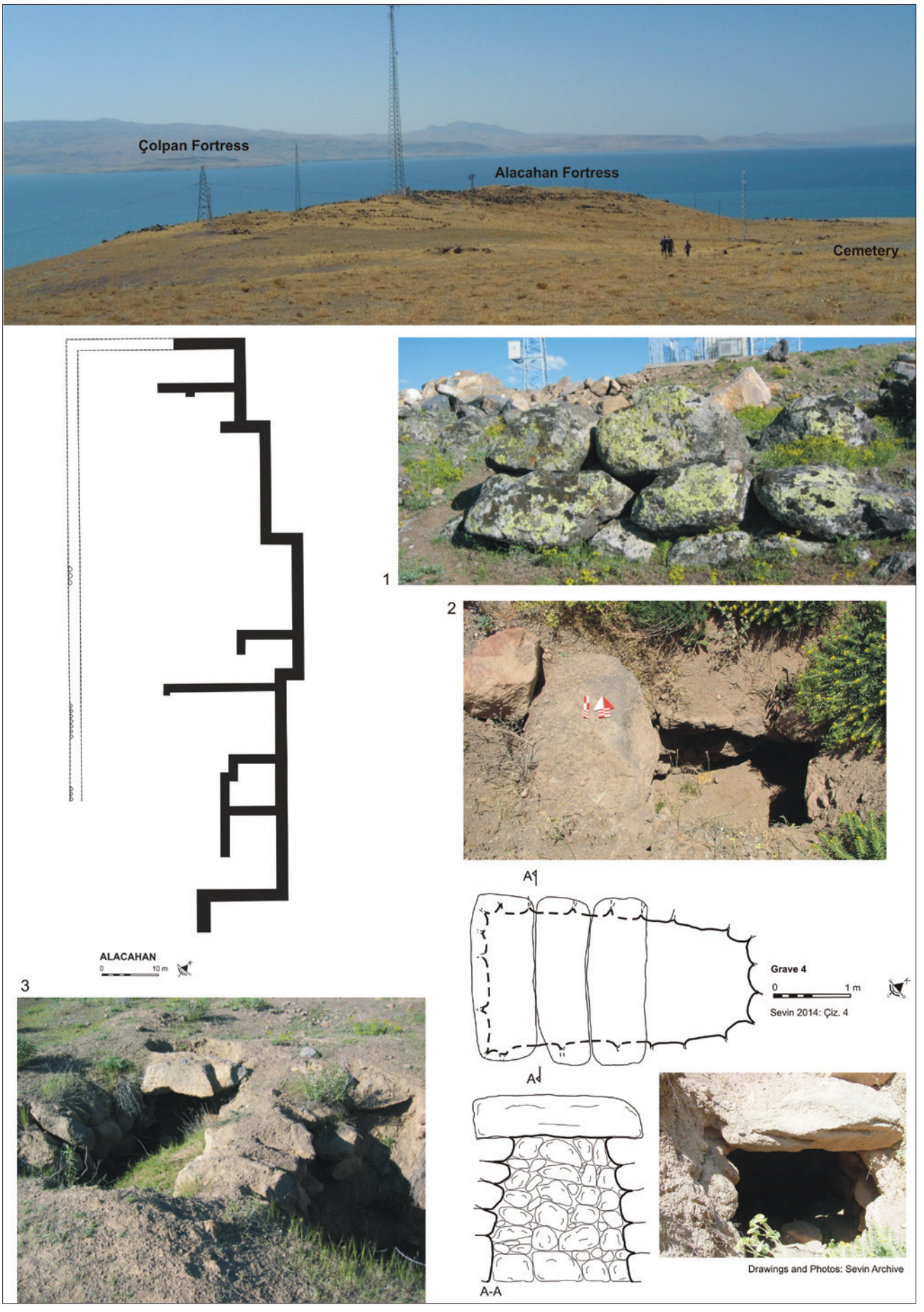
Figür 4: Ernis-Ünseli Evditepe Fortress and Cemetery General View / *Ernis-Ünseli Evditepe Kale ve Mezarlık Genel Görünüm.*



Figür 5: Ernis-Ünseli, Evditepe Graves / *Ernis-Ünseli, Evditepe Mezarları.*



Figür 6: Ernis-Ünseli, Evditepe Graves / *Ernis-Ünseli, Evditepe Mezarları.*



Figür 7: Ernis-Ünseli, Alacahan Fortress and Graves / *Ernis-Ünseli, Alacahan Kalesi ve Mezarları.*

partially covered with two heavy cover stones. Because they were only investigated in the survey we have no information about their graves goods.

The grave goods are around two hundred of pottery, around thirty ceremonial weapons such as iron daggers, mace heads and axes (Fig. 5: 5) and ornaments such as bracelets, needles, rings and beads[9]. The only bronze pieces are a ring-circle and a bracelet[10].

The fortresses-cemeteries at Evditepe and Alacahan show characteristics of EIA by their building technic and irregular plan based on topography were made of uncut or roughly shaped stones and by the remains of extensive cemetery and by their pottery (Figs. 3-4, 7: 1). In chronological sequence of Ernis, stone lined and chamber graves respectively represent early phase where iron ceremonial-ornamental grave goods and pinkish-buff were intensively found. They were built roughly rectangular in layout with irregular walls. Chamber graves with dromos contains latest phase, red slipped ware and bowls with thick rims appear first in these graves. The chamber graves built with more regular rectangular plan and walls in layout, their height increased and dromos arisen. 270 pottery were studied by Sevin from the cemeteries of Erzen and Bilgiç excavations, they can be separated into pinkish-buff ware, red slipped ware and red-brown ware. The pottery of excavations and survey in Evditepe and Alacahan fortresses-cemeteries have contemporary properties. However, because of the insufficiency of the excavation documents and the recording of some other pottery under the name of Ernis it is hard to separate the evidence[11]. EIA is the largest group in the pottery which we have collected on the fortress at Evditepe, contemporary with the cemetery. No pottery was found on the fortress at Alacahan, some EIA potsherds were only found from the cemetery.

Pre-Urartian settlements at Evditepe and Alacahan which is known as Ernis in the literature might suggested to be the part of the same settlement due to their closeness and being contemporary fortress-cemeteries. Even though a large citadel and a lower city that will support the population of these cemeteries were not found, Ernis can be seen as the most populated settlement on the northern shore of lake dated to the EIA when the cemetery enclosing a large area is considered. Major fortresses which is mainly located in settlement complexes that cover long periods, along with citadels, lower cities, cemeteries and mounds such as Ernis, suggest that the region was divided into numerous small units ruled by a central city in the EIA. Ernis (Evditepe and Alacahan) can be considered a central fortress-city of a small local polity on the northern shore of basin in Uruatri lands by its remarkable fortesses-cemeteries of pre-Urartian and Urartian structures on the neighboring hill (Yukarı Keçikıran) and by its location. The fortresses and some cemeteries that was located on the surrounding foothills and highlands, and around the plains of Muradiye and Erciş can be considered as the seasonal or permanent fortresses built for the territorial control of the pastures and agricultural lands of this central fortress. The northern shore of Lake Van is the most fertile area of the basin in terms of pastures and agricultural lands and also it is situated on the crossroad of main routes of the basin. It is surrounded by the volcanoes of Süphan to the west and Aladağ and Tendürek to the north which also function as a large barrier separating the Lake Van basin and northeastern Anatolia. The plains of Muradiye, Erciş and Patnos and large rivers going through them like Bağdişan-Murat, Ilıca (Zilan), Deliçay and Bendimahi lie in this great range of volcanoes. The limited agricultural lands in the basin of Lake Van are mostly in these plains and river valleys. The largest and richest pastures of eastern Anatolia are located on surrounding volcanoes. The northeastern shore of lake is the crossroad of main routes from the Van Plain to the northwards the Araxes Valley - southern Transcaucasia - northwestern Iran, to the westwards the Upper Euphrates Valley and Erzurum region.

Karagündüz

Karagündüz mound and cemetery (Karagündüz village) is located on the eastern shore of Lake Erçek at the point where the Memedik River (Büyük Çaylak, Özalp) flows (Figs. 1-2, 8). The mound situated on the shoreline, the EIA cemetery lies 1.5 km east of the mound within a

[9] There is a confusion for Ernis iron artefacts: The bronze hilted iron sword which was published by Belli/Konyar in the EIA finds of Evditepe cemetery is a typical Late Urartian (7th century BC) weapon (Belli 2001: 148, Fig. 6; Belli/Konyar 2003a: cover photo, upper left, 111, Fig. 38/3; pl. 25; Belli/Konyar 2003b: 187-189, Figs. 22: 3, 23); besides the origin of this is nor Ernis. The find spot of it which was delivered to us during the excavation of Van-Altıntepe (Tuşpa) Urartian cemetery was mentioned as Kalecik (070/9) near Van, see Marro/Özfırat 2004: Fn 6; Sevin 2014: Fn 12. For the Ernis metals see Sevin 1987; Sevin 2003; Sevin 2005a.
Besides some of the iron artefacts with origins defined as Evditepe by Belli/Konyar (Belli 2001: 148, Figs. 6-9; Belli/Konyar 2003a: 110-112, Figs. 36-39, pl. 23-26; 2003b: 179-194, Figs. 17-27) have brought to Van Museum by purchase or grant. Therefore the argument that they originated from Ernis is baseless, see Marro/Özfırat 2004: Fn 6; Sevin 2005a: Fn 6-7.

[10] Sevin (2005a: 362) suggests that the bronze is used scarcely at the beginning of EIA, even so this situation is quite interesting, it may be because some of the bronze objects haven't been recorded in excavation documents. It is reported that bronze objects are much fewer than the iron ones, Erzen/Bilgiç/Boysal/Öğün 1963 (1965): 34; Bilgiç 1964: 22.

[11] 270 pottery were studied by Sevin from the Erzen and Bilgiç excavation, 236 of them in the Van Museum and 30 from Anatolian Civilizations Museum, see Sevin 1996; 2004; 2005.

wide alluvial plain of the Memedik River. The area is also one of the richest pastureland and wetland in the basin. The site was in the middle of these fertile plain which covers an area of 80 km, today, and the mound appears to be an island because of the rising water level of lake. The Memedik River valley, on the western edge Karagündüz located, is also one of the most important route going to Iran in the basin through Van, Özalp and Saray. The mound heavily destructed by the rising of water of lake and village of Karagündüz which lies mainly on the mound. Excavations of both mound and cemetery were carried out between 1992 and 1999 by V. Sevin and Van Museum[12]. The sequence of mound spans from the Early Bronze Age (Kura-Araxes) to the Medieval Age in 7 levels. Earlier levels are still unknown because of the excavation didn't reach under the level of Late Kura-Araxes (7). Karagündüz mound has brought out to light almost uninterrupted occupation of which the most important architectural layers are those of the Kura-Araxes (Level 7) and Urartu (Level 4). Even though the architectural remains of MBA-EIA (Levels 6-5) and Late Iron Age (LIA, Achaemenid) are very weak, pottery of EIA (Level 5) and LIA (Level 3) are remarkable.

The EIA level 5 at the mound represented only by some earthen pits showing characteristics of a temporary settlement. A radiocarbon dating from this level gives a date of calibrated 1092-956 BC. This pre-Urartian level 5, even though it was either weak architectural remains clearly separate from the Urartian level 4a-4b by its pottery. The pottery of level 5 is the same those in the cemetery, pinkish-buff and red slipped wares are the most common groups.

In the EIA cemetery, eight chamber graves (K1-K8, K10) and a simple inhumation of an infant (K9) were excavated (Figs. 9-13). The chamber graves are divided into two group: chambers graves and chamber graves with dromos. They are rectangular in plan and the walls are built into a false arch roofed by large stones. Entrance to the burial chambers was provided by a simple door (width varies between 0.50 and 0.60 m) covered with a vertical slab on the narrow side or from the simple shaft dromos. Some of the burial chambers were reached by steps and some were not. Some graves have sections included for additional space for the burials, these are the earthen pits (K1, K2) on the ground or the holes (K6-7, K10) dug on the side walls of the chambers. All of graves contain multiple burials, the number of inhumations varies from twenty to one hundred six which belong to women, men, children and infants wrapped in a textile or dressed. The bodies were in the hocker position, when new bodies were added, the remains of earlier skeletons were pushed toward the back of the chamber creating a pile of older skeletons and burial gifts, and only the last body in each tomb was found in its original position, right in front of the entrance. Cremation was found only in the grave K5 together with inhumations, forty four bodies, and burnt bones of an infant were encountered in the northeastern corner of chamber, not buried in an urn, but possibly wrapped in a textile. Among the grave goods, a bowl with open rim and a high or shallow necked pot for each body, near the head are invariable, in bowls, generally the pieces belonging to sheep or goats and in pots the liquid residues were uncovered (Figs. 10, 12). In the grave K6-7, other than the food left in the vessels, bones belonging to sheep and goats were found. Additionally, three hearths found next to graves K3, K5 and K10, probably sacrificed animals were cooked of the during funeral ceremony in these hearths. Sevin also suggest that all these evidence and so many pots in the graves may indicate that the feast included all the people who attended the funeral ceremony[13]. As shown by some pieces, in order to light the dark burial chambers, terracotta lamps were used.

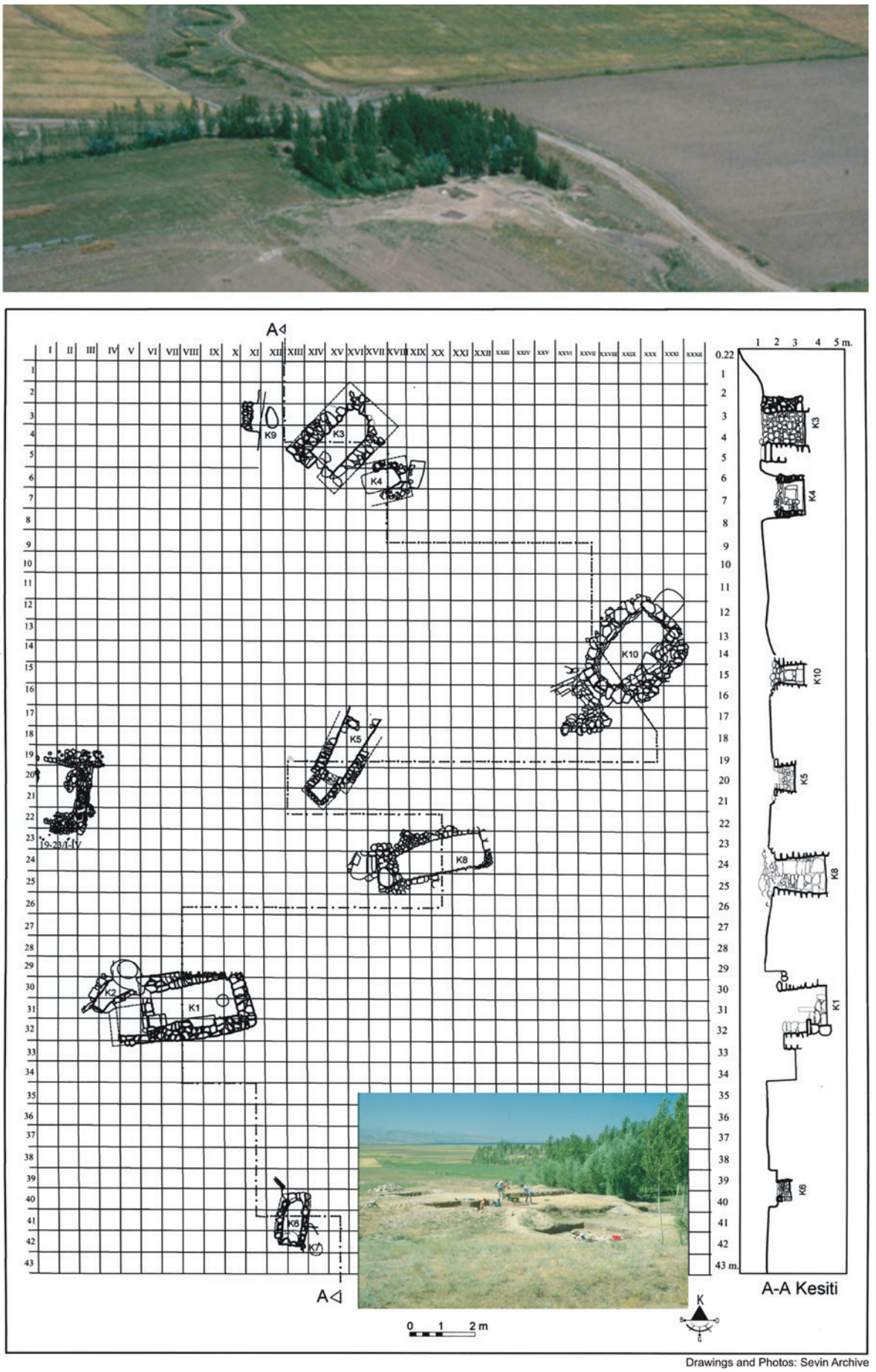
The chamber graves which is the first group of the cemetery (K2, K4, K6-7) are lower compared to those in the second group. The main feature of these graves are roughly rectangular in shape and a low and simple door which is covered with a vertical slab on the narrow sides. Grave K2 which is the smallest and most irregular one, reaches only 0.70 m in height, its length between are 2.50 and 2.70 m (Fig. 9, 10). The entrance is 0.53 m wide, from here by a corridor-like part the main room in 2.30 m in diameter is accessed, in this elliptic second part were largely dug into the ground and it's walls were not supported by the masonry. In the northeastern end of chamber an earthen pit (1.2 m diameter and 0.45 m depth), in which were found burials and grave goods. Thirty one bodies are found in the chamber. The grave K2 is separated from the others by its architectural features, it can be suggest that it is a transitional grave type from stone lined to chamber grave by the reason of its primitive chamber. It has features of stone lined by its being very shallow and with its flat roof covering heavy stones, and also has characteristic of chamber grave by its door. Dimensions of the grave K4 are 1.75 x 1.15 x 1.50 m. The last tomb in this group K6-7 is 1.30 x 335 x 1.50 m in dimensions (Fig. 9, 11). There is a separate hole (K7) dug on the ground level in the southeastern corner of the main chamber (K6). This hole used as an additional space for the bodies was dug into the ground and has a diameter of 2.00 m. Forty one bodies were found in both chamber. A radiocarbon result (with 1 sigma confidence) yielded a calibrated date range of 1250-1120 BC for grave K6.

[12] Sevin/Kavaklı 1996; Sevin 1999; Sevin 2003; Sevin 2004; Sevin 2005a.

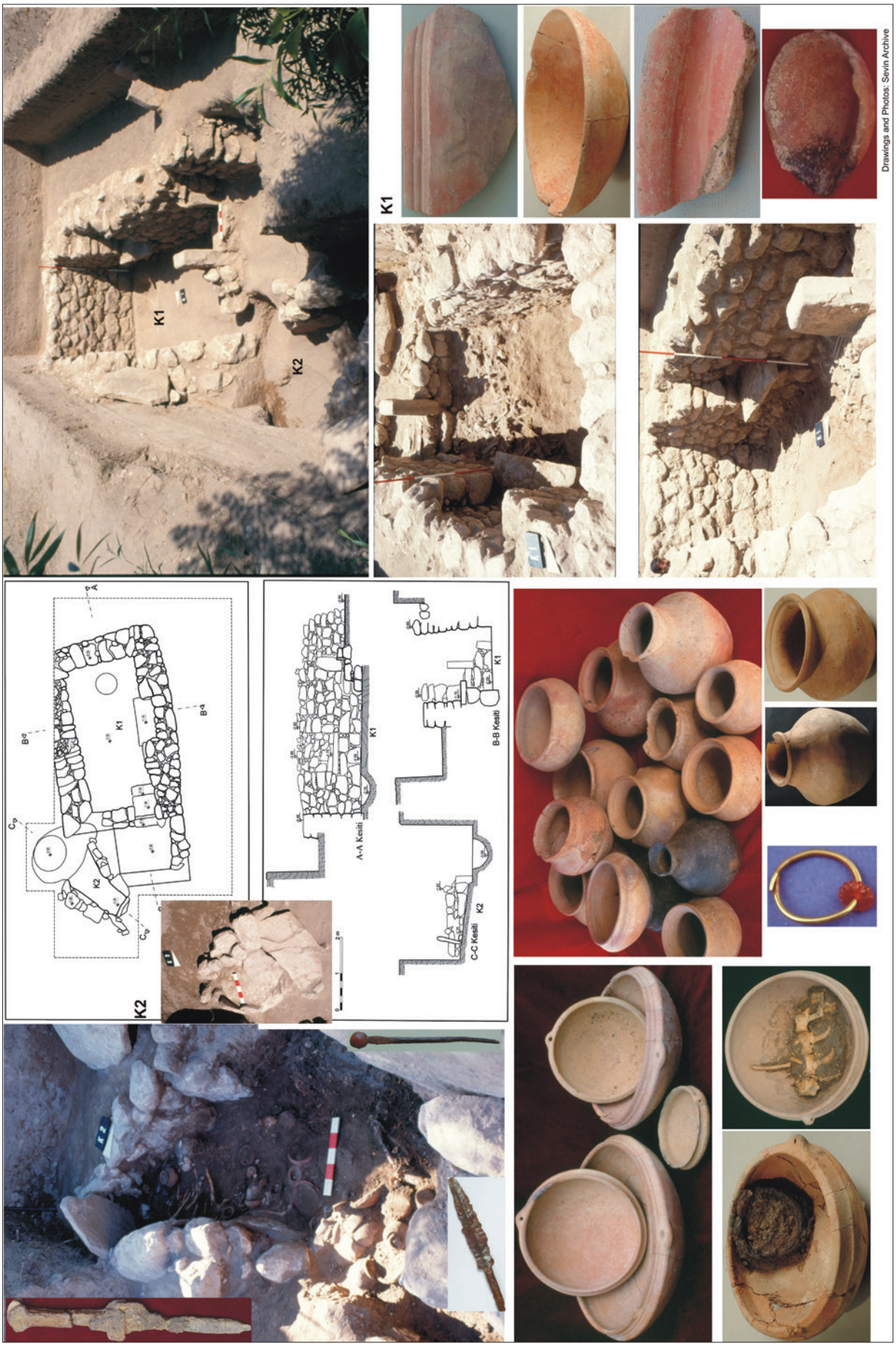
[13] Sevin 1999: 162.



Figür 8: Karagündüz Mound and Cemetery General View / *Karagündüz Höyük ve Mezarlık Genel Görünüm*



Figür 9: Karagündüz Cemetery / *Karagündüz Mezarlığı.*



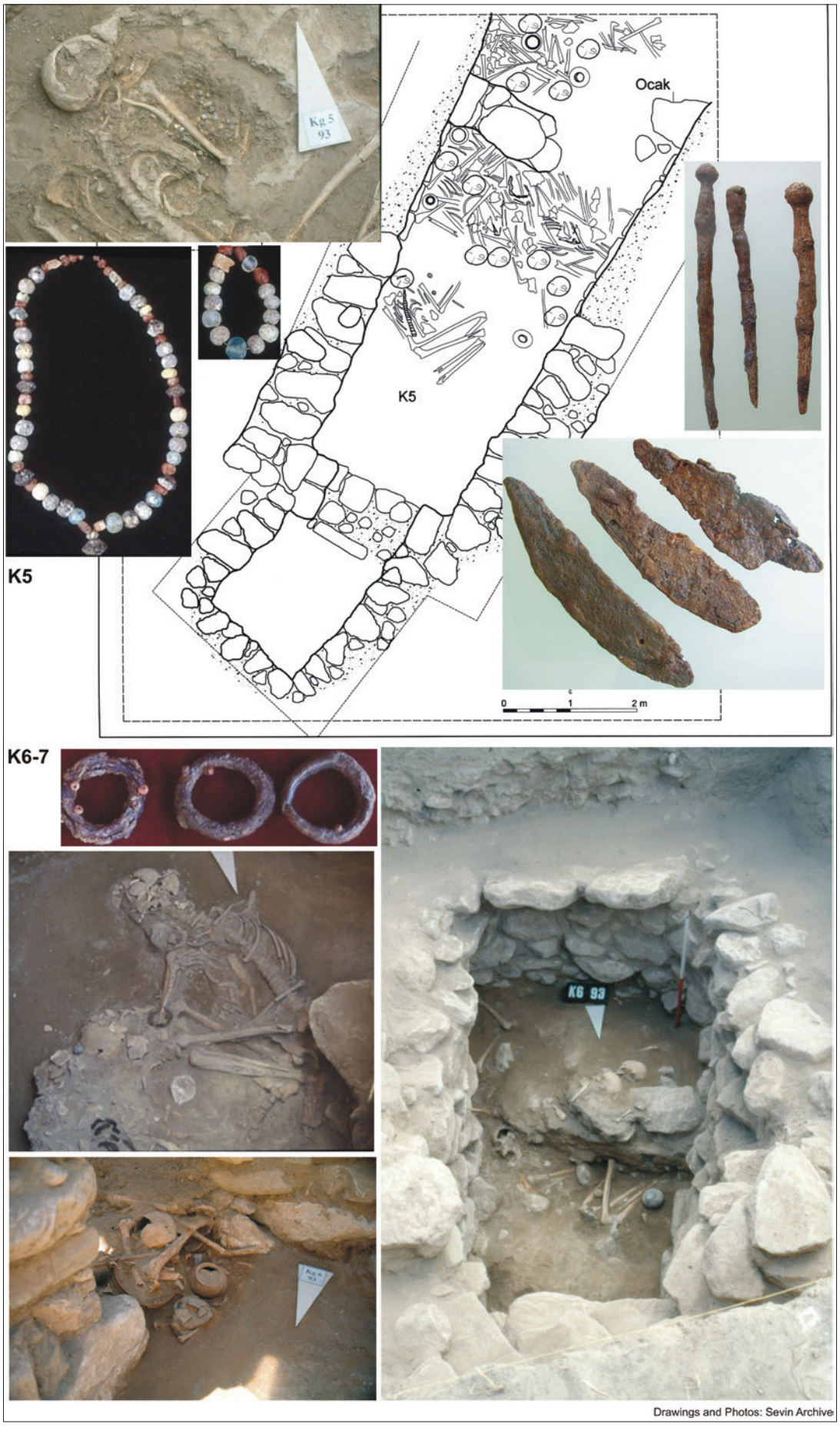
Figür 10: Karagündüz Graves K1 and K2 / *Karagündüz K1 ve K2 Mezarları.*

The chamber graves with dromos constitute of the second group of cemetery (K1, K3, K5, K8, K10). These graves built more regular in plan and building technic, the chamber is lower than the dromos which is on their narrow sides. Simple shaft dromoi are sometimes a simple pit (K3, K8), sometimes a pit partly (K10) or completely (K1, K5) surrounded by stone walls which is separated from the grave by a low and simple door covered with a vertical slab, reached by the one or a few steps to chambers in some graves. Dimensions of dromoi are varies between from 0.50 to 0.65 m, except for 1.50 x 1.50 (K1), 1.30 x 1.15 (K8), 1.00 x 1.10 (K5). The grave K1 is the largest one grave in the cemetery, its dimensions are 2.10 x 4.20 x 2.50 m, dromos 1.50 x 1.50 m (Figs. 9-10). Entrance to the chamber provided by a more regular door and two steps. Differently, there is a large niche (1.15 x 0.95 x 0.45 m.) in the middle of the south long wall of the grave, creating a protrusion of 0.20 m into the chamber. At the eastern end of the tomb there is a pit (0.30 x 0.40 m) for the burials. Dimensions of other graves of this group are: K3 (1.75 x 3.30 x 2.30 m), K5 (length is 3.20 m, 1.30 m wide in the southern end and 1.50 m wide in the northern end, height is 1.20 m), (Figs. 9, 11). Grave K8 has one hundred six bodies, its length is 4.30 m, 1.64 m wide in the middle, 1.25 m wide in the eastern end and 1.45 m wide in the western end, height is 2.50 m (Figs. 9, 12). The grave K10 has dimensions in 2.42 x 1.85 x 1.50 m. On the middle of northeastern wall of the chamber, in the level of floor there is a separate hole dug into the ground for the additional burials (0.63 X 0.72 m).

The grave goods contain mainly hundreds of vessels and large quantities of beads, ceremonial weapons and ornaments (Fig. 10, 12-13). Beads were used largely for necklaces, pin-pendants and amulets. Most of beads are made from semi-precious stones, agate and cornelian or from glass and frit, examples in bronze, bone, antimony, rocky crystal and faience are less used, one made from sea-shell. Iron bracelets, armlets, anklets and rings, ıron and bronze pins and earrings, gold earring constitute other ornaments. Bronze ornaments are very few compared to iron, these are small disk, one pair of earrings with frit beads, rings and pins. Ceremonial weapons are only made in ıron, no bronze used, these are daggers, spear-heads and mace-heads. Other objects of ıron are knives, staffs and chains, and two stone seals. Pottery consist of two groups, pinkish buff ware and red slipped ware (Figs. 10, 12-13). Pinkish buff ware is the majority in these vessels numbering 553 which found all of the graves. Red slipped ware are seen in the second group of graves, it has two subgroups: Thin and patchily red slipped ware which is derived from pinkish buff ware; and thick and bright burnished red slipped ware. Jars with ribbed shoulder and jugs with trefoil rims in thick and bright burnished red slipped ware are the closest forms to Urartian examples (Fig. 13) and, in the same way, bowls with rounded bodies and thick rimmed vessels that can mostly be seen in grave K1 found only in the second group of graves (chamber tombs with dromos). The lack of both these characteristics in the first group of graves proves the chronological differences between two groups of graves. The jug with trefoil rim found in the simple pit grave K9 is the closest to the Urartian examples. The thick and bright burnished red slipped ware with metallic surface in the chamber tomb with dromos (second group) quite resembles to the Urartian pottery characteristics in technic and shape. However, the thin and patchily red slipped ware which are the earlier examples are different with their more mat surface. Red slip was applied irregularly over the pinkish buff ware in these vessels, which is indicated earlier examples. The higher intensity of iron and the much lesser bronze in the first group of graves, only a ring (K4) and a hook (K6); the increase of the number of bronze finds with the number of iron in the second group of graves are most of the remarkable differences between two groups of graves.

The chronological sequence of Karagündüz is divided into two phase based on pottery, finds and architectural features. The chamber graves (first group: K2, K4, K6-7) represent early phase, those in the chamber graves with dromos (second group: K1, K3, K5, K8, K10) and a simple pit grave (K9) are in the late phase. According to architectural features and finds, the earliest grave is K2, the latest one is grave K1 in the cemetery. The most striking architectural differences between two groups are that the first group of graves were built with a more irregular lay out and built with a smaller in size with a lower height. Graves K2 and K4 were partially destroyed during the construction of graves K1 and K3, this stratigraphic situation also provides a relative chronology between two groups of graves. Although some clear differentiations between two groups of graves in architecture, pottery and bronze ornaments, and also there is a continuity of burial tradition, iron ornaments-weapons and pinkish buff ware which are still main grave goods in both phases.

Cemetery at Karagündüz was used during the EIA as it was shown by the early and late phases of the graves. The EIA level (5) at the mound of Karagündüz has a weak architecture just as the other mounds in the region, the pottery of this layer shows contemporary characteristics with the cemetery. Karagündüz level 5 is a temporary settlement, people were most probably living in tents, moving seasonally. It can be suggest that the people buried in the cemetery which lies in the middle of the richest grazing pastures of the region and the Memedik River valley were members of a tribe with a pastoral lifestyle.



Figür 11: Karagündüz Graves K5 and K6-7 / *Karagündüz K5 ve K6-7 Mezarları.*



Figür 12: Karagündüz Grave K8 / *Karagündüz K8 Mezarı.*



Figür 13: Karagündüz Cemetery Pottery, Beads, Seals and Metal Finds / *Karagündüz Mezarlığı Çanak Çömlek, Boncuklar, Mühürler ve Metal Buluntular.*

Yoncatepe

Yoncatepe building complex and cemetery (Yukarı Bakraçlı village) located on the western slope of mountains Erek and Varak surrounding on the eastern side of the Van Plain (Figs. 1-2, 14). The site is situated on this high slope overlooking all the plain and lake, and on the route of small lake in Keşiş (Turna) yaylası which is the richest pastureland and water source in the basin. The Urartian building complex is situated on the highest section of the settlement, some buildings which is defined lower settlement lies at the northern skirt of it, the EIA cemetery lies at the northern skirt of the building complex. Excavations were carried out between 1997 and 2009 by O. Belli and Van Museum[14].

Eight chamber graves were excavated in the cemetery (Fig. 14). The chamber graves are divided into two groups: chambers tombs (M2, M5, M6, M9) and chamber tombs with dromos (M1, M3, M4, M8). They are rectangular or roughly rectangular in plan and the walls are built into a false arch roofed by large stones. Dimensions of graves are: M1 (two sections, length 1.20 and height 1.70, 2.40 x 1.80 x 1.50 m), M2 (4.20 x 1.20 x 1.20 m), M3 (5.95 x 1.54 x 2.10 m), M4 (5.95 x 1.54 x 2.10 m), M4 (two chambers 1.20 x 0.85, 1.60 x 1.85, height 1.70 m), M5 (1.00 x 2.20 x 1.95 m); M6 (two chambers and a section, 5.95 x 1.60 m, 2.75 x 1.30, height 2.50, section 2.60 x 1.98 x 1.83 m, because of the height difference between the units the height of grave reaches 4.20 m). Although, the walls of graves built with stones, some of the burial chambers fully or partially were built into the ground. Entrance to the graves are provided by removing one of the roof stones on the narrow sides or by dromos which is separated from the chamber by a low and simple door covered with a vertical slab. Some of the chambers are reached by the one or a few steps (M3, M4, M5, M6). In the grave M9 (4.00 x 2.30 m at the ends 1.80 m, existing height 1.70 m) the burial chamber shows difference in architectural features by its regular door (0.60 x 0.70 m, lintel is 0.90 m) on the northern long wall. Yoncatepe graves mostly have various units, some has multiple rooms (M1, M4, M6, M8). These separate units inside the tombs were covered by the vertical slabs just like their entrances. In these tombs M8 has an irregular plan and a construction technique, it is dug into the ground has three different chambers and a spherical section in its complex plan. At the east of the chamber (M8I: 1.85 x 2.45 m) reached by dromos (1.00 x 1.05 m) there is a section M8II (length 1.55, height 0.70 m), at the south another section M8II (length 1.30, height 1.20 m) with another section one M8III (length 2.20 m). Another distinction is that the presence of the niches in the M8 tomb. In some tombs there are earthen pits on the ground of the chambers or the room shaped large holes on the side walls (M1, M6, M8), these holes dug into the earth constructed for additional space reach up to 1.50 m in depth (M1).

Dromoi were shaped a deep shaft surrounded by slabs, they are 1.20 x 1.00 m in average dimensions, the deepest being 1.70 m (M1). The graves contain multiple burials, the number of inhumations are thirty eight (M6) and forty (M2). The bodies were in the hocker position, only the last body was found in its original position (entrance of M3, M9), the remains of earlier skeletons were pushed toward the back of the chamber creating a pile of older skeletons and gifts. A large number of dog skeletons and bones of sheep and cattle were encountered in the chambers and entrances, especially in the grave M6, one and two dog skeletons were found *insitu* respectively in the graves of M5 and M4.

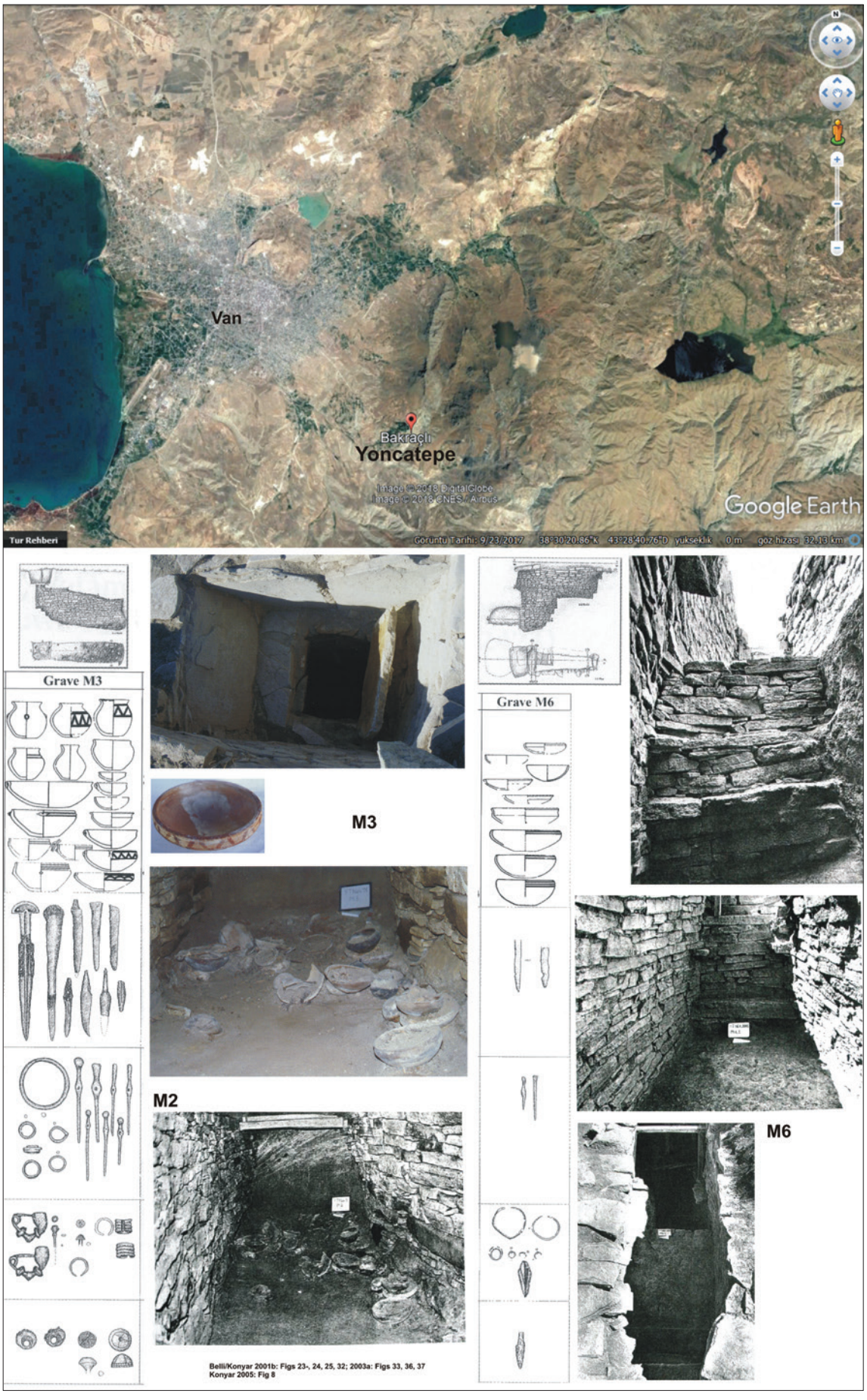
The grave goods are mainly vessels, ıron ceremonial weapons and ornaments, beads, and a small amount of bronze ornaments (Fig. 14). Ceremonial ıron weapons are daggers, knives. Iron ornaments are pins, bracelets, rings and mace heads. A few bronze ornaments are rings, pins, earrings, two fibulae and an arrowhead. Beads of necklaces made of various stones, agate, carnelian, glass and frit. Other ornaments are one pair of gold earrings and pendant, and antimony buttons in a small quantity. Pottery is mainly pinkish buff ware which is variation of grooved ware in the basin and its painted samples (M3), second group is red slipped ware which is found in lesser numbers mainly in the graves of M5 and M6.

Dilkaya

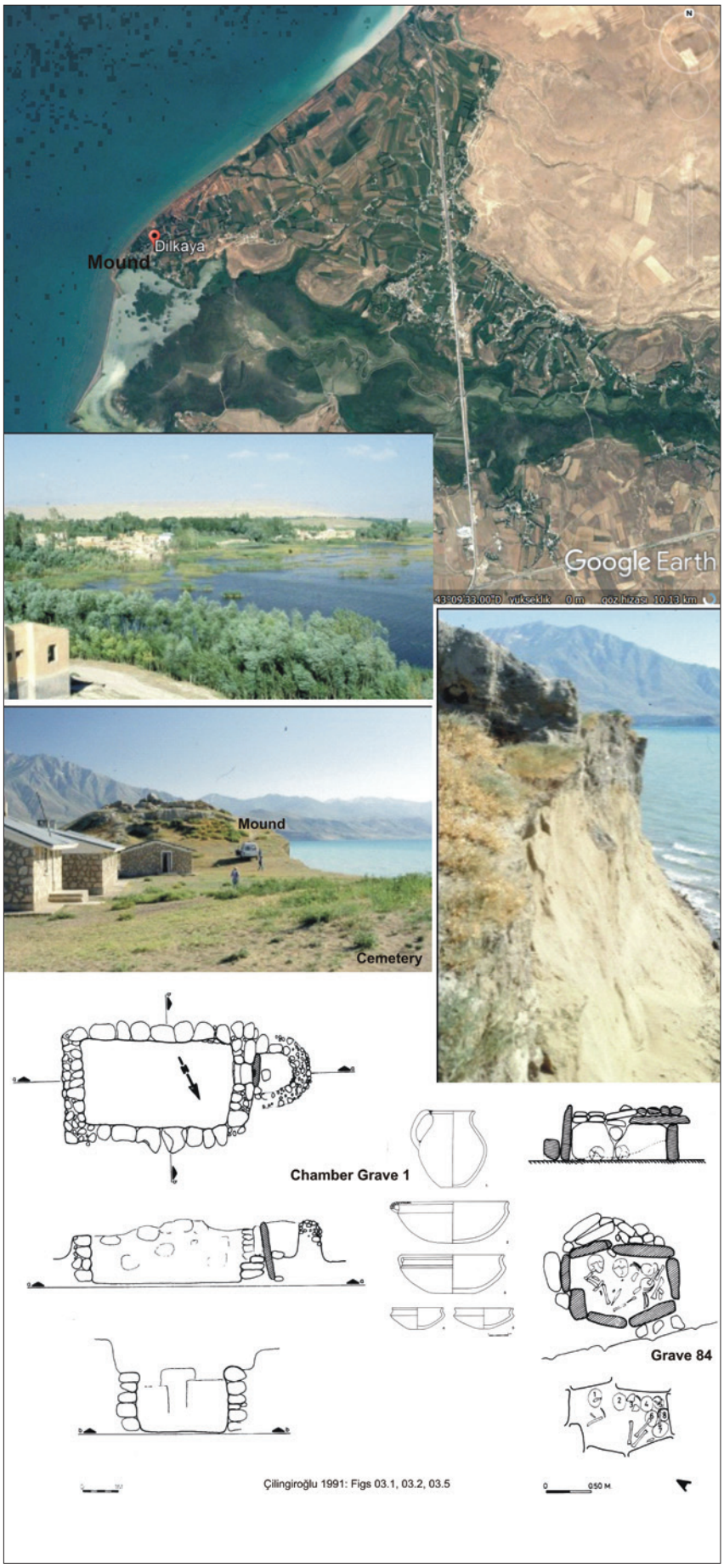
Dilkaya mound and cemetery (Dilkaya village) is located on the eastern shore of Lake Van at the point where the Güzelsu (Hoşap) River flows (Figs. 1-2, 15). The mound situated on the shoreline, the EIA cemetery lies 200 m north of the mound, it is heavily destructed by water of the lake. Güzelsu River valley, on the western edge where Dilkaya is located, is one of the main route reaching Iran through Van, Gürpınar and Hakkari in the basin. Excavations both mound and cemetery were carried out between 1984 and 1991 by A. Çilingiroğlu[15]. The sequence of mound spans from the Early Bronze Age II (Kura-Araxes) to the Medieval Age in five levels. The EIA level IIb (11-10 centuries BC) no architectural remains, only pottery was found which is same those in the cemetery.

[14] Belli/Konyar 2001; Belli/Konyar 2003a: 116-119; Belli/Tozkoparan 2005; Belli 2009; Konyar 2005: Fig. 8.

[15] Çilingiroğlu 1991; Çilingiroğlu 1993; 2012; Sağlamtimur 1984.



Figür 14: Yoncatepe Graves M2, M3 and M6 / *Yoncatepe M2, M3 ve M6 Mezarları.*



Figür 15: Dilkaya General Views of Mound and Cemetery, Chamber Grave 1 and Grave 84 / *Dilkaya Höyük ve Mezarlık Genel Görünüm, Oda Mezar 1 ve Mezar 84.*

Dilkaya cemetery belong to EIA, Urartu and Medieval Ages. Two chamber graves and some stone cist graves dates to the EIA which has inhumation burials, only in chamber grave 2 inhumation and cremation burial seen together (Fig. 15). Chamber graves have partially been destroyed, they probably had been robbed in ancient times, this is the reason why the finds from both these graves doesn't represent the whole inventories of chamber graves 1 and 2 and except for the hocker burial that was found in the chamber grave 1 no skeleton or finds found *in-situ*. Chamber grave 1 is rectangular in plan with semi-circle simple shaft dromos which is separated from the chamber by a small door covered with a vertical slab, two steps leading to the inside of the grave. The walls built into a false arch and the roof was covered by large stones. The dimensions of grave are 2.40 m and 4.60 m and height is 1.65 m. It contains multiple burials, the number of inhumations are eleven, and one body was in a hocker position in the northeastern corner of grave. The grave goods were only six vessels. Chamber grave 2 has oval plan, the walls are partly destroyed, thus it is undetermined whether the grave has a dromos and roofed by large stones or not. The diameter of grave is 1.75 m, and height is 1.70 m. At least thirty bodies and traces of cremation were found in the grave. The grave goods were bronze bracelets, ıron mace-head, stone beads and potsherds that the tomb was used until the Urartian period.

In the stone cist graves, No 84 is roughly rectangular in plan covered by slabs, dimensions are 0.70 x 1.10 m. The grave had been robbed in ancient times. It contains eight bodies, they were pushed toward the southern part of the grave, and those in the northern part were found in hocker position, right in front of the entrance. The grave good was only an iron pin. No 91 were divided two parts, bodies were hocker position. The grave good were one vessel and ıron knife. No 88, dimensions are 2.50 x 2.75 m, and it has two bodies.

The EIA cemetery at Dilkaya is dated to the end of the EIA, to the 11-10 centuries BC as in the level IIb of mound.

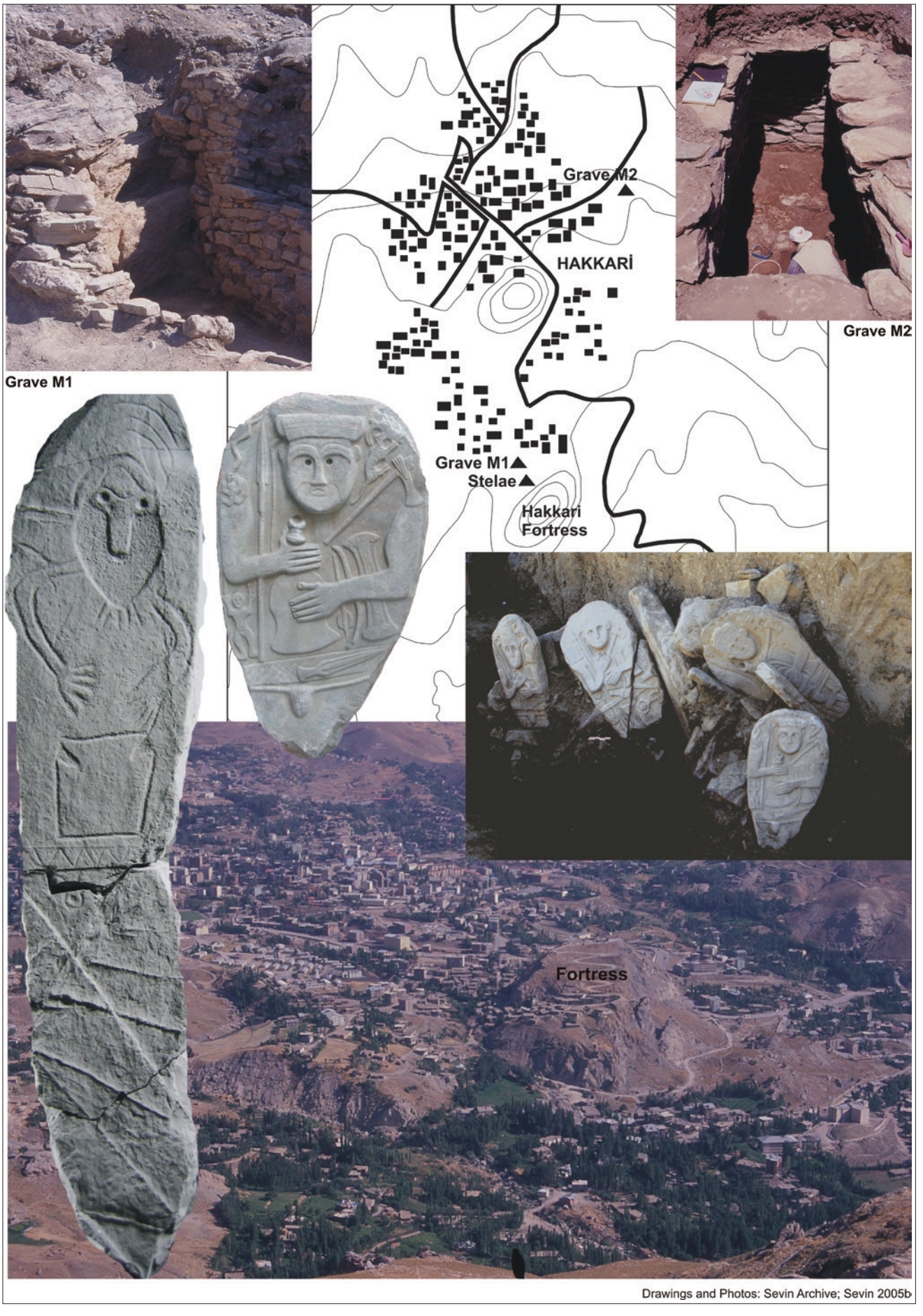
Hakkari

Hakkari stelae and two chamber graves (M1-M2) is located in the city center of Hakkari (Figs. 1, 16-18). The excavation carried out between 1997 and 2000 by Prof. Dr. V. Sevin and Museum of Van16. The city of Hakkari lies within the graben of mountains where at the convergence point of Mt Southern Taurus and Mt Zagros. Katramas Çay Stream, a branch of the Great Zap River, flows by the south of the city located in the basin of Great Zap.

In the excavation discovered thirteen stelae and two chamber graves (M1-M2) in the city center of Hakkari. Stelae were found with their original positions on the western slope of fortress at Hakkari (Mir Fortress), (Fig. 16). Thirteen stelae erected side by side at the outskirts of the western cliff of the fortress, eleven of them male, two of them are most probably female figurines. They sculpted from local stones of limestone, their techniques are the bas-relief, the bas-relief and engraving, and linear. The main theme is a frontal view of the upper part of a human body which all are naked. The main figures of male stelae are a warrior together with a number of symbolic objects, weapons, tents, human and animal figures, their height are between 0.81 m and 1.42 m. Two female stelae have distinctive features with their linear technic and lack of weapons and other symbols, their height are 1.10 m and 3.30 m.

Hakkari chamber grave M1 is located at the western slope of Hakkari fortress and 19.00 m north of the stelae (Figs. 16-17). It contains multiple burials, at least 75 individuals were found in the grave. It is not possible to discern the exact number individuals, to define burial rite and architectural features since the grave was largely destroyed. Chamber grave M1 has irregular plan looking primitive, it is roughly rectangular in lay out, on southern and southeastern walls partially the bedrock was utilized. The length of the tomb is 3.00 m, its width is 1.20 m in the southern and 0.70 m in the northern end, the existing height of the wall is 2.00 m. The walls must have been built into a false arch and the roof was sealed by large cover stones. The totally destroyed northern section is the narrowest part of the tomb and it is not fully determined if there is an entrance here. Therefore, it is uncertain whether the grave has an entrance or not, probably, the entrance to the chamber was provided by removing one of the stones that cover it. In the grave, scattered amongst the grave goods, were numerous animal bones, these are the remains of the food that were left here as a burial ceremony. Since there is a heavy destruction in the grave, the finds do not represent all the inventory of the tomb and no skeletons and finds are *in-situ*. The grave goods included two bronze daggers, obsidian arrowheads, bronze and bone pins, gold, silver and bronze earrings, bronze and bone rings, fragments of bronze bracelets ?, mainly bronze, frit, stone (mostly agate), a few glass and shell beads, bone, stone and terracotta amulets, bone and stone spindle whorl, bronze hair rings and astragals (Fig. 17). Pottery was the main goods in the grave, these vessels of almost 700 in number are mostly pinkish red-brown ware, a small number of Khabur ware and Van-Urmia ware (Araxes painted ware), (Fig. 17).

[16] Sevin 2005b; Sevin 2015.



Figür 16: Hakkari Stelae and Graves / *Hakkari Stelleri ve Mezarları.*

Hakkari chamber grave M2 located to the north of fortress (Figs. 16, 18), approximately 1 km. It is rectangular in plan, 4.10 x 1.60 m in dimensions and height is 2.10 m, width is 1.60 m on the floor and 1.00 m uppermost of the walls. The walls are built into a false arch, the roof was covered by large stones. The entrance to the grave was provided by removing one of the stones that cover it and there is a step leading to the inside on the southern wall of the chamber. There are also small holes scattered all over the walls, with their purposes undetermined. Chamber grave has multiple burials, eleven bodies were found. Bodies were piled up in front of the northern short wall across the entrance, back of the tomb, probably creating more space for the new bodies. Probably, the skeletons were stacked in two layers, but since they were at least partially destroyed neither skeletons nor any finds were *in-situ*. The grave goods are ıron dagger, ıron bracelets, bronze blades, bronze pins, bronze pectoral, stone objects, gold and silver discs, bone spindle whorl, cornaline, bronze and stone beads and amulets (Fig. 18). Pottery was the main goods in the grave number around 200 pinkish red-brown ware (Fig. 18).

In chronological sequence of Hakkari, the oldest group of the pottery is Khabur ware in the grave M1 (Fig. 17) which is related to northern Mesopotamia-Syria and it is dated approximately between 1.800-1.700 BC (Period 2)[17]. The presence of Khabur ware in Hakkari is quite remarkable, it also found eastwards in Dinkha Tepe IV and Hasanlu VI in southwest of Lake Urmia which proves the political and economic relations between Mesopotamia and Zagros regions at the beginning of second millennium BC. Since Khabur ware was found in a chamber grave (M1) in Hakkari, adjacent to the stelae can be considered as a reflection of a long range tin trade which can be associated with these stelae. Accordingly, the first burials of grave M1 belong to trade system at the period of Old Assyrian and Old Babylonian and it is clearly much earlier from the stelae which are dated 1450-1000 BC. King Samsi-Adad I expanded Assyrian borders to the Rania Plain which is located 150 km south of Hakkari and conquered the city of Susarra (Şemşara) here. It might suggests that the warriors depicted in the Hakkari stelae are not them, their ancestors should be the ones who were in the control of this trade. The absence of Late Khabur ware should point out the breaking of the trade between Hakkari and Mesopotamia. The end of the Old Babylonian kingdom and the rise of the Hittite kingdom in central Anatolia should have been caused crises and changes in the trade systems. It is not clear that how these changes effected southern Urmia and Hakkari regions which were owing to their location on the long range trade route between east and Assyrian Kingdom.

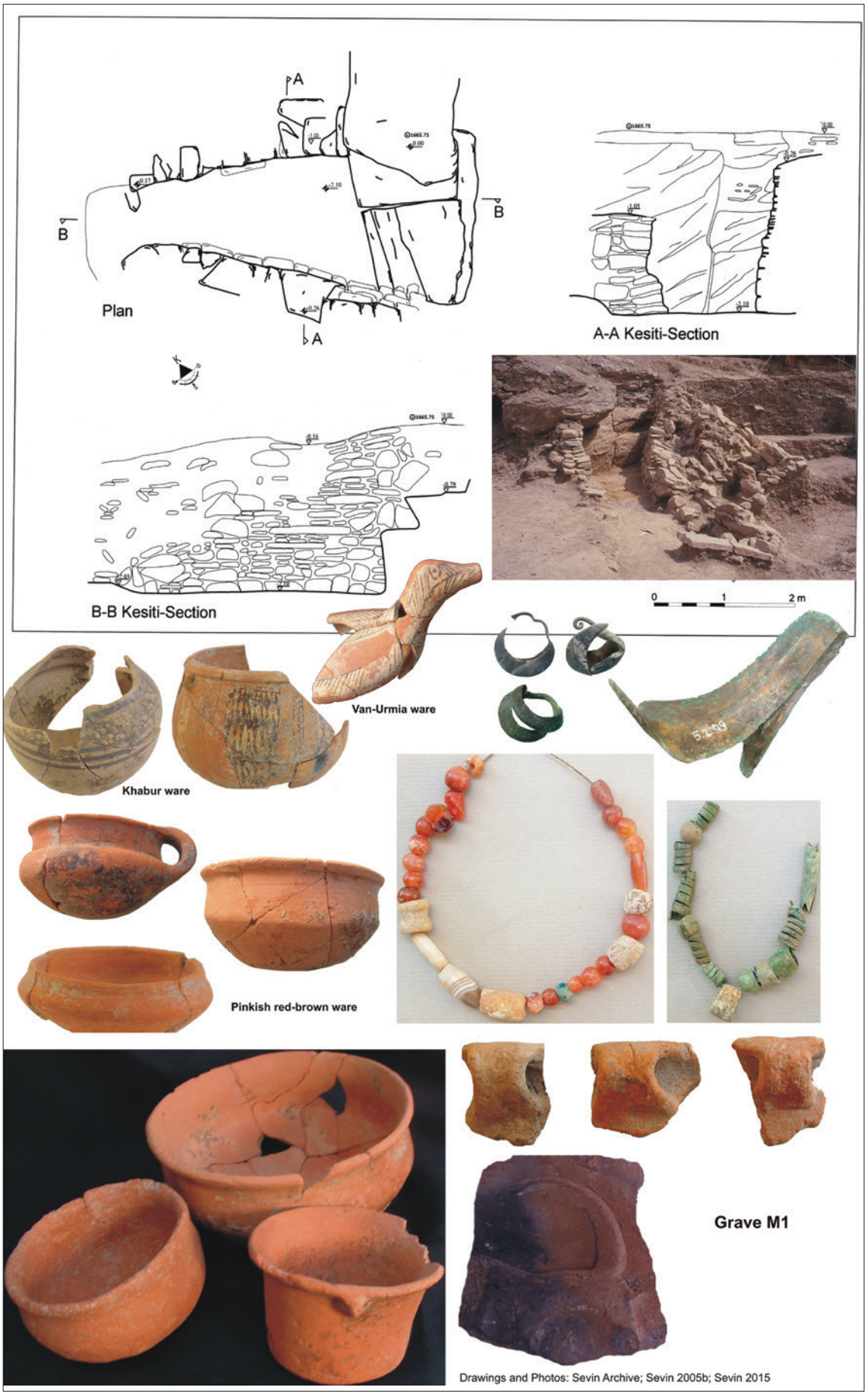
[17] Özfırat 2002a; Sevin 2015: 72-73.

Khabur ware is followed by Late Van-Urmia ware which is a sub group of the Araxes painted ware culture in the grave M1 (Fig. 17)[18]. Araxes painted ware appeared on the western shores of the Lake Urmia, southern Caucasia and the highland of eastern Anatolia during the MBA-LBA with some regional variations[19]. This change in the pottery is considered an evidence of a significant breaking point, a new beginning. The latest phase which was proposed for the Araxes painted ware is *c*. 1650-1400/1300 BC[4]. It seems that the pottery of LBA is represented by polychrome painted ware of Van-Urmia tradition in the basin of lakes Van and western part of Urmia. Van-Urmia ware of the grave M1 shows trade relationship with the region of western and southern part of Lake Urmia.

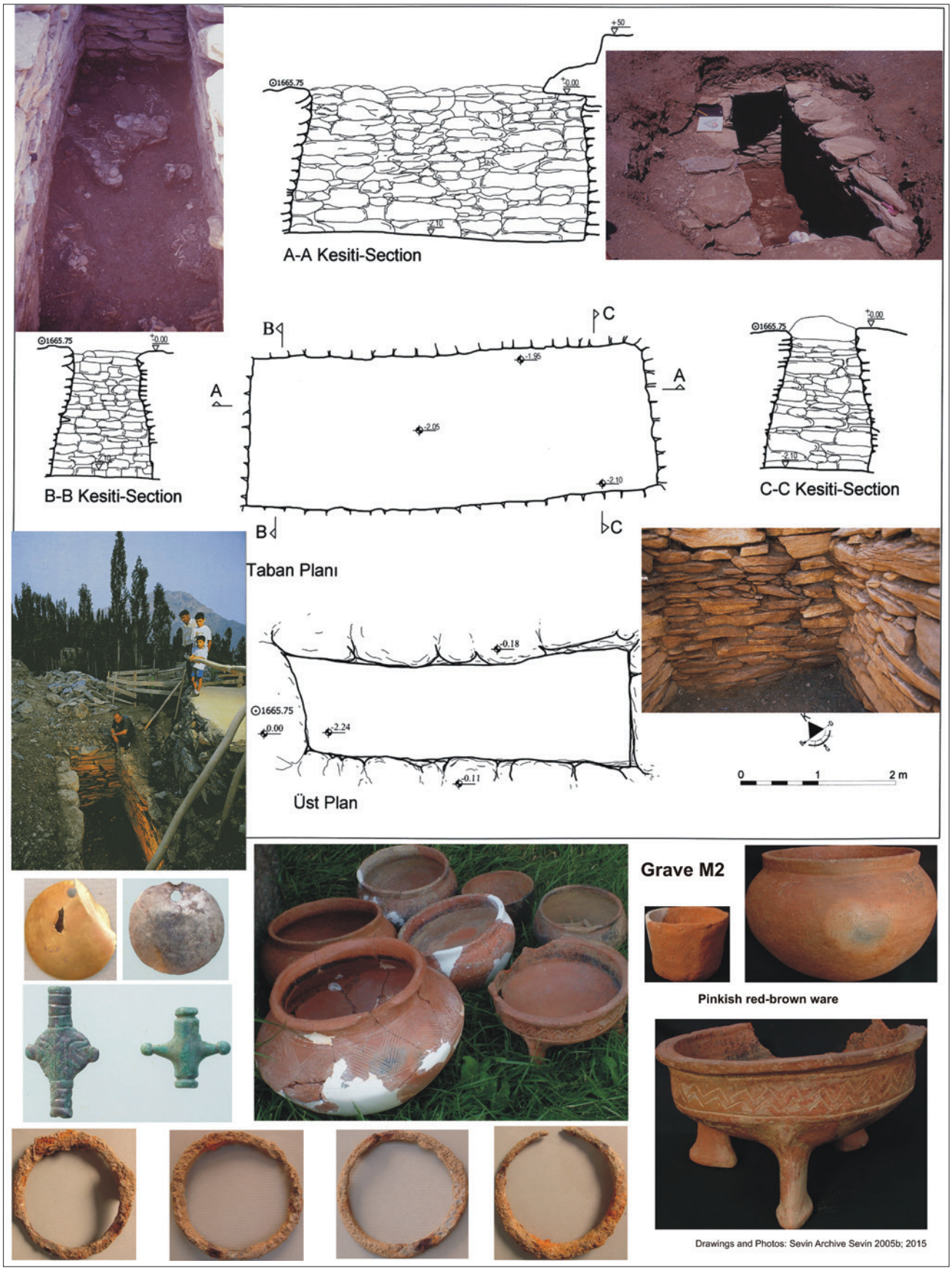
Pinkish red-brown ware represents last phase which is the largest group in the grave M1 (Fig. 17)[20]. A part of this group is contemporary with the Araxes painted ware and the other part of them is related to the transition period to the grave M2. Khabur and Araxes painted wares are not local groups, but pinkish red-brown ware shows strong local character. While some fragments of the pinkish red-brown ware, on which we don't have too much information, were similar to the LBA-EIA pottery of eastern Anatolia other forms and such as crescent, snake and ibex reliefs evidence a local character. Additionally, it can be said that it is in limited relation with the region of western Urmia. In the extensive excavations and surveys made in the basin of Lake Van no pinkish red-brown ware has been found until now. Their intensive presence in the graves of Hakkari point towards their widespread use in this region and even a new zone that can be called as the northern Zagros culture. In the grave M1, a fragment of grooved ware bowl is typical of the eastern Anatolia EIA. The emergence of grooved ware dated in the second half of or end of 13th century in eastern Anatolia; similarly, two small pieces resembling iron studs or wires uncovered in the grave M1 proves that the EIA I period was reached.

Grave M1 is used for *c*. 300 years, from the end of first quarter of second millennium BC to the third quarter of same millennium showing the relationships with a wide region. The warriors described in the EIA stelae and the period when chamber grave M1 was in use is partially coincide with. It is remarkable that in the grave M1, there are no weapons or object which were depicted in the stelae of Hakkari, although the pottery shows that partly used in the a same period. It seems that the owners of this grave to share it with their ancestors as shown by the earlier pottery of Khabur ware which provides us a *terminus post*

[18] Özfırat 2002b; Sevin 2015: 73-79.
[19] Özfırat 2001; Özfırat 2018.
[20] Sevin 2015: 53-72; Özfırat 2018.



Figür 17: Hakkari Grave M1 / *Hakkari M1 Mezarı.*



Figür 18: Hakkari Grave M2 / *Hakkari M2 Mezarı.*

quem for the grave M1. The radio-carbon analysis on the human bones of the grave M1 also give the dates of 1885-1745, 1995-1690, 1950-1835 and 2030-1780 BC. Even though it is represented with small number of potsherds the grooved ware presents a *terminus ante quem* for the grave M1. Accordingly, the grave M1 is dated to the LBA-EIA I in eastern Anatolia chronology. Pinkish red-brown ware of the grave M2 belongs to the later phase of this group, some continuity in forms and decoration shows that there is not a large time gap between the two tombs. It seems that with the end of usage of the grave M1 in the beginning of EIA, grave M2 started to be used just after. This transition is more of a continuation rather than an interruption. This also makes us think that both people buried in two graves could be ethnically be related, but it is not possible to further comment only by the archaeological evidence. Grave M2 was used for a short timeframe. The small number of finds and the number of bodies limited to eleven is the evidence of that. It should most probably be used from the last centuries of second millennium BC to the beginning of first millennium BC. Along with the changes of pottery, the large number of iron finds which in the grave M1 lacks evidences of this later phase. Accordingly, grave M2 is dated to the later phase of EIA chronology, to EIA II. At this last stage the owners of the grave gives an outlook of total isolation, there is no traces with neighboring regions contrary to their ancestors in those grave M1.

The mountainous and isolated geographic characteristics of the Hakkari region makes it harder to ascertain the typological and chronological development and to reach archaeological and cultural evaluation. There is no settlement traces with the characteristics of mound or sedentary settlement in our survey cooperated with the excavation. In throughout the history this region must have been the homeland of semi-nomadic peoples in pastoral characteristic that sustain themselves with animal husbandry and trade. It is possible that these semi-nomadic groups moved seasonally between Mt Zagros and the region southern part of Caspian Sea. Aside the strong local character, the chiefdoms of Hakkari region that by the first centuries of second millennium BC established relations with Mesopotamia and dominated the ore trade that spans from central Asia to Assyria, can be considered as a mountain dynasty with a nomadic characteristics. The stelae on which some ruling elites are described and graves of Hakkari appear to belong to a local dynasty of the EIA kingdom. These powerful people might have been small local kings or chiefdoms, together with royal women in Nairi land during the period of pre-Urartians. The possible relation between stelae which is dated *c*. 1450-1000 BC and the chamber grave M1 where many people were buried shows that they might be gravestones for their dead ancestors. But this context might be considered thought that these stelae were not gravestones but more related to the cult of ancestors and its funerary rites. There should have been other graves in this area but reaching exact conclusion is difficult since the whole area haven't been excavate, but the presence of so many burials in a single grave (M1) and its close proximity of the stelae suggests us a cemetery in the area.

DISCUSSION-SUMMARY

The common features of EIA cemeteries in the Lake Van Basin are the chamber graves, high number of the iron items and the grooved pottery (Fig. 19). Most of the cemeteries which are located on the rich pastures of the highlands and foothills belong to MBA-EIA in the basin. Information of MBA-LBA burial tradition is limited to these cemeteries which has only been investigated in survey. There is no settlement traces of MBA-LBA, graves are mainly stone lined or simple earthen pit graves and a few very shallow kurgans with single inhumation burial together with Van-Urmia ware (Araxes painted ware) (Fig. 19).

To the contrary, settlement system of the EIA defined by the highland fortresses-cemeteries in the whole region, some of the EIA fortresses and cemeteries located in the lowlands (river valleys-plains) despite weak levels or gaps from the MBA to the EIA in the mounds. The EIA highland fortresses-cemeteries were investigated only in survey in the region (Fig. 20). Large cemeteries which is sometimes containing over one hundred separate graves are mainly in direct association with contemporary fortresses. Excavations at cemeteries of Ernis, Dilkaya and Karagündüz located in lowlands, except for Yoncatepe. Cemeteries at Ernis (Evditepe-Alacahan) directly connected with contemporary fortresses, cemeteries at Dilkaya and Karagündüz associated with mounds, cemetery at Yoncatepe adjacent to an Urartian structure complex. No related settlement traces to the Hakkari graves were found, fortress of Hakkari, in whose outskirts the stelae and the Grave M1 were located, belongs to the Middle Ages. Even though the levels of the Karagündüz 5 and Dilkaya IIB had weak architectural evidence their pottery shows contemporary features with the cemeteries. In both cases when we compare population of these pre-Urartian cemeteries and some of the cemeteries investigated in survey, the remains of the settlement are scanty, they do not appear to be connected to a permanent settlement, probably they belong to nomadic or seminomadic tribes. It seems that the population of cemeteries at Hakkari, Karagündüz, Dilkaya and Yoncatepe were not sedentary, probably they were moving seasonally and living in tents with their flocks indicating pastoralism as shown by the descriptions of on the stelae of Hakkari. Pastoralist lifeway is also indicated by fortresses-cemeteries which are located on the rich grazing pastures of

the highlands and foothills in the basin. Otherwise, such as Ernis (Evditepe-Alacahan), Aliler-Tutumlu (N70/7), Gönlüaçık (M68/5) and a large number of highland or lowland cemeteries have associated with contemporary fortresses (Fig. 2, 20)[21]. It seems that, fortified cities or major fortresses of rulers of small local polities or ruling elite of the pre-Urartians surrounded by rich pastures and seasonal or permanent settlements-fortresses built for the territorial control of the pastures and agricultural lands. This settlement pattern indicates the existence of nomadic and semi-nomadic groups beside the sedentary ones.

Chronological sequence of the EIA based mainly on these cemeteries since the mounds have substantially thin layers between the MBA and EIA in the region. Excavations at mounds of Karagündüz 6-5, Van Fortress mound IV-III, Tilki Tepe O, Dilkaya IIB and those in survey had found thin levels of the MBA-EIA, they mainly settled during the EBA-Kura-Araxes and MIA-Urartu (Fig. 20). Due to lack of insufficient stratigraphical context, only the evidence from cemeteries can provide data for both chronology and material of the EIA in the basin. The chronology of the EIA in the basin of Lake Van were defined in two phases by Sevin based on evidences of excavations at Ernis, Karagündüz and Hakkari, EIA I, c. 1300-1100 BC and EIA II (1100-850/800 BC)[22]. The polychrome painted pottery of MBA (Araxes painted ware) seems to have continued up to the 1400-1300 BC, at least around in the basin of Lake Van. EIA I started from the middle 13th century BC and EIA II which follows this period probably during the 10th and 9th centuries BC when the kingdom of Urartu was founded with Tuşpa as its capital, 850-800 BC. Actually, it is difficult to determine the exact time span between two phases, but development of pre-Urartians and process of preparing the foundation of the kingdom of Urartu seems to have been ended in the last centuries of 2nd millennium BC and at the beginning of the 1st millennium BC.

The cemeteries of Lake Van basin and Hakkari contain stone lined, chamber graves and chamber graves with dromos developing from one another. Common features of the graves are those: The graves lies at 0.70-1.50 m below the surface. They constructed with stones dug into the earth and built into a false arch roofed by large stones. Burial tradition is multiple burials, they were inhumation burials with one or two cremation. The bodies were in the hocker position, when the new bodies were added, the remains of earlier skeletons and burial gifts were pushed toward the back of the chamber creating a pile. The early phase (EIA I) of graves are stone lined and chamber graves. They respectively represent early phase, ıron ceremonial weapons-ornaments and pinkish-buff ware intensively found in these graves, no red slipped ware was encountered. The late phase (EIA II) represented by chamber graves with dromos, pinkish-buff ware, red slipped ware, increasing of bronze and cremation. On the other hand, pinkish-buff ware and ıron weapons-ornaments were most common grave goods during both phases. Bronze was found only in ornaments and in a small number of compared to ıron artefacts, similarly, red slipped ware is much lesser amount compared to pinkish buff ware. Burial architecture and grave goods indicate continuity in two phases. The early phase (EIA I) comprise chamber graves of Karagündüz (first group) and stone lined and chamber graves of Ernis (first group). The earlier graves are stone lined which is only known from first group of Ernis, they were roughly rectangular in plan and irregular construction, the height of walls was low, one and a half meters. The walls were built into a false arch covered by large slabs, and entered by raising one of the cover stones. Chamber graves seems as a transitional type between stone lined and chamber graves with dromos, Karagündüz grave K2 is the most remarkable and earlier example of this phase by its primitive chamber. Their distinctive characteristics from stone lined are their more regular construction, higher walls, a low and simple door on one of the narrow sides with one or two steps leading to the inside of in some graves. According to C14 dates taken from chamber grave K6-7 in Karagündüz goes back as far as the last quarter of second millennium BC. But, the chamber grave tradition must be much earlier in the region, Hakkari M1 is used for c. 300 years, from the end of first quarter of the second millennium BC to the third quarter of same millennium. Although Hakkari grave M1 shows an irregular construction and primitive looking, it can be accept in transitional phase from stone lined to chamber grave as Karagündüz K2.

In the second phase (EIA II) chamber graves with dromos, red slipped ware, jugs with trefoil rims and ribbed on the shoulders, bowls and jars with thick rims in the forms appear first, groove decoration decreases, the usage of bronze increases and cremation appears. Construction of graves were more regular and detailed. They were entered through a simple or shaft dromos is separated from the chamber by a door, with steps leading to the inside of the some graves, height of chamber walls increased and niches on the walls were seen. The characteristics of Urartian kingdom start to arise as shown by these new features. But, no classical Urartian artifacts were found in these graves such as bronze belts, weapons, fragments of furniture, beads, seals and red polished ware (Biainili or Palace ware). Second groups of Ernis and Karagündüz, Dilkaya, Yoncatepe and Hakkari M2 comprise this phase. Karagündüz K1 is

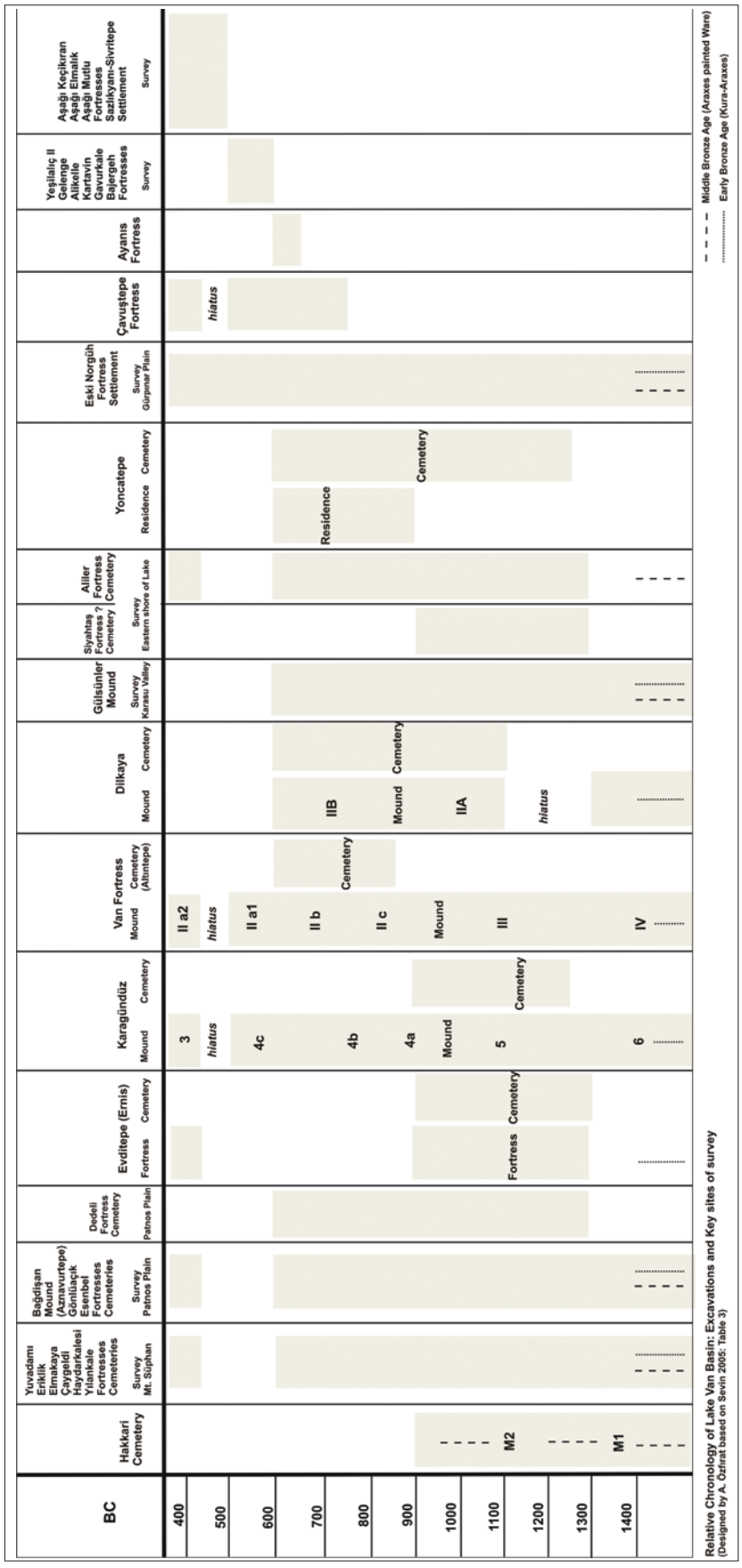
[21] Evditepe, Aliler, Gönlüaçık and most of the EIA lowland fortresses have stratigraphical sequence from the Early Bronze Age (Kura-Araxes) to the Late Iron Age (Achaemenid), except for gaps in the Post-Urartu and in the MBA in some cases.

[22] Sevin 1999; 2003; 2004; 2005a; Özfırat 2018.

BC	Chronology	Key Sites	Archaeological Features
400	Pers-Achaemenid	Karagündüz mound 3 Van fortress mound II a2 Survey Aşağı Keçikıran, Aşağı Elmalık, Aşağı Mutlu fortresses Sazlıkyanı-Sivritepe (Alabayır) settlement Eski Norgüh fortresses ? Settlement	Lowland Small fortresses, Settlements-Mounds Triangle ware Cream slipped ware Red slipped ware Red-brown ware
	Late Iron Age		
500	Post Urartu-Med ?	Karagündüz mound 4c Van fortress mound II a1 Çavuştepe fortress Survey Yeşilalıç II, Gelenge, Alikelle, Kartavin, Gavurkale fortresses	Highland fortresses Cream slipped ware Red slipped ware Red-brown ware
600	Middle Iron Age Urartu	Karagündüz mound 4a-b Van fortress and mound II b-c Dilkaya mound IIA Çavuştepe fortress Ayanıs fortress Aznavurtepe-Giriktepe fortress-settlement Survey Körzüt, Kancıklı fortresses Gülsünler, Bağdişan-Aznavurtepe mounds Yukarı Keçikıran road staion-cult building Dedeli cemetery	Monumental fortresses, Settlements-Mounds Rock-cut tombs, Chamber graves Inhumation, Cremation-Urne Bronze ornaments, weapons, tools *etc* Iron weapons Red polished ware (Biainili-Palace Ware) Red slipped ware Red-brown ware
900	Early Iron Age II	Karagündüz mound 5 Van fortress mound III Dilkaya mound IIB Ernis second group of graves Karagündüz second group of graves K1, K3, K5, K8, K10 Dilkaya graves 1, 2, 84, 88, 91 Yoncatepe graves M1, M3, M5, M6 Hakkari grave M2 Survey Gülsünler, Bağdişan-Aznavurtepe mounds Siyahtaş, Aliler, Dedeli, Gönlüaçık, Esenler, Okçuhan, Elmakaya, Çaygeldi, Yılankalesi, Haydarkelsi fortresses and cemeteries	Highland fortresses Lowland fortresses (less) Chamber graves with dromos Stone cists (a few) Inhumation, Cremation no urne (a few) Bronze ornaments Iron weapons and ornaments Pinkish-buff ware Thick and bright burnished red slipped ware Red-brown ware
1000			
1100	Early Iron Age		
1200	Early Iron Age I	Karagündüz mound 5 Van fortress mound III Ernis first group of graves Karagündüz first group of graves K2, K4, K6-7 Dilkaya grave 1 Hakkari grave M1 Survey Gülsünler, Bağdişan-Aznavurtepe mounds Siyahtaş, Aliler, Dedeli, Gönlüaçık, Esenler, Okçuhan, Elmakaya, Çaygeldi, Yılankalesi, Haydarkelsi fortresses and cemeteries	Highland fortresses Lowland fortresses (less) Stone lined graves, Chamber graves Inhumation Bronze ornaments (a few) Iron weapons and ornaments Pinkish-buff ware Thin and patchily red slipped ware Red-brown ware
1300			
1400	Late Bronze Age Middle Bronze Age	Karagündüz mound 6 Van fortress mound IV Hakkari grave M1 Survey Gülsünler mound Gönlüaçık, Nurettin, Elmakaya, Çaygeldi, Yuvadamı, Eriklik cemeteries Yılankalesi, Haydarkelsi, Eski Norgüh fortresses ? Settlement	Highland Cemeteries Simple earthen pit graves, Stone lined graves Kurgans (a few, in the northern part of basin) Araxes painted ware

Lake Van Basin
(Designed by A. Özfırat based on Sevin 2005: Tablo 1)

Figür 19: Iron Age Archaeological Chronology of Lake Van Basin / *Van Gölü Havzası Demir Çağ Arkeolojik Kronoloji.*



Figür 20: Iron Age Relative Chronology of Lake Van Basin Sites / *Van Gölü Havzası Yerleşimleri Göreli Kronoloji.*

the latest example, closest to Urartian chamber graves by its architecture and grave goods. While Hakkari M2 has no a dromos, with its highly developed architecture and grave goods it can be included in the second phase. Even though Yoncatepe graves defined in the second phase here, it has it's problems, since there is no exact definition in the publications. It is separated according to red slipped ware which was found in most of the graves and their grave architecture[23]. The additional spaces for the burials found in Karagündüz and Yoncatepe graves suggested as the prototypes of the multi-chambered Urartian tombs[24]. They were found at Karagündüz as holes or earthen pits, in those at Yoncatepe are much larger and deeper that some can even be considered as separate chambers. These multi-chambered graves of Yoncatepe should be considered as the latest phase of grave architecture.

The burial practice of the EIA is multiple burial in the basin. Bodies were mainly inhumad by wrapping them in a textile or dressing them in Karagündüz. The bodies were in the hocker position when new bodies were added, the remains of earlier skeletons were pushed toward the back of the chamber creating a pile. Only the last body in each tomb was found in its original position, right in front of the entrance. In some cases, the skeletons were found superimposed one upon another, separated by layers of earth as seen in the stone lined graves of Ernis and probably in Hakkari M2. Cremation was found in a small quantities, not buried in urns in Karagündüz grave K5 and Dilkaya chamber grave 2. The existence of both inhumation and cremation in the same grave and only the last body kept its original position creating a pile of older skeletons at the back of the grave are also characteristics of the Urartian graves[25].

In the grave goods of Karagündüz, a bowl and a pot for each body, near the head are remarkable, generally, in bowls the bone pieces of sheep or goats and in pots the liquid residuals were found, apart from these, the bones of sheep and goats were existed in the grave K6-7. Since the hearths were located next to graves in Karagündüz cemetery and existing animal bones in the graves, it is suggest that sacrificed animals were cooked of the during funeral ceremony and the feast organized which is included all the people who attendance of all the people who participated to the ceremony.

Pottery was the main grave goods, the monochrome pottery tradition which is also known as Grooved or Nairi ware can be divided in three group in the basin of Lake Van: Pinkish-buff ware, red slipped ware and red-brown ware. Pinkish-buff ware is main group of pottery and it is occurred during the whole period together with red-brown ware. Red slipped ware is in lesser amount, in 200 vessels found in the grave K8 only 3 of them are red slipped ware, and in 112 vessels in the grave Kl only 20 are red slipped ware which are mostly thick and bright burnished red slipped ware in Karagündüz cemetery. Pinkish-buff ware is divided into two subgroups: Earlier one is thin and patchily red slipped ware which is derived from the pinkish-buff ware; and late one is thick and bright burnished red slipped ware. The distinctive feature of thick and bright burnished red slipped ware is representation of transition phase to MIA-Urartu and it is prototype of Urartian red polished ware (Palace or Biainili ware). Thick and bright burnished red slipped ware does not demonstrate the same features as the classical red polished ware of the kingdom of Urartu, Because of its different technique and shape. But some of the features compare with the characteristics of Urartian red polished ware, such as thick slip and shiny surface. It has also some closer forms in those Urartian pottery which is also appeared in red-brown ware, such as round bodies with thick rims or carinated bowls with simple or everted rims, jugs with trefoil rims and ribbed on the shoulders, decreasing grooves, disappearing string-hole lugs and triangular-ledge handles as seen in the late phase graves of Karagündüz. Urartian red polished ware must have been derived from red slipped ware of the EIA which is developed from pinkish-buff ware. The most remarkable feature of the EIA pottery in the basin is distribution of groups, while red-brown ware existed in the whole region, pinkish buff ware and red slipped ware were found only eastern shore of Lake Van basin showing strong local character which later became the central area of the Urartian Kingdom.

[23] It suggested that, cemeteries of Yoncatepe, Karagündüz and Dilkaya must be belong to the Urartian period based on two bronze fibulae found in the Yoncatepe grave M3, an arrowhead from the grave M6 (see Konyar 2005; Köroğlu/Konyar 2005; Köroğlu/Konyar 2008). Published material of Yoncatepe contains a large number of pinkish buff ware and the lesser number of red slipped ware found just like in Karagündüz and Dilkaya which is typical EIA pottery of the region as pointed out by Sevin (2014: 359-360). The well-known EIA elements of the basin of Lake Van and southern Caucasus such as grooved ware, ıron artefacts, beads and limited using of bronze, burial tradition and architecture of the graves, makes the EIA dating of Yoncatepe graves undisputable. Explanation of this confusion can be long term usage of the Yoncatepe graves M3, M5 and M6 into MIA-Urartu. The large Urartian structure complex adjacent to the cemetery is an evidence to continuity of the EIA-MIA in Yoncatepe.
During EIA or in the earlier periods such as Hakkari Grave M1, the long term usage of the chamber graves with multiple burials common in the basin of Lake Van, as seen in some of the chamber graves of Karagündüz and Dilkaya.

[24] Sevin 1999: 161.

[25] Sevin 1999: 161-162.

CONCLUSION

The cemeteries and burial traditions of the pre-Urartians in the basin of Lake Van shows a cultural unity and continuity in the Urartians in some features. The eastern shoreline of Lake Van where the cemeteries of Ernis, Karagündüz, Dilkaya and Yoncatepe are located has also special importance because of being the central area of the Urartian Kingdom. The results of EIA investigations in the basin, which represents the establishment dynamics of the Urartian Kingdom, is important for the foundation phase of the Urartian Kingdom as well as understanding the small local polities of pre-Urartians. Evidences of the late phase (EIA II) indicate some of the characteristics of the kingdom of Urartu started to appear strongly, such as, red slipped ware, chamber graves, burial custom, cremation, bronze ornaments and beads which are remarkable characteristics of the Urartu. These features show that the process of preparing the foundation of the Urartian Kingdom came to the end. Describing all these evidences Sevin suggest that, the charasteristics of the Urartian Kingdom were based mostly on the local traditions of the pre-Urartians in eastern shore of the basin of Lake Van, which later became the center of the Urartian Kingdom, and 'it is possible to say that some, at least, of the eight nations or tribes mentioned in the Assyrian royal annals followed a pastoral lifestyle. The cemeteries of Karagunduz, Ernis and Dilkaya may very well belong to such tribes'[26], 'it is necessary to accept that the necropoleis of Karagündüz, Ernis and even Dilkaya are the cemeteries of the people known to the Assyrians as the Uruatri'[27]. The graves and stelae from Hakkari are significant evidences of the pre-Urartian elite, or the rulers of Uruatri and Nairi lands.

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[26] Sevin 1999: 163.
[27] Sevin/Kavaklı 1996: 58.

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