

A CULT STRUCTURE FROM OVAÖREN: EVIDENCE FOR KUBABA ASSOCIATION

S. Yücel ŞENYURT – İlkay AKLAN

Abstract

This study examines a cult structure at Ovaören, exploring its architectural features and associated material evidence in relation to Kubaba worship. Located 2.5 km south of the village of Ovaören in the Gülşehir district of Nevşehir Province, Ovaören-Yassihöyük was one of the prominent settlements of Tabal during the Late Hittite Period. Its proximity to the eastern frontier of the Phrygians/Mushki and nearby significant Tabal inscriptions such as those at Suvasa (3.5 km) and Göstesin (2.5 km) attest to Ovaören's importance during the Middle Iron Age. Ovaören-Yassihöyük, an important fortified city in the Late Bronze Age, adopted a fortified urban model again in the 10th century BC. The architectural remains uncovered within the three-phase Middle Iron Age stratum at Ovaören-Yassihöyük predominantly reflect a rural character. As commonly observed throughout the region, this layer is dominated by independent, single-room structures with rectangular or square plans. Among these structures is Building M8, a Middle Iron Age structure unearthed during the 2015–2017 excavations provides significant evidence that Tabal cult practices were not limited to open-air sanctuaries but also occurred within enclosed spaces. Recent studies focusing on the spread of Phrygian influence have increasingly explored the presence and interactions of the Kubaba/Matar Kubileya cult across different geographies. These investigations reveal that Middle Iron Age communities in Central Anatolia embraced abstract thought and symbolism in their religious practices. Given that communities engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry in the region could not always access the open-air sanctuaries located in elevated areas, it is understood that, as exemplified by the case of Ovaören, deities were venerated in modest cult places of a rural character. As the first cult structure identified within the Tabal region, the Ovaören sanctuary offers valuable insights

*Prof. Dr. S. Yücel ŞENYURT, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Archaeology, Ankara/Türkiye, E-mail: yucel.senyurt@hbv.edu.tr. ORCID 0000-0001-7364-311X.

Dr. İlkay AKLAN, Çukurova University, Faculty of Science and Letters, Department of Archaeology, Adana/Türkiye. E-mail: iaklan@cu.edu.tr. ORCID 0000-0002-8817-8895.

into the religious identity and worship practices of the era, particularly in terms of the cultural interactions between the Late Hittite and Phrygian traditions.

Keywords: Iron Age, Tabal, Phryg, Ovaören, Cult, Kubaba, Matar Kubileya

Introduction

Tabal, one of the representatives of the Late Hittite tradition that ensured the survival and transmission of the Hittite culture into subsequent centuries¹, appears not as an ethnically based definition but rather as a geographical term. In light of Assyrian records, and local inscriptions in Luwian hieroglyphs found in the southern part of Central Anatolia², it is understood that the Land of Tabal extended from the bend of the Kızılırmak River in the north to the Taurus Mountains in the south, and from the eastern edge of the Konya Plain in the west to the western slopes of the Anti-Taurus Mountains in the east³. In the post-Hittite period, the Kingdom of Tabal, established in the southern part of Central Anatolia corresponding to the modern region of Cappadocia, stands out as one of the least studied and documented representatives of the Late Hittite cultural tradition. Over the past two decades, research in the Cappadocia region has focused on the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early and Middle Iron Ages, examining the continuity of Hittite political and cultural traditions that form the central focus of studies on the Tabal region. Information from Assyrian written sources, in which the name Tabal appears for the first time, sheds light on the political landscape of Central Anatolia during the Middle Iron Age. Meanwhile, the rock monuments and inscriptions of the Tabal region—believed to have emerged under the hegemony of Neo-Assyrian art—are among the primary elements contributing to our understanding of this period. Religious or belief-related themes seem to be particularly prominent in the artifacts in question.

The ritual and cult practices known to have held an important place in Hittite society prior to the Iron Age⁴ also maintained their significance in the Late Hittite society. According to written sources and archaeological studies conducted in the region, the temples built in Late Hittite settlements stand out in cultic practices. Temples constructed for gods and goddesses during this period became the centers of religious life and served as important venues for public rituals. Archaeological evidence indicates that in Late Hittite centers such as Carchemish, Aleppo, Tell Tayinat, and Ain Dara, monumental temples—often decorated with orthostats and sculptural works—existed alongside more modest

1 Bryce 2012, 141; Akçay 2014, 51.

2 Hawkins 2000, 433-531; Hawkins 2024, 158-168.

3 Bryce 2012, 43.

4 Karauğuz 2024, 43-77.

sacred structures, such as those found at Zincirli⁵. In contrast to these regions, where the continuity of cultic identity and monumental religious architecture is evident, it is not yet possible to speak of a similar situation for the Tabal region, the westernmost representative of the Late Hittite culture. If rock monuments and stelae are set aside, it has been suggested that the monumental temples of the previous period in this region were replaced by sacred areas characterized by their cultic function, often located on elevated terrain or around water sources⁶. In addition, cult places that are architecturally indistinguishable from domestic buildings are thought to have emerged in the same context. While evidence of worship in identifiable spaces across the region remains limited, a Middle Iron Age structure unearthed at Ovaören-Yassihöyük, one of the major settlements of Tabal⁷, during the 2015–2017 excavations provide important clues that cultic practices were also carried out in enclosed spaces.

M8 Structure at Ovaören

Located approximately 25 km south of the Kızılırmak River, Ovaören—renowned for its rich archaeological landscape—has been the focus of ongoing excavations since 2007, which have revealed a Middle Iron Age settlement enclosed by a defensive system and comprising three architectural phases (fig. 1). Although a fortified settlement model was adopted in Ovaören from the early 10th century BCE onwards, the architectural remains unearthed at the site—distinguished by its commanding position over extensive arable lands—exhibit a predominantly rural character. In the Middle Iron Age stratum, which comprises three architectural phases (fig. 2), alongside single-room structures of varying functions and sizes ranging from 10 to 30 m², a megaron-like building—characterized by an open porch and a stone-paved area in front of its main chamber and dated to the early part of the period—currently represents the only known example of this architectural type at Ovaören⁸. As previously noted, within this architectural tradition, a space identified during the 2015–2017 fieldwork stands out from other Middle Iron Age structures at the site due to the assemblage of finds recovered from its interior.

The space unearthed in trenches JA-175–176 within the YH5 architectural level (800–700 BC) exhibits features similar to other Middle Iron Age structures at the settlement (fig. 3). The space designated as Structure M8 during the excavations represents a typical example of the tradition characterized by independent single-roomed, and generally rectangular-plan constructions. With an

5 Gökçe – Pınarcık 2020, 148–152; Novák 2012, 46; Naumann 2007, 483.

6 D'Alfonso 2017, 51–55; Massa – Osborne 2024, 39; Lanaro 2015, 91; Lanaro et al. 2015, 70; Maner – Kuruçayırılı, 2018, 785; Dinçol 1994, 117–128.

7 Şenyurt et al. 2023, 527; Şenyurt – Akçay 2022, 102; Şenyurt – Kamış – Akçay 2014, 62; Şenyurt – Akçay – Kamış 2014, 101; Şenyurt – Akçay – Kamış 2016, 116; Şenyurt et al. 2019, 252; Şenyurt et al. 2020, 488.

8 Şenyurt – Akçay – Aklan 2023, 52.

area of 20 m², the Structure M8 is one of the largest structures identified in the Middle Iron Age level. The walls of the building measure approximately 50–60 cm in thickness. The large quantity of rubble stones recovered within the structure indicates that the walls were predominantly built using stone masonry⁹. The frequent occurrence of high walls with extensive stone use in the Iron Age architecture of Ovaören provides a basis for this interpretation¹⁰.

The Structure M8, enclosed by rubble-stone walls on the east, west, and north sides, opens to the south onto a stone-paved courtyard measuring approximately 15 m², where traces indicate that several repairs were carried out over time (fig. 4a–4b). The absence of any foundation associated with the building on its southern side—where it opens to the courtyard—suggests that this section was intentionally left open¹¹. In terms of plan and construction technique, the Structure M8 does not differ from the domestic and workshop structures identified at Ovaören-Yassihöyük. Although lacking elements such as hearths or ovens, which are commonly found in dwellings and workshops, the Structure M8 features 50 cm-wide mudbrick benches with stone foundations placed along the walls. Based on the small stone bases and postholes located at the junctions of the benches with the walls and in the center of the space on the compacted earth floor, it is inferred that the building, like other Middle Iron Age structures, was ground-level structure with a probable flat roof. In contrast to the common features that define the shared domestic architectural character hitherto described, a mudbrick platform with a stone foundation discovered in front of the western wall of the Structure M8 constitutes one of the most distinctive features, setting it apart from its contemporaries and indicating a possible cultic function (fig. 5). Positioned centrally along the western wall, this mudbrick platform measures 65 cm in height and 1.20 × 0.70 m in size. On the upper surface of the platform, where it adjoins the wall, partially preserved protrusions resembling the side armrests of a throne are visible¹². On the other hand, it is also possible that this platform served as an altar upon which offerings were placed (fig. 6).

Apart from the Structure M8 at Ovaören, several buildings identified in the Iron Age levels of Boğazköy, located in the northern part of Central Anatolia, are also understood to have served a similar purpose. In Boğazköy, where Phrygian influences are attested during the Iron Age, some structures such as House 26 on Büyükkale, the T Building on Büyükkaya, and several structures in the Lower Town have been interpreted as cult buildings on the basis of the materials unearthed inside¹³. Among these, the structure unearthed in front of Storage Room 78 of Temple 1 in the Lower Town shows close architectural similarities with the Structure M8 at Ovaören-Yassihöyük. This single-room, rectan-

9 Şenyurt – Akçay 2018, 576.

10 Aklan 2022, 166.

11 Şenyurt – Akçay – Aklan 2023, 48.

12 Aklan 2022, 173.

13 Neve 1974, 876.

gular structure—partially preserved because it was close to the surface—has been associated with the cult of Kubaba/Kybele on the basis of the finds identified as votive offerings¹⁴.

In this cult structure, dated to the second half of the 8th century BC, stone benches approximately 1 m wide were found along the rear and western walls. At the center of the rear bench, a rectangular stone platform, 20 cm higher than the bench and considered as an altar, constitutes the dominant element of the space, as in the Ovaören structure¹⁵. Considering that the objects related to the goddess cult¹⁶ were found around the altar and benches, the structure provides strong evidence for its association with cultic activity. Although these buildings do not differ from the domestic and workshop units at Boğazköy in terms of construction technique and layout, they have generally been associated with Phrygian influence and defined as cult buildings rather than temples¹⁷.

Apart from the mudbrick platform, possibly used as an altar at Ovaören-Yassihöyük, the most significant evidence distinguishing the function of this structure from others is provided by the small finds discovered in the Structure M8. A falcon figurine with a broken head, bronze fibulae, tweezers, worked astragali, spindle whorls and unbaked loom weights were found around the mudbrick platform and on the adjacent bench within the structure.

Within this assemblage of finds, the falcon figurine stands out as one of the primary indicators of the sacred function of the structure. On the figurine, made of alabaster and measuring 14 cm in height, the feet are not preserved. On the wings, rendered close to the body, linear incisions representing feathers are partially preserved (fig. 7). The falcon, known as the sacred animal of the goddess Kubaba, is also used as the logogram *AVIS* (“falcon”) to denote the goddess’s name in Luwian hieroglyphs. It has been suggested that the depiction of the falcon on Late Hittite orthostats and stelae is not merely an attribute but represents the animal embodiment of the goddess herself¹⁸.

The closest parallel to the falcon figurine from Ovaören-Yassihöyük was unearthed in the cult structure at Boğazköy/Lower Town, dated to the second half of the 8th century BC, as briefly mentioned above. The stone bird figurine, measuring approximately 10 cm in height, has a relatively more massive form, and its limbs are roughly modeled¹⁹. In the Phrygian lands located in the western part of Central Anatolia, depictions of falcon—also seen in many places within the Mother Goddess Matar Kubileya/Kybele cult and showing iconographic similarities with the Late Hittite Kubaba²⁰—are depicted together with the goddess

14 Bittel 1970, 139.

15 Beran 1963, 35.

16 Beran 1963, Abb. 9-17.

17 Bernt-Ersöz 2006, 179, 180.

18 Goedegebuure 2019, 296; Gilibert 2022, 13; Posani 2024, 318-320.

19 Beran 1963, 44, Abb. 9-10.

20 Summerer – Koch 2024, 344; Derada 2024, 435-450.

in the Gordion (650 B.C.) and Ankara Bahçelievler (625 B.C.) reliefs²¹. Falcon figurines recovered at Gordion²² (YHSS 5–4), a figurine found in a 6th-century BC house at Sardis²³, and another example discovered in the Kubaba sanctuary at Oluz Höyük²⁴ (ca. 600–500 BC) have all been associated with the goddess Kubaba. Furthermore, a falcon figurine unearthed in the sacred area of Layer KH-P III (ca. 500–200 BC) at Niğde-Kınık Höyük²⁵, located south of Ovaören, also demonstrates the continuity of the Kubaba cult represented by the falcon motif into the Late Iron Age.

Another group of finds from the Ovaören-Yassihöyük M8 structure that can be regarded as votive offerings consists of fibulae²⁶. Three bronze examples of fibulae, known to have been first used in Anatolia by the Phrygians²⁷, were recovered within the Structure M8. While fibulae are generally found in domestic contexts and as grave goods, reflecting their use in daily life, it is known that over time they came to serve as prestige objects and were also deposited in temples and sacred areas as votive offerings or textile dedications²⁸. The Phrygian-type fibula depicted on the attire of King Warpalawas in the İvriz rock monument, dated to the second half of the 8th century BC and located within the borders of Tabal, reflects the cultural interaction between the Phrygian and Tabal regions²⁹. Comparable examples from the same period are also known from reliefs and sculpted works at Zincirli, Maraş, Carchemish, and from the Assyrian capital, Khorsabad³⁰.

Of the three fibulae recovered from the Ovaören-Yassihöyük Kubaba Cult Structure, two belong to subtypes XII.13 and XII.14, which were comprehensively studied by Blinkenberg³¹ and later by Muscarella³². The example classified as Type XII.13 (fig. 8a), one of the most common and long-lasting fibula types³³ dated to the 8th–7th centuries BC, has examples not only in the Gordion W Tumulus (ca. 850 BC) and S1 Tumulus (late 8th century BC)³⁴ but also in 8th–7th century layers of settlements such as Smyrna, Emporio, Lindos,

21 Işık 2019, 112, Lev. 32: 165-166; Bernt-Ersöz 2009, 16 (Bernt-Ersöz suggests that these reliefs should be dated to the late 8th century BC).

22 Mellink 1964, 28-32.

23 Cahill 2010, 509, No: 138.

24 Dönmez – Saba 2023, fig. 5. (This structure was previously defined as the Temple of Kubaba in earlier publications, but recent data indicate that it should be regarded not as an enclosed space, but rather as a sanctuary.)

25 Trameri – D’Alfonso 2020, fig. 4; D’Alfonso – Pucci – Yolaçan – Karadavut 2025, 169.

26 The fibulae recovered from the Iron Age layer at Ovaören are not discussed in detail, since their publication is in preparation as a separate study.

27 Erdan 2017, 53.

28 Erdan 2020, 66; Erdan 2024, 19; Summerer – Koch 2024, 355; Burke 2016, 159-168.

29 Muscarella 2012, 174.

30 Akçay 2020, 14.

31 Blinkenberg 1926, 204-207.

32 Muscarella 1967, 12-28.

33 Erdan 2020, 65.

34 Muscarella 1967, 21-24.

and Ephesos³⁵. Beyond these sites, Type XII.13 examples found in museum collections from Akşehir, Aydın, Hierapolis, İzmir, and Tire are also dated to the 8th–7th centuries BC³⁶.

Another fibula from the Structure M8 belongs to subtype XII.14 (fig. 8b), dated to between the 8th and 6th centuries BC³⁷. Comparable examples of this type have been identified primarily in the MM and S1 tumuli³⁸, as well as in the Iron Age levels of Kaman-Kalehöyük³⁹ and Boğazköy⁴⁰. The final example from the cult structure (fig. 8c) does not belong to the Anatolian-Phrygian group; instead, it closely resembles a fibula type identified by Stronach as being in use during the 8th century BC in the Syro-Palestinian region⁴¹. Similar examples have been found at Boğazköy⁴² and Alişar⁴³. The fibulae discovered in the Ovaören-Yassihöyük M8 structure appear to have been deposited as votive offerings, serving as attributes associated with the goddess Kubaba.

Another artifact recovered from the structure, symbolizing femininity and associated with notions of beauty, is a bronze tweezer (fig. 9). Measuring 5.4 cm in length, the tweezer lacks its handle portion, and its central part bears decorative elements—defined as a disc or molding—similar to motifs frequently encountered on fibulae⁴⁴. Tweezers with similar decorative elements on the handle were discovered in the J Tumulus at Gordion (late 7th century BC) and in the E and M Tumuli (6th century BC)⁴⁵. Although tweezers have not been identified as an attribute of the goddess, the Ovaören example clearly reflects that such objects could also have been used as votive offerings.

In addition to the finds mentioned above, astragali—commonly encountered in stratigraphic sequences at many excavation sites—were found scattered in front of the mudbrick altar/platform. Due to their roughly square, cubic form, these objects are generally thought to have been used for gaming or oracular purposes⁴⁶, with one example of such use known from the reliefs of Carchemish⁴⁷. Archaeological evidence also demonstrates that astragali formed part of funerary ceremonies and cultic practices. At Gordion, astragali found in groups within vessels in Megarons 1, 2, and 3—important public buildings—are likewise thought to have held special significance⁴⁸.

35 Erdan 2017, 55; Muscarella 1967, 22, 23.

36 Tekocak 2012, 34; Erdan 2017, 55; Özcan 2025, 27; Erdan 2024, 17; Erdan 2020, 73-75.

37 Erdan 2020, 66.

38 Erdan 2017, 55.

39 Omura 1991, 431, 438, res. 6, 6-7.

40 Boehmer 1972, taf. VII: 122-132.

41 Stronach 1959, 193.

42 Boehmer 1972, 67, taf. VIII, 161.

43 Von der Osten 1937, 440 e1272, e1623.

44 Erdan 2019, 174-175.

45 Kohler 1995, fig. 25D; Kohler – Dusinberre 2023, fig. 188, pl. 244.

46 Onar – Siddig – Dönmez, 2022, 3.

47 Gilibert 2022, 10, fig. 8.

48 Dandoy 1996, 53.

Examination of the five astragali (fig. 10) found scattered directly in front of the mudbrick altar in the Ovaören-Yassihöyük M8 structure revealed that all the specimens had been perforated, and three of them also had their corners flattened. The tradition of depositing astragali in structures associated with cultic activity has been attested in Levantine settlements since the Late Bronze Age and is known to have continued into the Iron Age at sites such as Taanach, Tell Qasile, and Lachish⁴⁹. In Anatolia, examples in which astragali may be interpreted as cult objects are relatively rare. Aside from the astragali recovered inside a pot in the so-called Stele Building at Kilisetepe, similar finds have been documented in the Kubaba Sanctuary at Oluz Höyük (600–500 BC), where they were discovered together with sheep phalanges⁵⁰. The presence of astragali in cultic structures, sanctuaries, or caves—spaces associated with the performance of certain rituals—has been interpreted as evidence of animal sacrifice to deities⁵¹. In later periods, the Roman author Apuleius (ca. 125–180 AD) mentions in his *Metamorphoses* rituals in which priests would flog themselves with whips tipped with astragali⁵². The perforated astragali discovered in the Ovaören-Yassihöyük M8 structure suggest that a similar ritual practice may have persisted from the Iron Age.

Spindle whorls—used together with spindles in yarn production—and loom weights—employed to keep the threads taut and stable on the loom—are among the most frequently encountered artifact groups in archaeological contexts, regardless of stratigraphic layer⁵³. Spindles or distaffs are known to be associated with noble women in Late Hittite art⁵⁴ and are depicted in their hands on reliefs from Maraş and Karkamış⁵⁵. Although Late Hittite art contains no representations of the goddess Kubaba holding a spindle, Phrygian art that was influenced by Late Hittite artistic traditions includes depictions of Kybele with a spindle in hand. Based on examples such as the Bolu/Mudurnu Kybele statue, the Kayseri/Beydeğirmeni stele, and the Silifke/Mut relief⁵⁶, it can be inferred that the spindle was one of the symbols of the Anatolian Mother Goddess⁵⁷. Moreover, the discovery of spindle whorls and unbaked loom weights within the Ovaören Kubaba Cult Area, in the same context as fibulae—objects known to have been dedicated as textile votives in sacred spaces—suggests that these finds were interrelated offerings associated with textile production and ritual practices (fig. 11).

The M8 building at Ovaören-Yassihöyük lost its original function during a period when Late Hittite/Tabal authority in Central Anatolia had weakened,

49 Gilmour 1997, 168.

50 Onar – Siddig – Dönmez 2022, 9, 11; Dönmez 2014, 296.

51 Gilmour 1997, 167.

52 Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, VIII, 27.

53 Yakupoğluları 2009, 1.

54 Işık 2019, 213.

55 Orthmann 1971, taf. 47, d-g.

56 Arslan – Metin, 2004, 5, res. 6.

57 Işık 2019, 221.

and Cimmerian incursions and Lydian pressure were increasingly felt. During this transformation, the structure was converted into a basement-level building through the addition of southern walls and steps⁵⁸. In this phase (YH4), as the Alişar-4 ceramic tradition began to decline at Ovaören, locally produced dark-faced ware with diamond decoration—also attested during the Lydian domination period (IIa3–5) at Kaman-Kalehöyük⁵⁹—suggests that the cult structure remained in use from at least the mid-8th to the mid-7th century BC. Indeed, comparative analyses of other votive objects recovered from within the building point to a similar chronological range. Furthermore, this basement-level structure appears to represent an early example of the architectural form later identified immediately to its south, in the YH3–2 levels dating to the beginning of the Late Iron Age, where floors were accessed by stone steps⁶⁰. This observation is significant, as it indicates that the political and cultural transformations at Ovaören were accompanied by changes in both ceramic traditions and architectural character.

Summary and Conclusion

Due to the limited scope of archaeological research conducted in the region, our knowledge of Tabal remains restricted, and its political history is known mainly through Assyrian sources. Among the most significant indicators reflecting Tabal's Late Hittite identity are the rock monuments, stelae, sculptural works, and a few inscribed lead plaques discovered in various parts of the region⁶¹. From these works, which may also be considered visual arts, it is possible to obtain some insight into the names of rulers, the political process, and the economic structure of the region. Yet religious themes are predominant in the majority of these artifacts. The inscriptions and iconographic elements attested particularly on the rock monuments and stelae provide important clues about the region's belief system and the deities worshipped there⁶².

In light of the existing rock monuments and stelae inscribed in Luwian hieroglyphs, it is understood that deities such as *Tarhunzas* (primarily), *Kubaba*, *Sarruma*, *Santas*, *Ea*, *Hepat*, *Runtiyas*, and the *Moon God of Harran* were all included in the religious system of Tabal. Following *Tarhunzas*, who is most frequently mentioned in the inscriptions, *Kubaba* is the goddess whose name appears most often⁶³. The goddess's name appears in seven inscriptions KARABURNA, KAYSERİ STELE, KULULU 1, KULULU 5, SULTANHAN, ÇİFTLİK, and BULGARMADEN⁶⁴ dated to the second half of the 8th century BC (fig. 12), leaving

58 Şenyurt – Akçay – Aklan 2023, 48.

59 Matsumura 2008, 182.

60 Aklan – Akçay 2023, 33.

61 Akçay 2020, 25–26.

62 Akçay 2011, 191.

63 Frayne – Stuckey 2021, 169.

64 Hawkins 2000, 443 (X.9), 448 (X.11), 466 (X.14), 473, (X.15), 481 (X.18), 485 (X.20), 522 (X.45); Hawkins 2024, 257 (X.9), 259 (X.11), 262 (X.14), 264 (X.15), 266 (X.18), 267 (X.20).

no doubt about the existence of the Kubaba cult in the Tabal region⁶⁵. The fact that the majority of these inscriptions are located within the territory ruled by King Wasusarma of Tabal—including the Ovaören region—suggests that the cult of Kubaba held significant influence in the northern part of this area.

Kubaba's presence in Anatolia is attested as early as the Assyrian Trade Colonies Period⁶⁶. Her name appears in the 17th–16th centuries BC as *Al-li-Kubaba*, and in the 15th century BC as *Kubaba* and *Kubabatanni* in Alalah, the capital of the Kingdom of Mukish. The goddess, who was an important figure in the Allaiturahhi festivals held at Alalah, is also known from the Boğazköy archives for her revered status within the Hurrian cult and its sphere of influence⁶⁷. The Hittites' policy in northern Syria and the adoption of Kizzuwatna traditions, particularly under Puduhepa, played a role in the integration of Kubaba into the Hittite world during the reigns of Šuppiluliuma I and Muwatalli II⁶⁸. Various Hittite texts from this period attribute the presence of Kubaba in Kizzuwatna and Carchemish, although it is understood that the goddess held a relatively minor status in these texts⁶⁹. With Carchemish emerging as a significant regional center after being only partially affected by the chaotic events at the end of the Late Bronze Age, Kubaba gained importance as the city's protective goddess and became a venerated figure throughout the Late Hittite cultural sphere⁷⁰. In addition to the temples and monuments dedicated to the goddess in Carchemish⁷¹, inscriptions and stelae uncovered in cities such as Malatya and Maraş attest to the spread of her cult deep into Anatolia⁷². According to various researchers, the Kubaba cult, whose presence in the Tabal region is attested through rock monuments and stelae, was transmitted from regions such as Kizzuwatna and Kummuh to the Tabal territory, where Hurrian-Luwian religious traditions were adopted⁷³.

Monumental temples comprising multiple architectural units, as seen in the grand building programs of the 2nd millennium BC, have not yet been identified within the Tabal territory in the 1st millennium BC. Beyond the limited nature of archaeological data due to the scarcity of excavations, the absence of temple structures even in long-studied sites such as Kültepe or in monumental centers like Göllüdağ suggests that the tradition of monumental sacred architecture underwent a transformation in Iron Age Central Anatolia. Indeed, the presence of a similar phenomenon in the Phrygian region—another major cultural sphere of the Iron Age—and in eastern areas influenced by it points to a possible shared understanding regarding the relationship between belief systems

65 Lanaro 2015, 86.

66 Dexter 2009, 55; Bremmer 2020, 14; Kubala 2015, 36; Şenyurt – Akçay 2017, 191.

67 Hutter 2017, 115.

68 Dexter 2009, 56; Hutter 2017, 115.

69 Lovejoy – Matessi 2023, 111; Hutter 2017, 113.

70 Hawkins 1981, 147.

71 Gilibert 2011, 110, 111.

72 Posani 2024, 299; Orthmann 1971, 361.

73 Hutter 2017, 116; Hutter 2021, 294-296; Lovejoy – Matessi 2023, 116.

and sacred space.

Deriving from the Latin term *cultus*, the concept of ‘cult’ encompasses religious rituals and practices that have constituted a significant aspect of human life since early societies and continue to do so in the modern era. Cultic activities performed by humans in accordance with their beliefs—aimed at demonstrating devotion to deities, seeking their favor, or requesting assistance—encompass rituals such as votive offerings, libations, animal sacrifices, funerary feasting, and the use of symbols representing divine beings. These practices, as integral components of cultural and social structures, contribute to the understanding of belief systems and ritual traditions within societies. “Temples, cult structures, and open-air cult areas, in turn, appear as the primary settings where such rituals were performed.

As previously noted, while evidence of indoor worship in Central Anatolia during the Iron Age remains limited, the structure designated as M8 at the Tabal settlement of Ovaören-Yassihöyük provides significant insights into rural cult architecture and belief systems. The building, which we define as the “Ovaören Kubaba Cult Structure,” offers valuable perspectives on the religious identity of the Tabal region, indicating a belief system supported by symbolic elements and marked by a strong syncretism with the Phrygian cultural sphere. The votive offering objects deposited within the structure are not only items symbolizing the Great Goddess and the feminine principle, but also artifacts that carried both individual and communal meanings in religious rituals. The syncretic transmission of Kubaba symbolism into the Phrygian belief system can be explained through the representations of Matar Kubileya accompanied by birds and the discovery of predatory bird figurines in Phrygian centers.

Beyond their phonetic connection, many scholars have agreed that the Phrygian Great Goddess fundamentally derived from the Late Hittite Kubaba, having been transferred into Phrygian religion through Anatolian cultural continuity and subsequently developed with local characteristics. The presence of Late Hittite influence in the Early Phrygian levels of Gordion suggests that interactions between these two traditions occurred during the 9th century BC. Indeed, the abundance of predatory bird sketches identified on the walls of Megaron 2, which reflect Late Hittite artistic influence, illuminates the Kubaba–Matar Kubileya interaction. Between the 8th and 6th centuries BC, figurines of predatory birds symbolizing the Great Goddess became widespread across Phrygian territory.

Moreover, the semi-iconic idol⁷⁴ previously unearthed at the Late Hittite City Gate had already demonstrated the presence of the Kubaba cult at Ovaören. The Kubaba Cult Structure and the votive assemblage examined in this study further reveal that Ovaören played a significant role in the shared and syncretic religious exchanges between the Phrygian and Late Hittite cultural spheres.

74 Akçay 2015, 47-54.

Öz

Ovaören'den Bir Kült Yapısı: Kubaba İlişkisine Dair Bulgular

Bu çalışma, Ovaören'deki bir kült yapısını inceleyerek, Kubaba ibadeti bağlamında yapının mimari özelliklerini ve ilişkili buluntuları araştırmaktadır. Geç Hitit Dönemi'nde Tabal'ın önemli yerleşimlerinden birisi olan Ovaören, Nevşehir ili Gülşehir ilçesine bağlı Ovaören köyünün 2,5 km güneyinde yer almaktadır. Frig/Muşkilerin doğu sınırına yakınlığı ve çevresindeki Suvasa (3,5 km) ve Göstesin (2,5 km) gibi önemli Tabal yazıtları Ovaören'in Orta Demir Çağı'ndaki önemini kanıtlar niteliktedir. Ovaören-Yassıhöyük, Geç Tunç Çağı'nda önemli bir tahkimatlı kent olarak, MÖ 10. yüzyılda yeniden tahkimatlı bir kent-sel model benimsemiştir. Ovaören'deki, üç evreli Orta Demir Çağı tabakasında ortaya çıkarılan mimari kalıntılar ağırlıklı olarak kırsal bir karakter sergiler. Söz konusu tabakada, bölge genelinde sıklıkla görüldüğü gibi, bağımsız, tek odalı, dikdörtgen veya kare planlı yapılar baskın karakteri yansıtmaktadır. Bu yapılar arasında 2015-2017 yılı çalışmalarında açığa çıkarılan Orta Demir Çağı'na ait M8 yapısı, Tabal kült pratiklerinin açık hava kutsal alanlarının yanı sıra kapalı mekanlarda da gerçekleştirildiğine dair önemli ipuçları sunmaktadır. Son yıllarda Frig yayılımı üzerinden Kubaba/Matar Kubileya kültürünün farklı coğrafyalardaki varlığı ve etkileşimlerine dair yapılan çalışmaların sayısı artmış ve bu çalışmalar Orta Anadolu Demir Çağı toplumunun kült pratiklerinde soyut düşünce ve sembolizmi benimsediğini ortaya koymuştur. Bölgede tarım ve hayvancılıkla geçinen toplulukların, yüksek bölgelerdeki açık hava kutsal alanlarına ulaşımı her zaman mümkün olmayacağı için, Ovaören örneğinde olduğu gibi, kırsal nitelikli mütevazi mekanlarda tanrı ve tanrıçalara ibadet edildiği anlaşılmaktadır. Tabal coğrafyasında tespit edilmiş ilk kült mekânı olan Ovaören kült yapısında, Geç Hitit ve Frig kültürleri arasındaki etkileşimleri yansıtan bulgular, dönemin tapınma pratiklerinin ve dini kimliğinin öğrenilmesine katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Demir Çağı, Tabal, Frig, Ovaören, Kült, Kubaba, Matar Kubileya

Bibliography and Abbreviations

- Akçay 2011 Akçay, A., Arkeolojik ve Filolojik Belgeler Işığında Tabal Ülkesi, Gazi University Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Ankara.
- Akçay 2014 Akçay, A., “Tabal Ülkesinin Tarihsel Süreci Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme”, *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi* XXIX/1, 37-58.
- Akçay 2015 Akçay, A., “Ovaören-Yassihöyük’den Bir Yarı İkonik İdol”, *Arkeoloji ve Sanat* 149, 47-54.
- Akçay 2020 Akçay, A., “Tabal Heykeltıraşlık Eserleri Üzerine Genel Bir Değerlendirme”, *HEFAD* 2, 11-28.
- Aklan 2022 Aklan, İ., Ovaören Demir Çağı Mimarisinin Orta Anadolu Demir Çağı Mimari Gelenekleri İçindeki Yeri ve Önemi, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Ankara.
- Aklan – Akçay 2023 Aklan, İ. – A. Akçay, “Kırsalın Öyküsü: Geç Demir Çağı’nda Ovaören”, *Çukurova Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 32/3, 20-41.
- Apuleius The Golden Ass or Metamorphoses. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by E. J. Kenny, London, 1998.
- Arslan – Metin 2004 Arslan, M. – M. Metin, “Yeni Bir Kybele Heykeli”, *Anadolu* 26, 1-10.
- Beran 1963 Beran, T., “Eine Kulstättte Phrygischer Zeit in Boğazköy”, *MDOG* 94, 33-52.
- Bernt-Ersöz 2006 Bernt-Ersöz, S., *Phrygian Rock-Cut Shrines, Structure, Function and Cult Practice*, Leiden.
- Bernt-Ersöz 2009 Bernt-Ersöz, S., “Sacred Space in Iron Age Phrygia”, *Sacred Landscapes in Anatolia and Neighboring Regions* (eds. C. Gates – J. Morin – T. Zimmermann), 11-19.
- Bittel 1970 Bittel, K., *Hattusha, The Capital of the Hittites*, New York.
- Blinkenberg 1926 Blinkenberg, C., *Fibules Grecques et Orientales*, Copenhagen.
- Boehmer 1972 Boehmer, R. M., *Die Kleinfunde von Boğazköy*, Berlin.
- Bremmer 2020 Bremmer, J. N., “Kubaba, Kybele and Mater Magna: The Long March of Two Anatolian Goddesses to Rome”, *Der Kult der Meter/Kybele in Westanatolien und in der Ägäis* (ed. M. Kerschner), 13-32.
- Bryce 2012 Bryce, T., *The World of the Neo-Hittite Kingdoms*, New York.
- Burke 2016 Burke, B., “Phrygian fibulae as markers of textile dedication in Greek sanctuaries” *Textiles, Trade and Theories* (eds. K. Dross-Krüpe – M. L. Nosch), 159-192.
- Cahill 2010 Cahill, N., “The City of Sardis”, *The Lydians and Their World* (ed. N. Cahill), 75-105.
- D’Alfonso 2017 D’Alfonso, L., “Suvasa and the Open-Air, Non-Royal Cultic Monuments of Hittite and Post-Hittite Anatolia”, *Samsat’tan Acemhöyük’e Eski Uygarlıkların İzinde Aliye Öztan’a Arma-*

- ğan (eds. S. Özkan – H. Hüryılmaz – A. Türker), 51-60.
- D'Alfonso – Pucci – Yolaçan – Karadavut 2025
D'Alfonso, L. – M. Pucci – B. Yolaçan – D. Karadavut, “Niğde-Kınık Höyük Arkeolojik Çalışmaları Hakkında Kısa Bir Rapor”, Niğde Arkeolojisi ve Kültürel Miras 1 (ed. Y. Ünlüler), 155-178.
- Dandoy 1996
Dandoy, J., “Astragali, the Ubiquitous Gaming Pieces”, Expedition Magazine 38/1, 51-58.
- Derada 2024
Derada, M., “Bird of prey as bird of power in Phrygian Anatolia”, ANES 61, 435-450.
- Dexter 2009
Dexter, M. R., “Ancient Felines and the Great-Goddess in Anatolia: Kubaba and Cybele”, Proceedings of the 20th Annual UCLA Indo-European Conference (eds. S. W. Jamieon – H. C. Melchert – B. Wine), 53-67.
- Dinçol 1994
Dinçol, B., “New Archaeological and Epigraphical Finds from İvriz: a Preliminary Report”, Tel Aviv 21/1, 117-128.
- Dönmez 2014
Dönmez, Ş., “Kuzey-Orta Anadolu'da Yeni Bir Arkeolojik Keşif: Oluz Höyük Kubaba (Matar Kubileya) Tapınağı”, Arkeolojikle Geçen Bir Yaşam İçin Yazılar Veli Sevin'e Armağan. SCRIPTA Essays in Honour of Veli Sevin A Life Immersed in Archaeology (ed. A. Özfırat), 289-304.
- Dönmez – Saba 2023
Dönmez, Ş. – M. Saba, “Demir Çağı Kappadokia'sında İlk Tapınak: Oluz Höyük İbadethane ve Ateşgedesi”, Höyük 12, 57-78.
- Erdan 2017
Erdan, E., “Aydın Arkeoloji Müzesi'nden Bir Grup Frig Tipi Fibula”, ArkeolojiveSanat 156, 51-60.
- Erdan 2019
Erdan, E., “Frig Tipi Fibulalarda Tanrıça Sembolizmi Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler”, Art-Sanat 11, 163-185.
- Erdan 2020
Erdan, E., “Tire Müzesinden Bir Grup Fibula”, Arkhaia Anatolika 3, 60-81.
- Erdan 2024
Erdan, E., “İzmir Arkeoloji Müzesi'nden Bir Grup Anadolu-Frig Tipi Fibula”, Septem Artes 2, 14-28.
- Frayne – Stuckey 2021
Frayne, D. – J. H. Stuckey, A Handbook of Gods and Goddesses of the Ancient Near East: Three Thousand Deities of Anatolia, Syria, Israel, Sumer, Babylonia, Assyria, and Elam, Pennsylvania.
- Gilibert 2011
Gilibert, A., Syro-Hittite Monumental Art and the Archaeology of Performance: The Stone Reliefs at Carchemis and Zincirli in the Earlier First Millennium BCE, Berlin.
- Gilibert 2022
Gilibert, A., “Children of Kubaba: Serious Games, Ritual Toys, and Divination at Iron Age Carchemish”, Religions 13.10, 1-28.
- Gilmour 1997
Gilmour, G. H., “The Nature and Function of Astragalus Bones from Archaeological Contexts in the Levant and Eastern Mediterranean”, Oxford Journal of Archaeology 16/2, 167-175.
- Goedegebuure 2019
Goedegebuure, P., “The Hieroglyphic Luwian Signs *128

- (AVIS 'BIRD') = wa and *30 =HAPA¹", IX. Uluslararası Hititoloji Kongresi Bildirileri (Çorum 8-14 Eylül 2014) I. Cilt (ed. A. Süel), 295-316.
- Gökçe – Pınarcık 2020 Gökçe, B. – P. Pınarcık, "Geç Hitit Kent Devletleri Dini Yapısı Üzerine Gözlemler", *Cedrus VIII*, 147-176.
- Hawkins 1981 Hawkins, J. D., "Kubaba at Kargamis and Elsewhere", *Anatolian Studies* 31, 147-176.
- Hawkins 2000 Hawkins, J. D., *Corpus of Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions Vol. I, Part 2*, Berlin.
- Hawkins 2024 Hawkins, J. D., *Corpus of Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions Vol III*, Berlin/Boston.
- Hutter 2017 Hutter, M., "Kubaba in the Hittite Empire and the Consequences for her Expansion to Western Anatolia", *Hittitology Today. Studies on Hittite and Neo-Hittite Anatolia in Honor of Emmanuel Laroche's 100th Birthday* (ed. A. Mouton), 113-122.
- Hutter 2021 Hutter, M., *Religionsgeschichte Anatoliens. Vom Ende des dritten bis zum Beginn des ersten Jahrtausend*, Stuttgart.
- Işık 2019 Işık, F., *Uygurluk Anadolu'dan Doğdu*, İzmir.
- Karağuz 2024 Karağuz, G., *Hitit Merasim ve Bayramları Kil Kitapları*, İstanbul.
- Kohler 1995 Kohler, E. L., *The Lesser Phrygian Tumuli. Part I: The Inhumations*, Philadelphia.
- Kohler – Dusingberre 2023 Kohler, E. L. – E. R. M. Dusingberre, *The Lesser Phrygian Tumuli. Part II: The Cremations*, Philadelphia.
- Kubala 2015 Kubala, A., *Iconography of 'Neo-Hittite Seals'*, Warsaw.
- Lanaro 2015 Lanaro, A., "A goddess among Storm-gods. The stele of Tavşantepe and the landscape monuments of southern Cappadocia", *Anatolian Studies* 65, 79-96.
- Lanaro et al. 2015 Lanaro, A. – A. Trameri – L. D'Alfonso, "Kınık Höyük ve Çevresinde Tapınma Etkinlikleri Konusunda Ortaya Çıkanlar", *Arkeoloji ve Sanat* 148/1, 62-73.
- Lovejoy – Matessi 2023 Lovejoy, N. – A. D. G. Matessi, "Kubaba and other Divine Ladies of the Syro-Anatolian Iron Age: Developmental Trajectories, Local Variations and Interregional Interactions", *Theonyms, Panthea and Syncretisms in Hittite Anatolia and Northern Syria. Proceedings of the TeAl Workshop Held in Verona, March 25-26, 2022* (eds. L. Warbinek – F. Giusfredi), 109-126.
- Maner – Kuruçaylı 2018 Maner, Ç. – E. Kuruçaylı, "İvriz Ambarderesi Kızlar Oğlanlar Sarayı (Manastırı) Mağarası'nda Araştırmalar", *Belleten LXXXII/295*, 785-802.
- Massa – Osborne 2024 Massa, M. – J. Osborne, "Kızıldağ, Karadağ and Sacred Peak Sites in Central Anatolia During the Late Bronze and Iron Ages", *American Journal of Archaeology* 128/1, 33-58.
- Matsumura 2008 Matsumura, K., "A Note on Anatolian Iron Age Ceramic Chronology: Black Lustrous Ware with Diamond Faceting",

- Anatolian Archaeological Studies XVII, 175-184.
- Mellink 1964 Mellink, M., "A Votive Bird from Anatolia", Expedition Magazine 6/2, 28-32.
- Muscarella 1967 Muscarella, O. W., Phrygian Fibulae from Gordion, London.
- Muscarella 2012 Muscarella, O. W., "Frig Fibulaları", Friglerin Gizemli Uygarlığı, The Mysterious Civilization of the Phrygians (eds. H. Sivas – T. Tüfekçi-Sivas), 173-181.
- Naumann 2007 Naumann, R., Eski Anadolu Mimarlığı, Ankara.
- Neve 1974 Neve, P., "Hattuša in Nachhethitischer Zeit", Mansel'e Armağan Melanges Mansel (eds. E. Akurgal – B. Alkım), 873-891.
- Novák 2012 Novák, M., "The Temple of Ain Dāra in the Context of Imperial and Neo-Hittite Architecture and Art", Temple Building and Temple Cult. Architecture and Cultic Paraphernalia of Temples in the Levant (2.-1. Mill. B.C.E.) (ed. J. Kamlah), 41-54.
- Omura 1991 Omura, S., "1989 Yılı Kaman-Kalehöyük Kazıları", KST 12/1, 427-442.
- Onar – Siddig – Dönmez 2022 Onar, V. – A. B. Siddig – Ş. Dönmez, "Items of Fun, Utility and Divination: The Knucklebones from Oluz Höyük, North-Central Anatolia (Turkey)", Archaeological Research in Asia 30, 1-14.
- Orthmann 1971 Orthmann, W., Untersuchungen Zur Späthethitischen Kunst, Bonn.
- Özcan 2025 Özcan, A., "Hierapolis Arkeoloji Müzesinden Bir Grup Demir Çağı Fibulası", Art-Sanat 23, 20-45.
- Posani 2024 Posani, C., "Epithets and Iconographic Attributes of Kubaba in Syro-Anatolian Iron Age Sources", What's in Divine Name? Religious Systems and Human Agency in the Ancient Mediterranean (eds. A. Palamides – C. Bonnet), 299-324.
- Stronach 1959 Stronach, D., "The Development of the Fibula in the Near East", Iraq 2/21, 180-206.
- Summerer – Koch 2024 Summerer, L. – J. M. Koch, "The Mother Goddess at the Black Sea: pushing Phrygia towards the north" ANES 61, 325-369.
- Şenyurt – Akçay 2017 Şenyurt, Y. – A. Akçay, "The Kurul Fortress and the Cult of Kybele as a City Protector", Colloquium Anatolicum 16, 179-198.
- Şenyurt – Akçay 2018 Şenyurt, Y. – A. Akçay, "Ovaören 2015-2016 Yılı Kazıları", KST 39/2, 571-586.
- Şenyurt – Akçay 2022 Şenyurt, Y. – A. Akçay, "Late Bronze Age Painted Pottery and its Contextual Relationship to the Hittite Levels at Ovaören", Late Bronze Age Painted Pottery Traditions at the Margins of the Hittite State. Papers Presented at a Workshop

- Held at the 11th ICAANE (München 4 April 2018) and Additional Contributions (eds. F. Manuelli – D. P. Mielke), 99-112.
- Şenyurt – Akçay – Aklan 2023
Şenyurt, Y. – A. Akçay – İ. Aklan “Ovaören-Yassihöyük Kazıları ve Orta Anadolu Demir Çağı Mimarisinde Gelişim ve Değişime Kronolojik Bir Bakış”, Höyük 11, 41-63.
- Şenyurt – Akçay – Kamış 2014
Şenyurt, Y. – A. Akçay – Y. Kamış, “Ovaören 2013 Yılı Kazıları”, KST 36/2, 101-120.
- Şenyurt – Akçay – Kamış 2016
Şenyurt, Y. – A. Akçay – Y. Kamış, “Ovaören 2014 Yılı Kazıları”, KST 37/2, 111-128.
- Şenyurt – Kamış – Akçay 2014
Şenyurt, Y. – Y. Kamış – A. Akçay, “Ovaören 2012 Yılı Kazıları”, KST 35/2, 62-80.
- Şenyurt et al. 2019
Şenyurt, Y. – A. Akçay – M. Cevher – İ. Aklan – S. Kara, “Ovaören 2017 Yılı Kazı Çalışmaları”, KST 40/1, 251-270.
- Şenyurt et al. 2020
Şenyurt, Y. – A. Akçay – İ. Aklan – M. Cevher – S. Kara, “Ovaören 2018 Yılı Kazı Çalışmaları”, KST 41/4, 487-504
- Şenyurt et al. 2023
Şenyurt, Y. – A. Akçay – S. Kara – İ. Aklan – U. Kıvrak, “Ovaören 2021 Yılı Kazıları”, KST 42/4, 527-538.
- Tekocak 2012
Tekocak, M., “Akşehir Müzesi’nde Bulunan Bir Grup Bronz Fibula”, Pamukkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi 13, 27-42.
- Trameri – D’Alfonso 2020
Trameri, A. – L. D’Alfonso, “The >Sacred City< of Kınık Höyük: Continuity and Change in Cappodocia (Turkey) between the Late Achaemenid and Late Hellenistic Periods”, The Transition from the Achaemenid to the Hellenistic Period in the Levant, Cyprus, and Cilicia: Cultural Interruption or Continuity? (ed. W. Held), 65-81.
- Von der Osten 1937
Von der Osten, H. H., The Alishar Hüyük, Season of 1930-1932 Part II, London
- Yakupoğulları 2019
Yakupoğulları, P., Ovaören Kazıları Doküman Ağırılıkları ve Ağırşakları (Tunç-Demir Çağı), Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University Unpublished Master’s Thesis, Ankara.

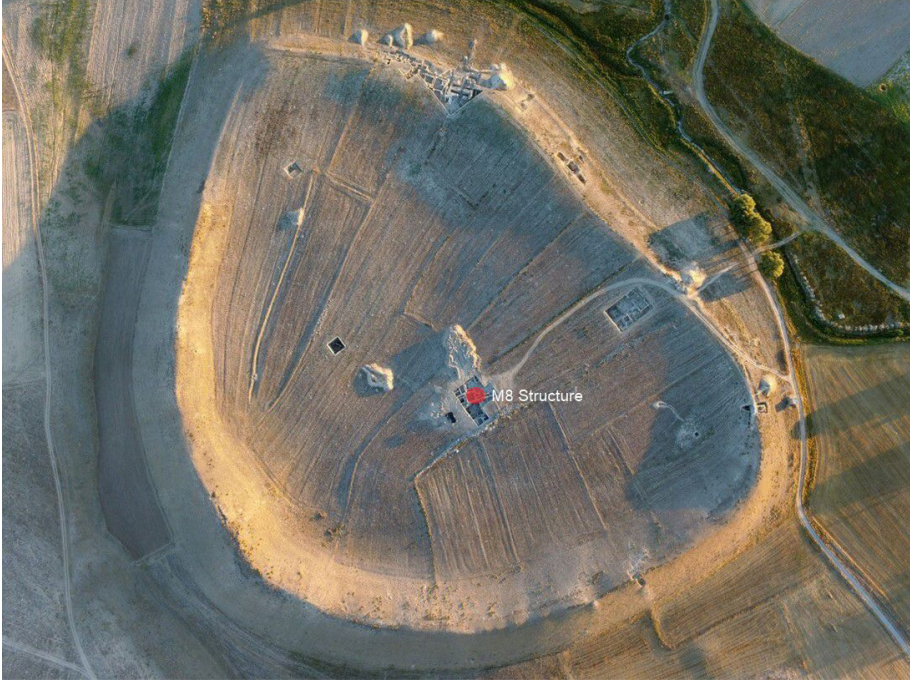


Fig. 1. General view of Ovaören-Yassihöyük and the location of the M8 structure

Period	Architectural Layer	Approximate Date	Evidence and Artifacts
Late Iron Age	YH2a	450-330 BC	Disruption in settlement pattern Large kraters Single Room structure
	YH2b		Single Room structure Additive architecture Grain storage pits and kilns Achaemenid bowls
Late Iron Age	YH3	550-450 BC	Paved stone courtyards Pits
Middle Iron Age	YH4	700-550 BC	Out of use fortification Structure with basement Alışar IV ceramics
Middle Iron Age	YH5	800-700 BC	Fortification Kubaba cult structure Alışar IV ceramics
Middle Iron Age	YH6	950-800 BC	Fortification Megaron type structure Alışar IV ceramics Silo
Early Iron Age	YH7	1050/1000-950 BC	Grain storage pits Wheel made pottery Dwellings
Early Iron Age	YH8	1100-1050/1000 BC	Grain storage pits Wheel made pottery

Fig. 2. Stratigraphic sequence of the Iron Age levels at Ovaören

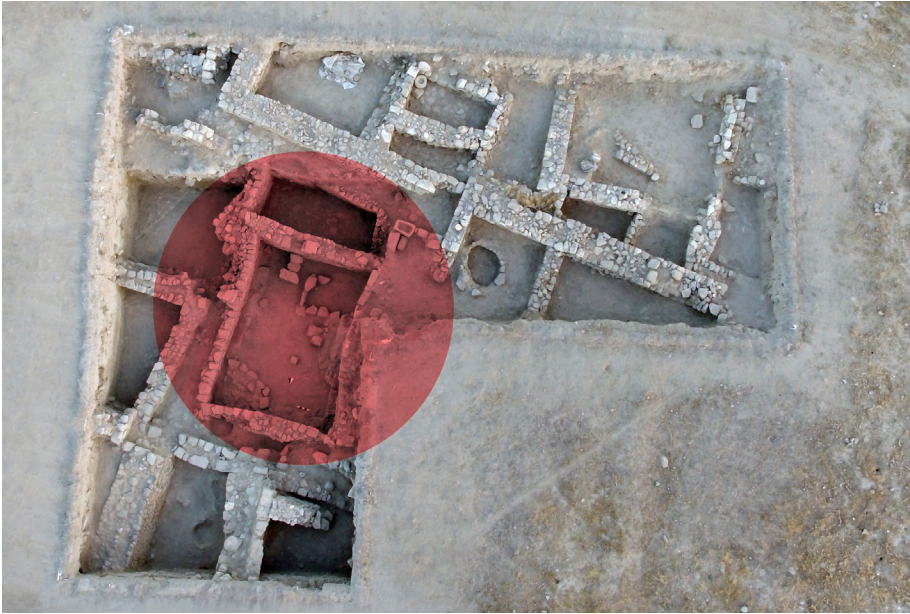


Fig. 3 Fig. 3. Ovaören Area B Iron Age architecture

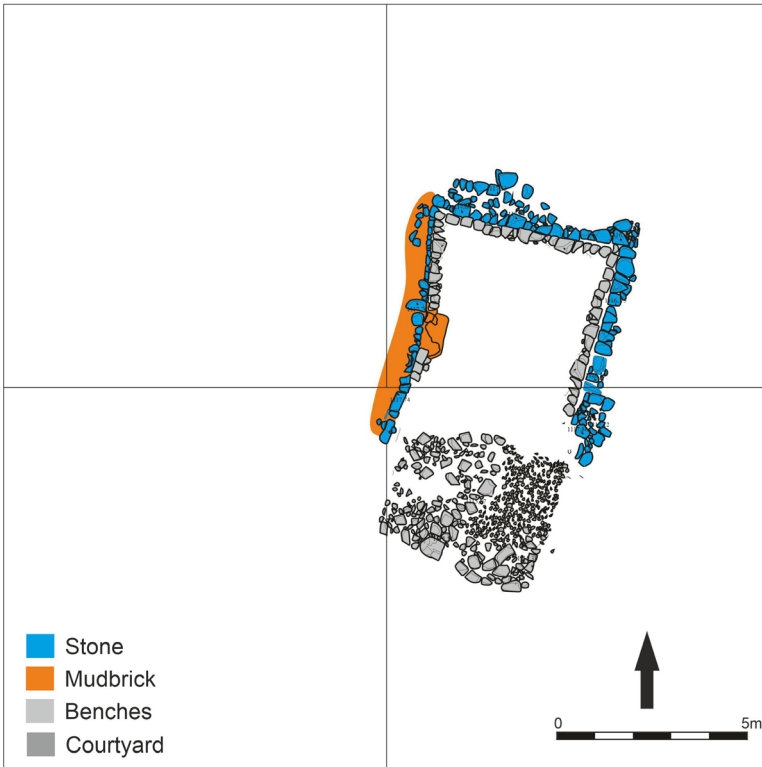


Fig. 4a. M8 structure of Ovaören



Fig. 4b. M8 structure, courtyard and late-phase wall



Fig. 5. The altar and bench foundations of the Ovaören M8 structure



Fig. 6. Ovaören M8 structure, along with the late-phase wall and associated steps



Fig. 7. Falcon figure representing Kubaba

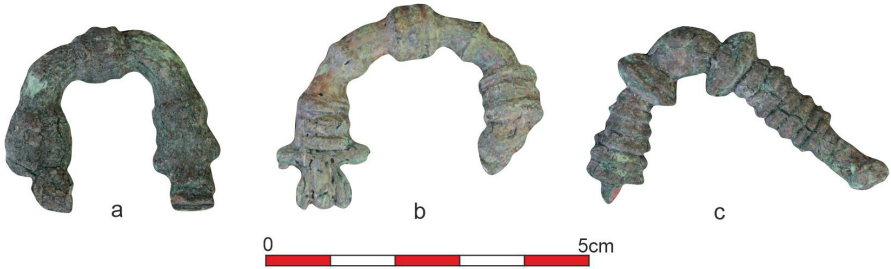


Fig. 8. Fibulae unearthed from M8 structure



Fig. 9. Bronze tweezers

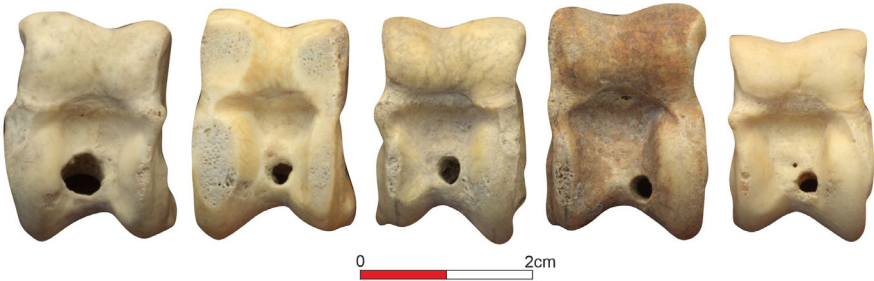


Fig. 10. Astragali recovered from within the structure

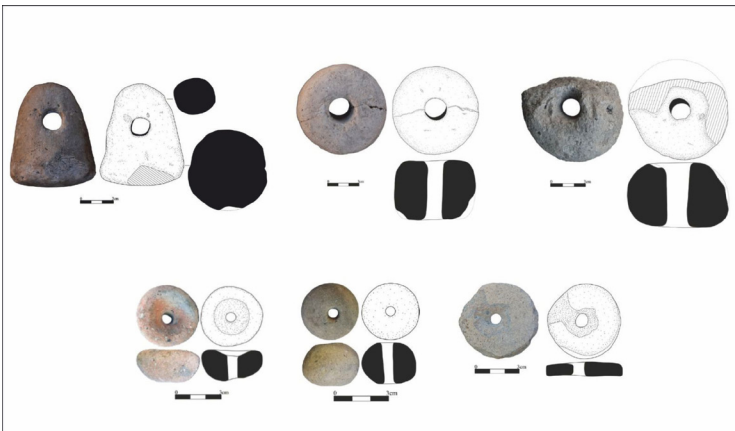


Fig. 11. Loom weights and spindle whorls

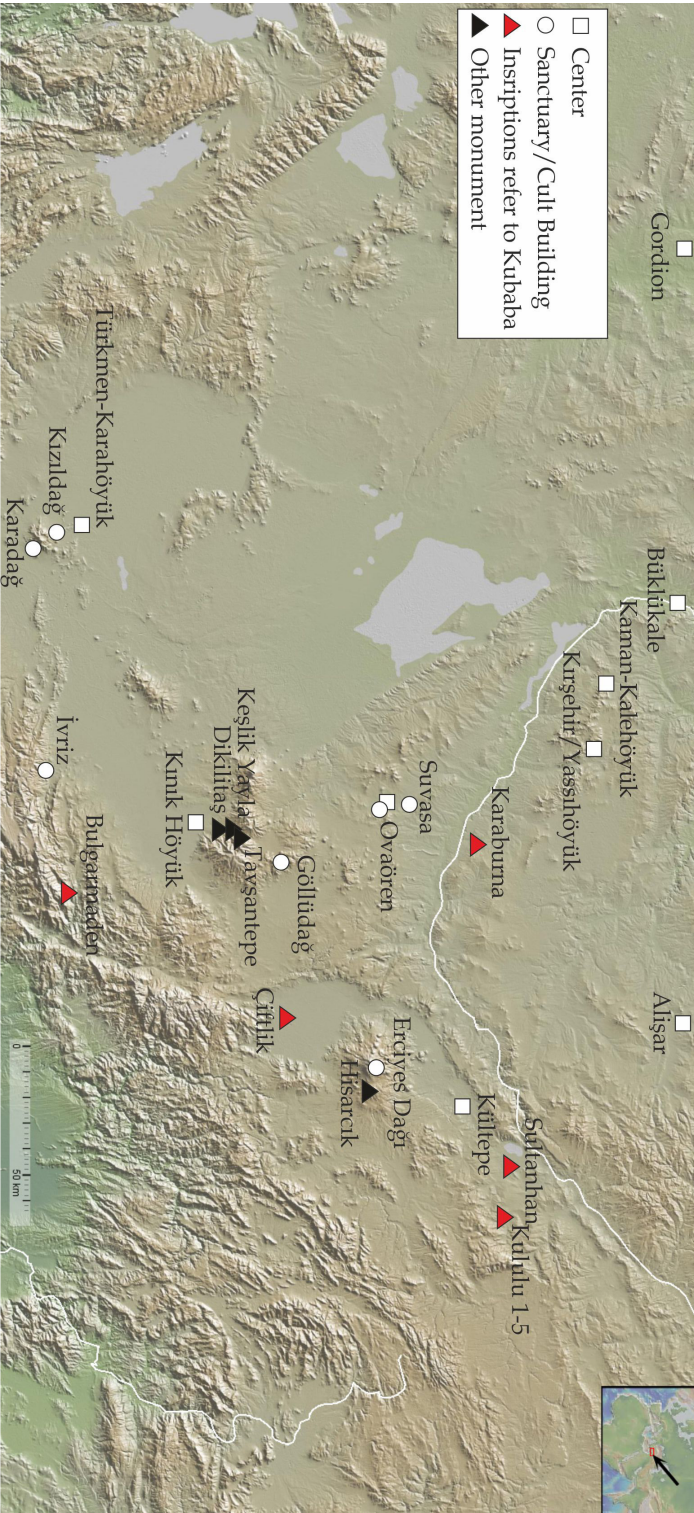


Fig. 12. The center, sacred area, and inscriptions mentioned in the text (I. Aklan)