



Funeral Jewelry and Gold Artifacts from the Yüksel Erimtan Collection: Examination of Ritual and Artistic Values

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ABSTRACT

This study examines a group of gold artifacts from the Yüksel Erimtan Collection, focusing on their ritual and artistic significance. The examination includes 15 gold artifacts, categorized as funerary jewelry, comprising mouth-eye bands, wreaths, wreath fragments, and eye appliques. These artifacts are distinct from personal adornments, being crafted from thinner and less durable gold plates. Experimental investigations based on cranial measurements of adult individuals were undertaken to determine the functional aspects of the mouth-eye bands and eye appliques. The findings revealed that the mouth-eye bands were diverse and exhibited different forms: Long, thin strips on the arms and rhombic bands were determined to be mouth bands. Additionally, a round-shaped artifact was identified as an eye band. Eye appliques stand out among these artifacts, likely used as funeral jewelry, alongside wreaths and their fragments, which are tentatively dated from the 1st century BC to the 2nd century AD. Notable pieces include spiral-shaped, stylized snake-head earrings from the 5th–4th centuries BC and ring-disk earrings reflecting the Roman Imperial Period fashion, posited to have originally served as pendulums. The study also includes pendulum and hook earrings from the Roman Imperial Period, adorned with semiprecious stones. Collectively, the artifacts in the Erimtan Collection exemplify craftsmanship spanning from the 5th century BC to the 4th century AD, offering valuable insight into the fashion and artistry of the period.

Keywords: Erimtan Museum, Gold, Mouth-Eye Band, Wreath, Earing



Introduction

The tradition of wearing jewelry originated from a confluence of factors, including religious beliefs, talismans, charms, and the desire for good fortune. Over time, its purposes expanded to include funerary offerings, devotional dedication to deities, indicators of social status, expressions of wealth, gifts, and simple aesthetic adornments. The allure of jewelry, rooted in both spiritual motivations and the pursuit of beauty, has persisted throughout human history (Bingöl, 1999, p. 13). Accordingly, the materials used in jewelry-making exhibit significant variation across cultures and periods (Köroğlu, 2004, p. 2). During the early Neolithic period, when settled communities emerged, individuals fashioned seashells, animal teeth, and bones into adornments, later incorporating drilled ornamental stones to create beaded necklaces (Köroğlu, 2004, p. 2; Tekin, 2018, p. 117). The advent of underground mining in the Late Neolithic marked a turning point, enabling the use of metals in jewelry-making and the production of decorative metal ornaments (Tekin, 2018, p. 118). From the 4th millennium BC onward, artisans skillfully worked gold and silver, incorporating vibrant gemstones such as agate and chalcedony into their designs (Köroğlu, 2004, p. 16). Throughout the Archaic and Classical periods, gold jewelry reached remarkable levels of technical and aesthetic sophistication (Uygun, 2007, p. 96). Ancient artisans employed diverse techniques such as molding, stamping, forging, and casting, embellishing their creations with filigree, granulation, enamel, inlay, embossing (repoussé), and niello (Higgins, 1961, p. 8; Meriçboyu, 2001, p. 28; Aydın Tavukçu, 2007, p. 21).

The Erimtan Archaeology and Art Museum, a repository of the gold artifacts under examination, serves as a cultural institution showcasing valuable materials from the Hittite, Urartian, Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods within the Yüksel Erimtan Collection. Utilizing contemporary exhibition techniques, the museum integrates archaeology with diverse art forms and interdisciplinary activities in alignment with modern museological principles¹. Among the museum's funerary jewelry holdings are 15 gold pieces, including mouth-eye bands, eye appliques, wreaths and wreath fragments, earrings with their respective pendants, and a distinct pendant. This study analyzes these artifacts in terms of their typological characteristics and functions. Since the provenance and contexts of the artifacts acquired to the museum through acquisition are unknown, they will be dated by analogy and style criticism in the light of similar examples.

1. Funeral Jewelry

Among the diverse array of grave goods and archaeological artifacts uncovered in necropoleis, a specific category crafted from thin, delicate gold plates is termed “funeral jewelry.” This category includes items such as mouth-eye bands, forehead bands, masks,

¹ <https://erimtanmuseum.org/tr/muze>.

wreaths/diadems, clothing appliques, and belts, which differ from personal adornment used during life. These artifacts, characterized by their specific designs, craftsmanship, and intended purpose, provide valuable insights into the burial customs and cultural practices of the periods and regions from which they originate (Despini, 2009; Uygun, 2021, p. 316). The most striking group of funerary jewelry in the Erimtan Museum are the rare mouth and eye bands.

1.1. Mouth-Eye Bands

In ancient burial practices, meticulous preparation of the deceased (*soma*) often included washing, anointing with oils, and ritual covering of the eyes, mouth, and chin (Şahin, 1996, p. 145; Uhri, 2014, p. 177; Akçay, 2017, pp. 102, 106; Aydın Tavukçu-Avli, 2021, p. 70). The origins of artifacts used in these rituals such as masks, forehead or cheek plates (Ogden, 1982, p. 26, Res. 5; Despini, 2009; Rohde, 2020, p. 452; Uygun, 2021, p. 318), and mouth-eye bands can be traced back to the Near Eastern Neolithic period. Evidence from plastered skulls unearthed at Köşkhöyük indicates the spread of these practices to Central Anatolia, highlighting their cultural significance in immortalizing the deceased's visage (Gavrilaki-Tzifopoulos, 1998, p. 347; Özbek, 2009, p. 157; Akçay, 2017, p. 15; Uygun, 2021, p. 318). The widespread use of mouth-eye bands in burial customs was particularly in Northern Greece from the late 8th to early 7th centuries BC (Despini, 2009, p. 34; Uygun, 2021, p. 318).

The naming conventions for these foil-shaped artifacts, generally designated as ‘mouth-eye bands’, show variations. The artifacts are generally termed “epistomion” (or epistomia) for mouth bands and “epiophthalmos” for eye bands in Greek and Roman cultures (Gavrilaki-Tzifopoulos, 1998, p. 347; Οικονόμου, 2003; Despini, 2009, p. 21; Uygun, 2021, p. 318; Aydın Tavukçu-Avli, 2021, p. 70). These bands, made of sheets obtained by forging ingots, are evidence that the deceased were of high status, that their graves were carefully prepared, and that they were probably buried with rituals (Polat, 2013, p. 432). Their inclusion in burials symbolized the high status of the deceased, showcasing elaborate funerary rituals and embodying belief in an afterlife and eternity (Gavrilaki-Tzifopoulos, 1998, p. 352).

Particularly noteworthy among funerary jewelry are the mouth-eye bands with thread holes or rings created using the repoussé (hammering) technique (Bingöl, 1999, p. 37)². It is thought that the bands were tied to the head with threads passed through these thread holes on the edges of the bands (Serdaroğlu, 1972, p. 23)³. It is evident that some of the mouth-eye bands, which are rarely found and about which we have very little information, have

2 For details, see. Higgins, 1961, p. 9-10.

3 Using gold leaf samples with holes at the edges, which could be placed directly on the mouth or eyes, by sewing them onto the fabric, increased durability, see. Quast, 2014, p. 270; Uygun, 2021, p. 318.

geometrically incised decorations made with the repoussé technique (Pierides, 1971, PL. VII, p. 1-6; Bingöl, 1999, p. 208-211, Cat. No. 232-235; Yalçınkaya, 2019, p. 519, Cat. No. 314) or depictions of animals, humans or gods/goddesses made with the relief technique (Uygun, 2021, p. 321-325, Kat. No. 4-7), and some even have mouth bands with important lip depictions made in relief (Kurtz-Boardman, 1971, p. 212; Pierides, 1971, PL. VII, p. 2-6; Bingöl, 1999, p. 212; Uygun, 2021, p. 320, Cat. No. 1). There are also decorated bands with coin or seal prints on them (Bingöl, 1999, p. 213, 217). The 5 mouth-eye bands in the Yüksel Erimtan Collection, which are the subject of this study, are decorated only with repoussé (hammering) technique, with back-drawn ornaments and thread holes. The common feature of the mouth-eye bands in the collection is that they are made of thin gold sheets in the form of foil, and except for one, the others have holes for threading on both edges. Many of the bands, which are of medium thickness and cannot be used for daily function, have tears and punctures. When the bands, whose lengths vary between 7.9–11 cm, widths vary between 1.9–4.3 cm and weights vary between 0.38–2.72 cm, are examined in their entirety, it is seen that they differ from each other in terms of form. Hence, it was concluded that the works can be divided into 4 types and thus the usage functions of the bands can be understood.

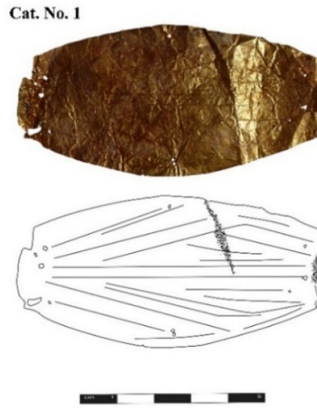


Fig. 1: Mouth Band (Cat. No. 1)

Cat. No. 1: Cat. No. 14 the artifact, which has a rhombus form, is separately categorized as Type 1 due to its distinctive characteristic, albeit with minor details (Fig. 1). It is clearly oval or round with broad edges. The piece, featuring a blunt cut with tears, contains numerous holes along its bottom, top, and edges, likely resulting from breaks caused by its thin foil construction. Usually, additional drilling holes are present at the top and bottom, a rare feature. Given the plates' thinness, it is plausible that the object was tied to the head using

4 Museum Inv. No.: 1096; Dimension: Length:7.9cm; Width: 3.7cm; Short edge width: 3.2 cm – 3 cm; Weight: 0.38g.

threads passed through the four corner holes or sewn onto fabric for added durability (Quast, 2014, p. 270; Uygun, 2021, p. 318). The artifact displays a ray-shaped decoration consisting of parallel lines, etched by scraping the back with a fine tool. A comparable example is the British Museum (Marshall, 1969, p. 18, Pl. II, 179) features relief dot borders and spiral depictions and is dated to 1300–1100 BC. Similarly, a silver band resembling the Erimtan sample, originating from Akseki and housed at the Anatolian Civilizations Museum, includes a central line flanked by zigzag and grape cluster decorations along its edges (Bingöl, 1999, p. 208, Kat. Cat. No. 232). This work is dated to the 5th-4th century BC. Additionally, a mouth band (Rudolph-Rudolph, 1973, p. 186, 151d) from the Burton Y. Berry Collection parallels the Erimtan artifact in form. Dated to the 2nd–4th century AD, it features a rhombus shape and includes rope passage holes on both sides. Another striking element is that the work, which is almost the same in size, has relief dot decorations made with the repoussé technique on its edges, unlike Cat. No. 1. Although there is no exact equivalent of the Erimtan Collection sample, its similarity to the work in the Burton Y. Berry Collection suggests a comparable context. Based on the thinness of the foil and the description of the repoussé technique, it was concluded that assigning Cat. No. 1 to a broad time frame, such as the Hellenistic Period, is appropriate. Furthermore, when analyzed in terms of form, the artifact's compatibility with the structure of the mouth is noteworthy. Tests conducted on the skull revealed that it was likely produced and used as a mouth band⁵ (Fig. 3).

Cat. No. 2: Within the Erimtan Collection, a Type 2 gold band, distinguished by its oval shape, is catalogued as Cat. No. 2⁶. This artifact deviates from its counterparts in the configuration of its thread holes, as illustrated in Fig. 2-3. On both sides, ring-shaped rope-passing holes were created by spirally twisting the ends of the extended sheet. Although the band, made of a thick plate, shows visible wrinkles and distortions, it lacks any deliberate decorative elements. The artifacts are entirely oval-shaped, resembling an eye-shaped form. A similar work in the British Museum (Marshall, 1969, p. 19, Pl. III, 185), dated to 1300–1100 BC, features floral volute decoration. Another band with ring-shaped thread holes on display at the Tokat Museum (Göral, 2019, p. 98, Cat. No. 80) dates to the 3rd–2nd century BC and shares nearly identical formal characteristics with Cat. No. 2. Additionally, an oval-shaped artifact with a double row of straight lines at its center is exhibited in the Adana Museum (Uygun, 2021, p. 321, Fig. 2). In the Adana Museum (Uygun, 2021, p. 321, Fig. 2), there is

5 Based on the average skull measurement of an adult individual (average length: 25 cm) and the original dimensions of the mouth/eye bands and eye appliques. Experiments were conducted using a skull drawing prepared by Expert Archaeologist Rabia Gören to determine the positioning and intended use of these bands. The article includes visuals depicting the artifacts on the skull based on their original measurements, illustrating the data derived from these experiments. For detailed dimensions of the average adult, see Çalış-Çalış-Koçali-Büyükkakıncı, 2021, p. 147-161.

6 Museum Inv. No.: 581; Dimension: Length: 10,4 cm; Width: 4,3 cm; Short Edge Width: 3,7 cm – 3,9 cm; Weight: 1,60 gr.

an oval-shaped work with a double row of straight lines in the middle, and it can be seen that it is quite similar in form to Cat. No. 2, regardless of the thread hole. Uygun highlights the similarity of this artifact to wreath leaves from the Hellenistic Period and notes its use as a mouth/eye band in the Roman Imperial Period, dating the piece to the 1st–2nd centuries AD (Uygun, 2021, p. 321). Experiments conducted on skull drawings have confirmed that Cat. No. 2 served as an eye band. Considering the Adana Museum example and parallel examples in form, Cat. No. 2 can also be dated to the 1st–2nd centuries AD (Fig. 2).

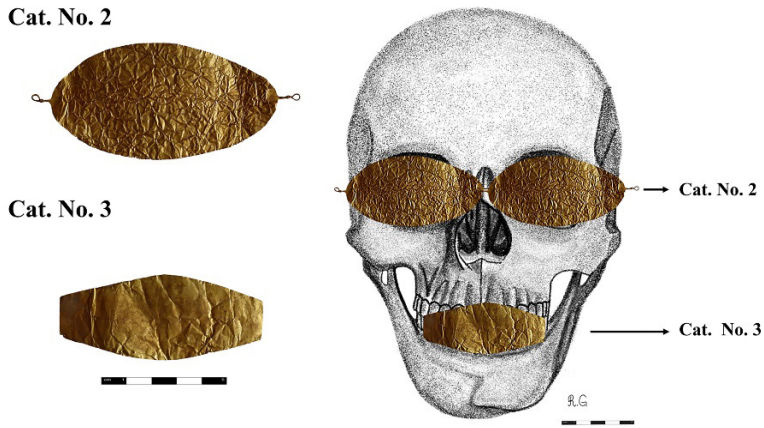


Fig. 2: Possible Uses of Eye (Cat. No. 2) and Mouth Band (Cat. No. 3) on the Skull Drawing

Cat. No. 3-4: Another bands in the museum collection with a rhombus form is Cat. No. 3⁷ and 4 (Fig. 2-3)⁸. The artifacts defined as Type 3 exhibit a sharper form in their middle sections, narrowing toward the edges compared to Cat. No. 1. They gradually taper into a long diamond shape as they thin slightly toward the edges. Cat. No. 3, crafted from plain, undecorated, medium-thick foil, lacks thread holes along its edges⁹. Conversely, Cat. No. 4 features a row of dot decoration along its edges, created using the repoussé technique, alongside geometric depictions resembling small and large diamond shapes at its center. A decorated artifact displayed in the Cyprus Museum, dated to 1400–1230 BC, shares similarities in form with Cat. No. 3 and Cat. No. 4. Additionally, a band with relief floral motifs and lion depictions housed in the British Museum (Marshall, 1969, p. 20, Pl. III, 195) and dated to the early periods of 1300–1100 BC, exhibits comparable features.

7 Museum Env. No.: 1082; Dimension: Length: 9,9 cm; Width: 3,5 cm; Short Edge Width: 2,6 cm; Weight: 2,72 gr.

8 Museum Env. No.: 581; Dimension: Length: 8 cm; Width: 3,2 cm; Short Edge Width: 2,1 cm; Weight: 1,27 gr.

9 The absence of thread holes, a rare feature, suggests two possibilities: the artifact may have been left unfinished and unused, or it might have been simply placed on the mouth.

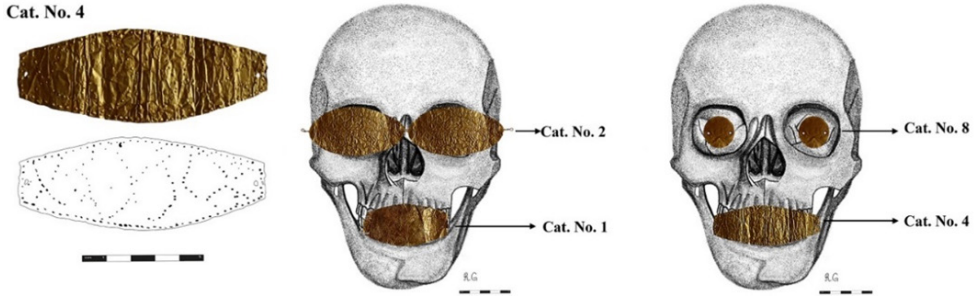


Fig. 3: Mouth Band (Cat. No. 4) with detailed drawing; Eye (Cat. No. 2) and Mouth Band (Cat. No. 1) on the skeleton drawing; Again, on the skeleton drawing, the possible uses of the Eye Applique (Cat. No. 8) and the Mouth Band (Cat. No. 4)

Among the funeral jewelry in the Adana Museum (Uygun, 2021, p. 320, Fig. 1), a band with a lip motif, dated to the second half of the 2nd millennium BC, and another plain, undecorated rhombus-shaped example recovered from the Stratonikeia Necropolis (Polat, 2013, p. 432, Lev. 121a.), bear similarities to the Erimtan examples. Other parallels include the Sagalassos sample (Yalçınkaya, 2019, p. 519, Cat. No. 314), dated to the late 2nd–early 3rd century AD, and a rim band with dot decoration made using the repoussé technique from the Burton Y. Berry Collection (Rudolph-Rudolph, 1973, p. 186, 151d.), dated to the 4th century AD. Based on stylistic and decorative similarities with artifacts from Stratonikeia, Sagalassos, and the Burton Y. Berry Collection, the rhombus-shaped Erimtan examples are likely dated to the 2nd–3rd centuries AD. Observations of their mouth/lip motifs and structural compatibility suggest that Cat. No. 3 and Cat. No. 4 functioned as mouth bands, similar to Cat. No. 1 (Fig. 2-3).

Cat. No. 5: Among the 5 mouth-eye bands of Type 4, Cat. No. 5 exhibits the most distinctive shape¹⁰ (Fig. 4). The band lacks any decoration features, resembling a wristwatch in form. However, its side parts extend into strips, terminating in holes. It is clear that the long, thin edges were extended to tie it to the head with threads passed through the holes, and the middle part in the form of a rhombus may have been used to cover the mouth. The central rhombus-shaped section might have served as a mouth covering. It is seen Archaeological comparison reveals that artifacts dated to the Roman Imperial Period in Stratonikeia (Polat, 2013, p. 432, Lev. 121b.) and Neapolis necropolises (Aydın Tavukçu-Avli, 2021, p. 76, Type 3a, Fig. 7b; Tip 3b, Fig. 8a-e.) are similar in form to Cat. No. 5. Additionally, artifacts from the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations (Bingöl, 1999, pp. 213, 216-217, Cat. Nos. 237, 240-241) share certain structural similarities with the Erimtan artifacts dated to the Roman Period, although they feature rows of repoussé dot decorations along the edges and coin or seal

10 Museum Inv. No.: 581; Dimension: Length: 11 cm; Width: 1,9 cm; Short Edge Width: 0,2 cm; Weight: 0,41 gr.

impressions in the center. The inclusion of coin or seal impressions on such bands suggests their use as mouth bands¹¹. Among the parallel examples, it was concluded that Cat. No. 5 can be dated to the Roman Imperial Period (Fig. 4).

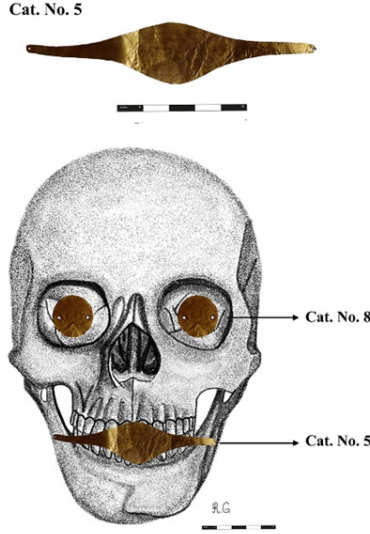


Fig. 4: Mouth Band (Cat. No. 5); Possible uses of Eye applique (Cat. No. 8) and Mouth Band (Cat. No. 5) on the skull drawing

1.2. Wreath (Crown)

Among the gold artifacts discovered in Greek graves, crowns, diadems, and honor wreaths are the most significant group (Türe, 2011, p. 185). Adorning the deceased's head with wreaths and headbands, a custom absent during the Homeric age, symbolized respect and sanctity (Rohde, 2020, p. 181). These adornments served multiple purposes: votive offerings, signs of authority, ornamental jewelry for gods and humans, expressions of love in private life, and during events such as birth, feasts, illnesses, death, and funeral ceremonies (Türe-Savaşçın, 2002, p. 101; Aydın Tavukçu, 2008, p. 384). Most wreaths and diadems unearthed today are grave offerings (Türe-Savaşçın, 2002, p. 101). Wreaths, or crowns, later became more prominent as symbols of status and adornment (Bingöl, 1999, p. 33). According to ancient texts and inscriptions, wreaths were also awarded as honors and worn during ceremonies (Türe-Savaşçın, 2002, p. 101). Early examples were crafted from olive, oak, and myrtle branches, later transitioning to metalwork (Bingöl, 1999, p. 33). Late Hellenistic

¹¹ Ancient people believed that the ferryman Charon received money to carry the souls of the dead across the River Styx (River of the Dead), so placing an obolos (penny/coin) in the mouth of the dead as part of the burial customs was of great importance for people. It is possible that the coin or seal impression seen as decoration on the bands was made based on this tradition. See Grimal, 2007, p. 369; Erhat, 2007, p. 173.

and Early Roman wreaths are among the most ornate artifacts of the era (Tonkova, 2013, p. 432). Hellenistic wreaths, similar to those from the 5th century BC, incorporated attached to circular gold bands or pipes (Türe, 2011, p. 200; Türe-Savaşçın, 2002, p. 100)¹². By the 4th century BC, wreaths featured dense foliage and detailed central ornaments, such as Nike and Eros figures or multi-layered flower rosettes, which persisted until the 2nd century BC. Starting in the 3rd century BC, the Herakles knot, a hallmark of the Hellenistic Period, was added to the center of wreaths (Türe, 2011, p. 200). During the Roman Empire, head jewelry continued in use until the 2nd century AD but gradually declined in significance (Türe, 2011, p. 216).

Cat. No. 6: The Erimtan Archaeology and Art Museum houses a wreath designated as a Cat. No. 6¹³, composed of 24 thin gold leaves, each shaped like a triangle (Fig. 5). The wreath leaves weighed 1.35 grams in total and consisted of small and large pieces ranging in size from 2 to 4.1 cm. The visible on the wreath leaves are breaks and punctures, along with parallel fiber lines extending downward from the midpoint of the triangular parts. These lines, produced using the scraping technique, from a triple grouping, are interpreted as imitation of the olive and myrtle branches depicted in Fig. 5. Early wreath suggest that the thin foliage of the foliage on this artifact renders it impractical for daily use (Miller, 1979, p. 44-45, 62; Tonkova, 2012, p. 714). Instead, the wreath likely originated as a funerary artifact before it was exhibited in the museum's collection.



Fig. 5: Funeral Wreath (Cat. No. 6)

12 Thin gold tubes filled with resin or wax provide flexibility and resistance to deformation. See Türe-Savaşçın, 2002, p. 100.

13 Museum Inv. No.: 1096; Dimension: Length-Width: 2-4,1 cm; Total Weight: 1,35 gr.

Similar three-lobed wreath leaves were discovered in the tomb of a Thracian noblewoman from Anchialos, located on the western Black Sea coast, and are dated to the Late Hellenistic Period (Tonkova, 2012, p. 714, Fig. 8; Tonkova, 2013, p. 432, Fig. 34). Notably, Amisos(?) wreath pieces from the same period exhibit a leaf form that resembles Cat. No. 6 (Şirin-Yiğitpaşa, 2021, p. 185, Cat. No. 61). In addition to the examples previously mentioned, several works dating to the 1st century BC are present in the Hamburg Museum of Art and Industry (Hoffman-Clear, 1968, pp. 46, 31-32), the Anatolian Civilizations Museum (Bingöl, 1999, p. 54, Cat. No. 15), and the Tokat Museum (Göral, 2019, p. 64, Cat. No. 4). These collections include leaf-shaped wreath pieces similar to Cat. No. 6. Notably, a wreath featuring three-lobed leaves was unearthed from a Roman tomb in Ankara-Balgat, dated to the 1st–2nd century AD (Temizsoy-Demirdelen, 1999, p. 29, Pic. 13). Additionally, a large number of wreath leaves were discovered at Fanagoria dating to the first half of the 2nd–3rd century AD (Юрьевич, 2015, p. 479–483, 529, Cat. Nos. 162–164, 224). Based on similar examples, it was established that the large pieces of Cat. No. 6 constitutes the primary structure of the wreath, while the smaller pieces were interspersed between them. The lower sections of all of the components are elongated, folded, and secured using bands or pipes at these points. Through a comparative analysis of grave goods and analogous artifacts from museum collections, Cat. No. 6 is likely attributable to the latter half of the 1st century BC or the 1st century AD.

Cat. No. 7: It was determined that Cat. No. 7¹⁴ which has a leaf form similar to that of Cat. No. 6, was part of another wreath (Fig. 6). This artifact, made of thick foil, features two, possibly three, thread holes at its base. These perforations suggest the possibility of attachment to a dress or another object as an applique. However, based on its form and comparative analysis, it was concluded that this piece was more likely a component of a wreath. It is believed that it may have been secured to the wreath using pipes or bands threaded through the perforated sections. Drawing parallels between the example from Phanagoria and the artifacts represented by Cat. No. 6, it is suggested that this fragment (Cat. No. 7) was part of a funerary wreath. The wreath is believed to date back to the latter half of the 1st century BC or the 2nd century AD (Юрьевич, 2015, pp. 505-508, Cat. No. 194).

14 Museum Inv. No.: 1333; Dimension: Length-Width: 2,7 cm; Weight: 1,44 gr.

Cat. No. 7



Fig. 6: Fragment of funeral wreath (Cat. No. 7)

1.3. Eye Appliques

Cat. No. 8: Cat. No. 8¹⁵ is another Erimtan example made in a circular form with holes drilled on both sides (Fig. 7). The artifact, crafted from a thicker foil compared to Cat. No. 9, aligns with works from Fanagoria dated between the mid-1st century AD and the mid-2nd century AD. These pieces were described as ornamental weaves positioned between wreaths (Юрьевич, 2015, p. 495, Cat. Nos. 183; 546-548, Cat. No. 256). However, the fact that the mentioned works have a hole on one side makes them more likely to be part of a funeral wreath, and we believe that it would be more logical to use the double-hole Erimtan sample as a dress applique on the corpse or to tie it to the head with threads passed directly through the holes over the eyes of the dead as eye applique (Demirer, 2016, pp. 133-148). As a result of the experiments conducted on the skull drawing, considering its original size, Cat. No. 8 is thought to be an eye applique¹⁶ (Fig. 3-4). Based on similar examples that are compatible in terms of form, the work was dated to the 1st-2nd century AD.

Cat. No. 8



Fig. 7: Eye Applique (Cat. No. 8)

15 Museum Inv. No.: 1333; Dimension: Diameter: 2,7 cm; Weight: 1,44 gr.

16 In Fig. 3 and 4, it was placed on both eyes in order to determine Cat. No. 8's position on the skeleton.

Cat. No. 9: Another example, which is claimed to have been used as a decorative element as part of a wreath but could also have been placed over the eyes of the dead, is named Cat No 9¹⁷ (Fig. 8). Both of the samples, which can be considered dress appliques due to their size, were 0.7 cm in diameter and weighed 0.02 g in total. The works were cut from a flat thin gold leaf and presented in a circular form. A gold-eye band was recovered from the Kültepe excavations, which has an oval shape and is slightly hollow inside (Bingöl, 1999, p. 207, Cat. No. 231). This band, which is similar in form and dated to the first half of the 2nd millennium BC, appears to be much larger in diameter. Among the Fanagoria examples, there are artifacts with diameters similar to Cat No 9, described as wreath pieces and dated to the first half of the 2nd century AD through the first half of the 3rd century AD (Юрьевич, 2015, pp. 512-514, Cat. No. 201a-d; 550; Cat. No. 260).

Cat. No. 9



Fig. 8: Eye Appliques (Cat. No. 9)

The artifacts were recovered from the head areas of various graves and were therefore identified as components of funerary wreaths. This data proves that the numerous similar artifacts found are not likely to be dress appliques, but rather wreaths or eye appliques. Notably, the artifacts' frequent discovery in pairs, combined with their lack of holes or thread loops (unlike Cat. No. 8, which features such elements) supports the interpretation that they served as eye applique placed directly over the eyes of the deceased during burial rituals. This differs from Cat. No. 8, which was tied using thread. Based on similar examples, the most accurate dating for these eye appliques is between the 2nd and 3rd century AD.

2. Earrings

The tradition of ear ornament dates back to the Paleolithic Period (Tekin, 2018, p. 163). The earliest examples, worn by both men and women as symbols of adornment, were simple thin wires shaped into rings (Bingöl, 1999, p. 33; Tekin, 2018, p. 163). Initially crafted from copper, earrings transitioned to silver and gold production by the late 4th millennium BC. By the 3rd millennium BC, when jewelry-making flourished, earrings produced using advanced techniques began to exhibit aesthetic sophistication. These designs, particularly prominent from the 1st millennium BC onward, were considered markers of nobility (Tekin, 2018, p.

¹⁷ Museum Inv. No.: 581; Dimension: Diameters: 0,7 cm; Total Weight: 0,02 gr.

16). Crescent and sandal-shaped earrings were especially popular during the Archaic and Classical periods (Higgins, 1961, pp. 122-127; Meriçboyu, 2001, pp. 47-49). However, by the mid-3rd century BC, disc and sandal-shaped earrings gave way to hoop earrings adorned with mythological figures such as Eros, Nike, and Pegasus (Ergil, 1983, p. 7; Türe, 2011, p. 203). From the 3rd century BC to the 1st century BC, earrings featuring human and animal figures gained widespread popularity due to their intricate and striking designs (Higgins, 1961, pp. 161-167; Bingöl, 1999, p. 33; Türe, 2011, p. 203). During the Roman Period, jewelers catered to diverse social classes, producing opulent earrings for the wealthy and simpler models for those of lower status (Uygun, 2007, p. 98). Designs included massive spherical pendants, hollow spheres, discs, and various pendulum styles, with or without stones (Bingöl, 1999, p. 33). Simple ring-shaped earrings, originating in the Hellenistic Period, persisted into the Roman period (Ergil, 1983, p. 8; Türe, 2011, p. 218; Meriçboyu, 2001, p. 199). In these extremely simple earrings, twisted rings were sometimes created by making a few grooves on the ring, and sometimes by wrapping the wires in a spiral shape. Pendulums suspended on a flat ring could be plain or decorated with spherical shapes or stones (Ergil, 1983, p. 8).

There are 5 earrings, two of which are pairs, that are the subject of the study in the Erimtan Archaeology and Art Museum. Three of these are ring-shaped earrings, while the remaining two belong to the pendulum earring group, crafted from precious or semiprecious stones. The study discusses these earrings chronologically, focusing on their form and stylistic development.

2.1. Classical Period

Cat. No. 10



Fig. 9: Spiral Earring (Cat. No. 10)

Cat. No. 10: The Erimtan Collection includes an earring made by twisting a gold band in a spiral shape. On the work named Cat. No.10¹⁸, it displays four relief decorations resembling grape clusters, created using the granulation technique¹⁹ arranged clusters (12 clusters). Additionally, a snake-shaped motif is formed by curling a separate thin band at one end (Fig. 9). The opposite end of the earring, adorned with granulated relief dots, tapers off and is broken at this point.

The earring transitions from an oval to a quadrangular profile as it approaches the snake's head, making this piece notable for its intricate form and decorations. Spiral earrings featuring flower or triangular decorations consisting of granulated elements date back to the 5th century BC. Commonly, granulated pyramidal ornaments adorned the ends of these earrings, which sometimes concluded with human or animal heads (Türe-Savaşçın, 2002, p. 101). A similar spiral-shaped earring from Xanthos is preserved in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum (Türe-Savaşçın, 2002, p. 89, Pic. 175). This piece, adorned with granulated pyramids at its ends, dates to the 7th century BC, though it was re-dated by Higgins to 450–330 BC (Higgins, 1961, p. 123, Pl. 25C). Another similar piece is held in the British Museum (Higgins, 1961, p. 123, Pl. 24F). Dating to 450–350 BC, it exhibits stylized decorations and pyramids granulation at its ends. The spiral earrings in the Erimtan Collection align stylistically with the examples. Similar 5th–4th centuries BC granulated earrings can be found in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum and the British Museum (Ergil, 1983, p. 17, Pic. 11; Marshall, 1969, p. 178, Pl. XXX, 1649). A pair of spiral earrings from Pantikapaion also bears structural similarities to the Erimtan example (Williams-Ogden, 1994, p. 152, Pic. 93). These earrings, dating to around 400 BC, feature granulated pyramidal decorations at their ends. Based on analogical evaluations, Cat. No. 10 is most accurately dated to the 5th–4th century BC.

2.2. Roman Period

Cat. No. 11: The two earrings from the Yüksel Erimtan Collection examined in this study represent the hoop earring type, a significant type of jewelry from the Roman period. These pieces are identified as Cat. No. 11²⁰ and Cat No 12²¹, Cat No. 11, recovered as a pair, holds a place in the collection (Fig. 10). These earrings consist of a simple flat hoop with one end soldered to the back of a flat curved disc and the other end hooked into a loop to close. The disc, featuring spherical protrusions at its ends, is hollow and has been crushed over time. A similar pendulum earring, dated to the 2nd century AD, is located in the Tokat Museum and demonstrates a parallel to the Erimtan example (Göral, 2019, p. 75, Cat. No. 28). Another

18 Museum Inv. No.: 917; Dimension: Diameter: 2,5 cm; Weight: 7,04 gr.

19 For details, see Higgins, 1961, p. 18-23.

20 Museum Inv. No.: 1369; Dimension: Length: 1,45 cm; Weight: 0,75 x 0,71 gr; Total Weight: 1,46 gr.

21 Museum Inv. No.: 1370; Dimension: Length: 1,5 cm; Weight: 0,85 gr.

similar piece in the British Museum dated to the 2nd–3rd century AD, features a disk ring with a bead at its tip and a simple disk like the Erimtan example. This piece also includes a pendulum bordered by wire (Marshall, 1969, p. 294, Pl. LIII, 2532). An earring in the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, acquired from Burdur, is almost identical to Cat. No. 11 (Bingöl, 1999, p. 73, Cat. No. 50). This work, surrounded by a wire border, is dated to the 2nd–3rd centuries AD.

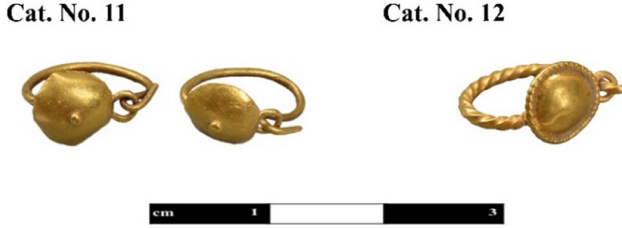


Fig. 10: Earrings with disk hoops (Cat. No. 11-12)

Another relevant example is a ring disc earring from the Neapolis Necropolis, also dated to the 2nd–3rd century AD (Avli, 2020, p. 121, Cat. No. 119). Similarly, a pendulum earring with a flat ring and curved disc from the Istanbul Archaeological Museum closely resembles Cat. No. 11, except for its pendulum (Ergil, 1983, p. 8-9, Cat. No. 95). This piece, dated to the Roman Period, features a bead made using the granulation technique at the center. Its pendulum includes a horizontally grooved, drop-shaped white stone encased in a decorated border and surrounded by a wire border.

Cat. No. 12: Crafted from thick wire, features a twisted ring designed and formed by winding the wire around itself. Its hemispherical disk, bordered by intricate filigree, was found hollow and crushed (Fig. 10). One end of the earring's ring is soldered to the back of the disc, while the other end hooks into a loop to close. A similar example a pendulum earring with a twisted disc and ring was unearthed during rescue excavations at the Neapolis Ancient City necropolis and is dated to the 2nd century AD (Avli, 2020, p. 122-124, Cat. No. 120). It is noteworthy that the earring with a disc ring and surrounded by wire borders, which is among the jewelry of the Tokat Museum, is fitting with the Erimtan example in terms of its crafting technique (Göral, 2019, p. 75–76, Cat. No. 29). Another artifact, discovered in Kula, Uşak, and acquired by the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, exhibited a hemispherical disk soldered onto a twisted ring, closely similar to Cat. No. 12. This piece is also dated to the 2nd–3rd century AD (Bingöl, 1999, p. 72, Cat. No. 48). Additionally, the British Museum holds a similar earring with a twisted ring and disc pendulum, attributed to the Roman Period (Marshall, 1969, p. 293, Pl. LIII, 2526). The Erimtan samples, Cat. Nos. 11 and 12,

dated from the 2nd to the 3rd century AD. Similar examples frequently feature pendulums, suggesting that the Erimtan earrings may originally have included pendulums. Based on the stylistic and technical evaluations, the works are appropriately dated to the 2nd–3rd century AD.

Cat. No. 13: A hook-and-pendulum earring from the Yüksel Erimtan Collection, identified as Cat. No. 13²² (Fig. 11). The piece features a semi-lunar-shaped filigree setting that encloses a stone, likely crafted from glass frit to emulate the appearance of lapis lazuli. Three pendulums are affixed to the slot in the center of the piece via separate rings that have been rotated several times and secured in a hooked form. The pendulums on the right and left sides are adorned with elongated, rounded green glass frits beads on the upper sections, designed to imitate lapis lazuli, while the lower sections showcase translucent, lustrous white pearls. Conversely, the central pendulum incorporates a bead of genuine lapis lazuli in a deep, matte blue hue, accompanied by a bright white pearl and a carnelian bead exhibiting a rich reddish-brown color. Additional ornamentation includes relief dot patterns created using the granulation technique. These details are present around the slot in the center and between the beads on each pendulum. The pendulums are finalized by coiling the lower ends around themselves and sealing them. Comparable examples provide insight into the earring's historical context. A similar piece discovered in Isparta, now held by the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, has been dated to the 3rd century AD by Bingöl (Bingöl, 1999, p. 88, Cat. No. 77). Looking at the details it is seen that the hook of the work, which differs from the Erimtan example with minor differences, has a disc and a pendulum, and its three separate pendulums are decorated with stones. Another comparable example is housed in the Hamburg Museum of Art and Industry, dated to the 3rd–4th century AD or later. This piece, featuring a precious stone set within a disc and two pendulums, exhibits distinctions from Cat. No. 13 in its pendulum count and specific characteristics (Hoffman-Clear, 1968, p. 143, 92). Additionally, a gold earring recovered from a tomb in Olbia, near the Black Sea, closely resembles the Erimtan example in form. This artifact, exhibited in the British Museum, has been dated to the 3rd century AD (Marshall, 1969, p. 306, Pl. LV, 2656). Originally designed with three pendulums, one is now missing. The square-shaped stone slot and some pendulum adornments are also absent. Based on these evaluations, Cat. No. 13 aligns with the characteristics of similar artifacts dated to the 3rd century AD and is therefore attributed to this period.

22 Museum Inv. No.: 914; Dimension: Length/Height: 1,5 x 3 cm; Diameter of the stone inside the disc: 0,6 cm; Weight: 3,42 gr.



Fig. 11: Hook and Pendulum Earrings (Cat. No. 13-14)

Cat. No. 14: Among the artifacts in the Erimtan Museum, the pendulum and probably hook artifact identified as Cat. No. 14²³, is made entirely of gold and a solid filling hollow (Fig. 11). The design includes a long, rectangular segment that widens in the center and terminates in pendulums. A round bluish-green turquoise stone is set into a slot at the top. The central section is adorned with a circular carnelian agate stone of a reddish-brown hue, positioned within a rosette decoration that extends inwards. Two thin, flat gold rings, made using the filigree technique, are soldered on either side of the piece²⁴. Two pendulums were originally passed through the rings at the base before soldering. These pendulums were inserted through a rectangular transitional element secured by hooking the ends of thin wires, which were then wrapped around the pendulum. One of these wires is broken, while the other retains a square-shaped decorative pattern created using the granulation technique. In the original form, the pendulum strings were probably decorated with semiprecious stones. This artifact can be compared to earrings dated to the 3rd century AD, categorized as hooked disc-and-pendulum earrings in the collection of the Anatolian Civilizations Museum (Bingöl, 1999, pp. 88-91, Cat. Nos. 76-80, 83). Similar features include square or round rosette decorations centered with colored stones and completed with double or triple pendulums. Comparable examples from the Istanbul Archaeological Museum exhibit two pendulum earrings with square and oval-shaped rosette decorations, each centered with a semiprecious stone and adorned with three pendulums, mirroring the Erimtan artifact (Ergil, 1983, Pic. 121-122). Artifacts dated to the 4th century AD also feature precious stones at the pendulum ends, and their rosette designs close resemblance to Cat. No. 14. Based on these comparisons and supporting literature studies, Cat. No. 14 has been dated to the 3rd–4th century AD.

23 Museum Inv. No.: 913; Dimension: Length/Height: 2,4 cm; Weight: 1,83 gr.

24 There are probably also rings on the left side of the piece, but this part is broken and missing.

3. Pendant

The Paleolithic period marked the emergence of the earliest necklaces, crafted from naturally available materials such as colored stones, animal teeth and horns, and shells. These materials were shaped through rubbing and scraping and then strung together after being drilled (Köroğlu, 2004, p. 14). During the Archaic and Classical periods, jewelry craftsmanship became highly meticulous. Necklaces commonly featured acorn-, cocoon-, vase-, and sphere-shaped pendants crafted using the granulation technique, suspended from gold wire braids (Türe, 2011, p. 205). From the Hellenistic Period onward, string necklaces with pine cone pendants and gold beads gained popularity. By the 4th century AD, gold necklaces featuring double or triple pendants suspended from short chains had emerged (Türe, 2011, p. 205). In the Roman period, necklace designs diversified, incorporating chain necklaces woven in intricate patterns or composed of large plates, along with pendants and cameos imbued with religious and magical significance (Türe, 2011, p. 216; Tavukçu-Göral, 2020, p. 1476). Roman pendants and medallions often featured hanging rings crafted from wide strips (Türe, 2011, p. 216). Among the necklace and earring elements, pendants stand out with their larger sizes than other pieces and are seen as the only element in necklaces. In addition to those made of precious metals, there are also those made of various metal or precious stone combinations (Bingöl, 1999, p. 33).

Cat. No. 15: A pendant is exhibited in the Erimtan Archaeology and Art Museum, and this work is identified as Cat. No. 15²⁵ (Fig. 12). The specific pendant under study (Cat. No. 15) features a wide, grooved ring encircled by a filigree frame. The centerpiece of the thin, disc-shaped gold plate is a helical decoration formed by winding a thin gold wire into a spiral.

Cat. No. 15



Fig. 12: Disc-shaped pendant (Cat. No. 15)

The exact symbolism of this design reminiscent of a stylized Ionic headdress is uncertain but seems to represent a floral motif akin to the Tree of Life. Three circular ornaments, the largest positioned centrally, embellish the lower portion. In addition, a circular ring is positioned at the

25 Museum Inv. No.: 1287; Dimension: Diameter: 1,3 cm; Thickness: 0,05 cm; Weight: 0,56 gr.

base of the spirals, splitting upward. The crafting technique firmly situates this pendant within the Roman period. For precise dating, comparable examples are essential. Similar disc-shaped pendants include one housed in the Anatolian Civilizations Museum, which shares stylistic elements with Cat. No. 15, such as a gold plate and filigree framing (Bingöl, 1999, p. 145, Kat. No. 161). However, unlike the Erimtan example, it features a Helios (?) relief crafted using the repoussé technique. Another example is from the Burton Y. The Berry Collection dated to the 2nd–3rd century AD, incorporates busts of Helios and a youth on its disc-shaped body, also crafted with the repoussé technique (Rudolph-Rudolph, 1973, p. 78a). This pendant includes granulation and central rosette decoration, (Rudolph-Rudolph, 1973, p. 129a-b), surrounded by filigree a characteristic shared with Cat. No. 15. Cat. No. 15 can be dated to the 3rd century AD based on the characteristics and dating of parallel specimens.

Evaluation and Conclusion

This article analyzed earrings and pendants, with a focus on funerary jewelry in the Yüksel Erimtan Collection. Items such as mouth-eye bands, wreaths, and eye applique were included. Material analysis revealed their delicate construction, including unsuitability for daily use. Comparisons with skull drawings clarified the functions of these items: one served as an eye band (Cat. No. 2), while four were identified as mouth bands (Cat. No. 1, 3-5).

As a result of the analogical evaluations, the Erimtan bands were categorized into four types (Cat. Nos. 1–5). Of these, Type 1 and Type 4 with repoussé decoration are dated between the Hellenistic Period and the 3rd century AD. The thin foil wreaths (Cat. Nos. 6–7) are attributed to the Roman Period. Two appliques, crafted from thin gold leaf, are likely funerary eye appliques (Cat. Nos. 8–9), despite earlier interpretations suggesting they were components of wreaths.

The collection also includes spiral-shaped, stylized snake-head earring and earrings with a disc ring and a pendulum rosette. The intricate craftsmanship of the spiral-shaped earring (Cat. No. 10) indicates an early origin in the (5th–4th century BC). In contrast, the earrings with disc rings and pendulums (Cat. No. 11–14), embellished with semiprecious stones, are comparable to similar items in other museum collections and are dated to the 3rd–4th century AD. Although the chain of the disc-shaped pendant (Cat. No. 15) is not extant within the collection, its central spiral decoration is noteworthy. Despite extensive research, a precise parallel for this piece, dated to the 3rd century AD, has not yet been identified.

The purchased works in the Yüksel Erimtan Collection collectively span a wide chronological range, from the Classical to the Roman Periods. The production techniques of jewelry, whether intended for burial or daily use, evolved significantly, reflecting technological advancements across different eras and cultures. This evolution has been closely tied to economic factors from ancient times to the present day. Unfortunately, the

inventory records at the Erimtan Archaeology and Art Museum lack precise data regarding the excavation contexts of these artifacts. Despite this loss of archaeological information, these works, evaluated within a typological framework, undoubtedly offer valuable contributions to the scholarly literature through their distinctive iconography and ornamentation.

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