

SECOND REPORT ON THE EXCAVATIONS AT ARSLANTEPE (MALATYA)

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The Italian Archaeological Mission which started excavations at Malatya in 1961 (Cfr. *Türk Arkeol. Dergisi*, XI, 2, 1962) and carried out a second campaign in 1962 at the same site, momentarily delayed the field investigations in order to correlate the archaeological data. The results of the two years of researches are now published through a monograph, although not definitive, in „*Oriens Antiquus*”, I. 1.1964. However, prof. Piero Meriggi, head of the Mission, has carried out during the season 1963 a wide survey in the Hittite area and located a number of Hüyük which will be recorded in the same magazine. After this pause the Mission proposes, according to the agreement between the General Direction for Antiquities of the Turkish Government and prof. Meriggi on behalf of the Italian Centre for Antiquities and Art History of the Near East, to continue systematically the excavations at Arslantepe. The discoveries outlined in this note are due to the valuable collaboration of Arch. A. Davico, Dr. E. Castaldi, A. Palmieri, P.E. Pecorella, P. Matthiae, restorer R. Medini and Assistant H.T. Uçankuş. Among the archaeological records, the excavations brought to light some epigraphical documents of remarkable interest just illustrated by P. Meriggi (*Oriens Antiquus*, II.2.1963).

The area, compared with that chosen for the excavations in 1961, is almost reduplicated (Fig. 1) including now the

zone where L. Delaporte discovered between the years 1932 and 1939 the monumental „Gate of the Lions”. Close to this zone appeared the most interesting architectural remains and valuable stratigraphic investigation have been carried out there. For instance, the brick-made defence wall destroyed by fire discovered in 1961 east of the “Gate of the Lions”, proved to have been built upon a series of strata containing neo-Hittite materials (fig. 2); consequently, the wall must be referred to a late phase of the neo-Hittite period. Besides, the same strata overlap the remains of a collapsed big stone wall which is structurally related to an impressive masonry-work looking like one of the sides of a monumental gate. The problem requires more extensive investigations in order to define the existence in this zone of an earlier entrance to the town (Cfr. E. Weidner, *Ausgrabungen in Arslan Tepe*, *Archiv für Orient-forschung*, XVI, 1952-53, pp. 151-152).

West of the “Gate of the Lions”, structural characteristic of the defence wall may be ascribed at least to two building phases (fig. 3): a brick-made wall penetrated by fire clearly overlapped a big stone defence wall partially destroyed. This brick-made wall does not correspond, both for width and layer, to that in the eastern zone, but it probably represents a different intermediate phase. Actually, the considerations on the style of the sculptures found in this zone and the chronological divergences noted by E.

Akurgal (*Remarques stylistiques sur les reliefs de Malatya*, Istanbul, 1946) are fully in accordance with the data of the excavations, which show a sequence in the building of the defence wall (and consequently of the gate) and give a sufficient explanation for the re-utilization of figurative elements.

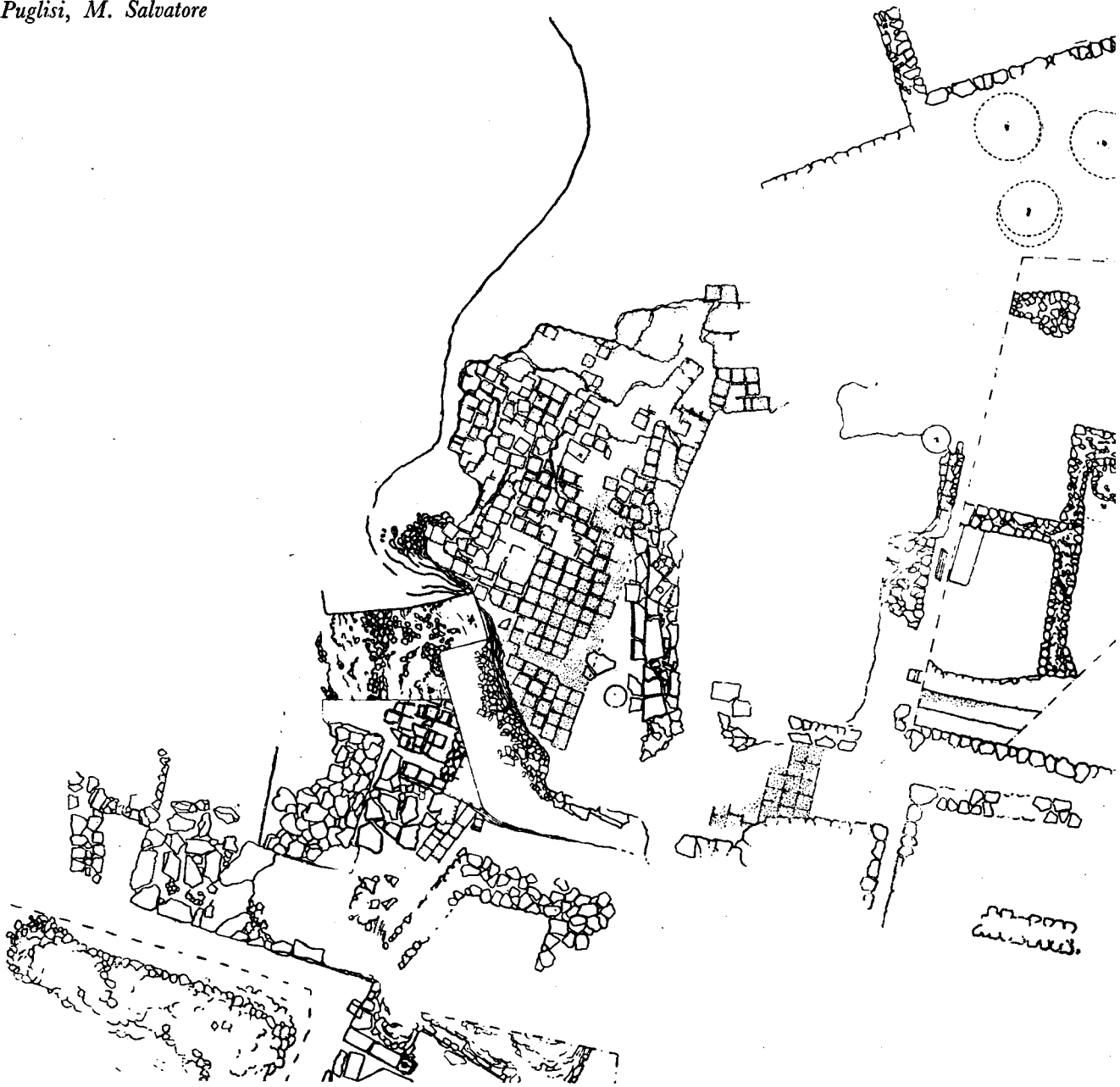
The archaeological materials found in the layer closely connected with the stone-made defence wall are typical of the Hittite imperial age: they contain *oinichoi*, narrow-necked vessels, ovoid jars with one or two handles (fig. 4), some of which with pointed bottoms, and a copper socketed axe. In the upper levels of the area, the digging of *siloi* in post-Hittite periods had brought out more characteristic objects of the imperial times like the bone tube with incised patterns (fig. 5) and the head of a clay red-slipped figurine of animal (fig. 6).

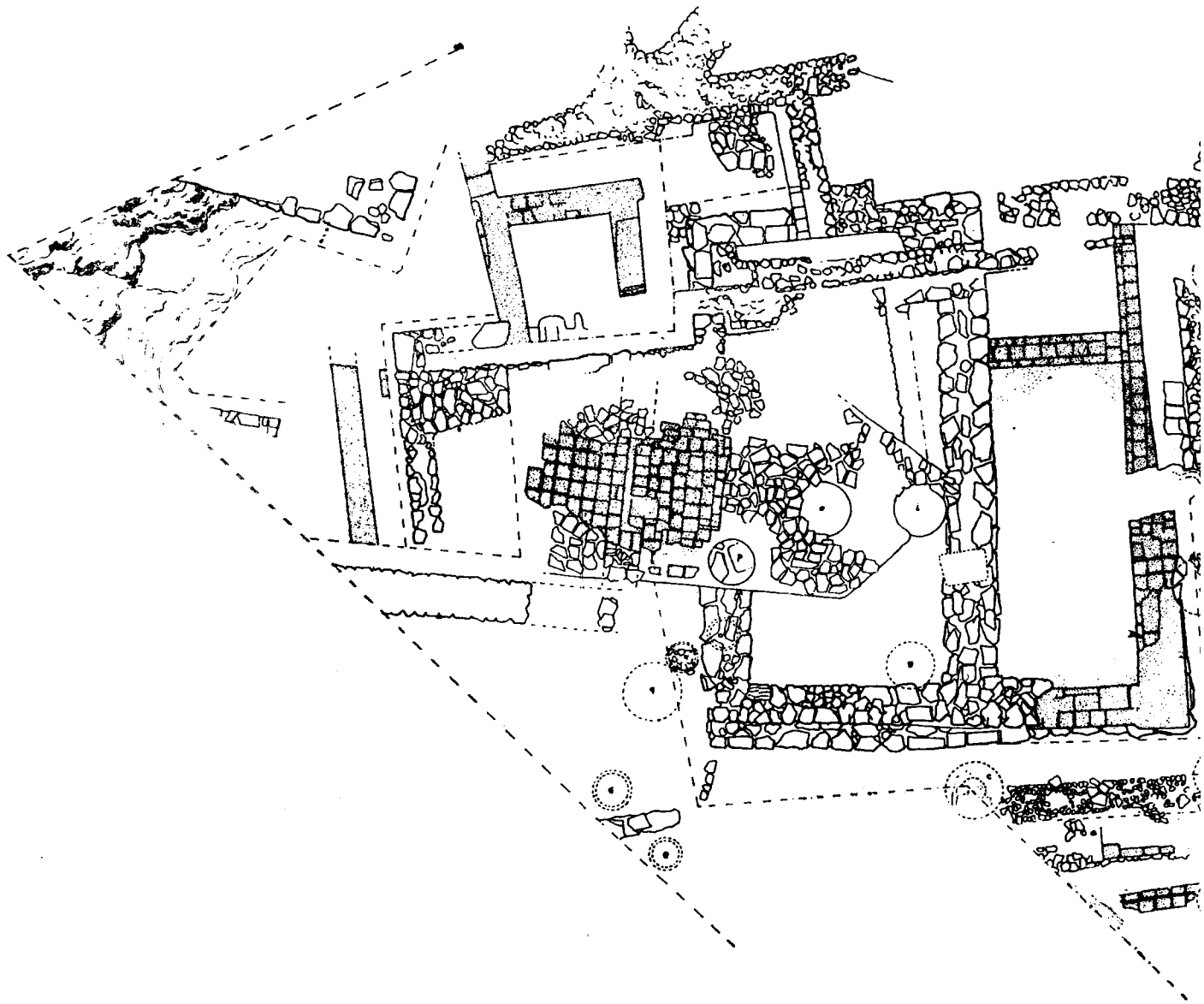
The datation of the collapsed stone defence wall was provided by the discovery in the related layers of some segmented or „starlike” faience beads of the Tell el Amarna type which are considered very indicative for cross-dating by a number of scholars (Cfr. H.C. Beck and J.F.S. Stone, *Faience beads of the British Bronze Age*, „Archaeologia”, LXXXV, 1936). According to those data, the building of the stone defence wall may be attributed to the end of XV^o or to the beginning of XIV century B.C. As to the cause and

epoch of its destruction it seems probable that the seismic phenomena which razed to the ground several settlements in Syro-Palestine and Asia Minor (according to C. Schaeffer, *Stratigraphie comparée et Chronologie de l'Asie Occidentale*, London, 1948) occurred also to Malatya.

In the west zone, the brick-made wall re-built on the stone structure was violently destroyed by fire whose traces are also recognizable in the eastern zone. Stratigraphic evidence for the destruction of this second defence wall points to a chronology of about 1200 B.C. connected perhaps to the invasion of the „Peoples of the North and the Sea” and to the decline of the Hittite Empire. A big building (which measures 15 by 8 metres) discovered in the neo-Hittite level (fig. 7) could be related to the monumental complex inside the town very close to the „Gate of the Lions”; it looks like a palace - building and it might be assigned to late neo-Hittite times, when the town was surrounded by the brick-made defence wall already described in Türk Arkeol. Dergisi, XI.2.1962. In effect, the remains of this palace-building are covered by the combustion layer due to the destruction of the defence wall. The archaeological materials found in the neo-Hittite level show a remarkable persistence of the Hittite Empire tradition, particularly in the pottery which does not reveal valuable influence from the Phrygian area.

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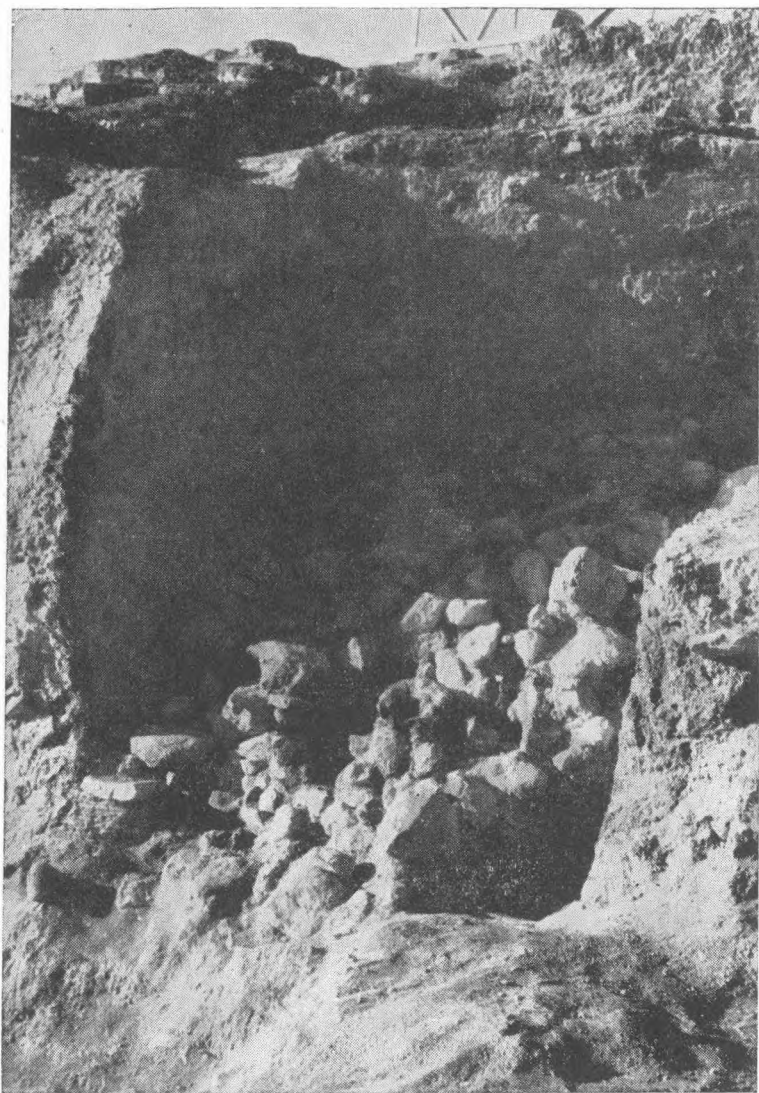


Fig: 2. Neo - Hitite stratification interposed between the stone and the brick - made defence wall in the eastern zone



Fig: 3. The two defence walls in the western zone

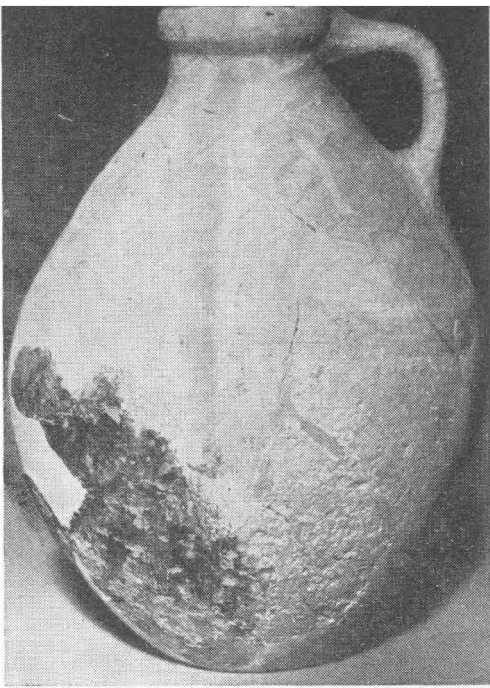


Fig. 4 Jar from the Hittite Empire level

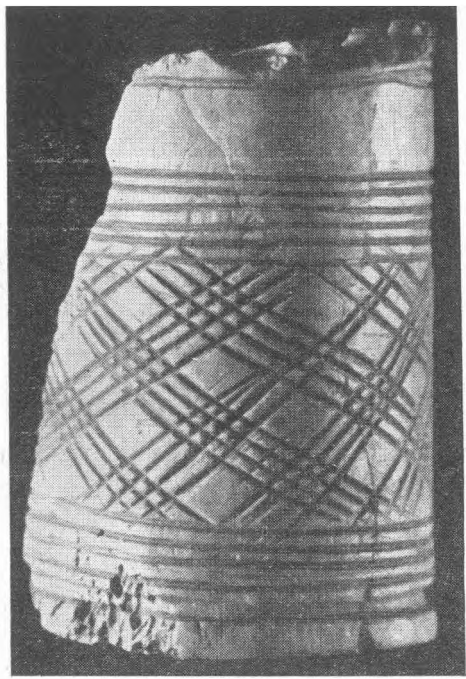


Fig. 5 Bone tube with incised Patterns (Hittite Empire)

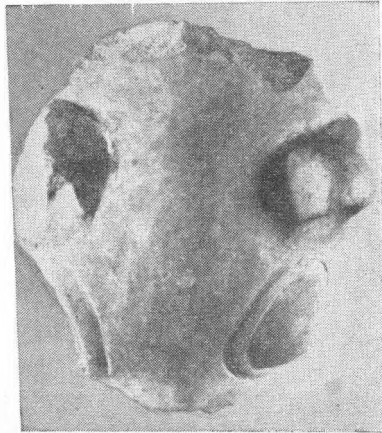


Fig. 6 Head of a Clay figurine (Hittite Empire)

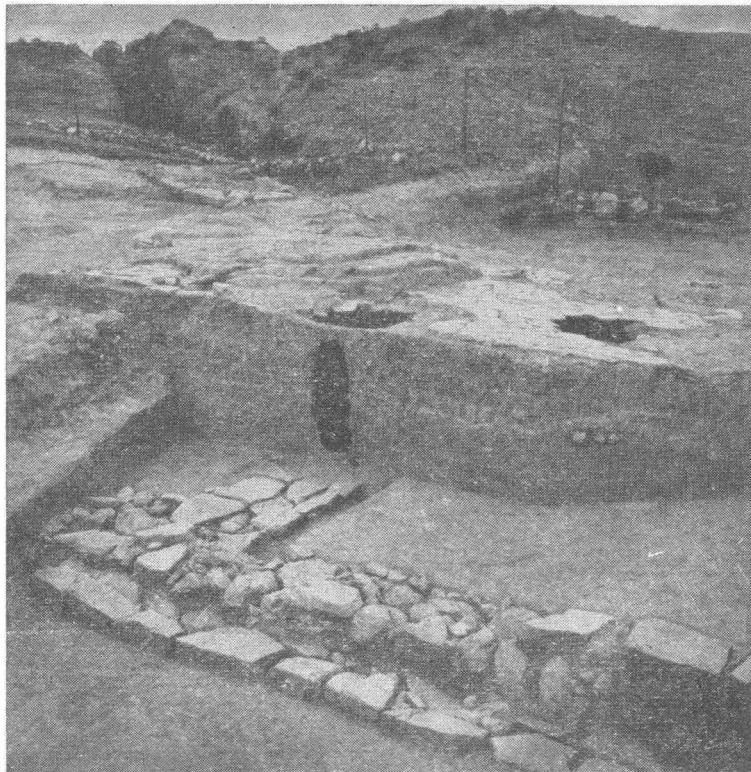


Fig: 7. Remains of neo - Hittite palace