CollAn VIII 2009 91-124

Bronze Votive Rings with Assyrian Inscriptions found in the Upper Anzaf Fortress in Van

Keywords: Urartian, Assyrian, Inscription, Anzaf Fortress, Ishpuini I
Anahtar Kelimeler: Urartuca, Assurca, Yazıt, Anzaf Kalesi, I. İšpuini

PART I

Oktay Belli

Introduction

The Lower and Upper Anzaf Urartian fortresses are located 11 km northwest of the modern city of Van (Map 1). The former was built by the Urartian king Išpuini (830-810 BC) while the latter by his son Menua (810-786 BC) (Belli 1999: 5; 2001a: 39; 2001b: 165; 2003b: 61). The Lower Fortress has a 62 x 98 m rectangular plan and was constructed on an area covering 6,000 m^2. 1900 m above the sea level, the fortress is situated on a rocky cliff that is neither very steep nor rough. It was founded completely for military purposes at the intersection of important military and trade routes coming from Transcaucasia in the North and Northwest Iran in the east, prior to reaching the Urartian capital of Tušpa (Van Fortress). For example, the six edifice inscriptions found there mention that King Išpuini built a strong fortress. The likes of the monumental ramparts of the fortress, of cyclopic construction using huge boulders without mortar or bastions have yet to be found in other parts of the Urartian Kingdom (Belli 2003a: 2).

The Upper Anzaf Fortress, which is located 800 m to the south, is ten times larger than the Lower Anzaf Fortress. It is situated on a cliff 1995 m above sea level and is currently the second highest excavation site in Turkey. The fortress covers an area of 60,000 m^2 and together with the Lower City, whose walls are attached to it, encompasses a total area of 200, 000 m^2 (Drawing 1).

The bases of the stone walls surrounding the Upper Anzaf Fortress are different from those of the Lower Anzaf Fortress in that they are constructed with mortar and bastions. The distance between the bastions is not even; hence, they are the first examples of bastions used in Urartian fortress architecture (Belli 2001b: 167).

The Upper Anzaf Dam, located 850 m east, provides water for the irrigation of the extensive and fecund land in the north. This important dam, which underwent minor repairs in the past, continues to function today. The Upper Anzaf Fortress, where agricultural products obtained from these fertile lands were stored, became one of the largest administrative and economic production centers in Eastern Anatolia (Fig. 1).

The Upper Anzaf Fortress has two important characteristics that distinguish it from other Urartian fortresses: it was a permanent settlement from its foundation to its collapse, and it continually expanded. The cuneiform edifice inscriptions and the bronze objects and weapons excavated there mention the new architectural structures and weapons depots the Urartian kings had built. Therefore, it dynamically reflects the development of Urartian architecture from the last decade of the 9th century to the end of the 7th century BC (Belli 2007: 181).

The Upper Anzaf Fortress is the administrative center where the greatest number copper objects and votive weapons with cuneiform inscriptions have been found to this day in Urartian fortress excavations in the Caucasus, Northwest Iran and Eastern Anatolia. 29 cuneiform-inscribed metal objects and weapons belonging to kings that ruled between the reigns of King Išpuini (830-810 BC) and Argišti II (714-685 BC) have been unearthed (Belli 2003c: 129; Belli 2004: 282; Belli – A. Dinçol – B. Dinçol 2004: 1-14; Belli – A. Dinçol – B. Dinçol 2005: 217-226; Belli 2006: 145-154). The inscriptions on both are extremely valuable and contribute to our understanding of Urartian history and palaeography. The five Assyrian cuneiform-inscribed copper votive rings from the reign of King Išpuini are of particular importance and are the first Assyrian objects with cuneiform inscriptions found in archaeological excavations in area that was once the domain of the Urartian Kingdom.

Grand Reception Hall no. 15

The main corridor no. 10, which runs northeast as far as the courtyard of the Haldi Temple, is 2.5 m wide and averages 46 m in length. There is a high mudbrick wall on the southern side of the corridor. After this point, it takes

a 90º turn and continues east. The corridor has been named corridor no. 13 and is 2 m wide and 38 m long. Because the walls of this corridor, which runs in an eastward direction, are very high, they were ruined the most. Some parts of the southern and northern walls of this corridor, which were built with mudbricks upon a stone foundation, was become burnt bricks due to a severe fire. While there is no doorway on the southern wall of the corridor, there are four on the northern wall that are separated at regular intervals. Their atriums are an average of 1.50 m wide and 1.80- 1.90 m high. In order to keep the doorways and walls from collapsing, the stone and earth filling the interior of the doorways have not been removed (Belli 2005a: 181-184; Belli 2005b: 184-186).

The main corridor also runs towards the west. This part of the corridor averages 4.30 m in width. After a small recess that is 3.5 m deep, there is an entranceway of another chamber. This chamber, which is situated on the eastern side of the Grand Reception Hall, is an entrée. The wall of the entranceway attached to the south wall is 1.90 m thick and 2.80 m long. The entranceway is 1.5 m wide and has a depth of 1.80 m. In other words, the doorway is not completely centred. It was built adjoining the southern entranceway of chamber no. 12. There is a 50 cm-wide threshold stone at the base of the doorway. This stone, which is in one piece and carefully shaped, goes under the walls of the doorway in the north and south. It is so flat and shiny that it looks like it was sanded. No other thresholds found up till now have been wrought with such care. This meticulously made threshold stone indicates that the Grand Reception Hall no. 15 entranceway was magnificent. Flat sandstone slabs, along with wooden beams and lentil stones, were placed above its entranceway and at the entrances to other chambers. However, the beams have since rotted and the doorway has become completely filled with a thick layer of stone and earth.

The main doorway was formed from small niches having an average depth of 25 cm, located at the northern and western corners of the doorway. The door had a single panel and opened inward toward the west. The door panel and the wooden planks supporting the roof were destroyed in a fire that broke out in the chambers during the Scythian attack at the end of 7th century BC which left a thick layer of ash and charcoal. During this fire, the rocks used to support the bases of the walls cracked and a major part of the mudbricks burned and became solid burnt bricks.

We have called the chamber that continues towards the west after the entranceway Grand Reception Hall no. 15. It consists of what is now the closest room to the courtyard of the Haldi Temple, which is located immediately to the south. There is a distance of only 14 m between them. This chamber has strong foundations laid with very flat stones. High walls were built upon the stones having an average height of 1.5 m. However, the walls of these chambers are the highest of those of the group of chambers in this area. They have an average height of 3-3.5 m and the chambers possess hearths and garbage pits built into them belonging to medieval settlers. Together with their ruins, the height of some of the walls exceeds 5 m (Fig. 2).

The east wall, which stretches north from the entranceway of Grand Reception Hall no. 15, is covered by a mudbrick wall that circumscribes this room after the 10th meter. In other words, the northeast wall marking the northern part of the chamber is 10 m long. Moreover, the northeastern wall of this chamber makes up the western wall of chamber no. 12. After extending westward for 2.5 m, the northeastern wall enters another chamber in a northerly direction. For now, this room has been called room no. 17 (Drawing 2). The northern wall of the Grand Reception Hall, which runs towards the west, after continuing for 5.75 m, enters a small chamber located to the north. This area has temporarily been called room no. 18.

The actual entranceway of the Grand Reception Hall is located to the northwest. Being 2 m deep and 2.5 m wide, it is much larger than that of the eastern wall, which is 1.5 m wide. It has become clear that the road from the southwest gate, which protects the Grand Fortress below in the northwest, runs into it from the northwest wall of the Grand Reception Hall (Drawing 2). The wooden gate had a single panel. The wooden doorframe was situated in a niche, 49 cm in width and depth, in the northwest wall of chamber no. 18. The door opened inward, toward the hall. However, during a fire, the wooden door and its frame were destroyed and the walls turned into brick.

On the eastern side of the southeast wall of Grand Reception Hall no. 15, which extends in a southward direction from entranceway of the hall, there are two framed niches situated on the on the eastern side.

At a location 7 m from its outset at the entranceway of the Grand Reception Hall, the southeast wall forms two framed niches facing the east. The niches themselves average 22 cm in depth and width while their central façade is 108 cm wide. The latter is painstakingly crafted and faces west. It and the niches reach a width of 151 cm. After the niches, the wall continues east for another 7 m and is then blocked by the ruins of walls reaching a height of 5.5 m.

The floor of this hall, just as that of the other rooms, is of pressed clay. There is a very large storage jar 3.5 m from the entranceway and just in front of the northeast wall. The storage jar (pithos) is much larger than those excavated in chambers no. 1 and 2 and Hall with Pilasters no. 14 years ago. It is thought that water or wine was stored in it. However, because of the collapse of the ceiling and walls, the mouth and rim of the jar have been shattered. Therefore, we do not know whether there is any cuneiform or pictorial inscription on them.

During the archaeological excavations in the Grand Reception Hall, 11 cracked circular column bases belonging to ceiling support columns have been uncovered (Drawing: 2). Seven of these were *in situ* while three were spread out in various places as a result of the collapse of the walls and ceiling (Fig. 4). The diameter of these circular column bases, which were made with great care from sandstone, average 70–80 cm, and range in height between 28–31 cm (Belli 2007: 200).

Compared to the other walls, the western and southwestern ones of the Grand Reception Hall in particular were completely destroyed. The thick high walls collapsed inward, rather than outward, to an enormous degree. With the collapse of the wooden ceiling support columns, the ceiling, and the high walls caved inwards. The large heavy column bases, which had been put into place with great care with small stone wedge in around them were dislocated and spread throughout the hall. Two dislodged column bases with cuneiform inscriptions are turned upside down; some column bases cracked and crumbled into little pieces when the wooden beams and ceiling burned. This is an indication of how the three-meter high walls, which measured an average two meters in thickness, collapsed, due to the severity of the fire. The fire left a thick layer of ash and charcoal on the floor.

There are two different kinds of column bases stretching northwest down the center of the hall. For now, ones located 3.5 m west of the east wall and running northwest at an average distance of 4 m apart have been found (Drawing 2). A second row of column bases, situated near the west wall of the hall, will be excavated next year. It appears that the ceiling of the Grand Reception Hall was supported by logs and covered inside out with long wooden planks. It was covered with a flat earthen roof compatible with traditional Urartian residential architecture.

There are two *in situ* column bases on the floor in the western part of the hall; one is 70 cm and the other is 80 cm in diameter (Picture 5), with a

three-line cuneiform inscription on the latter. The former does not have an inscription. An average 3.5-cm wide row is etched above and below the carefully done inscription. In other words, the inscription has been made within a 3.5-cm section. There is 1.5 cm between each line. The column base with cuneiform inscription has been split down in the middle into two parts due to the impact of the burning of the log, and its edges are broken. 1 m northwest of these two *in situ* column bases is another one that rolled there from someplace else. There is a two-line cuneiform inscription on the collapsed column base lying on its side on the ground. It has the same content as inscriptions on the other column bases.

4 m north of the *in situ* column bases and lying in the same direction is a third *in situ* column base, which is buried in the ground. This column base, which is located 2.5 m west of the east wall of the hall, does not have any inscription on it. An average of 70 cm in diameter, the column base is firmly buried in its foundation.

4 m north of this column base and in the same direction is a fourth *in situ* column base. This one, too, is situated 3.5 m west of the east wall of the hall. It is circular like the other column bases. It is firmly placed on its base and bears no inscription.

4 m north of this column base, again in the same direction, is a fifth *in situ* column base. However, this one has no inscription on it. The column base that is 1.5 m northwest of this one was wrenched out of its place and dragged to its current location when the roof and walls collapsed. There is a three-line cuneiform inscription having the same content on its circumference. However, the inscription has been turned upside down, which is an indication of the force under which the roof and walls collapsed.

There are inscriptions on the fifth *in situ* column base and on the sixth and seventh *in situ* column bases located 4 m to the north. Like the first and second *in situ* column bases in the south, these two column bases are buried side by side. While there is no inscription on the column base in the south, there is three-line cuneiform inscription on the one in the north. The content of this inscription is similar to the cuneiform inscriptions found on the other column bases.

Approximately 2.5 m northwest of these two column bases is yet another one. It, too, was thrown off its base when the roof and walls of the hall collapsed, and was dragged to its present location. For such a large heavy column base to be turned upside down points to how violently the walls and

roof collapsed. This column base, like others, has a three-line cuneiform inscription on it. It appears to be a repetition of the same text. Unfortunately, the force of the fire that broke out in the hall was so great that the round sandstone column bases burned, turned black and crumbled. The impact was so great that among the column bases harmed by the fire and broken into pieces, this one was the most greatly affected.

There are a total of ten column bases, five with cuneiform inscriptions. It appears that in each inscription, the same sentence is repeated. This reflects a tradition frequently practiced in the epigraphy of the Urartian Kingdom.

The excavation of the first cuneiform inscription at the Upper Anzaf Fortress greatly contributed to the dating of both the fortress and its buildings. It reads as follows:

Menua, son of Išpuini, had this palace built to its completion

These important inscriptions show that the hall and the ensemble of 17 rooms that have been unearthed north of the courtyard of the Haldi Temple belong to the palace (Fig. 3). It is known with certainty that the Grand Reception Hall in particular, and the temple dedicated to the God Haldi, just 16 m south, were built by Išpuini's son Menua. The palace structures, which have an interesting architecture, like the square-plan temple, and the Grand Reception Hall, constitute the oldest palace of the Urartian Kingdom at the end of the 9th century BC.

The southern walls of Reception Hall no. 15, which averages 13 m in width and 26 m in length, have not yet been uncovered. The Reception Hall, which has a northwest plan, is very impressive. Currently spread out over an area of 238 m^2, it is the oldest and largest of the Urartian Reception Halls. It is not known whether this magnificent Reception Hall, whose roof is supported by pillars, was influenced by those of the Assyrian Kingdom.

There is another question that remains unanswered, that is whether the Grand Reception Hall had two storey. We believe that the future excavations and understanding how the structures of the south wall in the temple courtyard were integrated in particular, will shed light on this important unknown.

Cuneiform-Inscribed Bronze Arrowhead and Votive Rings

Two other fascinating and rare finds uncovered at the excavations of the Upper Anzaf Fortress are the cuneiform-inscribed bronze arrowhead and votive rings found on the floor of Grand Reception Hall no. 15. They were found near the sixth and seventh column bases, in the northern part of the hall, near the northwest entranceway. One of these two *in situ* column bases has an inscription while the other has a three-line cuneiform inscription. 2.5 m to the northwest of these two column bases, which are lying side by side, is another column base with an inscription. This one was dislodged from its place and turned upside down when the roof and walls collapsed (Fig. 6).

The bronze arrowhead and votive rings are covered with a thick layer of oxidation due, first to the fire, and then to the accumulated effect of moisture over the centuries. The result has been that the bronze arrowhead has expanded and burst, and the bronze rings have thinned and broken into pieces. It is thought that these votive rings, once interlinked into a chain, most likely were hung over an inscription on a log. It is clear that the bronze rings were damaged by the heat of the burning logs. It is not known how many bronze rings there were but five have been uncovered in relatively good condition (Fig. 7).

Repair and conservation of the bronze arrowhead and votive rings, which underwent severe oxidation due to moisture, were first carried out by conservator Vedat Evren Belli (M.A.) at the modern, fully equipped laboratory of the Van Region History and Archaeology Research Center, which is affiliated with Istanbul University Faculty of Letters. If it were not for Vedat Evren Belli's time-consuming, painstaking and successful work, neither would the bronze arrowhead or the votive rings have had the effects of oxidation removed nor would the cuneiform inscription on them have appeared so clearly. Therefore, I would like to thank Vedat Evren Belli for his extraordinary effort.

When it appeared, as a result of the conservation efforts, that there was a cuneiform inscription on the bronze arrowhead and votive rings, permission was obtained from the Director of the Van Museum to have them taken to Istanbul. The bronze artifacts are under the protection of the "Department of Restoration and Conservation of Moveable Cultural Wealth," which is affiliated with the Istanbul University Faculty of Letters. The bronze arrowhead and votive rings were x-rayed by Prof. Beril Tuğrul at the Nuclear

Research Institute Laboratory of Istanbul Technical University. Since the desired results were not obtained here, the finds were x-rayed at the Istanbul Archaeological Museums Central Laboratory.

Conservator Gökçe Eğin then carried out conservation work on the bronze arrowhead and votive rings, under the supervision of Assisstant Prof. Ufuk Kocabaş. It took 2.5 years before the cuneiform inscription on the bronze votive rings could be read. We would like to thank Dr. Kocabaş and Gökçe Eğin for their meticulous work.

The Method of Production of the Bronze Rings

The rings, which were wrought with bronze forging technique, vary in size and weight. They are made of bronze rods averaging 46-57 cm in length, the ends of which were brought together to form a ring. The middle parts are thicker and have circular cross-sections. The ends of them are thinner and have rectangular sections. The diameter of the metal rod forming the ring is 0.8 cm. The diameter of the rings themselves ranges between 11.8 cm - 12.8 cm. They are larger in size compared to metal bracelets. The bronze rings currently weigh between 129 gr-181 gr. It is clear that they were heavier when they were first made.

The bronze rings are embellished with vertical, horizontal and zig zag motifs using a scoring-scratching technique. These interesting motifs resemble those on cuneiform votive rings dated to the King Išpuini-Menua-Inušpua era found in the area of the Haldi Temple years ago. However, the diameter of the metal used in the votive rings is smaller than that of the rings belonging to this triumvirate regime. The embellishments and the cuneiform inscriptions between them give the uniform bronze rings enormous vibrancy.

Another interesting feature of the bronze votive ring that distinguishes them from the panther-headed metal bracelets is the way their ends were twisted into a circle and the diameter of the loop-shaped ends are small enough to pass a string through.

PART II

Ali Dinçol – Belkıs Dinçol

Five bronze rings of a votive chain were excavated in the Great Reception Hall of the palace (see *Part I* for a detailed description of the find spot; see also Figs. 6-7) of the Urartian fortress of Upper Anzaf, where in the temple area other votive rings in form of crescents inscribed with Urartian cuneiform had formerly been found (A. Dinçol – B. Dinçol 1995). Each of the five rings bears a single-line cuneiform inscription covering the space from one loop-shaped end to the other along the geometric pattern consisting of horizontal, vertical and oblique lines or strokes made in relief. The cuneiform signs were not always struck properly and some parts of the lines were badly damaged due to corrosion, so that it is difficult to identify the signs. On some rings the scribe or the metalworker seems not to be able to keep the direction of the line because of the lack of space and was forced to continue to write wherever there is empty surface below or under the decoration. In addition to these hardships in the decipherment, the inscription more or less the same on all five rings, unexpectedly turned up to be in Assyrian with some peculiarities, which are either unique or rarely attested in the Late Assyrian corpus of inscriptions, which will be dealt with later. Each of the rings was very carefully searched for invisible signs under the empty looking surfaces by the conservator Gökçe Eğin under our supervision in our own office at the university for about six weeks with some intervals and many additional signs could be detected. We extend our thanks to Gökçe Eğin and to our student Sezer Seçer for her effords in drawing the rings. We are also thankful to Dr. Hasan Peker for his assistance in photographing. Below we give the transcriptions of the preserved inscriptions on each ring separately:

Ring Nr. 1: (Fig. 8, drawing 3) Ø 11, 1 cm; Ø of the cross-section 1 cm; Length 41, 7 cm.

[x-x] ^{D}Hal-[d]i-e ^{m}I[š]-pu-[ú-i]-ni apil $^{m.D}$Sar$_5$-dūru šárru rabū šárru dannu šar$_4$ kiššati šar$_4$ ^{mât}Na-i-ri ^{alu}Ú-te$_9$-ru-hi-e-i tìl-lì an-ni-ú bi-bu [x]-š[i] ana ^{D}Hal-di-e beli-[x x] x [x x]

Ring Nr. 2: (Fig. 9, drawing 4) Ø 11, 5 cm; Ø of the cross-section 0, 8 cm; Length 46, 3 cm.

ṣíl-lí ^{D}Hal-di-e ^{m}Iš-pu-ú-i-ni apil $^{m.D}$Sar$_5$-dūru šárru rabū^{ú} šárru d[a]n-nu šar$_4$ kiššati šar$_4$ ^{māt}Na-i-ri ^{alu}Ú-te$_9$-ru-h[i]-e-i tìl-lì an-ni-ú bi-bu ištu lìb-bi na-ši ana ^{D}Hal-di-e beli-šú ana [x x] iqiš

Ring Nr. 3: (Fig. 10, drawing 5) Ø 11, 8 cm; Ø of the cross-section 0, 8 cm; Length 47, 5 cm.

ṣíl-lí ^{D}Hal-di-e ^{m}Iš-pu-ú-i-ni apil $^{m.D}$Sar$_5$-dūru šárru rabū^{ú} šárru dan-nu šar$_4$ kiššati šar$_4$ ^{māt}Na-i-ri ^{alu}Ú-te$_9$-ru-hi-e-i tìl-lì an-ni-ú bi-bu na-ši ana ^{D}Hal-di-e beli-šú ana [x x] napišti-šú iqiš

Ring Nr.4: (Fig. 11, drawing 6) Ø 12, 8 cm; Ø of the cross-section 0, 8 cm; Length 57, 1 cm.

ṣíl-lí ^{D}Hal-di-e ^{m}I[š]-pu-ú-i-ni apil $^{m.D}$Sar$_5$-[dūr]u šárru rabū^{ú} [x x x x x x] ^{māt}[N]a-i-[x x x x x x]-e-i tìl-lì an-ni-[x] bi-bu ištu lìb-bi na-ši ana ^{D}Hal-di-e [x x x] na[pišti]- šú [i]qiš

Ring Nr. 5: (Fig. 12, drawing 7) Ø *ca.* 12 cm; Ø of the cross-section *max.*0, 9 cm; Length 51, 2 cm.

[x x x x x x ^{m}]Iš-pu-ú-i-ni apil $^{m.D}$Sar$_5$-dūru šárru rabū [šár]ru dan-nu šar$_4$ kiššati ^{māt}Na-i-ri ^{alu}Ú-te$_9$-ru-hi-e-i [tì]l-lì an-ni-ú bi-bu ištu lìb-bi n[a-š]i ana ^{D}[Hal-di]-e be[li-š]ú ana [x x x]

The reconstructed text gained from the legible parts of the inscription on the rings should be as follows[1]:

ṣíl-lí ^{D}Hal-di-e ^{m}Iš-pu-ú-i-ni apil $^{m.D}$Sar$_5$-dūru šárru rabū^{ú}[2] šárru dan-nu šar$_4$[3] kiššati šar$_4$ ^{māt}Na-i-ri ^{alu}Ú-te$_9$-ru-hi-e-i tìl-lì an-ni-ú bi-bu[4] ištu lìb-bi na-ši ana ^{D}Hal-di-e beli-šú ana [balāṭ][5] napišti-šú iqiš

The usage of Assyrian on small objects in the reign of Išpuini was rare and hitherto restricted to the inscription on the silver *situla* dedicated by him to his grandson Inušpua (Salvini 1978: 1-4). Our text, also a dedicatory one,

---

1 Our thanks are due to our colleague Dr. Gerfrid G.W. Müller for his scholarly advice in assyriological problems.

2 This phonetic compliment is omitted on rings Nr. 1 and Nr. 5.

3 Omitted on ring Nr. 5.

4 *ištu libbi* is omitted on rings Nr. 1 and Nr. 3.

5 There is no sufficient place for this emendation except for the ring Nr. 3.

repeated with minor changes on five bronze rings, represents the second example of inscriptions on non-monumental material in Assyrian. Its existence confirms the theory of Salvini (1978: 3), that there was a certain bilingualism in the royal circles and among the members of the leading class even after Urartian became the official language. In spite of the fashion to use Assyrian in the "court", this language seems to be influenced by the local tongues and dialects of the region. For example, the word ^{LÚ}*kibāru/kibbaru* referring to Inušpua in the inscription of the silver *situla* is not attested either in Neo-Assyrian, or in Akkadian in general (Salvini 1978: 4 fn 23). Similar words in Assyrian do not make any sense in that sentence (CAD "K": 329 b *kibarru* = "boat"). The word *kiparu*= "a high judicial official" (CAD "K": 336 b) which could designate an honorary title of the young prince leads us to an Elamite milieu, a neighboring culture of Urartu. In our text there are divergences from the normal usage of Assyrian. In the following we shall dwell on them briefly.

ṣíl-li ^{D}Hal-di-e: "shadow, aegis, protection of the God Haldi" (CAD "S": 189-192). This compound here seems to be part of Išpuini's royal long title, which neither in the Neo-Assyrian, nor in the Urartian sources could be attested. If there were a construction with a preposition like *ina/ana ṣilli DN*, a form frequently seen in the assyrian texts, it should be interpreted as "in/under the protection/aegis of the God". Unfortunately after a very careful examination of the beginnings of the inscribed lines on all of the rings, no sign could be detected, which would allow for the reading of a preposition. In that case we are forced to consider the above mentioned unique title, which would mean "the representative of the God Haldi". Although it may sound as a very far-fetching analogy, this reminds one, who is acquainted with the Turkish culture, the title of the Ottoman sultans "*zillullah-ı fi'l arz*" meaning "the shadow of the God on earth".

^{alu}Ú-te$_9$-ru-hi-e-i tìl-lì an-ni-ú bi-bu ištu lìb-bi na-ši: This sentence shows abnormalities in the Assyrian word order. Especially the unusual position the preposition draws attention. The word *tillu,* which generally means "tell" i.e. a settlement, still inhabited or abandoned (CAD "T": 409a) could make sense in this sentence if *ištu lìb-bi* = "from the inside/out of somewhere/something" (cf. CAD "I": 287a) had not been used. Therefore a secondary meaning of it as "equipment", "weaponry" (CAD "T": 411a) or "armory" in spite of the lack of *bīt* in the *bīt tilli* should be more appropriate. This word is attested once more in the Urartian milieu in the Assyrian version of the *Kelišin* Stele (HChI 9 Vo. 8). Its reading as *be-le* (Salvini 2008: 143) in the meaning "weapon" is contradicted by the fact, that on the *Anzaf* rings it is not

written with the signs "be" = "til" and "le" as on the *Kelišin* Stele but with "ti" = "tìl" and "ši" = "lì" and thus affirm the reference for *Kelišin* in CAD "T": 411a. But, in any case the preposition and the following noun, *ištu lìb-bí,* do not seem to be put in a grammatically appropriate place in this sentence. They should define from where or out of which adobe the action is made, which the verb *naši* "to remove", "to steal" (CAD "N": 102b) designates. A sentence such as ^{alu}*Ú-te$_9$-ru-hi-e-i tìl-lì ištu lìb-bi na-ši* would be grammatically correct and could be translated as *"(he) took away out of the treasury/storehouse of the city of Witeruhi"* If the object *an-ni-ú bi-bu* is added the meaning of the first part of the sentence would be:*"(he) took away this bibu out of the storehouse of the city of Witeruhi".*

^{alu}Uteru(hi): According to Diakonoff and Kashkai (1981: 102-103), the name of the city is derived from the name of a tribe *witeru* and is to be localized with some other place names like *Katarza* and *Luša* in the boundaries of the *vilayet* of Kars (Diakonoff – Kashkai 1981: 102-103), around the modern settlement of *Kağızman* (cf. HChI 6, 6a). The oldest reference to the city is found in this votive text. The name of this city also occurs in the inscriptions of *Išpuini* and *Menua* and later in the texts from the reigns of *Argišti I.* and *Sarduri II.* The study of all the texts implies that the city was the goal of raids during the military campaigns conducted by the Urartian kings into that region, but there is no clear reference to its conquest except the inscription of *Argišti I.* The wording of our votive text also points to such a raid, when the treasury or warehouse of *Witeruhi* was looted, than to a long-lasting invasion by *Išpuini* son of *Sarduri.*

bi-bu: In Akkadian the primary meaning of this word is "wild sheep". In Assyrian texts from Urartu it reflects a different sense (CAD "B": 217b and 218a; HChI Teil II: 178 and 196 *s.v.* "*niribi*"). In most cases, including the *Kelišin* Stele, the word occurs designating an object made of metal. The equivalent of it, *niribi,* in the Urartian version is also used for objects enumerated among products of bronze. Philologists, who prefer to equate *niribi* with the primary meaning of *bibu* were therefore forced to derive a new meaning like "die aus Metall gearbeiteten Weih-Tiere". In the inscription on our rings the word *bibu* seems to represent the object on which the inscription takes place. The demonstrative pronoun *anniu,* "this", also confirms that the (votive)ring is called a *bibu*. This implies that it is the general noun for votive objects, no matter in which form they were produced. In translations of the relating sentences one should not insist to use its primary meaning (cf. Salvini 2008: 144).

ana ^{D}Hal-di-e beli-šú ana [balāṭ] napišti-šú iqiš: In this sentence the usage of *balāṭ napišti* does not bear a different meaning than the almost synonymous two elements of the nominal composition, but reflects a meaning like "good health" or" well-being" (CAD "N": 300a; CAD "B": 46b, 47a, b, 48a, b, 49a).

The text can be translated accordingly as:

"The shadow of the God Haldi, Išpuini, son of Sarduri, the great king, the mighty king, king of the universe, king of the Land Nairi took away this votive object out of the storehouse of the city of Witeruhi (and) dedicated (it) to his lord Haldi for his own good health"

In the same find-spot as the votive rings an inscribed bronze **arrowhead** (for another arrowhead from the storeroom 9, see Belli – A. Dinçol – B. Dinçol 2004: 5, 11 and 12) was also excavated (Figs. 13-14; Drawing 8). Because of the corroded surface, only remnants of some cuneiform signs on both sides can be seen, which cannot be emendated to meaningful words.

Prof. Dr. Oktay Belli
İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi
Eskiçağ Tarihi Ana Bilim Dalı
34134-İstanbul / Türkiye
obelli@istanbul.edu.tr

Prof. Dr. Ali Dinçol
İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi
Eskiçağ Dilleri ve Kültürleri Bölümü, Hititoloji Ana Bilim Dalı
34134-İstanbul / Türkiye
dincola@hotmail.com

Prof. Dr. Belkıs Dinçol
İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi
Eskiçağ Dilleri ve Kültürleri Bölümü, Hititoloji Ana Bilim Dalı
34134-İstanbul / Türkiye
dincola@hotmail.com

Van-Yukarı Anzaf Kalesi Sarayında Bulunan Assurca Yazıtlı Bronz Adak Halkaları

Aşağı ve Yukarı Anzaf Urartu Kaleleri, bugünkü modern Van kentinin 11 km kuzeydoğusunda yer almaktadır. Aşağı Anzaf Kalesi Urartu Kralı İšpuini (M.Ö. 830-810), Yukarı Anzaf Kalesi de bu kralın oğlu Menua (M.Ö. 810- 786) tarafından kurulmuştur. Aşağı Anzaf Kalesi'nin tümüyle askeri amaçla kurulduğu, kalede bulunan ve Kral İšpuini tarafından yazdırılmış 6 inşaat yazıtından açıkça anlaşılmaktadır. Yazıtta, güçlü bir kale yaptırdığından bahsedilmektedir. Yukarı Anzaf Kalesi'ni diğer Urartu kalelerinden ayıran en önemli özelliği, kurulduğu tarihten yıkılışına değin sürekli bir yerleşime sahne olması ve genişlemesidir.

Yukarı Anzaf Kalesi kazı çalışmalarının bir başka ilginç ve özgün buluntusunu, 15 no'lu Büyük Kabul Salonu'nun tabanında bulunan çivi yazlı bronz ok ucu ve adak halkaları oluşturmaktadır. Çivi yazılı bronz ok ucu ve adak halkaları, salonun kuzeyinde ve kuzeybatı kapı girişine yakın altıncı ve yedinci sütun kaidelerinin yakınında bulunmuştur. Önce çıkan yangından ve daha sonra da yüzlerce yıldan beri oluşan nemden fazlasıyla etkilenen bronz ok ucu ve adak halkaları, aşırı şekilde oksitlenmiştir. Bir zincirin halkaları gibi iç içe geçtiği anlaşılan adak halkalarının, olasılıkla kaide üzerindeki ağaç sütuna asıldığı sanılmaktadır. Ağaç sütunların yanması sonucunda, bronz halkaların ısının etkisiyle aşırı bir şekilde tahrip olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Bronz halkaların toplam kaç adet olduğunu bilemiyoruz, ancak 5 tanesi nispeten sağlam olarak ortaya çıkarılmıştır.

Halkalar üzerindeki Assurca yazıtta Sarduri oğlu İšpuini'nin bu adak eşyasını Uteruhi / Witeruhi kentinin hazinesinden çıkardığı ve Efendisi Tanrı Haldi'ye sunduğu yazılıdır.

Bibliography

Belli, O.
1999 *The Anzaf Fortresses and the Gods of Urartu*, İstanbul.

2001a "Bronze Votive Rings with Cuneiform Inscriptions from Van-Upper Anzaf Fortress", R. M. Boehmer – J. Maran (eds.), *Lux Orientis*, *Archäologie zwischen Asien und Europa, Festschrift für Harald Hauptmann*, Rahden: 39-43.

2001b "Excavations on the Upper and Lower Anzaf Urartian Fortresses", O. Belli (ed.), *Istanbul University's Contributions to Archaeology in Turkey (1932-2000)*, İstanbul: 165-172.

2003a "Van-Aşağı ve Yukarı Anzaf Urartu Kaleleri Kazısı: Bir Ara Değerlendirme (1991-2002) / Excavations at Van- Lower and Upper Anzaf Urartian Fortresses: An Intermediary Evaluation (1991- 2002)", *CollAn* II: 1-49.

2003b "Historical Development of the Kingdom of Urartu", F. Özden (ed.), *Urartu: Savaş ve Estetik-Urartu: War and Aesthetics*, İstanbul: 45-73.

2003c "Metal Artefacts and Weapons with Cuneiform Inscriptions", F. Özden (ed.), *Urartu: Savaş ve Estetik-Urartu: War and Aesthetics*, İstanbul: 129-131.

2004 "Bronze Quivers with Cuneiform Inscriptions from Van- Upper Anzaf Fortress", A. Sagona (ed.), *A View from the Highlands, Archaeological Studies in Honour of Charles Burney, Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 12, Melbourne: 277-298.

2005a "Aşağı ve Yukarı Anzaf Urartu Kaleleri, 2003 Yılı Çalışmaları- Upper and Lower Anzaf Urartian Fortresses, 2003 Campaign", *TÜBA-AR* VIII: 181- 184.

2005b "Aşağı ve Yukarı Anzaf Urartu Kaleleri / 2004 Yılı Çalışmaları- Upper and Lower Anzaf Urartian Fortresses", 2004 Campaign", *TÜBA-AR* VIII: 184- 186.

2006 "Yukarı Anzaf Kalesi'nde Bulunan Urartu Kralı II. Argişti'ye Ait Çiviyazılı Bronz Adak Kalkanı / Urartian King Argisti's (II) Bronze Votive Shield with Cuneiform Inscription from Upper Anzaf Fortress", B. Avunç (ed.), *Hayat Erkanal'a Armağan, Kültürlerin Yansıması-Studies in Honor of Hayat Erkanal, Cultural Reflections*, İstanbul: 145-154.

2007 *Tarih Boyunca Van*, İstanbul.

Belli, O. – A. Dinçol – B. Dinçol
2004 "Royal Inscriptions on Bronze Artifacts from the Upper Anzaf Fortress at Van", *Anatolica* XXX: 1-14.

2005 "Bronze Door Rings with Cuneiform Inscriptions of Sarduri II from the Upper Anzaf Fortress", *Anatolica* XXXI: 217-226.

CAD *The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.*

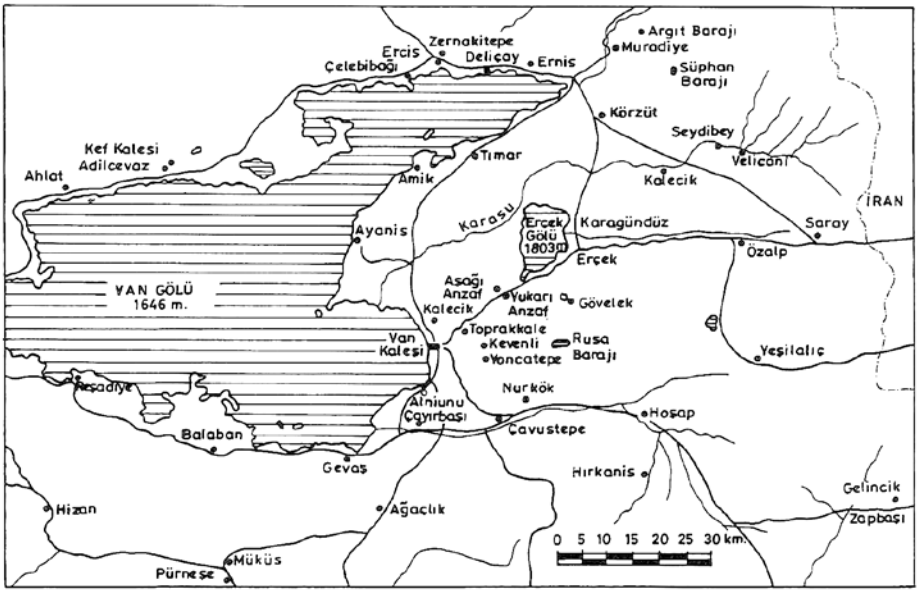
Diakonoff, I. M. – S. M. Kashkai
1981 *Geographical Names according to Urartian Texts,* (RGTC IX), Wiesbaden.

Dinçol, A. – B. Dinçol
1995 "Die neuen Inschriften und beschriftete Bronzefunde aus den Ausgrabungen von den urartaeischen Burgen von Anzaf", T. van den Hout – J. de Roos (eds.), *Studio Historiae Ardens: Ancient Near Eastern Studies presented to Phili H. J. Houwink ten Cate on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* , Istanbul: 23-55.

HChI F. W. König, *Handbuch der chaldischen Inschriften I-II* (AfO Beiheft 8), Graz.

Salvini, M.
1978 "A dedicatory Inscription of the Urartian King Išpuini", *Assur* I/8: 171-177.

2008 *Corpus dei testi Urartei*, (Vol I-II-III), Istituto di Studi sulle Civiltà dell'Egeo e dell Vicino Oriente, Dokumenta Asiana, Roma.



Map 1 Lower and Upper Anzaf Fortresses and close environs

Fig. 1 Upper Anzaf Fortress from the northwest

Fig. 2 Grand Hall no.15 from the north

Fig. 3 Temple and palace structures from the southeast

Fig. 4 A displaced cuneiform column inscription

Fig. 5 in situ column inscription

Fig. 6 A reversed column inscription and bronze votive rings

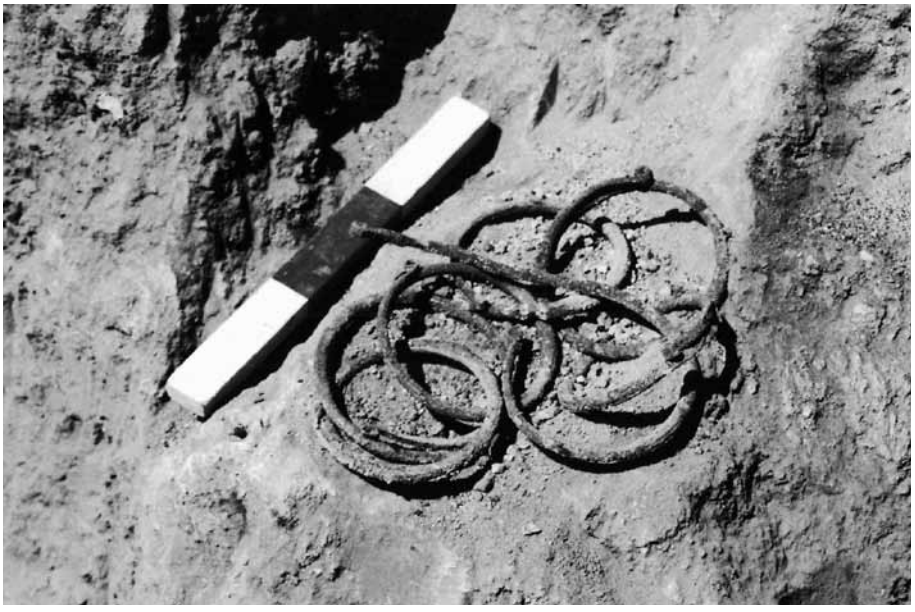
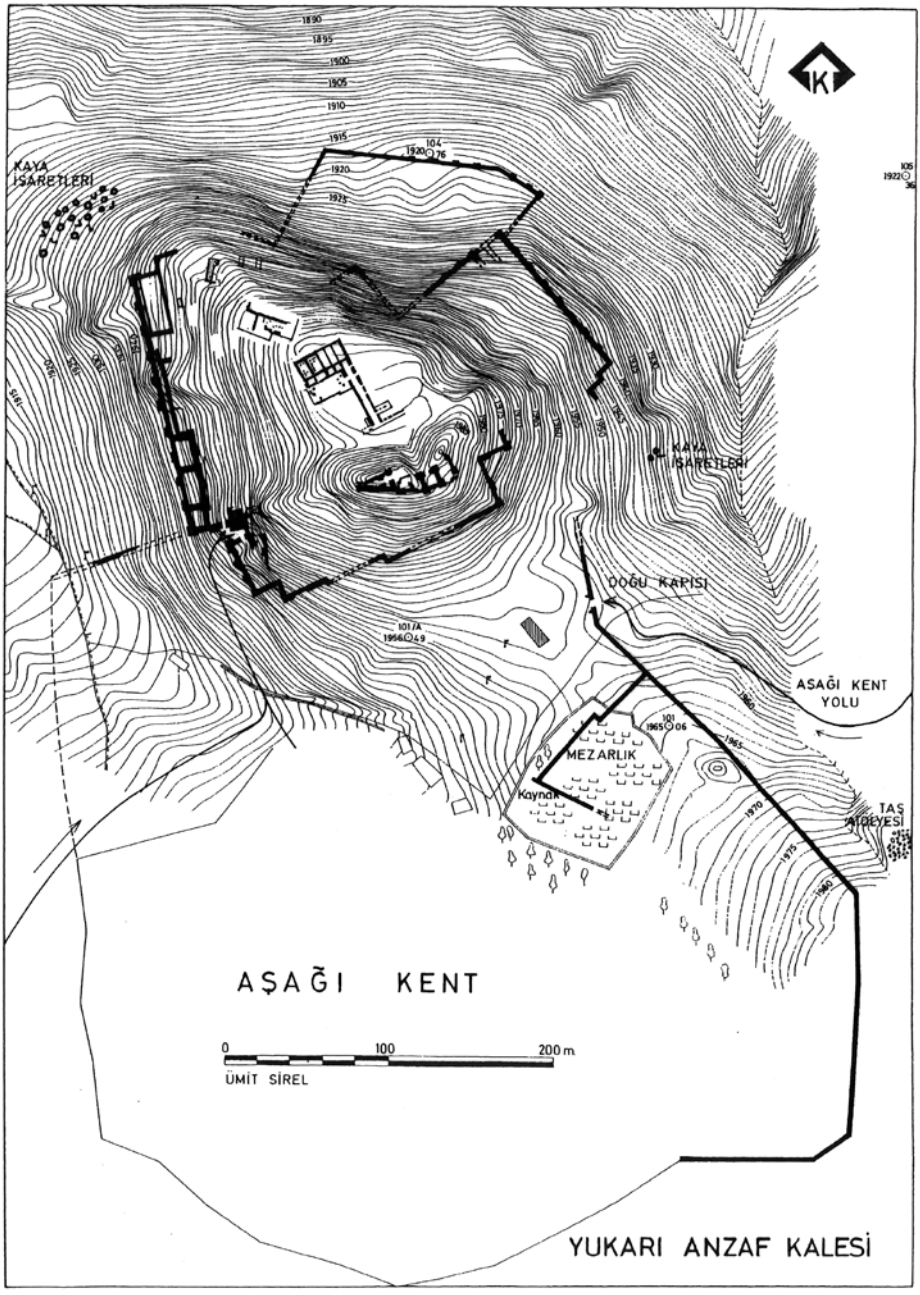
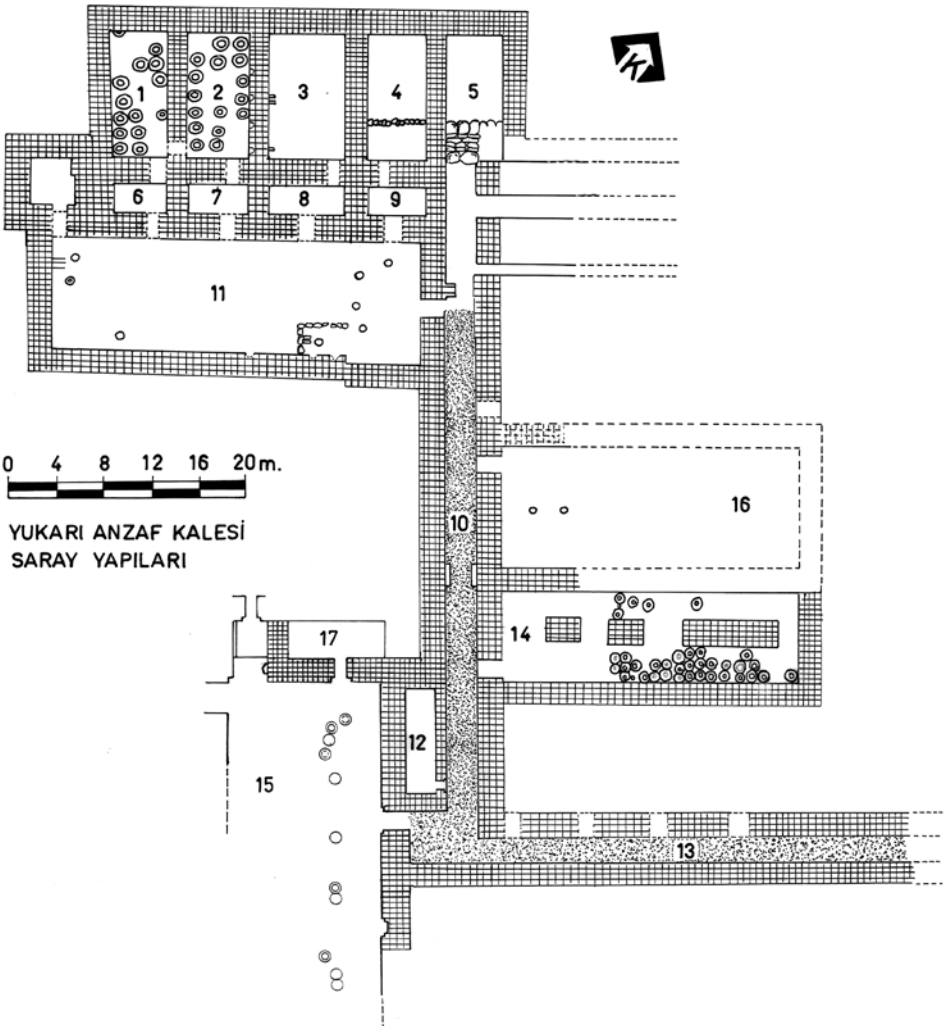


Fig. 7 Appearance of the bronze votive rings when first excavated

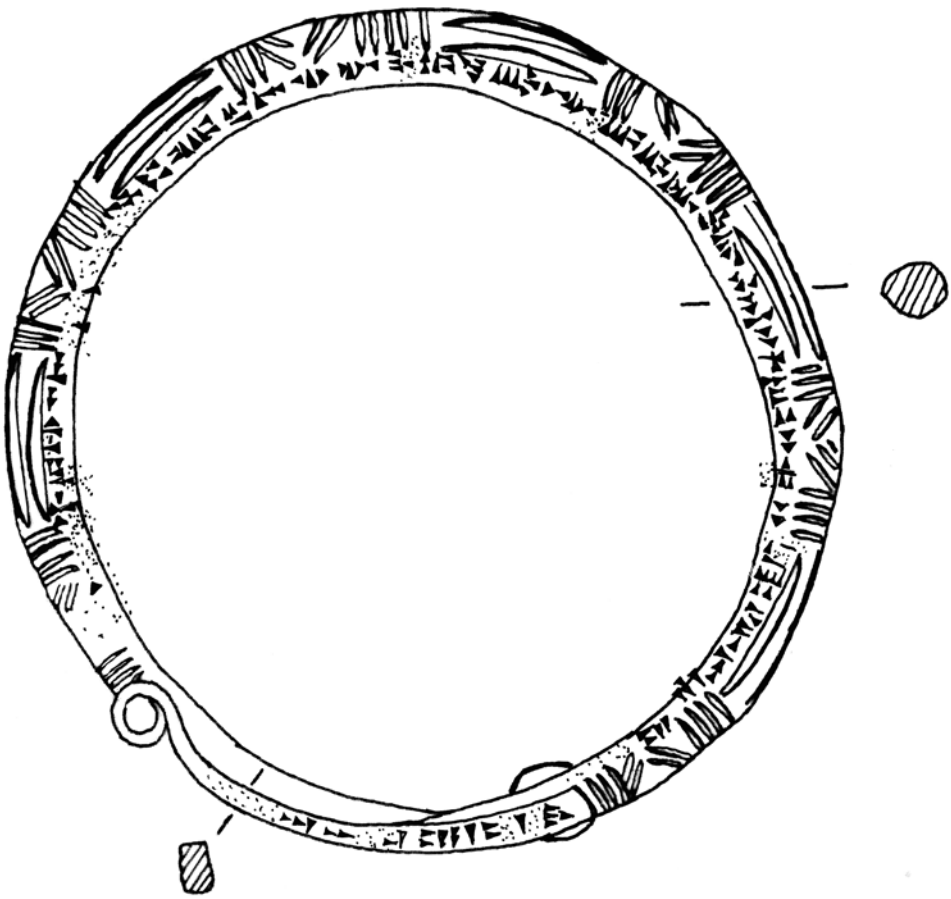


Drawing 1 Upper Anzaf Fortress and the topographical plan of the Lower City



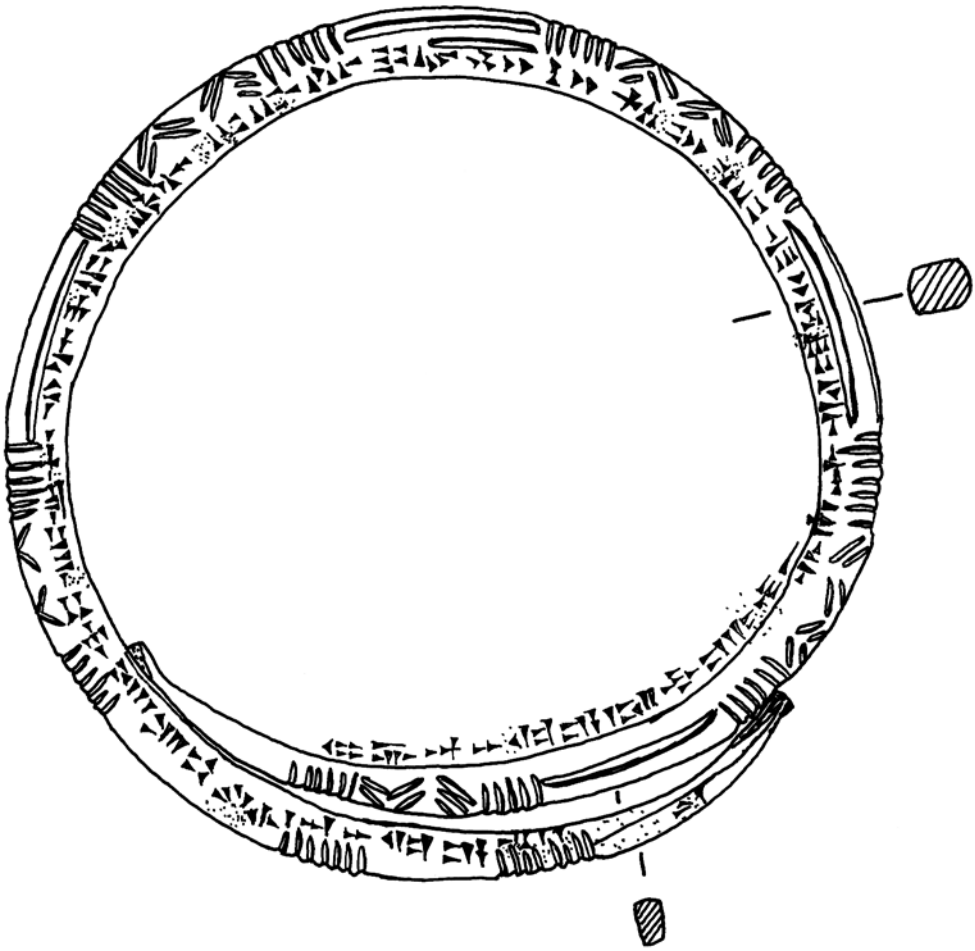
Drawing 2 A general view of the palace structures

Fig. 8 Ring Nr. 1 (1:1)



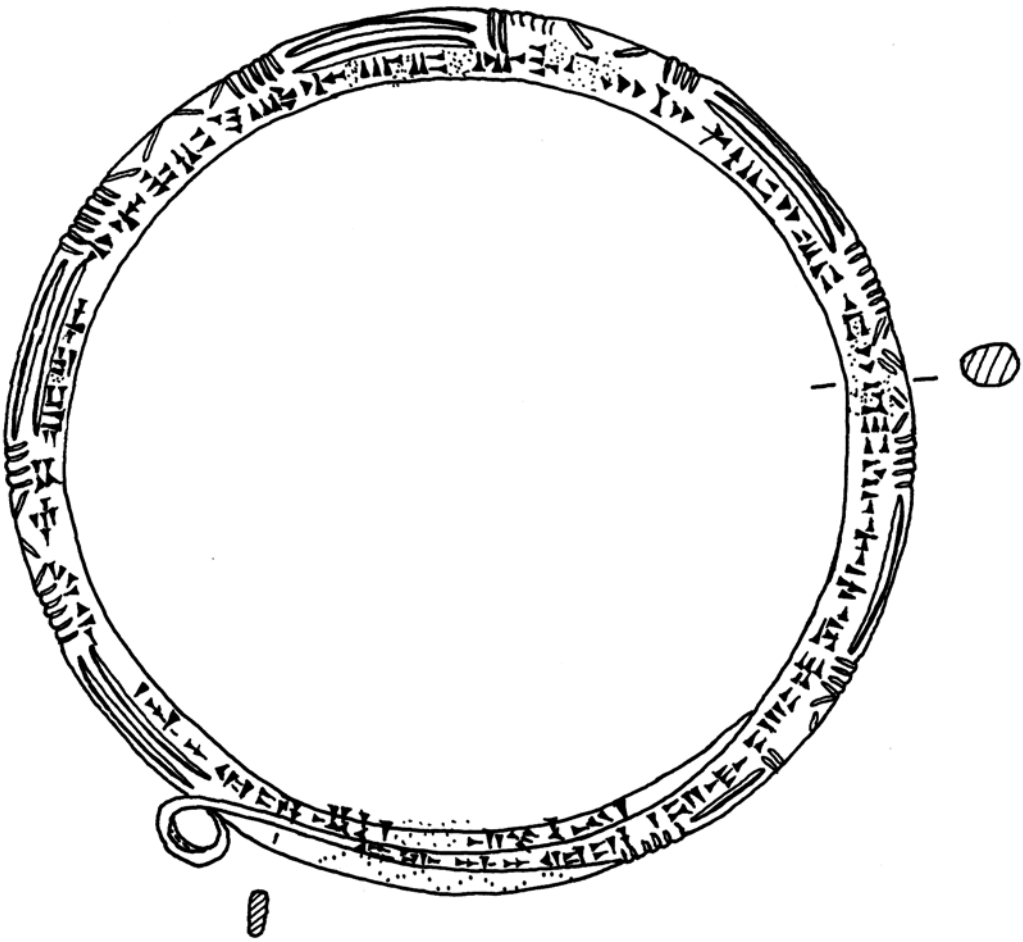
Drawing 3 Ring Nr. 1 (1:1)

Fig. 9 Ring Nr. 2 (1:1)



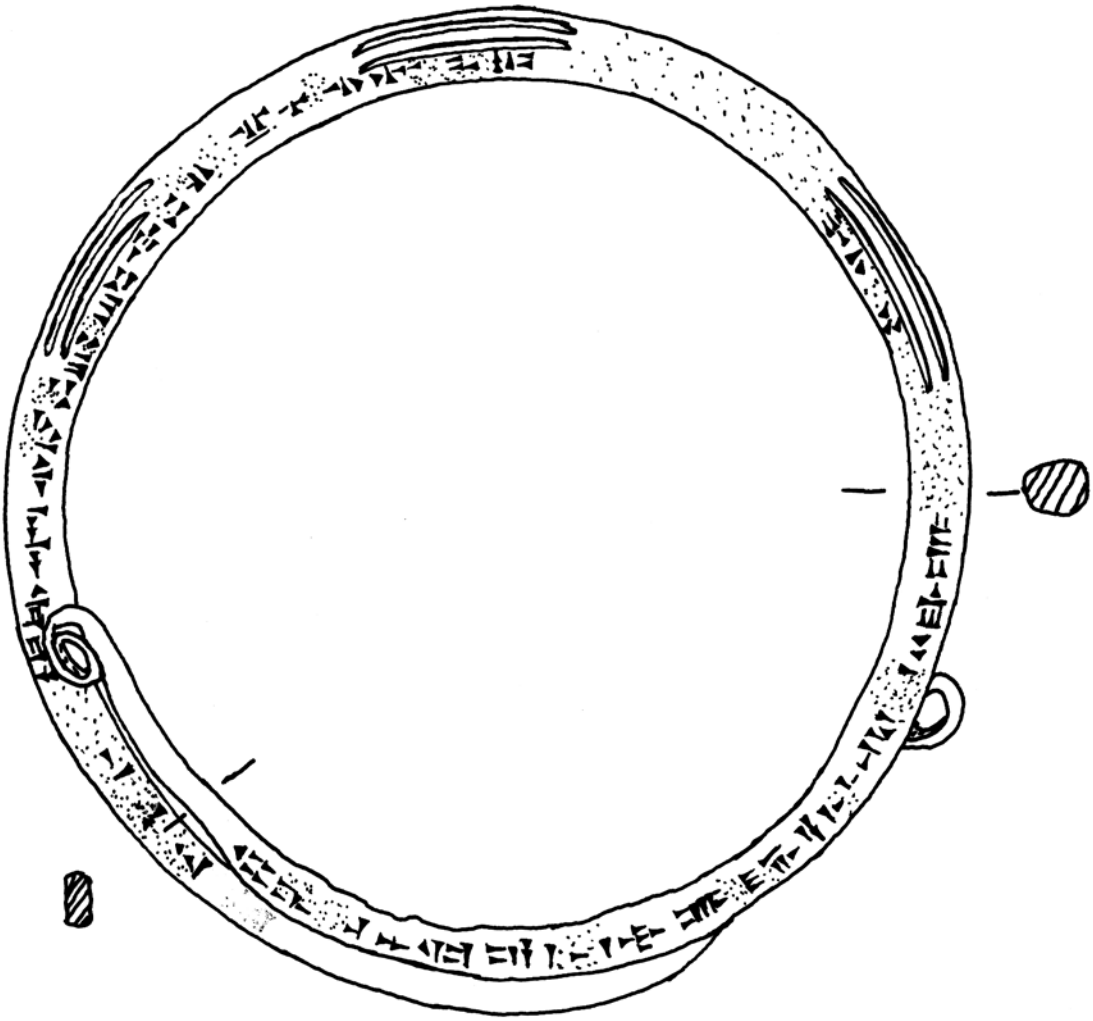
Drawing 4 Ring Nr. 2 (1:1)

Fig. 10 Ring Nr. 3 (1:1)



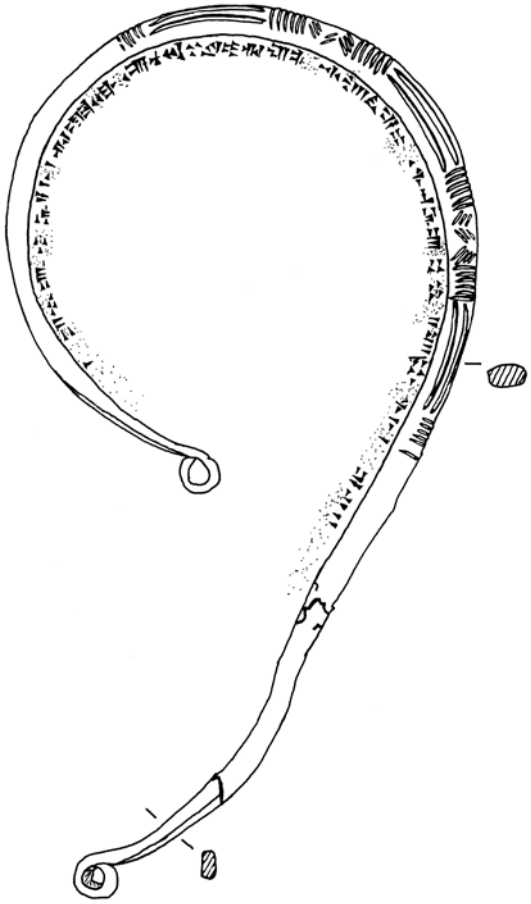
Drawing 5 Ring Nr. 3 (1:1)

Fig. 11 Ring Nr. 4 (1:1)



Drawing 6 Ring Nr. 4 (1:1)

Fig. 12 Ring Nr. 5 (1:2)



Drawing 7 Ring Nr. 5 (1:2)

Fig. 13
Arrowhead (side A)
(1:1)

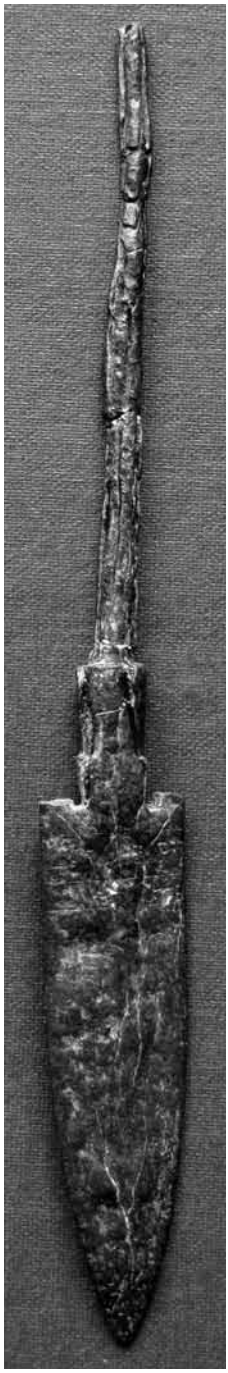
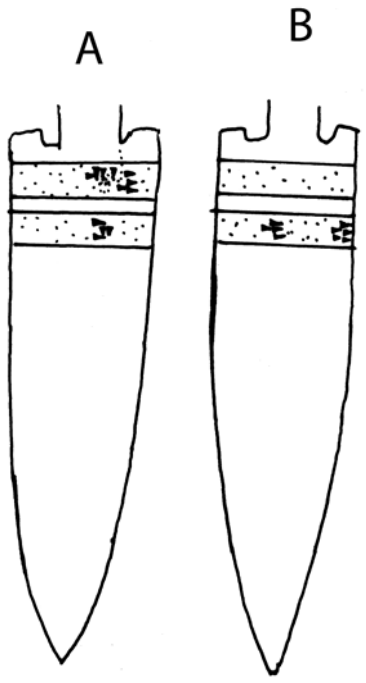


Fig. 14
Arrowhead (side B)
(1:1)



Drawing 8
Arrowhead (side A and B)
(1:1)