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## Excavations at the Old City, Fortress, and Mound of Van: Work in 2018

Erkan Konyar, Bülent Genç, Can Avcı and Armağan Tan

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# **ANATOLIA ANTIQUA**

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**XXVII**



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Erkan KONYAR, Bülent GENÇ, Can AVCI, Armağan TAN\*

## EXCAVATIONS AT THE OLD CITY, FORTRESS, AND MOUND OF VAN: WORK IN 2018<sup>1</sup>

The citadel at the site of Van Fortress-Tushpa rises on a natural rock formation and consists of three main sections including the Van Fortress Mound in the north and the Old City of Van in the south and the Citadel of Tushpa (Fig. 1). In the 2018 excavation season, excavations were carried out on the mound and the citadel. The rooms that are connected to the columned hall, which was found in trenches M25 and N25 on the Van Fortress Mound between 2015 and 2017, were completely exposed in the north-south direction (Fig. 2). As we have encountered in other trenches in the previous years, Urartian architecture in this area also consists of two building levels,

“Early Urartian” and “Late Urartian”. In 2018, excavations concentrated on the section between the Urartian buildings in trenches N20 and N21 to the west of the mound and the columned hall in the east at the highest part of the mound. Excavation work started in trenches N24 and M24 to the west of the columned hall, and levels belonging to the Medieval/Modern, Post-Urartian/Late Iron, and Urartian periods were exposed (Fig. 3). The part of the citadel area that is known as “Širšini of Minua” was cleared and investigated through soundings in order to understand its function.



**Fig. 1:**  
**Van Fortress**  
**from the**  
**west, Van**  
**Fortress**  
**Mound and**  
**Old City of**  
**Van.**

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## 1. VAN FORTRESS MOUND

### 1.1. Late Medieval and Modern Cemetery

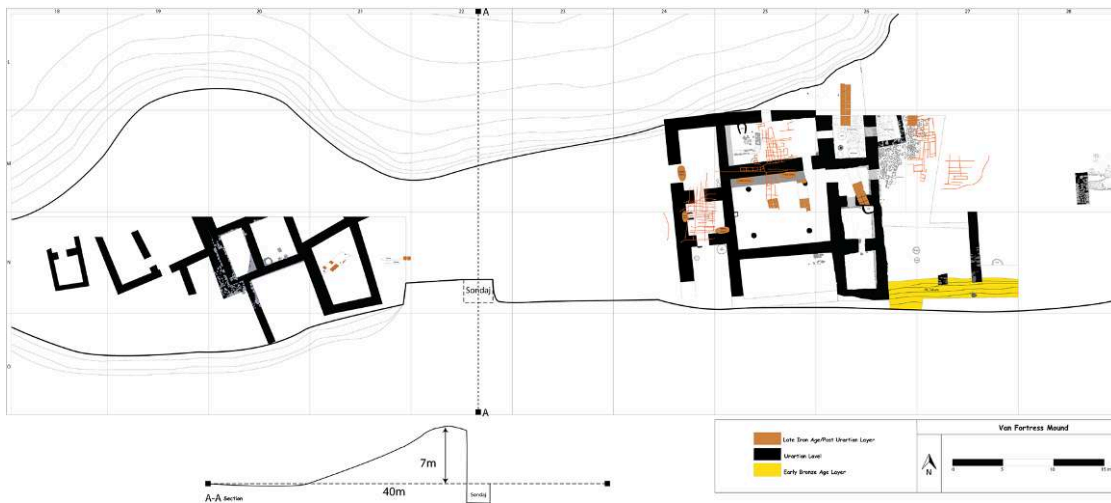
As we have found out in the previous years, the latest level of the Van Fortress Mound was used as a cemetery from the end of the Medieval to the Modern period. Burial activities were dense on the slopes of the mound as well as on its higher parts (Konyar 2012: 413-415, Konyar 2013: 128-130, Konyar and

Avcı *et al.* 2013: 194, Fig. 2). A total of 36 simple inhumation burials belonging to this period were found in trench N24 during this year's excavations (Fig. 4). Burials caused great damage to the earlier levels as they were located on the slopes of the mound. Earlier burials were also damaged by later burials and scattered skeleton fragments belonging to about 54 individuals were encountered.

A fire/ash pit about 1 meter long and maximum 34 cm wide, extending in the north-south direction



**Fig. 2:**  
Area A,  
General  
View of  
Urartian  
Architecture



**Fig. 3:**  
Plan of the  
Urartian  
and Post-  
Urartian  
Architecture





**Fig. 4:**  
**Late**  
**Medieval**  
**and Modern**  
**Burials of**  
**Van Fortress**  
**Mound**

from the northwest end of trench M24, which was cut into the lower Post-Urartian level and filled with ash and burnt wood pieces, was found. Another fire pit that is about 2 meters long and 30-35 cm wide that also extended in the north-south direction and contained a mixed fill of burnt wood, ash and animal bones was found to the northwest of the trench.

This area we consider as a fire pit is located to the east of the fire pit with locus no 2018N24-20, which extends in the north-south direction in trench N24; it contains animal bones, seeds, mudbricks and stones, and resembles locus no 2018N23-6. The pits are about 10-15 cm deep. They are considered to be associated with the burials. Taking the geographical conditions of the region into consideration, they are thought to have been related to fires built in order to keep away various animals that could harm the bodies after the individuals were buried, especially in the winter. This practice can be witnessed even today in seasons of heavy winters when the ground is covered with snow.

A small number of these Medieval/Modern burials contained bodies that were buried with their jewelry. Among them is a burial that probably belongs to a young adult woman wearing 12 glass bracelets in trench N24 (Fig. 5).

Seven burials were carefully recorded in trench M24 and removed. The soil mounded on these simple inhumations was covered with flagstones, as it is

often observed on the overall mound (Konyar 2013: 129). All these burials were mostly cut into the Late Iron Age/Post-Urartian levels and damaged them considerably. For this reason, the use of the mound as a cemetery is quite an unfortunate situation that hinders a better understanding of the Late Iron/Post-Urartian periods.

A total of ten intact Medieval/Modern period simple inhumation burials were removed from trench N23. There were also scattered skeletons of ten individuals and fragments of nine skeletons in this area. A 1.50 m-long, 34 cm-wide and 11 cm-deep fire pit extending in the east-west direction that was cut into the Post-Urartian level and filled with burnt wood fragments and ashes, was found in the north-eastern section of trench N23, similar to the pits in trench M24. The interior surface of the pit has formed a brown layer due to fire.

The Medieval period on the Van Fortress Mound is not only represented by the cemetery. Medieval architecture with foundations made of small stones, tannurs and refuse pits known from the previous years is represented by at least two building levels (Konyar and Ayman *et al.* 2012: 222, Konyar 2013: 130). The 2018 excavations revealed a Medieval tannur with an approximately 1 m diameter in the northeast of trench M24. The base of the tannur was supported by stones and it features a ventilation channel on the interior. Mixed ceramics from the Iron Age and the Medieval period were found







**Fig. 9:**  
Late Iron  
Age/Post  
Uartian  
layer

form, measuring 2.07 cm in diameter, with a thin bronze piece through the middle. The *fibula*, which was found under the right shoulder, has parallels in similar forms from Ziwiyé (Muscarella 1965: Plate 58, Fig 3) and from the southern Caucasus. It is particularly similar to an example in the Adana Museum (Ögün 1979: 183, Abv.6.). The fact that this burial was cut into the Urtian levels and partly damaged the Urtian wall strengthens its association with the Late Iron Age. The fact that the rim of the plate under the left arm is missing indicates that it may have been placed in the burial in this state as a burial gift.

Another hocker burial identified during this year's work was in trench M24. This burial cut the western wall of the northernmost Urtian room excavated this year and did not contain the skull. This skeleton was also laid on its left side and was badly preserved. Unlike the previous one, no burial gifts were found in this burial. The burial also coincided with the doorway to the west of the Urtian room that we observed in the lower layers.

Yet another hocker burial was found in trench N24, and cut the western wall of the Urtian room no. 2 from the south to the north. It was badly preserved and cut into Urtian architecture.

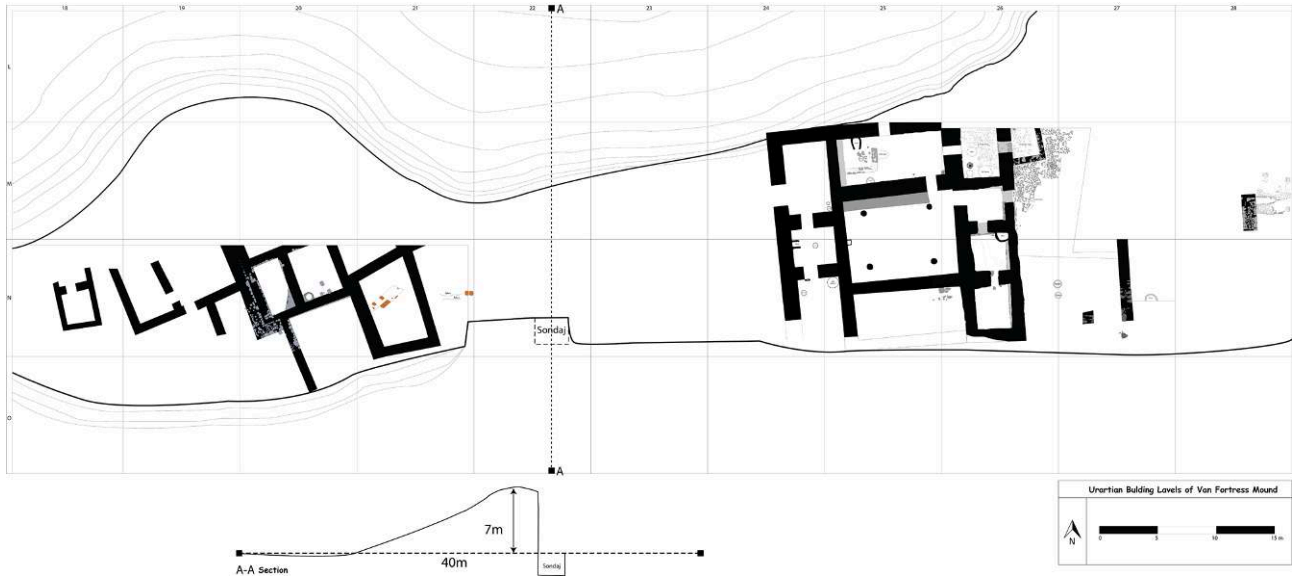
Architectural traces of the Post-Urtian and Late Iron periods, although slight, also continued to be observed in 2018. The architecture of this period, which was in a large extent disturbed by the Medieval-Modern burials, was known from the previous years as consisting of two phases of 45 x 45

cm mudbricks and dense mortar traces (Konyar and Genç *et al.* 2017: 127-130) (Fig. 10). Therefore if we include the hocker burials, after the Urtian period, the Van Fortress Mound can be identified with these three elements. However, we should not exclude the possibility that some of these elements could have been contemporaneous.

This year's work additionally identified a line of compacted earth wall extending in the east-west



**Fig. 10:**  
A Right  
Foot Print  
of a Person  
on a  
Mudbrick.  
Post-Urtian/  
Late Iron  
Age Layer.



**Fig. 11: Area A, General Plan of Urartian Architecture**

direction in the southern section of trench M23. The architectural context of this wall, which is 70 cm wide and quite hard, could not be identified. Within this fill, there were various pottery sherds from the Late Iron Age and an iron arrowhead in an area near the northwest border of the trench. We find the continuation of this wall in trench M24. The Post-Urartian compacted earth wall runs from the northeast of trench M24 to the west, for approximately 10 meters. Urartian and Late Iron Age painted pottery sherds were found within the Post-Urartian collapse fill to the northeast of the trench. A floor was reached right below this collapse. Iron Age pottery sherds, including those with geometric patterns, were also found on the floor. The ground continues in the form of compacted clay. Also, a layer with irregular mortar lines (a mudbrick floor?) similar to those observed in other trenches in the previous years (Konyar and Genç *et al.* 2017: 127-130) was unearthed near the eastern border of the trench right above the Urartian architecture. This feature must have belonged to the earlier floor of the Post-Urartian period.

3 meters long and about 80 cm wide wall lines belonging to the Late Iron/Post-Urartian building layer and extending in the east-west direction, as well as scattered mudbrick collapse along these lines were identified in trench N24. An obsidian arrowhead, which we consider may have been mixed from earlier levels, was found in the northeast corner of the trench (Fig. 11). In the transitional layer between the Late



**Fig. 12: Aerial Photo of Urartian House**

Iron collapse and the Urartian collapse was the layer with mortar lines as was found in other trenches extending in the east-west direction.

In trenches N24 and M24, a moderately large floor that gets deeper towards the west, which we think was an unroofed floor or open area in the Late Iron/Post Urartian period, was unearthed. Two iron arrowheads and Late Iron Age painted pottery sherds were found above the floor.

A right footprint of a person on a mudbrick belonging to Post-Urartian/Late Iron Age architecture was identified in trench N23. This footprint is about size 36 and can be considered to belong to a woman or a young adult (Fig. 12). The floor and collapse



belonging to the Post-Urartian period were removed and the lower building level and collapse were reached.

### 1.3. Urartian Period

Urartian period on the Van Fortress Mound consists of two building levels: early and late (Fig. 13). Urartian rooms made of mudbricks over stones have similar plans in both building levels. Adjacent rooms or entrance rooms in the north-south axis were connected to each other by doorways and some of the larger rooms or halls to the east and west were accessed from these rooms through door openings. Building construction indicates a single-storey

plan. Early Urartian building level structures with stone foundations in particular were built with better craftsmanship and in larger sizes. This architectural tradition is partly less carefully executed in the Late Urartian building level.

Three more rooms from the Urartian period, placed adjacent to each other in the north-south direction to the west of the columned hall were unearthed on the Van Fortress Mound in 2018 (Fig. 14, 15). The south wall of the room in the south was completely destroyed by an asphalt road. The north, west and south walls of this room (room no. 1) in trench N24 were distinct. The visible part of the room measures 5.50 x 3.50 meters. Its walls consist of mudbrick construction over three courses of stone



**Fig. 13:**  
Rooms from the  
Urartian House



**Fig. 14:**  
U-Shaped Hearth of Room 2



**Fig. 15:**  
Mushroom Shaped Bronze Nails were  
Found in and Around the Hearth



foundations and they are preserved to a height of 110 cm; there is a doorway on the north wall. There is also a stone with a small depression on the left side of the doorway near the interior of the room, which probably held the door pivot. A thin fire line was observed on the floor of this room. The floor is made of compacted earth over grit fill. This kind of floors are characteristic for Early Urartian architecture exposed in other parts of the mound. A pit with a 1 meter diameter in the northeast corner of the room contained fist-size stones, dense concentrations of animal bones, and Urartian pottery sherds. This pit was filled and levelled at the top in a second reconstruction phase of the building.

The southernmost Urartian room provides access to a second Urartian room through a doorway on its northern wall. The floor of this room (room no. 2) in trench N24, which measures 3.20 x 3.70 m, was reached and a 70 x 70 cm U-shaped hearth made of mud was found adjacent to the western wall (Fig. 16). Numerous mushroom shaped bronze nails were found scattered in and around the hearth (Fig. 17). Similar bronze nails were found in and around the hearth in the northwest corner of the Late Urartian building level to the north in trench M25 in 2016 (Konyar and Genç *et al.* 2017: 133-134, Fig. 9).

Various animal bones and pottery sherds were found on the floor of the room, which had ashes and fire traces in patches. Other than numerous bronze nails, an iron arrowhead and a bronze bracelet fragment with a serpent's head was also found. A shallow, round ash pit with a 45 cm diameter roughly at the center of the room is also noteworthy. Considering the burnt wood fragments in this pit, it must have been used for making fires for warming up.

The northernmost Urartian room (room no. 3) has a plan that is close to a rectangle oriented in the north-south direction (Fig. 18). This room is accessed by a doorway from room no. 2 to its south, and its west wall has another doorway that is 180 cm wide. The hocker burial mentioned above was found in the higher levels of this doorway.

The north wall of room no. 2 in trench M24 makes up the south wall of room no. 3. The wall is 265 cm long and 110 cm wide and features a doorway connecting the two rooms. This room measures 6 x 3.70 m on the interior; its east wall is 3.70 meter long on the east-west direction and 120 cm wide. Constructed by mudbricks over a foundation of three courses of stones, the wall is preserved to a height

of 100-120 cm. As can be followed on the section of the west wall, the floor of the room has a dense fire and ash layer. Dense concentrations of animal bones, Urartian pottery sherds, an iron arrowhead and bronze nails with mushroom heads were found in the room fill. Two pits with ash, animal bones and potsherds were found in the southeast corner of the room. These areas could have been used for warming and cooking.



**Fig. 16: The Northernmost Urartu Room no. 3.**



**Fig. 17:  
A Bull Head  
Made of  
Baked Clay.**



**Fig. 18:  
Urartian  
Cylinder  
and Stamp  
Seal Made of  
Limestone**



**Fig. 19: Cylinder and Stamp Seal Impression.**

Numerous pithoi and storage vessels found in the room indicate the storage function.

Work carried out to understand the exterior line of the west walls of these rooms that are distributed to trenches N24 and M24 found that the wall was 1.30 m wide. Red slip Uartian pottery was dense in this area, and a 4 cm-long horn fragment of a bull head made of baked clay was found. In addition, a



**Fig. 20: Širšini of Minua**



**Fig. 21: In Front of the Entrance Širšini of Minua**

bull head made of baked clay was found on the floor about 1 meter west of the wall (Fig. 19). The tips of the horns of the bull head are broken away; the bull head could have been applied somewhere, rather than functioning as a rhyton. The neck in particular is round in form and made so that a part could be inserted. The round neck has a diameter of 1.5 cm and measures 8-10 cm together with the horn-span. It has red and in places brownish red slip. Similar bullheads are usually observed as applications on bronze cauldrons in Uartian art (Piotrovsky 1969: Fig. 108, Konyar and Işık *et al.* 2018). Especially the bull heads applied on the shoulders of a pot with a wide mouth found at Karmir-Blur is similar to the bull head found on the mound (Piotrovsky 1969: Fig. 55). This example and the horn fragment from another bull head found in the same area are pottery versions of bronze bull heads.

As mentioned above, the south wall that we think used to surround this area was destroyed by the modern road to the south of the mound. Dense concentrations of red slip potsherds are notable on the floor that was preserved from the slope onwards. The floor was made of variously sized pebbles overlaid with pressed earth as in room no. 1 to the east. An Uartian seal made of limestone was also found just above this floor (Fig. 20, 21). Such cylinder and stamp seals are known from various Uartian sites such as Karmir-Blur (Piotrovsky 1969: Fig. 39, Ayvazian 2006: 971, NP 52), Çavuştepe (Erzen 1978: Lev. 38), Ayanis (Abay 2001: 321-353) and Bastam (Kleiss 1979: Taf. 38-41). This cylinder stamp seal is decorated with winged animals on both the body and the base. The string hole at the top is broken, and three different animal figures are carved on the body. One of figures resembles a bull, one resembles an ibex and the other resembles a mountain sheep with double horns. The bull and the ibex are depicted facing each other. The bodies of the animals consist of three small circular depressions; they have wings and seem to be walking. On the stamp of the seal is a deer with antlers with a body consisting of two circular depressions and wings, and depicted in a running pose.

#### 1.4. Širšini of Minua

The building that was carved into the bedrock on the northern slopes of the Van Fortress, which is called Širšini of Minua after an inscription to the right of the entrance, has remained unprotected and





**Fig. 22: Inscription to the Right of its Entrance.  
Širšini of Minua.**

used as a barn or a similar purpose. This room falls into trenches AM67-68, which were cleared and documented in 2018. The building is 20.30 m long in the east-west direction, 8.20 m wide in the north-south direction, and is 2.50 m high. The entrance of the building, which is 8.45 m wide and 2 m high, is to the north; it was also cleared and some traces were found on the floor (Fig. 22).

After the interior of the room was cleared, work continued in the area in front of the entrance that faces the north (trenches AL67-68). Excavations found that the bedrock continued for about 1.50 meters from the entrance in an approximately 70% inclination, and two lines of pebbles were arranged to the east and west of the entrance. To better investigate this

area, a sounding was opened in an area that measures 7.50 m in the east-west direction and 2.40 m in the north-south direction. Dense grit fill of various sizes that probably shows the erosion of the bedrock above the inclined bedrock was identified. Scattered pebbles similar to those found arranged on the bedrock were found at various elevations in the eastern and western sections of the fill (Fig. 23).

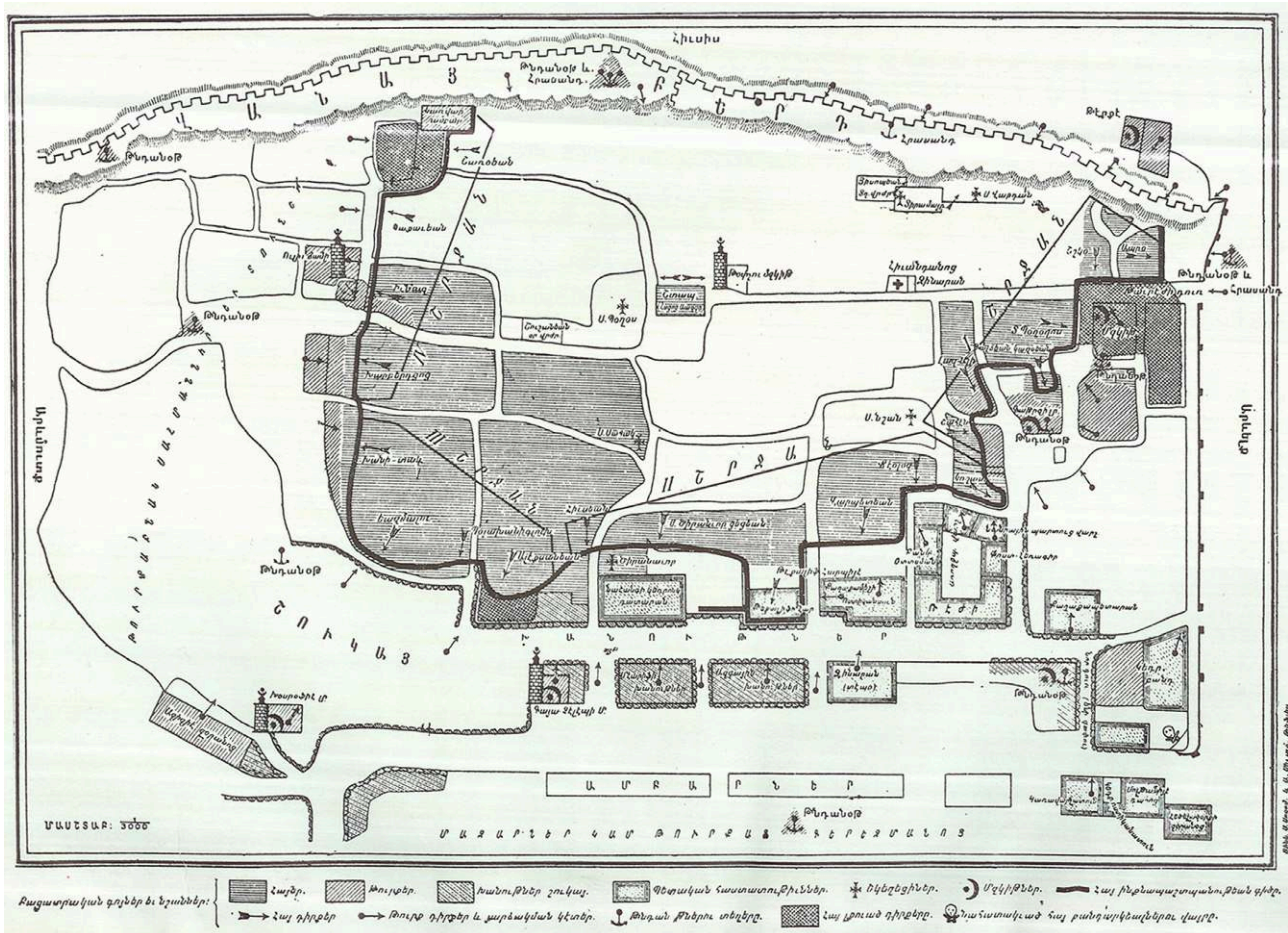
Also a sounding was opened in this fill area, in which abundant glazed and unglazed Ottoman period pottery sherds and sparse Urartian period pottery sherds were identified. Animal bones were also abundant in the fill. Stone blocks, one of which was worked as a building stone, were identified just below the grit fill to the east of the sounding area. Grit fill continues under the large stones, which were possibly placed there as fill. This homogenous area also yielded Iron Age pottery sherds.

This building that is carved into the bedrock on the northern slopes of the Van Fortress is defined as a barn because of the inscription to the right of its entrance (Salvini 2008: CTU A 5-68) (Fig. 24). Moreover, the stela nest on a high rock platform to the right of the entrance and the stela that could have been erected here have been interpreted in the context of “*purification of sacred sacrificial animals*” (Tarhan 2011: 318-320). However, Širšini should be interpreted together with its vicinity. The sounding work carried out just outside the building in 2018



**Fig. 23: Old City of Van from North.**





**Fig. 24: Cuneo's Plan of Old City of Van.**

in particular raises the question of whether there were more than one stela erected in this area, as it found a nest cut into the rock on the ground in front of the building so that a stela could be erected in it. In this case, Širšini should be identified as a special area in front and around of which various practices associated with the stelae were applied and laid with homogenously sized pebbles on the ground, rather than a barn. However, this issue is open to discussion for the time being, as we do not yet have any data about the stelae that could have been erected in this area or their content.

## 2. THE OLD CITY OF VAN

Archaeological excavations that we have undertaken in an approximately 10.000 m<sup>2</sup> area in the Old City of Van resulted in the identification of the street texture and buildings through examples that were

unearthed, albeit partially (Fig. 25). Naming all of the buildings in the 420-decare city through archaeological excavations does not seem possible in a short time. Therefore, archival documents and travelers' accounts were used to identify the city's major buildings and their functions. Early Armenian sources, Early Islamic/Eastern sources and the accounts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century western travelers who visited the area, stand out among these sources.

A 0.70 x 0.55 m 17<sup>th</sup> century miniature named Kala-i Seng-i Van (Inv. No. 9487) kept in the Topkapı Palace Museum today, and the accounts in Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatname* (Çelebi 2010), are important for the descriptions of the Old City of Van, as they are contemporaneous and thus allow comparisons and confirmation.

An engraving called Vanaper in a book by Incicean published in 1806 (Incicean 1806), reflects the view of city models of the period, while



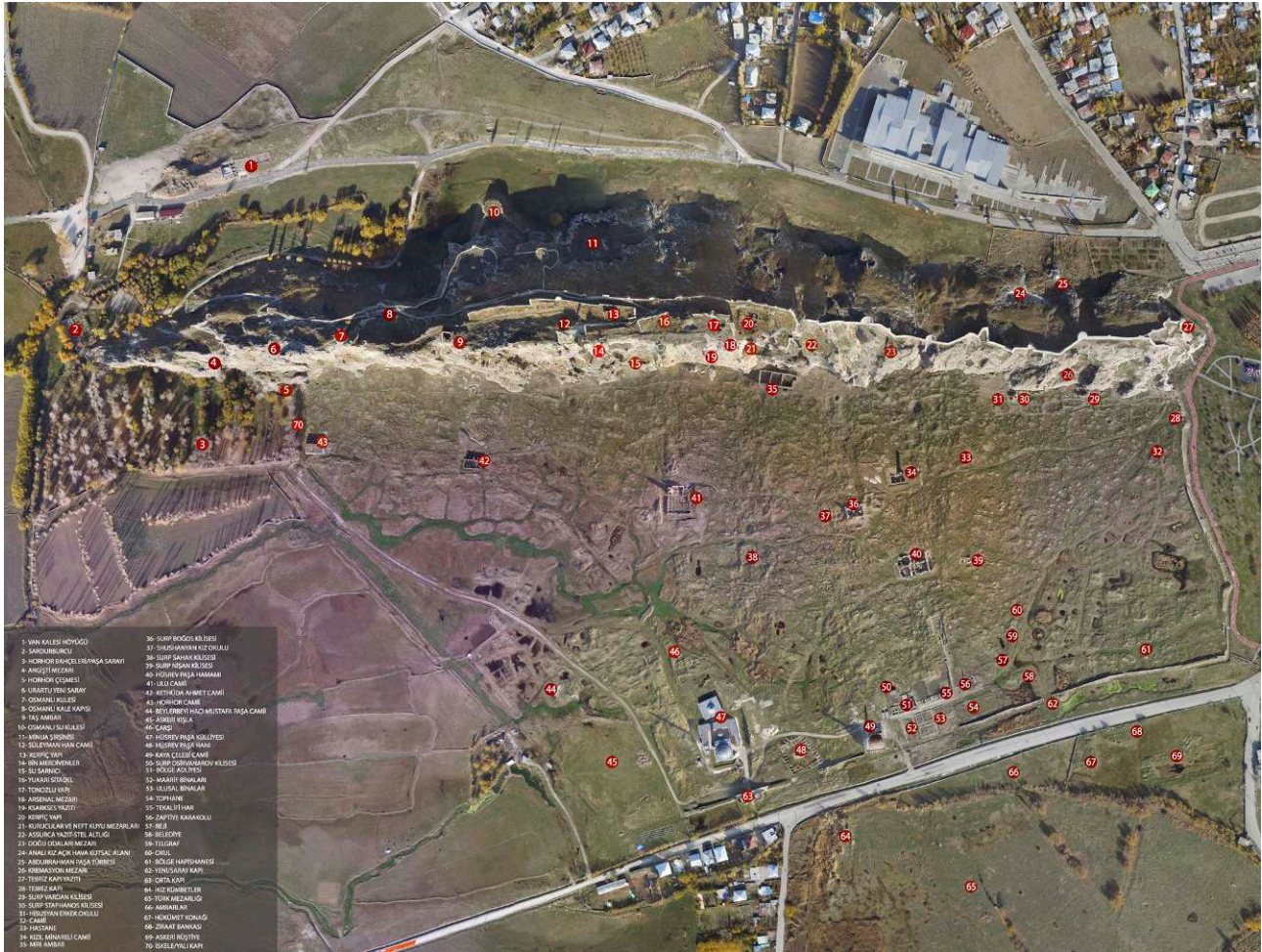


Fig. 25: Probable Locations of buildings of the Old City of Van

its depiction is exaggerated. Similarly exaggerated depictions are also found in Borè's 1838 book (Borè 1838) in which the lower town is depicted with a double wall surrounding it. In the works of Texier, which were published in 1842/1852 (Texier 1842), include more realistic depictions. An engraving by F. C. Cooper (Layard 1853) is important for understanding the settlement texture of the city. Drawings of Deyrolle (Deyrolle 1876) is unique for analyzing the Great Mosque and close-up views of the city. Engravings, drawings, plans and photographs of P. Müllert-Simonis and H. Hyvernats (Muller, 1892) as well as the city plan and detailed engravings that Lynch (Lynch 1901) developed from these plans and photographs show the details of the buildings. Lehmann-Haupt's photographs and drawings that show the general views of the city (Lehmann-Haupt 1926) were very useful in identifying the locations of

buildings. Yıldız Albums collected during the reign of Abdulhamid II are effective in giving the details of the buildings. Bachmann's images of the Great Mosque (Ulu Cami) and the panoramic views of the city (Bachmann 1913) constitute a key to follow the changing architectural elements. A. Vruyr's panoramic photograph in the work of Marr and Orbeli (Marr and Orbeli 1922) shows the overall perception of the city. 1938-39 photographs of Kirsopp and Silva Lake (Lake 1939; Lake and Lake 1939) and Cuneo's city plan and works that reflect the functions of some buildings (Cuneo 1986) also contain data on the recent condition of the buildings (Fig. 24). These data made it possible to follow the chronological continuity in architecture and to identify these buildings. Archaeological excavations we carried out to evaluate the current state seem sufficient to reach definite results, while they also found that the



buildings were used for functions other than their original ones. Archaeological data made use of the sources mentioned above to identify the functions of the buildings. We confirmed the archaeological data using these sources. Thus, the probable locations and characteristics of the buildings in the Old City of Van such as the City Walls, the Surp Nishan Church, the Armenian Merchant House, the Aziziye Barracks, the Beylerbeyi Mustafa Pasha Mosque, Saray Kapı, Orta Kapı, the Horhor Gardens, the Maarif Stores, the Regional Courthouse, the Zaptiah Station, the Tekalif-i Harbiye (Military Taxes) Building, the Arsenal and the City Jail were identified (Fig. 24).

Firstly, the line and characteristics of the wall system that surrounds the Old City of Van was investigated and observed on site. Some travelers and old plans, maps and photographs tell us that the city was surrounded by double walls. Also according to some travelers, there was a water-filled moat in between the two walls. Observations on the field and investigation of relevant images concluded that the inner wall was built of rubble stones and there were galleries near the gates, possibly to climb to the towers and the top of the wall. The outer wall was quite lower in height compared to the inner wall and was built of mud-bricks. The question of the water-filled moat between the two walls is open to discussion, as the existence of natural waterways and streams fed by waters from the gardens is reported in some publications. In this context, it is possible to say that the natural water system that flowed between the two walls could have been used as part of the defense system from time to time. There is ambiguity in the publications about the locations and names of the gates in the walls. Certain contradictions were found concerning the locations of Saray Kapı, Yeni Kapı and Orta Kapı. Our work concluded that the names Yeni Kapı and Saray Kapı designate the same location. Public buildings were renewed in the framework of new policies during the reign of Abdulhamid II. The Government Office building was moved to the outside of the walls of the Old City of Van. In this context, Saray Kapı was opened in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in order to facilitate the access between public buildings within the city walls and public buildings outside of the city walls.

Excavations carried out in between the Kaya Çelebi Mosque and Saray Kapı identified public buildings used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Buildings on either side of the stone-paved street extending in the same direction had stone foundations and mudbrick

walls. In the south were the Maarif Building and the Arsenal from west to east, and in the north were the Regional Courthouse, the Tekalif-i Harbiye building and the Zaptiah Station. The complex called the Maarif Building is especially noteworthy by its workmanship. All four buildings were constructed in the same plan type. Their vicinity was surrounded by stone pavements. Paths in between the buildings were built of stone and they were ribbed. As for the streets of Old Van, we can say that there were two main streets that spanned the city along the east-west axis. The one in the north extended from Tabriz Kapı in the east to İskele Kapı in the west end of the city. The itinerary of the street was defined by the buildings on it. From west to east, the Kızıl Minareli Mosque, the Surp Boghos Church, the Great Mosque of Van (Van Ulu Camii), the Abbas Ağa Mosque and the Horhor Mosque were the religious buildings on the street that defined its line. The street in the south followed public buildings as well as religious ones. Stone pavements in front of public and religious buildings and shops served as sidewalks on either side of the stone-paved street. This part is higher than the street. The street ends at the Hamidiye Barracks in the west. The side streets that opened to these main streets seem to have been narrow and winding. These streets, some of which were also stone-paved, had channels in the middle. Streets that provided access in between the houses were especially irregular and winding. The street network was shaped through time according to the locations of the houses as they are in traditional Middle Eastern urban texture.

## CONCLUSION

Work in the 2018 excavation season continued in a total of seven trenches and details from the Medieval-Modern, Post-Urartian/Late Iron and Urartian periods were uncovered. In these trenches, Medieval burials belonging to a total of 70 individuals were removed and 86 scattered skeletons were encountered. The Post-Urartian/Late Iron and Urartian periods were documented in trenches M24 and N24. A large floor that is spread to these trenches, which we consider to have been used as an open area, represents the Post-Urartian period. This open feature belonging to a Post-Urartian period may be the reason why the preserved height of Urartian rooms unearthed in the western trenches in the previous years were smaller than those in the eastern trenches.

A wall line made of compacted mud bordering the north of this floor was found. Late Iron Age painted pottery sherds associated with the floor were also found. The architecture associated with this floor, which continues to the west in an inclination, will be better understood in the future excavation seasons. Just below this floor is another floor consisting of dense mortar traces, which we can define as an early phase. The floor with the mortar lines was removed starting from the east of trenches M24 and N24 and the fill of the Urartian building level underneath it was reached.

Three more interconnected Urartian rooms in the north-south line were unearthed in trenches M24 and N24 to the west of the Early Urartian building level columned hall and the associated rooms we have uncovered last year in trenches M25 and N25. The southernmost 5.50 x 3.60 m room no. 1 gives access to room no. 2 through a door on its north wall. 3.20 x 3.70 m room no. 2, which contains a hearth,

gives access to 6 x 3.70 m room no. 3 through a doorway on its north wall. Room no. 3 contains no tannurs or hearths, but abundant Urartian pottery sherds and pithos fragments, indicating that it could be a storage room. These three adjacent rooms share walls with the columned hall to their east and the room to their north. The floors of these rooms consist of compacted earth over grit fill. This is a practice that we generally encounter in the Early Urartian Building level over the mound.

Late Iron Age hocker burials cut into the Urartian fill are noteworthy. The semi-hocker burial cut into the east wall of the Urartian room no. 2 is significant for its rich finds and jewelry. A fragmented skeleton that disturbed the west wall of room no. 2 was also found. Another semi-hocker burial was excavated in the west wall of room no. 3.

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Figurine d'homme en terre cuite (Louvre, Tarse 314)  
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