

TAHSİN ÖZGÜÇ, *Maşat Höyük 11. A Hittite center northeast of Boğazköy.*  
Ankara. Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1982.

The publication of Maşat Höyük II soon after Maşat Höyük I completes the detailed account of the excavation of the palace and citadel of this important site and includes an appendix on the 1981 season which was only concluded while this volume was being published. Since the chance find of a tablet by a school teacher in 1943, now well-known as the Maşat letter, the archaeological and historical potential of the site was quickly recognised by the Turkish Historical Society and it has been particularly fortunate that Professor Özgüç has conducted excavations here since 1973.

Maşat is situated 20 kms south of Zile, 116 kms as the crow flies from Boğazköy and lies in a strategic position near the border of the territory ruled from the Hittite capital and the region controlled by the Black Sea area. There is little doubt that Maşat was the city known as Tapigga, a city fortified by Muwatallis, at the time of the Kashkan rebellions and mentioned in the Narrative of Accession of his brother Hattusilis III (1289 B.C.). That the site should be the seat of a Hittite ruler is not therefore surprising nor the fact that a mound of this size, standing 28.80 metres above the plain, should have yielded material and finds dating from the Early Bronze Age to the 6th-4th centuries B. C. But it is the detailed account of the extensive palace built on the citadel which must, in the excavators' view, have been completed "at the latest in the second half of the 15th century B.C." which provides important new evidence for the methods of construction and elaborate planning effected by Hittite architects, masons, and other craftsmen at a period earlier than that of the monumental buildings already known from Büyükkale and the upper city of Hattusas-Boğazköy. The palace, constructed with well-worked ashlar blocks in the entrance area, mudbrick walls built on stone foundations, often strengthened with wooden beams, contained a courtyard larger than those known in other Hittite palaces and there is convincing evidence for two or three upper stories, with the mudbrick walls again constructed with extensive timber framing. An account of the discovery of the tablets belonging to the palace archive is given in Maşat Höyük I and publication of these documents, which belong to the level 3 palace is eagerly awaited by scholars all over the world. Here one can only note that many different objects such as chariots, weapons, objects of silver, headdresses in Kashka fashion, garments in Hurrian fashion, as well as the storage of copper, silver and wheat, are mentioned in these tablets, all of which are written in Hittite. The documentary evidence gives a date for the palace of Level 3 of c. 1400 B.C. Furthermore, stamp seals on two of the tablets indicate that the burning and sacking of the palace must have taken place in the reign of Tudhaliya II, before 1380 B.C. That this disaster can be attributed to the Kashka people seems likely, in view of the fact that we know that one of the important Kashka invasions took place in the reign of Tudhaliya II. But if this is so, we are confronted with the puzzling fact that we have either here or elsewhere in Anatolia, no archaeological evidence for the Kashka to supplement the references to them which can be found in the texts. Their success in capturing Hattusha itself and the constant threat to the northern frontier of the Hittite empire would have needed a well equipped and organised army; yet there are no artifacts excavated as yet which can be described as specifically Kashkan. Within their territory lay rich deposits of iron and yet we have no evidence that this was exploited by the Kashkans. Yet in the Early Bronze age the importance of

this area, renowned for its deposits of copper, silver and iron, the forests for supplying the charcoal and presumably skilled metal-smiths, is emphasised by the wealth of extant metal objects known to have originated in this region. Many of these have recently been published in Maşat Höyük I.

An important discovery is a stone mould for a shaft hole axe intended to cast axes of the so-called Tepe Gawra type which is known at Karum Kanish level Ib and other north Syrian-Mesopotamian sites. While the closest analogy for this type is known from Ashur, grave 18, stone moulds have also been found, not only at Kültepe, but at Shemshara, in northern Mesopotamia, where an axe of this type was found near a mould for casting a similar axe and dated by tablets to the reign of Shamsi-Adad I. The Danish excavations have shown that Shemshara was the site of a Hurrian kingdom whose ruler corresponded with Shamsi-Adad and whose activities included the storage of tin or tin-ore, the manufacture of weapons and an extensive trade in metals and ores. The export of the mass-produced castings from a single axe-mould could account for the widespread distribution of this distinctive type but we still know little about the actual method of distribution, or whether the smiths belonged to the Hurrian speaking part of the population. Did donkey caravans carry axeheads designed for specific functions along trade routes used by Assyrian merchants and their agents resident in Anatolia; were the moulds carried by the smiths themselves if they decided to emigrate to centres where raw materials were easily accessible, or were workshops in important centres of production of metal goods in close contact with each other regardless of the political conditions of the time?

The discovery of one nearly complete and another fragmentary arm-shaped vessel in a house of Hittite level I (1250-1200 B.C.) reinforces Bittel's view that these peculiar vessels were exported from North Syria. Özgüç is convinced on the grounds of fabric and technique that they are not local work and while their use for ritual libations is the most likely explanation of their purpose, their occurrence in Syria and Hittite levels in Anatolia suggests that they are more likely to be connected with Hurrian rather than Hittite practice. It must be noted, however, that the Maşat Höyük tablets are all written in Hittite and there are as yet no tablets in Akkadian or Hurrian.

Three stone moulds are noteworthy. One of serpentine, was intended for the fabrication of a pin with separate fitted top, another made of steatite, was used for the casting of pendants in the shape of animals and a bird, while the third made of an unidentified grey local stone was intended for the casting of thin silver and gold wire and elements of necklaces decorated with rows of triangles and concentric circles. Unfortunately there is as yet no jewellery from this period at Maşat (Hittite level 2, 15th-14th centuries B.C.) although the moulds suggest the presence of jewellers.

The history of Maşat is well illustrated by the stratified series of pottery which can be related to the abandonment of the palace in the reign of Tudhaliya II (1410-1380 B.C.) and the subsequent restoration of buildings in the reign of Shuppiluliuma I (1380-1330 B.C.). To the three complete specimens of Mycenaean III B vessels published in Maşat 1, two pieces (from the same house as the complete vessels), the neck of a two-handled flask, and the spout of a stirrup jar, are published here. Later pottery of level I (dated to c. 1275-1200 B.C.) seems to represent a time when the importance of the city had declined. A tablet in Hittite cuneiform found on the citadel in the Hittite building level I, however, may have been brought to Tapigga from Hattusas in the middle of the 13th century B.C.

The unfortified Phrygian settlement on the citadel consisted of small houses; but while no monumental buildings were found, the character of the pottery shows the usual animal and



geometric designs known all over the area controlled by the Phrygians while the latest group of Iron age pottery belongs to the time of Median and Persian rule. Pottery from the late 6th century includes jars and pitchers decorated with monsters and hybrid animal figures, considered by the excavator to have been "manufactured in local, interconnected workshops of Central and North Anatolia and marketed from there to nearby centers". This applies also to the kraters with painted tree and animal designs from Maşat also related to Central Anatolia. One of the Maşat sherds with deer and branch patterns is dated to the late 7th century B.C. and a remarkable bowl with a painted design of two bridled horses is considered to be directly imported from an East Greek workshop producing works resembling the style of Achaemenid Persia as known from the horses on the staircase of the Apadana of Persepolis. Three remarkable cylindrical jars decorated with painted fantastic animals which recall the painted revetments of Pazarlı and Akalan represent the influence of East Greek art mediated through Amisos and Sinope. These vessels belong to Phrygian level I whose sub-phases correspond to a well defined sequence of stratified floor levels which are dated 600-550, 550-500 and 500-450 B.C. respectively.

Finally, there are surprisingly few imports at this period at Maşat especially when the position of the site, accessible from the Black sea, Phrygia, and south and south east Anatolia is considered. But three imported Attic sherds are dated 400-350 B.C.

Maşat Höyük II is illustrated by several colour plates of high quality; the double page view of the site and pottery plates in colour are an excellent supplement to the comprehensive series of drawings and photographs. Many of the objects are both drawn and photographed in welcome contrast to many modern archaeological publications. The importance of this publication cannot be overestimated and our understanding of the period 1550-1380 B.C. is greatly enlarged. The author and the Turkish Historical Society must be congratulated in choosing and supporting the work at such a fruitful site which certainly repaid the skilled excavation and study directed by Professor Özgüç and for publishing in such a lavish and comprehensive manner the results of many seasons' work. The dedication in honour of the Centennial of Atatürk's birthday is the text of a lecture given by the author at the 9th Congress of the Turkish Historical Society. Atatürk's vision of the need to expand archaeology throughout Turkey and for everyone to understand that the subject should be considered as one of national importance, is admirably stressed. Perhaps today we can all learn from his conviction that the study of the past contains valuable lessons for each generation.

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