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# A Hittite Seal and Seal Impressions from Tatarlı Höyük

MELTEM DOĞAN-ALPARSLAN – K. SERDAR GİRGİNER\*

## Abstract

Tatarlı Höyük is one of the largest settlements of Cilicia Pedias (Campestris). It is located on the important commercial and military routes at the western exit of the Amanus Mountains, in the eastern part of the Ceyhan district of Adana. It is also close to the Hittite-Kizzuwatna Caravan Road and connected to Central Anatolia by this route. This article discusses a seal and two seal impressions found in the excavations of Tatarlı Höyük in 2013 and 2015. One of the seal impressions is without an inscription and can be suggested to belong to the 16th-15th century BC. The other seal impression is inscribed with the female name *Pa-ti*. We can propose a date for this hieroglyphic seal impression from the 14th to the 13th century BC. One terracotta stamp seal was found out of context during the 2015 excavation season. We can read the name of the seal owner as *Sâ-li-pi* with a proposed dating to the 15th-14th century BC.

**Keywords:** Kizzuwatna, Tatarlı Höyük, Hittite, glyptic, stamp seal, seal impression

## Öz

Tatarlı Höyük, Ovalık Kilikya'nın (Kilikia Pedias / Campestris) en büyük yerleşim yerlerinden birisidir. Adana'da Ceyhan ilçesinin doğusunda, Amanos Dağları'nın batı çıkışındaki önemli ticari ve askeri yol güzergâhları üzerinde yer almaktadır. Hitit-Kizzuwatna Karavan Yolu'na da yakındır ve bu güzergâh ile Orta Anadolu'ya bağlanmaktadır. Makalenin konusunu, 2013 ve 2015 yılı kazılarında bulunmuş olan bir pişmiş topraktan mühür ve iki mühür baskısı oluşturmaktadır. Bu malzemenin biri yazıtsız bir mühür baskısıdır ve MÖ 16.-15. yüzyıla tarihlenmesi teklif edilmiştir. Diğer mühür baskısı ise yazıtlıdır ve *Pa-ti* kadın adı okunmaktadır. Tarafımızdan MÖ 14. yüzyıldan 13. yüzyıla geçiş dönemine tarihlenmiştir. Bulunan pişmiş toprak mühür üzerinde ise *Sâ-li-pi* adı okunabilmekte ve MÖ 15.-14. yüzyıla tarihlenmesi teklif edilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kizzuwatna, Tatarlı Höyük, Hitit, Gliptik, damga mühür, mühür baskısı

This article discusses a seal and two bullae found in the excavations of Tatarlı Höyük in 2013 and 2015.<sup>1</sup> Tatarlı Höyük is one of the largest mounds in Cilicia Pedias and located

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<sup>1</sup> It was first introduced to the literature by M.V. Seton-Williams in 1951 (Seton-Williams 1954, 128-29, 170, no. 39), and was visited and re-evaluated by K.S. Girginer during his 2005 investigation of the settlements of Kizzuwatna such as *La(bu)wazantiya* and *Kummanni* within the scope of the Kizzuwatna Research Project, which started in 2002 (Girginer 2007, 177). Until this date, most researchers had localized these cities to the Anti-Taurus range and its surroundings (For detailed information, see Girginer 2005). For this reason, in order to determine whether *Kummanni* and *La(bu)wazantiya* cities were located in this region, a comprehensive settlement inventory study

approximately 40 km east of the Ceyhan district in the eastern part of the province of Adana. It measures 370 x 230 m and has a height of 37 m. About 2.5-3 km east of the mound is a volcanic cone that erupted in the Plio-Quaternary period so for this reason the mound rises on a basaltic land.<sup>2</sup> This environment is one of the richest watersheds of Eastern Cilicia. Seven fresh-water springs were identified on the northern skirts of the mound.<sup>3</sup> The stream (Beynamazı / Mercin) formed by these waters flows between the Citadel and the Lower City.<sup>4</sup> Apart from this, there is a dried lake to the south of the mound (fig. 1). It is located at the western exit of the Amanus Mountains on strategic trade routes. One can reach Northern Syria and Northern Mesopotamia from the southeast via Beilan Pass (Topboğazı), and from the northeast via Hasanbeyli-Fevzipaşa and Nurdağı Passes (*Pylae Amanicae*).<sup>5</sup> Kültepe and therefore Central Anatolia can be accessed by the route starting from about 30 km west of the mound called the “Hittite-Kizzuwatna Caravan Road” (fig. 2).<sup>6</sup>

Due to its location, Tatarlı Höyük is important in terms of Hittite historical geography studies. As is known, in the second millennium BC it is located in the Kizzuwatna region, which is more or less associated with the present-day Çukurova region. In recent years, attention has been drawn to the possible association of Tatarlı Höyük with *La(bu)wazantiya* by Girginer.<sup>7</sup> Sirkeli Höyük was thought to be *La(bu)wazantiya*, but in recent years it has been argued by the excavation team that it might be the city of *Kummanni* / *Kisuatni*.<sup>8</sup> A different localization proposal was made by M. Forlanini, who suggested the existence of two separate *La(bu)wazantiyas*. If this is accepted, then one might be Elbistan Karahöyük and the second Tatarlı Höyük.<sup>9</sup> The most recent localization proposal identifies Tatarlı Höyük with the city of *Arušna*, a cult center.<sup>10</sup>

The Tatarlı Höyük excavations have been continuing for 13 years.<sup>11</sup> The work has revealed a Hellenistic settlement with two phases at the top, preceded respectively by Achaemenid (Late Iron Age), Neo-Hittite (Middle Iron Age), and the Late Bronze Age settlements with their environs spreading over an area of at least 2-3 kilometers. The Middle and Early Bronze ages and Chalcolithic, and Neolithic cultures have now been identified (table 1).<sup>12</sup>

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was carried out in the Yahyalı, Sarız and Develi districts of Kayseri, and Tufanbeyli and Saimbeyli in Adana. Since it is unlikely that these two centers were founded in the aforementioned locations (Girginer 2004, 314; Akıl and Girginer 2012, 8, n. 58), the research then headed for East Cilicia (west of Amanus Mountains). Since 2004 in particular, the plains at the borders of the Kozan and Ceyhan districts have been surveyed in detail. See Girginer et al. 2006; Girginer 2007; Girginer 2008; Girginer et al. 2007. Excavations have been continuing since 2007 under the sponsorship of Adana Metropolitan Municipality, on behalf of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums and Çukurova University. See Girginer et al. 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Bilgin 1970-1971; Işık 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Girginer and Collon 2014, 61; Girginer 2016, 193.

<sup>4</sup> Girginer 2016, 193.

<sup>5</sup> Girginer et al. 2010, 454.

<sup>6</sup> Girginer and Oyman-Girginer 2016, 74, fig. 15; Girginer et al. 2017, 449, fig. 11.

<sup>7</sup> See Ünal 2008, 325; Girginer et al. 2011, 135; Trémouille 2013; Forlanini 2013, 6; Girginer and Collon 2014, 59; Forlanini 2015, 27; Novák and Rutishauser 2017, 138, fig. 11.2; Dardeniz et al. 2018, 118.

<sup>8</sup> Sollee et al. 2018, 112.

<sup>9</sup> See Forlanini 2013, 8; Forlanini 2015.

<sup>10</sup> For this new localization proposal based on philological data, see Pelvanoğlu et al. 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Novák et al. 2017, 173-76 and cf. Girginer and Oyman-Girginer 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Girginer et al. 2019, 404-5.



TABLE 1. (Novák et al. 2017, 175-76).

Period	Date	Level	Historical affiliation	Features and objects	Connections
Early Byzantine	4th century AD and later	I		Necropolis on eastern slope	
Hellenistic / Early Roman Imperial	330-50 BC	II a-b		Eastern Sigillata A, West Slope ceramics, Megarian bowls, fish plates, incurved-rim bowls, coins and terracotta figurines	
Late I A	539-330	III a		Achaemenid Stela and pottery	
Middle I A (Late Assyrian, Neo-Hittite)	850-609	III b1	Assyrian Domination Hiyawa / Que	Kohl box, Cypro-Cilician painted pottery	
Early I A	1200-850	–			
LBA II	1450-1200	IV a	Hittite Domination Kizzuwatna	Hieroglyphic bulla, seals, long-necked bottles, votive vessels, miniature bowls, Hittite monochrome ware, drab ware	Central Anatolia, Cyprus, Northern Levant
LBA I	1650-1450	IV b	Kizzuwatna Hittite Old and Middle Kingdoms	Hittite monochrome wares, hieroglyphic/non-hieroglyphic bullae	Central Anatolia
MBA	2000-1650	V	<i>kārum</i> -Period	Painted Syro-Cilician pottery, Cypriote WPPLS, cylinder seals, figurines, ring-shapes vessels, bull rhyta and bird-shaped vessels	Northern Levant, Cyprus, Central Anatolia
EBA III ?	2400-2000	VI		Orange wares	Tilmen ve Gedikli
LC EC (Ubaid)	4000-3000 5000-3000	VII		Amuq F-related stamp seals	Mesopotamia, Syria, Amuq
Late PN (Halaf) Early PN	6300-5000 7000-6300	VIII a VIII b		Stamp seals	Northern Levant, (Ras Shamra, Tell el Kerkh 2)

The first epigraphic find of Tatarlı Höyük from the second millennium BC is a recently published hieroglyphic bulla found during the 2008 excavations, which bears the name *tu/tu<sub>2</sub>/SUPPI-su<sub>2</sub>(?)-ta<sub>3</sub>-wa/i*. It was unearthed in Room 10 of the building (Late Bronze Age Temple) called Structure A located east of the mound and dated to the 15th century BC.<sup>13</sup> Another is a two-faced stamp seal uncovered during the work carried out at the Late Bronze

<sup>13</sup> Ünal and Girginer 2010.

Age fortification system in the 2012 excavations.<sup>14</sup> It is dated to the 13th century BC, but its inscription is illegible.<sup>15</sup>

The bulla was found in trench AZ 173 in 2013 and is 3.7 cm in diameter and 1.1 cm in thickness (fig. 3).<sup>16</sup> The edge decoration, in the form of a basket weave, lies between two borderlines. There is no sign in the central area usually reserved for hieroglyphics.<sup>17</sup> Although it is difficult to determine its date due to the lack of inscriptions, it probably belongs to 16th-15th century BC judging from similar edge decorations.<sup>18</sup>

During the 2015 excavation season in trench 186 AY, just beneath the Middle Iron Age floor, a terracotta stamp seal was found out of context (fig. 4 a-b). Unfortunately, it is not possible to say much about the form of the seal due to the broken handle. However, the outer edge decoration is reminiscent of the Tyszkiewicz Group seals.<sup>19</sup> The parallels suggest that the Tatarlı seal, with a hammer or bump head, is close to the group.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, due to its material being terracotta, it may also have had a handle in a simpler form. The preserved height of the seal is 2.7 cm, while the diameter of the print area is 3 cm. The inscribed central area of the seal is bordered by a frame. The border ornament is extremely detailed and displays fine workmanship. This section shows two antithetic winged creatures and bull-lion pairs. Bulls are depicted with wings, and a lion was studied in great detail to depict their bone structures. Although the edges of the seal are damaged, two tridents and four volutes placed between the animals can be easily followed.<sup>21</sup> The diameter of the seal's central area with the inscription is 1.2 cm judging from the impression. The right side of the inscribed area<sup>22</sup> contains the symbols of Life (L. 369; *VITA*) and Health (L. 370 *BONUS*) from top to bottom. We can read the name of the seal owner as *Sâ-li-pi* (L. 104 - L. 278 - L. 66)<sup>23</sup> with three hieroglyphic signs lined from

<sup>14</sup> Girginer and Collon 2014, 68.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Boehmer and Güterbock 1987, 35, fig. 21a.

<sup>16</sup> LBA I Tatarlı Höyük IVb (1650-1450 BC). For dating of the layers, see Novák et al. 2017, 176; cf. Girginer and Oyman-Girginer 2020.

<sup>17</sup> See the Kuşaklı sample for similar inscriptionless seals (Müller-Karpe 2000, 320, fig. 7). Some bullae found in Boğazköy Upper City (Dinçol and Dinçol 2008a, fig. 9.94 and fig. 10.95) and the Oluz Höyük seal (Doğan-Alparslan and Alparslan 2010) can be given as examples.

<sup>18</sup> For similar examples of basket weave, see Dinçol and Dinçol 2008a, figs. 1, 2.

<sup>19</sup> An example in the Berlin Staatliche Museum reminds us of the Tatarlı seal in terms of form and workmanship (Dinçol and Dinçol 2008a, 3-4, fig. 1). However, there is a small description in each area on the side surfaces of the Tyszkiewicz Group in question (Alexander 1972-1976). There are no such descriptions on the Tatarlı seal.

<sup>20</sup> The Tatarlı seal can be compared in terms of its form with the Baltimor seal. See Perrot and Chipiez 1887, 773-804; Messerschmidt 1900a, 45, pl. 43.6; Hogarth 1920, 75, fig. 79; Gordon 1939, 24-25, no. 70; Bossert 1942, nos. 679-80; Boehmer 1975, 450, pl. 376.9; Güterbock 1977, 8, no. 2; Mora 1987, 68, Group 3b, pl. 13.2.1 (mid 15th century BC - early 14th century BC). Yozgat seal see Hogarth 1920, 75, fig. 78; Budge 1887, 27; Messerschmidt 1900a, pl. 43.3; Messerschmidt 1900b, 441, fig. 3; Messerschmidt 1902, 44, pl. 15.18; Riemschneider 1954, pl. 98; Bossert 1959, 11-12, fig. 8; Alexander 1972-1976, 172-73, pl. 3, fig. 6; Alp 1993, fig. 12 a-b; Mora 1987, 70, Group 3b, fig. 13.3.1 and Louvre seal see Alp 1993, fig. 13; Orthmann 1975, fig. 376; Messerschmidt 1900a, 44, pl. 43.2; Messerschmidt 1900b; Delaporte 1920, 202, pl. 101.13 a-b, A.1037; Boehmer 1975, pl. 376.e; Güterbock 1977, 9-10, no. 14; Mora 1987, 70, fig. 13.3.2.b.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Dinçol 1983, 188-222, pls. 8.8 and 9.9a-b; Mora 1987, 71, fig. 14.3.3.b; Dinçol and Dinçol 2008a, fig. 2.18a-b, 19a-b, 20a-b, 21a-b, 22a-b, 23a-b.

<sup>22</sup> Unfortunately, the pressures did not work well, since the inscribed area of the seal was very worn.

<sup>23</sup> Hieroglyphic signs, especially the second one *li* (L. 278) providing us with the name of the owner, are hardly visible. For the hieroglyphic sign *pi* (L. 66), which constitutes the last sound value of the name, see Dinçol and Dinçol 2008b, 169 and 174; Herbordt 2005.

top to bottom.<sup>24</sup> This name has not been previously documented in the cuneiform and hieroglyphic corpus. The border decoration of the aforementioned seal and the small area reserved for the hieroglyphs suggest a date around the 15th-14th century BC compared to the similar seal impressions from Boğazköy.

The inscribed bulla on the floor belonging to the Tatarlı IVa layer (1450-1200 BC),<sup>25</sup> found in trench BA 186 in 2015, is 2.5 cm in width and 1.3 cm in thickness (fig. 5 a-b). The back of the clay lump, where the seal was pressed more than once, is broken. Therefore, a very small part of the second edition can be seen. In addition, the piece with the legible inscription is also very damaged. The diameter of the impression area, whose seal is bordered by a frame, is 1.2 cm. There is also a frame between the edge decoration and the inscribed area. The edge decoration consists of vertical and horizontal short lines. On both sides of the rather narrow inscribed part, the sign combination shows that the seal holder was a female: *BONUS<sub>2</sub> - FEMINA* (L.370 - L.79). In the central area, the name *Pa-ti* (L. 334 - L.90), written with two hieroglyphic signs from top to bottom, can be read. Two triangles with a notched bottom on both sides of the name were used for decorative purposes. It is possible to see an example very close to the Tatarlı seal impression in the Borowski Collection.<sup>26</sup> There is a hieroglyphic inscription on both sides of that seal. The name *Patiya* (L.334 - L.90 - L.209) was read on the B side, although it is not certain whether it is a female name or not,<sup>27</sup> since it also appears as a male name in Hittite cuneiform texts. In Maşat Höyük Letters (no. 111, Mt. 75 / 58 Vo.21), it appears as a male name in the form of *<sup>m</sup>Pa-ti-ya-aš*.<sup>28</sup> It was documented<sup>29</sup> as *<sup>f</sup>Pát-te-i / <sup>f</sup>Pít-te-i* in KUB 44.4+KBo 13.241<sup>30</sup> and *<sup>f</sup>Pattiya*<sup>31</sup> in KUB 22.70<sup>32</sup> as a female name. The texts suggest that *<sup>f</sup>Pattiya* was commissioned to serve the god of the city of *Arušna* and that she was probably removed from the palace because of an intrigue as the mother-in-law of the great king.<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, it does not give us much clue in terms of stamp impression, dating, form and edge decoration. Therefore, it is very difficult to date the bulla in question. However, we see the seals with small impression areas during the transition period between the 14th and 13th centuries BC. Considering the layer where the finds have been excavated, we can propose a date for this hieroglyphic seal impression extending from the 14th to the 13th century BC to date.

<sup>24</sup> See the Boğazköy archive for similar compositions for the order of signs from top to bottom in the inscribed area of the seal and the use of symbols of goodness and life. See Dinçol and Dinçol 2008a, fig. 7.68a-b and 72a-b; Herbordt 2005.

<sup>25</sup> For dating of the layers, see Novák et al. 2017, 176; cf. Girginer and Oyman-Girginer 2020.

<sup>26</sup> Poetto and Salvatori 1981, 92.

<sup>27</sup> Poetto and Salvatori 1981, 28-29, figs. 22 and 23.

<sup>28</sup> Alp 1991, 110.

<sup>29</sup> Beckman 1983, 176-81.

<sup>30</sup> CTH 767.7; Incantation Fragments with Luwianisms. Sammeltafel CTH 528.22; Cult Inventories with description of festivals.

<sup>31</sup> The name *Patti(ya)* is found in the text repertoire of the Hittite cuneiform and the seal corpus. *Pata* as a male name (Laroche 1966, no. 956) and *Pata* as a female name (Dinçol and Dinçol 2008a, fig. 17.175c-d; Dinçol and Dinçol 1981, 9, 23, fig. 7.7). *<sup>f</sup>Patabuli*, *<sup>f</sup>Pattiyanni*, *<sup>f</sup>Patila* are the other names that are documented in both cuneiform and hieroglyphic seals and seal impressions, and they originate from similar names; see Zehnder 2010, 245, 247. Hurrian names can be derived from the hypocoristic suffix *-iya*. Similar examples are documented in the names of individuals from many settlements. For the name *<sup>m</sup>Niqri / <sup>m</sup>Niqriya* mentioned in the Alalakh tablets, *<sup>m</sup>Pandi / <sup>m</sup>Pandiya* in the Mari tablets, *<sup>f</sup>Kili / <sup>f</sup>Kiliya* in the Emar documents, and *<sup>f</sup>Manni / <sup>f</sup>Manniya* in HKM 60 in the Maşat Höyük archive, see Alp 1991, 234; Zehnder 2010, 69-70, 246-47.

<sup>32</sup> CTH 566; oracles concerning the cult of the deity of Arušna.

<sup>33</sup> See Pelvanoğlu et al. 2020; Ünal 2017, 209-10, de Martino 2011, 16, 50.

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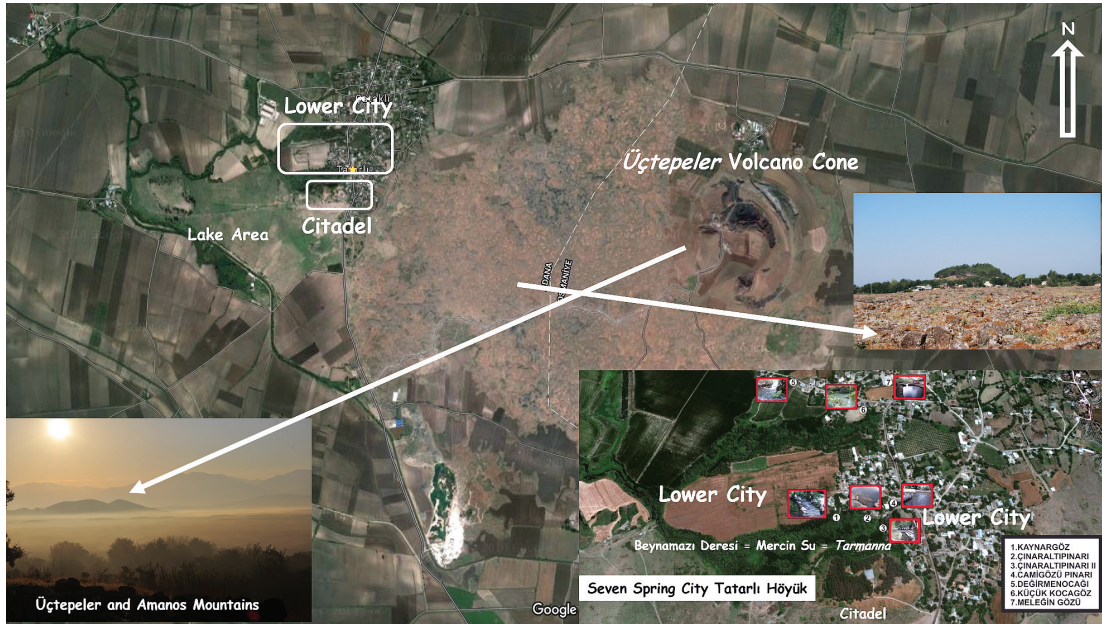


FIG. 1 Satellite image of Tatarlı Höyük and its surroundings, Üçtepeler volcano cone, and Yedi Pınar, located in Citadel and Lower City.



FIG. 2 Excavations, roads and “Hitit-Kizzuwatna Caravan Road” in Kizzuwatna (Tatarlı Höyük Excavation Archive ©).





FIG. 3 Late Bronze Age I site in Trench AZ 173 and location of bulla (Tatarlı Höyük Excavation Archive ©).



FIG. 4 a) In Trench AY 186 stamp seal found under the Middle Iron Age floor (Tatarlı Höyük Excavation Archive ©). b) Seal found in Trench AY 186 and its drawing.

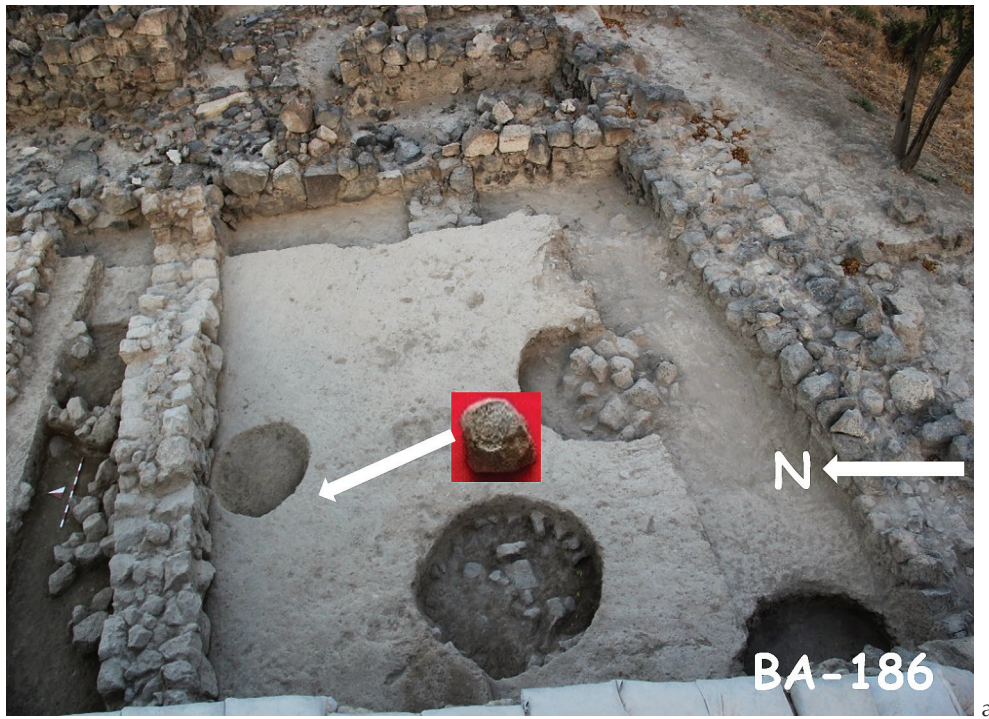


FIG. 5 a) Location of the bulla on the LBA II base in Trench BA 186 (Tatarlı Höyük Excavation Archive ©).  
 b) Bulla found in Trench BA 186 and its drawing.



