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## URARTIAN FORTRESSES AND TOWNS IN THE VAN REGION

By C. A. BURNEY

THE TEXT OF Sargon's Eighth Campaign provides a challenge to the archaeologist to seek the towns which he mentions, though one must remember that many of his "towns" were hardly more than villages. For two months (mid-June till mid-August 1956) I worked on a survey of Urartian and earlier sites in the districts around Lake Van and eastward as far as the Persian frontier.<sup>1</sup> Later I visited sites in the districts of Bulanik and Malazgirt (Manzikert), and two Urartian sites far to the west, at Palu and in the mountainous Dersim. Among the sites visited are several of which nothing has hitherto been published, whilst nearly all the rest are known only from the discovery of inscriptions. A few fragmentary cuneiform inscriptions were found, in addition to those already known,<sup>2</sup> but the chief purpose of this survey was to discover the Urartian fortresses and towns in this region and to make sketch-plans, wherever possible, of the walls visible above the surface. Circumstances did not allow of the drawing of accurately measured plans: that is an important task, which should be carried out as soon as possible, if only because of the constant and increasing danger of stone-quarrying by local peasants. At remarkably many Urartian sites it is possible to trace the defensive wall for the greater part of its circuit.

History can never be divorced from geography and this particularly applies to mountainous regions such as that covered by Urartu. The Van region is, except for the lands to the north, from Erzurum eastward to Doğubayazıt, the highest part of the highland zone incorporated by the rulers of Urartu in their kingdom. Summer does not really begin at Van until mid-June, and by early September it has finished; in the rather higher plain of Çaldıran the snow lies till mid-May and returns five months later. The waters of Lake Van, however, contain soda, and so never freeze over, and the fertile areas along the shores—particularly at Van, Gevaş and, on the north shore, the small plains of Muradiye (formerly Berkri) and Erciş and the valley of Adilcevaz—are somewhat sheltered and escape the full severity of winter. Undoubtedly the people of Urartu, like the present inhabitants, must have depended mainly on livestock, milk and eggs being a principal food. The climate makes corn-growing on any scale impracticable, the limited areas of well-watered, fertile soil being required

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<sup>1</sup> This survey was made possible by a grant from the Walker Trust. I am deeply indebted to the Turkish authorities, civil and military, for their unfailing assistance and co-operation, and particularly to the Directorate of the Department of Antiquities and to the Directors of Education in the vilayets of Van and Bitlis. A special debt of gratitude is owed to Bay Hakkı Yakupoğlu, Curator of Van Museum, and to the Education Officials of the districts which I visited.

<sup>2</sup> I am indebted to P. Hulin for help in connection with those inscriptions, which I copied.

for pasture. Despite the large size of many Urartian towns, the population must have been small, though very possibly not as small as it is to-day. This must be remembered when comparing Urartu with Assyria and helps to account for the ease with which both Tiglath-Pileser III and Sargon II were able to march through the heart of the hostile kingdom.

The results of this survey have done less than might perhaps have been hoped to improve our knowledge of Urartian historical geography. Thureau-Dangin's interpretation of the text of Sargon's Eighth Campaign seems justifiable in most respects.<sup>3</sup> Certainly Sargon must have marched along the northern rather than the very mountainous southern shore of Lake Van. In the parts of Urartu through which Sargon marched before reaching Lake Van, *Ušqaiā* (described as being on the frontier of Urartu), *Aniaštania*, *Tarui*, *Tarmakisa* and *Ulhu*<sup>4</sup> are to the east of the region covered by this survey, as also are most of the twenty-one towns and 146 villages in *Sangibutu*; but some of these places were probably in the valley of the Kotur Çay, and the site of Satmanis may be among the twenty-one towns named. The province of *Armarili*, devastated next by Sargon, was probably centred around the fertile valley stretching from the Özalp area westward to the Lake of Erçek.<sup>5</sup> Seven strong towns and twenty villages are mentioned, situated at the foot of the *Ubianda* mountains, which must include Irgat Dağ, overlooking the Lake of Erçek from the south-east; two other towns are named, *Arbu* and *Riar*. *Bubuži*, specifically described as a fortress, can be identified with Keçanis, not far east of the Lake of Erçek, where there are remains of a fairly small Urartian castle. Sargon may have turned north just after, rather than before, reaching the Lake of Erçek. If so, *Hundur*, described as having towers and being enclosed by two walls, may be identifiable with the upper fortress at Anzaf, which answers to that description: there is no such fortress east of the Lake of Erçek. After crossing the mountains called *Uizuku*, Sargon arrived in the province of *Aiadi*, which seems to have stretched along the whole northern shore of Lake Van: two great fortresses and thirty towns are listed and there were eighty-seven villages. The two fortresses were *Argištiuna* and *Qallania*, on *Mount Arsidu* and *Mount Maḥunnia* respectively: there is not much evidence, apart from the analogy of the names, for placing *Argištiuna* close to Erciş and, if it were so, the site remains undiscovered<sup>6</sup>; the suggestion that *Qallania* should be identified with Kefkalesi, above Adilcevaz, seems much more reasonable than Thureau-

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<sup>3</sup> F. Thureau-Dangin: *Une Relation de la Huitième Campagne de Sargon* (Paris, 1912). Alternative theories, such as those expounded in N. Adontz: *Histoire d'Arménie* (Paris, 1946), p. 366, seem to have less foundation.

<sup>4</sup> *Ulhu* is identified with Marand (Thureau-Dangin, p. viii).

<sup>5</sup> N. Adontz (*Histoire d'Arménie*, p. 108) argues that *Armarili* is the *Aramili* of Shalmaneser III and that it was close to *Mount Irtia*, which he identifies with Aladağ. If so, *Armarili* must correspond to the plain of Çaldıran: this is not impossible, but Sargon's mention of granaries makes its location in the Özalp-Erçek region more probable, since it is better country for corn growing.

<sup>6</sup> A stele found at Çelebibabağ, near Erciş, has an inscription concerning the foundation of the town of *Argistihimili* (*Histoire d'Arménie*, p. 179, no. 149). The stele was probably not *in situ*, so that this is inconclusive.

Dangin's tentative theory that *Qallania* was at Ahlat.<sup>7</sup> At the latter site there are probably Urartian remains, buried beneath the ruins of the great Seljuk city, but any Urartian town of great size on the same site is rather improbable, because to procure a sufficient water-supply the Seljuks had to cut a tunnel through a ridge, to bring water from a narrow ravine to their city. Among the thirty towns mentioned by Sargon, perhaps an exaggerated number, can doubtless be reckoned some of the sites recorded on this survey. From east to west, along or fairly near the north shore, there are : Karahan,<sup>8</sup> Keçikiran, Deli Çay Kalesi ; Kefkalesi, Kefirkalesi, the site at the foot of the castle of Adilcevaz ; a small site not far west of Adilcevaz (" Küçük Ören "), a town site on a promontory south-west of Ahlat (" Burun Harabesi ") and a site on a hill projecting into the lake by old Tatvan. Probably Körzüt Kalesi and the fortress at Muradiye,<sup>9</sup> both at the eastern extremity of *Aiadi*, can be included. There may have been an Urartian fortress on Kızvan Dağ. The province of *Aiadi* probably had two main centres of population : in the east, the plain of Muradiye and the shores of the north-eastern arm of Lake Van ; secondly, the district of Adilcevaz ; doubtless the district of Erciş was also well populated, despite the paucity of remains. The site of *Old Uaiis*, the last named in Sargon's long list of the towns of *Aiadi*, may possibly be identifiable with the fortified site at Tatvan, the nearest to Bitlis of the places on the shore of the lake and the last to be reached by the Assyrian army. But the suggested identification of *Uaiis* with Bitlis<sup>10</sup> remains quite unsupported by archaeological evidence : at that castle there seems to be nothing pre-Byzantine, despite local tradition that it was founded by a general of Alexander the Great ; *Uaiis* may have been very close to Bitlis, but its precise position remains unknown, as likewise does that of the town of *Muşaşir*, pillaged by Sargon II. The level of the lake has certainly risen since Urartian times, so that some sites must have vanished : this is particularly evident at Adilcevaz, where the ruined walls of the Seljuk castle can be seen running out under the surface of the lake (Pl. VI, b). The town of *Arzaškun*, which seems to have been somewhere to the north-west of Lake Van, could be identified with Mollakent, near Lız, or with Milbar, near Bulanık, or possibly with Bostankaya, between Malazgirt and Patnos. Of these the most probable is Mollakent, by its size and position.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1899, p. 260. Thureau-Dangin, p. ix, where he also suggests that *Mount Arşidu* may be Süphan Dağ and *Mount Mahunnia* may be Nemrut Dağ. Adontz suggests (*Histoire d'Arménie*, p. 110) that *Qallania* be located at Muradiye.

<sup>8</sup> The suggested identification of *Suini* with Karahan (*Histoire d'Arménie*, p. 225) is hard to reconcile with its absence from Sargon's list of the towns of the province of *Aiadi*, unless one postulates a change of name after the reign of Menuas.

<sup>9</sup> Improbably identified with *Qallania* (*Histoire d'Arménie*, p. 110) or with *Arsuniununi* (*ibid.*, p. 225).

<sup>10</sup> Thureau-Dangin, p. x. Lehmann-Haupt (*Armenien Einst-und-Jetzt* II, p. 317) places *Uaiis* at Başkale.

<sup>11</sup> The city of *Arzaškun* is mentioned in the Assyrian account of the campaign of Shalmaneser III into Urartu. The absence of all but traces of Urartian remains at Malazgirt makes the theory that this is the site of *Arzaškun* improbable (*Histoire d'Arménie*, p. 81).

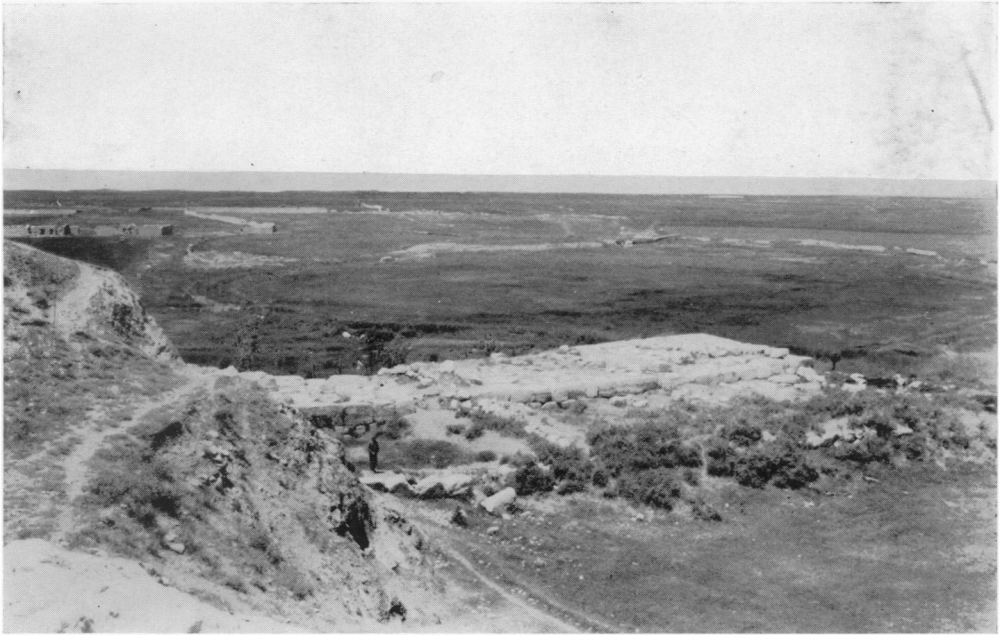
The site of each fortress was dictated by both regional and strictly local geography. Every natural approach to Lake Van was guarded by at least one fortress and every fortress was built in a naturally defensible situation, often on a hill or spur with precipitous, rocky cliffs. The road to Van itself from the east, which passes by the valley of the Kotur Çay, was commanded by two fortresses near the modern village of Anzaf (Pls. IV, a-b), hardly ten miles east of Van. The road from the north-east, by the plain of Çaldıran, was well guarded by castles at Çaldıran, Muradiye and Körzüt (Arapzengi Kale, Pl. V, b-c). At Asbaşın, close to Havazor (now called Gürpınar), a fortress on a rock ridge controlled the road from the Başkale district and the upper Zab valley via Hoşap to Van (Pls. IV, c-V, a).<sup>12</sup> The road from the north, which reaches the lake at the plain of Erciş, was guarded by a stronghold at Patnos, not visited by the writer. There were fortified sites along the north shore and one at Tatvan kept watch over the western approach to the lake. A ring of strongholds—Kalecik, the two castles at Anzaf, Zivistan—protected the capital, which was originally at Van Kale, but moved to Toprakkale by Rusas I, not long before Sargon's campaign (714 B.C.). On or near an important natural road through the country north and north-west of Lake Van there were fortresses at Patnos and, moving westwards, at Bostankaya,<sup>13</sup> Mılbar (near Bulanık) and Mollakent (near Lız).

All Urartian settlements of any size were wholly or partly fortified. At several fortresses, where the defences can be followed above the surface, there are less visible traces of a lower town, outside the walls, built beneath the shadow of the acropolis. Apart from surface pottery, the fortresses are usually dated by their masonry without difficulty. This is normally semi-“cyclopean”, but never of the Hittite finely jointed polygonal type found at Boğazköy. But there is a great range in standard of workmanship at different sites—from the roughest boulders, scarcely dressed at all, to large, fine-dressed ashlar. Stretchers are used invariably, never headers. There is nowhere any hint of the use of any kind of mortar. The Urartian builders normally used the black basalt found so widely around Lake Van, particularly on the slopes of Süphan Dağ and other volcanic formations; basalt was used almost exclusively for inscriptions, limestone only rarely. The height of each course of masonry is usually rather over 50 cm., but can be 1 m. The defensive walls are nearly everywhere from 3 to 4 m. thick,<sup>14</sup> usually with large blocks along both outer and inner face and small stones, sometimes rubble, in the centre; but the better built walls were of ashlar

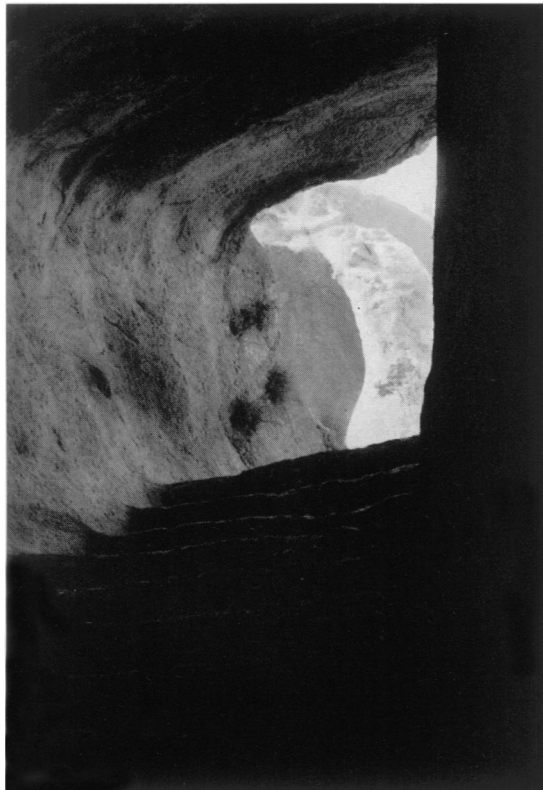
<sup>12</sup> Possibly this fortress can be identified with *Sardurihurda* (*Histoire d'Arménie*, p. 236).

<sup>13</sup> *Armenien Einst-und-Jetzt* II, p. 164 (plate).

<sup>14</sup> This corroborates Sargon's description (line 279) of the walls of *Usqai* and his estimate of the height of the walls of the towns of *Sangibulu* as equal to 120 courses of brick (line 240), or about 12 m., is reasonable. Russian excavations at Karmir-Blur, near Erivan, have uncovered remains of an Urartian citadel of similar construction: there the upper courses of the walls were of mud brick, the lower of cyclopean masonry (R. D. Barnett and W. Watson: *Russian Excavations in Armenia, Iraq XIV* (1952), pp. 132-147).



(a) Van Kale : the building at the foot of the N.W. corner of the Citadel.



(b) Toprakkale (Van) : the rock-cut stairway-tunnel.



(a) Lower Anzaf Kale : detail of cyclopean masonry.



(b) Upper Anzaf Kale : cyclopean wall, with towers (on N.E. side).



(c) Asbaşın Kale : cyclopean enclosure-wall.

throughout. Wherever the walls are standing high above the present surface a batter on the outer face is apparent, each course being stepped in for 5 or 10 cm. : this is clearly visible in the building at the foot of the north-west corner of Van Kale (Pl. III, a).<sup>15</sup> A striking feature of many fortresses is the occurrence—at regular intervals, on average about 10 m.—of towers or buttresses ; these normally project only 1 m. and are 4 m. wide, always being rectangular in plan, never curved. From one site (Körzüt Kalesi), where part of the wall still stands 8 m. above ground on the outside, it is apparent that these towers continued up to the top of the wall, or at least close to the top. Relevant to this matter is the Assyrian relief from Khorsabad, depicting the looting of the town of *Muṣaṣir* by the troops of Sargon II.<sup>16</sup> This relief suggests that these projections ought perhaps to be considered as buttresses rather than towers, giving the typical major Urartian fortress a “panelled” façade, with the parapet running in a straight line, level with the face of the buttresses. But at some sites these project too far for them to have been mere buttresses, unless one stipulates an exaggerated batter, greater than that of the wall as a whole : nowhere was any evidence of such construction found. A feature of Urartian castle-rocks that at once distinguishes them to the visitor is the occurrence of “steps”, cut irregularly in the rock : these ledges are not, in fact, steps ; at Toprakkale they served as the base for foundations, but at most sites they were probably merely the result of quarrying stone for the walls.<sup>17</sup> It was often impossible to determine the entrance to a fortress, though the lie of the land usually made it clear from which side it must have been. Toprakkale, overlooking modern Van, has a tunnel through which ascends a spiral staircase carved through the rock (Pl. III, b) : there are windows, and the entrance at the bottom is little larger than a porthole. At Bağın (Palın), in the western domains of Urartu, the impregnable castle-rock has a spiral stairway cut through the rock, as at Toprakkale, though here its purpose was probably not to serve as a general entrance but as a means of getting water from the river. Urartian architectural traditions were continued by the Achaemenids, and are discernible in the great terraces of Masjid-i-Sulaiman and Bard-i-Nishandah, and probably also in that of Pasargadae ; the masonry of Masjid-i-Sulaiman comprises blocks of less uniform size than those used in major Urartian fortresses, but the style is cyclopean and there are buttresses at regular intervals.<sup>18</sup>

Without excavation it is impossible to date these fortresses and towns with any precision, though inscriptions are, of course, of value, particularly if found *in situ*. The pottery is still too little known to provide close dating.

<sup>15</sup> The “Sardürsburg” of Lehmann-Haupt : *Armenien Einst-und-Jetzt* II, pp. 19, 23 (plates).

<sup>16</sup> Thureau-Dangin, pp. XI–XIX. Botta : *Monument de Ninive*. Tome II, pl. 141.

<sup>17</sup> See illustrations in *Armenien Einst-und-Jetzt* II, pp. 62, 163, 164.

<sup>18</sup> R. Ghirshman : *Iran* (Pelican Edition, 1954), pp. 123–4 and pl. 14a ; also in *Syria XXVII* (1950), pp. 205–220.

H. Frankfort (*The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (1954), pp. 215, 264 (notes 44 and 45) disagrees, but his objection seems invalid.



Uartian wares are in general brown, red-brown or dull, darkish red, with the outer surface slightly burnished ; there is also a red ware with distinctive cream or cream-and-pink burnished surface, the inside normally being dull red, plain or only partly burnished. Some pottery seems to be hand-made. The finest and most easily recognisable Uartian pottery is of red wheel-made ware, plain on the inside, but with highly polished outer slip : the colour is normally bright scarlet, but ranges to very dark red ; the commonest shape is not unlike the "bead-rim" bowl of the Second Millennium B.C. in Anatolia and its successors in the Alışar IV ware. A coarser version of this form occurs at Altıntepe and a neighbouring site, in the plain of Erzincan.<sup>19</sup> At these sites there is also a painted ware—red lustrous paint on a buff or cream slip—which is probably earlier than the red polished ware ; this painted ware does not occur much in the Van region. "Toprakkale ware" seems a suitable term for this fine red polished pottery, since it is found in abundance there, and because it appears to belong to the last century or so of Urartu, when the capital had been moved to Toprakkale. This is a luxury ware, only found at the larger sites and becoming rarer the further the site is from the capital. It would be tempting to say with confidence that all sites where "Toprakkale ware" is found must have escaped, or have been rebuilt after, the destruction wrought by Sargon II in 714 B.C. But this cannot justifiably be asserted from present knowledge : all that can be said with fair certainty is that "Toprakkale ware" belongs principally to the century after 714 B.C., and is most unlikely to have come into use before about 750 B.C., at the earliest. It remains equally uncertain whether or not at some of the Uartian fortresses there may lie buried remains of Late Bronze Age date. The very small quantity of pottery from the Van region that can be dated to the Late Bronze Age, when the land must surely have been inhabited by Hurrians, suggests an uninterrupted development into Uartian times.<sup>20</sup>

This survey of Uartian sites is not, of course, complete : other sites must exist in the lands around Lake Van. There are still the provinces of Erzurum, Karaköse, Kars and Hakkâri, in Turkey, and the Urmia region, in north-western Iran, awaiting exploration.

## SKETCH-PLANS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE FORTRESSES AND TOWNS

### VAN KALE

The building at the foot of the N.W. corner of the castle-rock shows the characteristic batter on the outer face, and is constructed of ashlar of the best quality found in Urartu, many blocks weighing several tons ; these stones must have been brought by boat across the lake, which at that period perhaps came right up to the western

<sup>19</sup> Pottery from these sites was collected by the writer in 1955. Altıntepe has produced fine Uartian bronzes. See R. D. Barnett and N. Gökçe : *The Find of Uartian Bronzes at Altıntepe, near Erzincan* (A.S. III (1953), pp. 121-9).

<sup>20</sup> H. H. Von der Osten : *Die urartäische Töpferei aus Van und die Möglichkeiten ihrer Einordnung in die anatolische Keramik* (*Orientalia* 21 (1952), pp. 307-328 ; and 22 (1953), pp. 329-354).

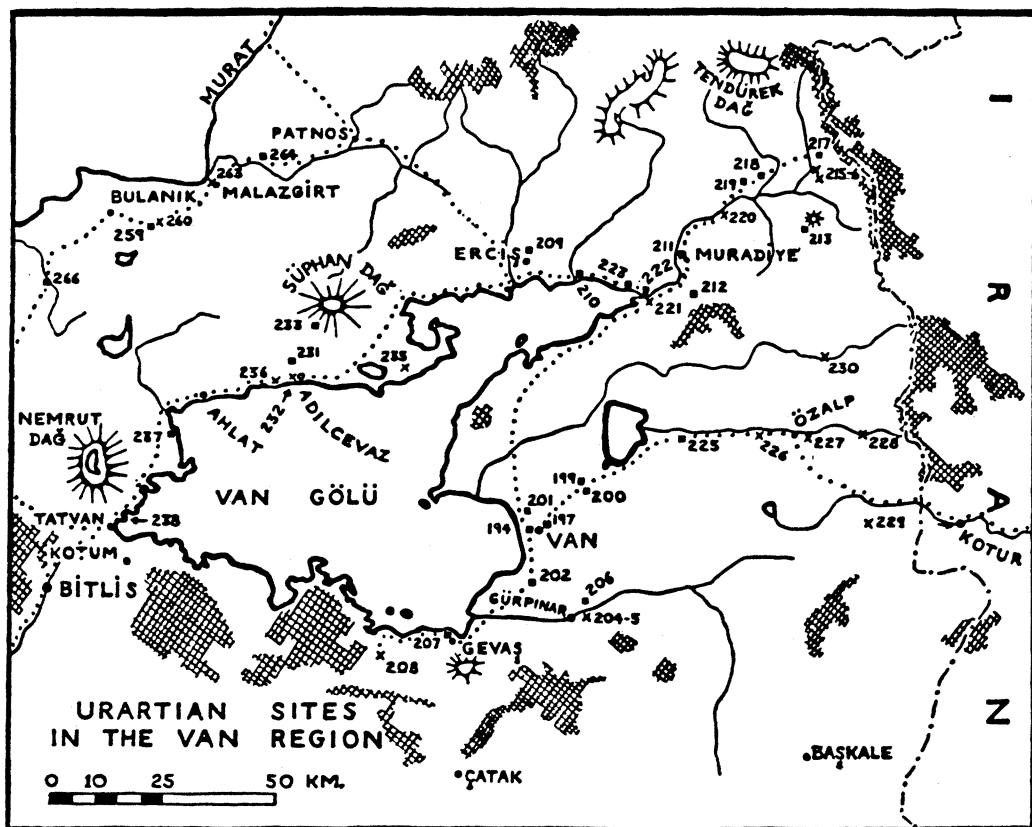


FIG. 1.

## URARTIAN SITES IN THE VAN REGION

Fortresses and towns are indicated by solid squares, minor sites by crosses. Dotted lines indicate the main natural roads. The administrative district (*kaza*) in which each site is situated is shown in parentheses.

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 194. Van Kalesi.               | 221. Bişikümbet (Muradiye).    |
| 197. Toprakkale (Van).         | 222. Karahan (Muradiye).       |
| 199. Lower Anzaf Kale (Van).   | 223. Keçikiran (Muradiye).     |
| 200. Upper Anzaf Kale (Van).   | 225. Keçanis (Van).            |
| 201. Kalcık (Van).             | 226. Aşağı Mollahasan (Özalp). |
| 202. Zivistan (Van).           | 227. "Küçük Tepe" (Özalp).     |
| 204. İremir (Gürpınar).        | 228. Saray (Özalp).            |
| 205. İremir II (Gürpınar).     | 229. Satmanis (Özalp).         |
| 206. Asbaşın Kale (Gürpınar).  | 230. Taşrumi (Özalp).          |
| 207. Hişet Kale (Gevaş).       | 231. Kefkale-i (Adilcevaz).    |
| 208. Varandanis (Gevaş).       | 232. Adilcevaz Kalesi.         |
| 209. Zernaki Tepe (Erciş).     | 233. Kefirkalesi (Adilcevaz).  |
| 210. Deli Çay Kalesi (Erciş).  | 235. Arınçkus (Adilcevaz).     |
| 211. Muradiye Kalesi.          | 236. "Küçük Ören" (Adilcevaz). |
| 212. Körzüt Kalesi (Muradiye). | 237. "Burun Harabesi" (Ahlat). |
| 213. Alikelle (Muradiye).      | 238. Tatvan.                   |
| 215. Sint (Muradiye).          | 259. Milbar (Bulanık).         |
| 216. Sint II (Muradiye).       | 260. Pülür (Bulanık).          |
| 217. Hacıhatun (Muradiye).     | 263. Malazgirt.                |
| 218. Şerefhanı (Muradiye).     | 264. Bostankaya (Malazgirt).   |
| 219. Çaldıran (Muradiye).      | 266. Mollakent (Bulanık).      |
| 220. Gümüştepe (Muradiye).     |                                |

end of the castle-rock. This building is Lehmann-Haupt's "Sardursburg". *No plan is given here.*

#### TOPRAKKALE

Little now remains of the Temple of Haldi: one feature of its masonry, evidently peculiar to this site, is the bevelling of the stone blocks. But the stairway-tunnel is rough-hewn, the rock undressed, possibly suggesting hurried work. At the south end of the citadel mud-brick debris suggests a building with walls still preserved 3 m. or more high. There are the characteristic ledges cut in the rock, here serving as the base for foundations. *No plan is given here.*

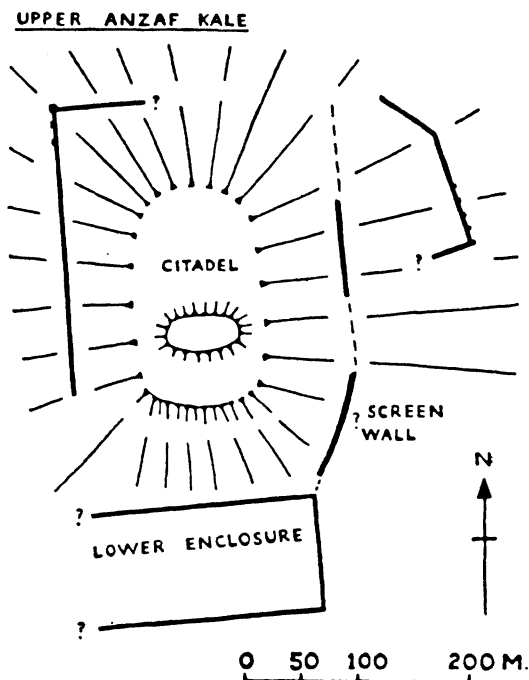


FIG. 2a.

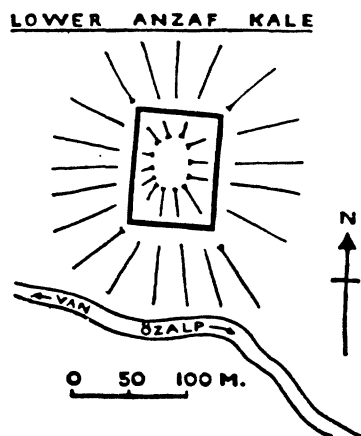


FIG. 2b.

#### THE UPPER AND LOWER FORTRESSES AT ANZAF

##### (1) *Upper Anzaf Kale*

This, the upper and larger of these neighbouring fortresses, has a main (inner) wall 4 m. thick, of cyclopean masonry. There is also, at any rate along much of the east side, an outer wall, lower down the steep slope of the hillside. Small towers or buttresses are discernible along both inner and outer wall, at intervals of 10 m., each being about 2.5 m. wide and projecting only one or two courses. On the top, at the S.W. corner, are quarry-ledges. Also on top, near the south end, is a mound, clearly the ruin of an important stone building, possibly a keep. To the south the ground slopes abruptly down to a col and then up again towards the high hills beyond: on this col is an enclosure-wall, of blocks obviously Urartian, the area enclosed being about 100 m. from north to south and at least 200 m. from east to west. This must surely represent a lower town, outside the walls. On the south side of the castle there are said to be "caves" (artificial) with a stairway.

(2) *Lower Anzaf Kale*

This fort, of simple rectangular plan, guards the road from the east via Özalp to Van. The wall runs round the slopes of the small hill about half-way up. The masonry is cyclopean, each course being 60–75 cm. high. At one place the wall is preserved five courses high.

## KALECİK

This small stronghold overlooked the approach to Van from the north, along the shore of the lake. It stands on an impregnable pinnacle, overhanging on two sides. On the S.W. side a small ravine allows a fairly easy ascent, but the defenders blocked this path with a masonry revetment wall. *No plan is given here.*

## ZIVİSTAN

This site is on the south side of a valley leading down to the lake from above the village of Zivistan. There is a small fortress and a lower town. At least four parallel

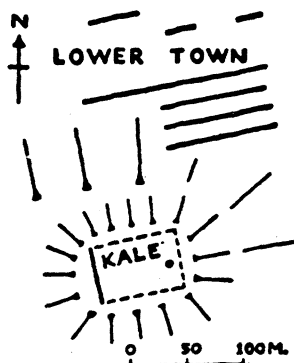


FIG. 3.

stone walls along the slope beneath the fortress, facing the valley, suggest terraced buildings, of which there are more traces further down the hillside; these terraces are 15 m. wide. The extent of the lower town may have been at least  $150 \times 150$  m., but the fortress was less than a quarter of that area. On the west side the fortress wall, of cyclopean masonry, survives four courses high. A circular rock-cut pit near the eastern end of the fortress must have been either a well or a cistern. Natural boulders strewn over the slopes beneath the defensive wall may have come from it.

## ASBAŞIN KALE

This fortress is of major importance, not only for its size but also for the excellent quality of its masonry: apart from the cyclopean wall in front of the rock-cut enclosure, the blocks used are dressed to a smooth finish and, though not all regular in shape, each block fits exactly against its neighbour, no mortar being used; some blocks are joggled (see Pl. V, a). Only at Van Kale and Toprakkale is masonry of this quality to be seen, though possibly it also occurs at Muradiye and at Mülbar, near Bulanık. Asbaşın Kale extends along a narrow rock ridge, which tails off down to the plain to the south-west, but to the north-east rises to a higher hill. This stronghold secured control both of the small plain of Gürpınar (Havasor) and of the road to Van from Başkale. The occurrence of "Toprakkale ware" is a second factor,

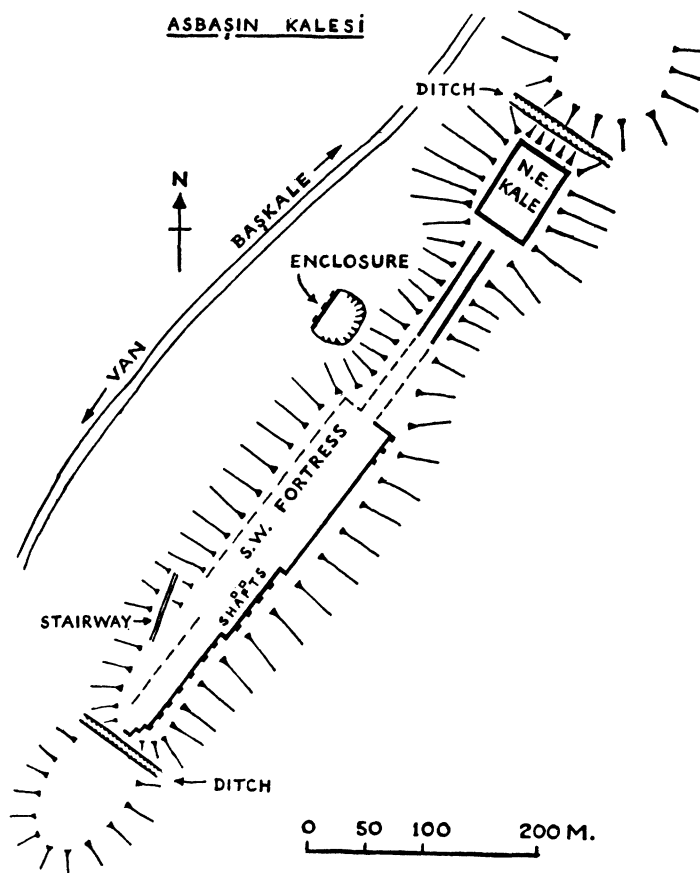


FIG. 4.

after the exceptional standard of the masonry, suggesting that this must have been a wealthy town, of which only the acropolis remains to this day. It is presumably to this site that Lynch refers when he mentions "the city of Hayk, in the Hayotz-dzor, south-east of Van". It is possible that this is the site of the fortress of *Sardurihurda*.

*From the sketch-plan certain important features can be seen :—*

(1) At either extremity of this long fortress is a *ditch* cut through the rock ridge, for defence : the N.E. ditch is 8 m. in width and maximum depth ; the S.W. ditch is slightly narrower ; originally both must have been considerably deeper, before silting. (2) Access to the fortress was by a *staircase*—the steps of which are now buried—cut through the rock, 2 m. wide, with a smooth, vertical rock face on both sides, so that it could easily be blocked in time of siege. (3) Within the fortress are two *vertical shafts* ( $2 \times 1.5$  m. and 4 m. apart), which may have been cisterns ; they have rounded corners and a flat rock-cut platform surrounds them. (4) On its S.W. side the *North-East Kale* has the rock cut almost vertically along the line of the wall, which was thus heightened, with a flat rock platform just beneath. This N.E. Kale has stone buildings inside its walls. (5) The purpose of the *enclosure*—quarried out of the rock and walled in on the open N.W. side—is not clear. The enclosure wall is cyclopean, with characteristic batter, and about 4 m. thick : in one part it is preserved ten courses (over 4 m.) high. It has three towers each projecting 1 m., being 5 m. wide and 7.5 m. apart. (6) The main fortified area was to the south-west, connected to the N.E. Kale by parallel screen-walls.

The N.W. wall of this main part of the fortress was very recently robbed, but it was presumably of approximately the same plan as the surviving S.E. wall. The line of this wall steps in until at its S.W. extremity the fortress is only 25 m. wide : in the N.E. section the surviving towers, which presumably continued all along the wall, are 4 m. wide, 8 m. apart and project 2·5 m., making it most improbable that they were mere buttresses ; in the middle section are four towers ; in the S.W. section each of the seven towers projects 1 m.

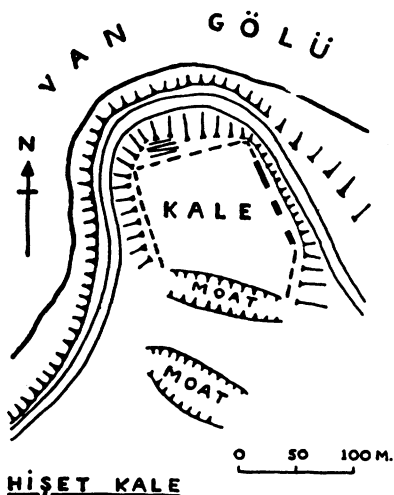


FIG. 5.

#### HIŞET KALE

Little of this Urartian fortress survives, owing to later building. But for 75 m. on the N.E. side a wall of characteristic blocks—well dressed, but not as fine as at Asbaşın—can be traced. Other Urartian features are the two ditches roughly cut through the rock on the vulnerable S.W. side and quarry-ledges at the north end. This fortress, on a spur immediately overlooking the lake, blocked access to the plain of Gevaş, and thence on to Van, from the mountainous country south of the lake.

#### ARAPZENĞİ (KÖRZÜT) KALE

This is the most impressive of the fortresses visited, because part of the wall still stands 8 m. high on the outside. The castle stands on a spur projecting into the plain of Muradiye, and is five miles south of the town. This spur is naturally impregnable on the S.W. side and round the N.W. end, and the other end is also precipitous ; only on the N.E. side is there a slope rather than a cliff, and it is here that the great retaining-wall remains so well preserved (see Pl. V, b-c). This wall has four towers, and is 4 m. thick ; the towers are 4 m. wide, 6 m. apart and project 1 m. ; each course is 1 m. high, some blocks being 0·75 m. long, others longer ; some exceptionally large blocks are used (one, at the corner of a tower, being  $2 \times 1 \times 1$  m.). The blocks are well dressed, though not absolutely smoothly as at Asbaşın : each block is slightly convex. This wall has the characteristic batter, each course being stepped in 5-10 cm. South of the great towered wall there continues an outer fortification, the main defences being a short way up the hill : possibly these continued parallel with and inside the towered wall. To the north there are slight remains of lower defences, including a large tower. There are certainly buildings within the fortress, and probably also an extensive lower town,

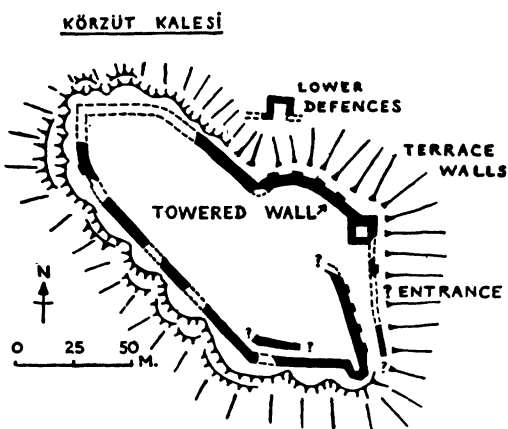


FIG. 6.

because stone terrace walls are discernible to the east of the castle. The entrance to the fortress must have been somewhere on the east side, south of the towered retaining-wall.

#### MURADIYE KALESİ

Although the ruins of Shah Ismail's Kandar Kale (c. A.D. 1500) are more obvious at first glance, there are also considerable traces of an Urartian fortress.

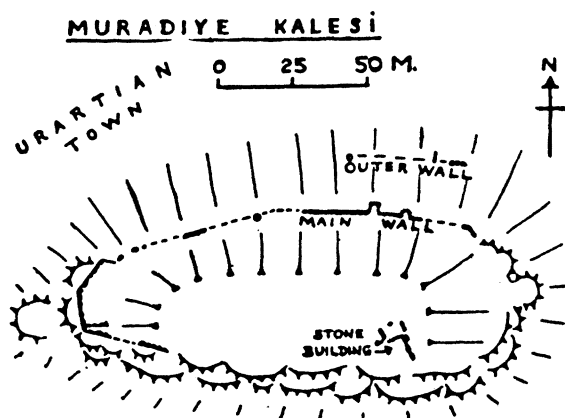


FIG. 7.

This occupied a larger area than Shah Ismail's castle, its walls, at least on the north side, being further down the slopes of the hill. Beneath the castle, to the west and north-west, recent diggings have revealed parts of extensive buildings, of good ashlar: the size of these walls, and of the blocks used in them, show them to belong to a lower town of Urartian date. This dating is reinforced by the presence in Muradiye of two fragments of cuneiform inscriptions. Urartian pottery occurs not only in the fortress but also

scattered thinly over a wide area towards the river. The Urartian wall at the west end of the castle-rock is extremely rough, of natural boulders; along the south side and at the east end the rocky cliff is impregnable, so that a wall was hardly necessary. There are hints of an outer wall on the north slope of the castle-rock: in each wall there is one block with a door-socket, perhaps indicating the approach up into the fortress.

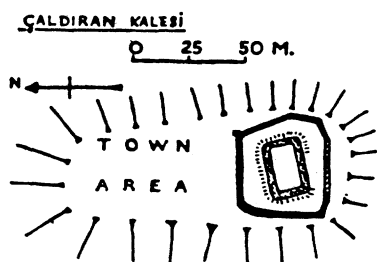


FIG. 8.

#### ÇALDIRAN KALESİ

This comprises a small citadel and a village outside its walls, the whole being on a low hill, now overlooking modern Çaldıran. The stone wall of the main defences

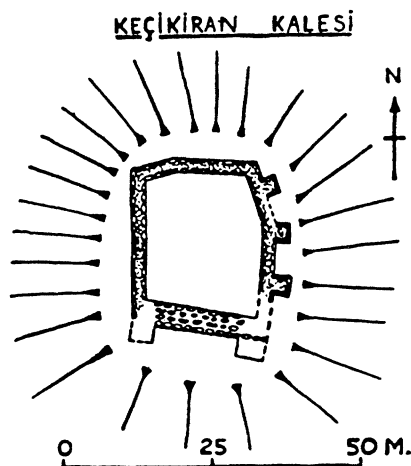


FIG. 9.



(a) Asbaşın Kale : the S.E. wall of the main fortress.

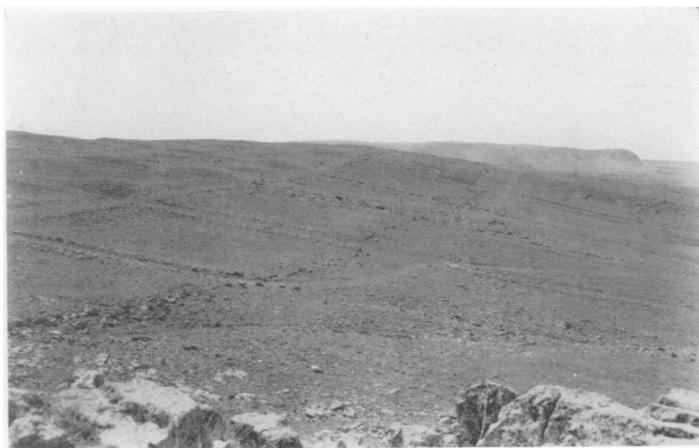


(b) Körzüt Kalesi : the towered revetment-wall (looking N.W. towards the plain).



(c) Körzüt Kalesi : the towered revetment-wall (looking S.E.).





(a) Zernaki Tepe.



(b) Adilcevaz : the Seljuk castle.



(c) Kefirkalesi : detail of cyclopean masonry.

can be followed almost continuously round, but the "inner keep" is visible now only as an earthen rampart of rectangular plan.

#### KEÇİKİRAN KALESİ

This small stronghold, near the right bank of a stream, not far west of the Urartian town at Karahan, is built in the cyclopean style, with the same method of construction as at Deli Çay Kalesi and Zernaki Tepe. There are the usual towers. The entrance may have been at the S.E. corner. Amongst the pottery collected were sherds probably of Late Bronze Age date, though perhaps as late as the beginning of Urartian times (i.e. early 9th century B.C.).

#### DELI ÇAY KALESİ

This fortified town is situated on the left bank of the Deli Çay, a considerable stream, at its estuary. Thus it was naturally protected on the west and north-west by the stream and on the south by the lake. A small hill at the north end of the site must have been the acropolis, but ruins of a recent village account for the absence of Urartian remains on the hilltop and its slopes: the Urartian walls have been destroyed, except for traces along the north side. But a fragment survives on the west side, four courses high, whilst from the S.W. corner round to the east side the course of the wall can easily be followed. The masonry is entirely cyclopean, the town wall being 3 m. thick and built in a distinctive manner: there are large blocks, each about 0.5 m. thick, along either face, with small stones and rubble in between. There are towers at regular intervals. On the east side are parallel terrace walls, outside the main defences, as at Zivistan. Stone buildings are evident inside the town wall on the east side, with small rooms 4 × 4 m. The town may have extended further east than as shown on the plan. At the N.W. corner, on the bank of the stream, is a rock-cut chamber, very likely a cistern.

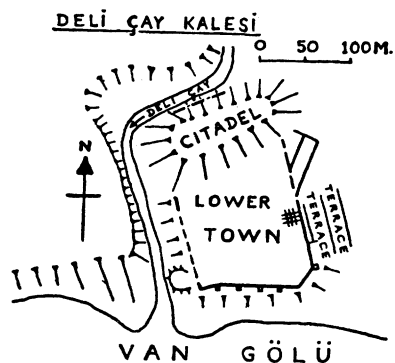


FIG. 10.

#### ZERNAKİ TEPE

This unusual site was reported but not actually seen by Lynch. This is not a fortress but a town plan, laid out on a regular grid. The site is at the end of a hill overlooking Erciş from the north-west and sloping abruptly down to the small plain. Each "block" in the grid plan is about 18 m. square, the walls being 1.25 m. thick; each "street" is 5 m. wide, except one "main street", which is 7 m. wide. The hilltop on which this town site stands is far from flat: in a small valley to the west, where the ground is ploughed, remains of the town plan are faint. There are strong reasons for supposing that this town was never completed, let alone occupied: the main reason for this opinion is that not one single potsherd was found; secondly, the walls stand everywhere at a uniform height of one course, unlikely if they had ever stood higher and had subsequently been robbed; thirdly, natural rock outcrops in the streets would surely have been levelled down if the town was ever finished. There remains the problem of date: the chief point—indeed the only real one—in favour of an Urartian date for this unfinished town is the method of wall construction, with large blocks along either face and small stones in the middle, which

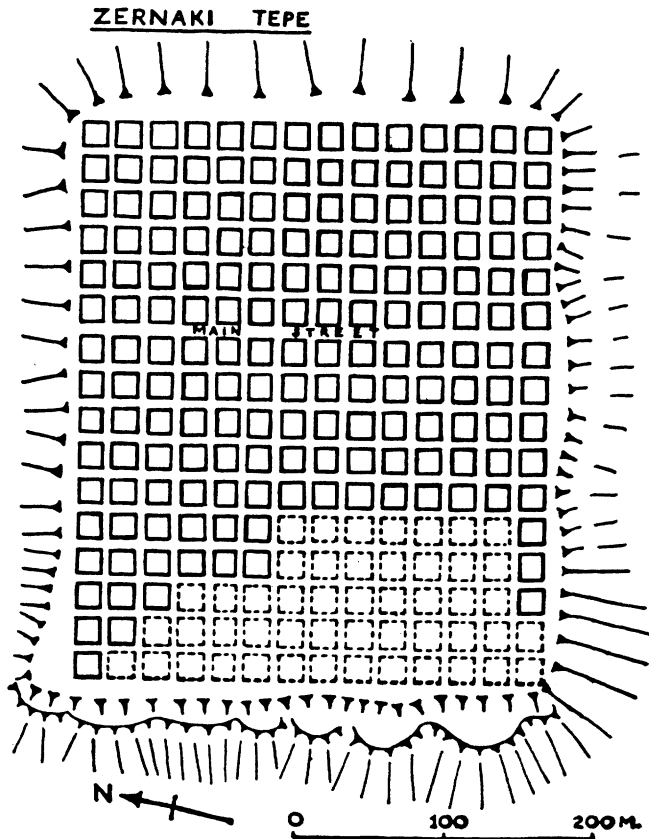


FIG. 11.

is the same as at Deli Çay Kalesi, where both architecture and pottery are beyond doubt Urartian. Admittedly this does not prove that Zernaki Tepe is Urartian, but it seems almost certainly so. The walls do not resemble those of later periods; no mortar was used. The rising waters of Lake Van have probably engulfed Urartian Argistis, just as the ruins of Osmanli Erciş have partly disappeared. Nearby are the inscriptions of Karataş, copied by Schulz.

#### KEFKALESİ

This must be the "colossal" site mentioned by Lynch, though he seems to have exaggerated its area. Nevertheless, it is a major town site, definitely dated by its architecture and pottery. This could well have been *Qallania*, mentioned by Sargon. This fortified town stands on a naturally defensible spur, south of which the valleys on the east and west join together, continuing as one valley down to Adilcevaz; this spur has precipitous sides, particularly on the west, the only easy approach being from the north. The "North-West Kale", whose walls are now reduced to a tumble of small stones, has a double screen-wall along a narrow col, connecting it with the citadel and town, a feature found also at Asbaşın. The walls of the *Citadel* have mostly vanished, but probably followed roughly the edge of the top of this small, partly artificial hill, which is fairly level. The *Town Wall* is built partly of fairly large blocks or flat slabs with small stones in between; but very large stones, 1.5 m. long, were used for the towers near the S.E. corner. The wall keeps more or less to the edge of the escarpment, hence the zig-zags in its course. Traces of internal walls

suggest that excavation should reveal many buildings within the town wall, though the depth of deposit at such rocky sites cannot be estimated : some traces of internal walls are not shown on the plan. The entrance to the town must have been somewhere between the east end of the citadel and the "outworks" at the N.E. corner : a rough, perhaps stone-paved, track, north-east of the outworks, and going down to the head of the valley east of the town, could be Urartian, though there is no proof

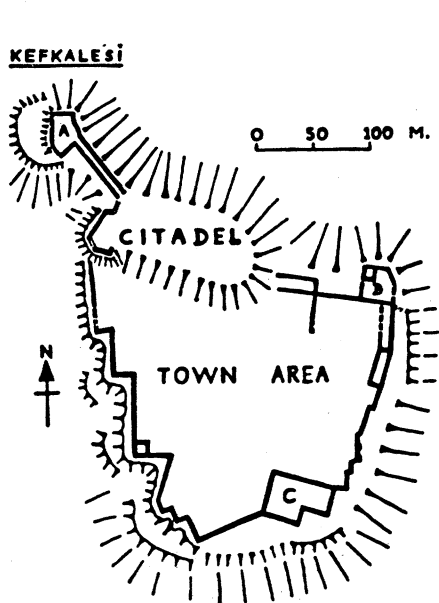


FIG. 12.

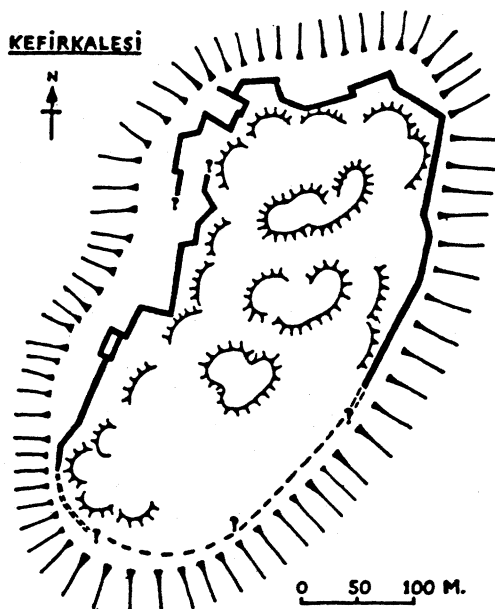


FIG. 13.

of this. In general, the walls of this site are about 3.5 m. thick and seldom preserved more than 1 m. above the surface. *On the plan, A = N.W. Kale, B = "Outworks", C = S.E. Enclosure.*

#### KEFIRKALESİ

This similarly named stronghold stands on-top of one of the immediate foothills of Süphan Dağ, high, steep-sided and everywhere rocky. Next to no potsherds were found, but the construction of the walls, which resemble those of Kefkalesi, makes it almost completely certain that this, too, is Urartian. The walls are 3-4 m. thick, with large stones along either face and much smaller ones roughly piled in between : natural stones have been used, particularly slabs ; there is no evidence of dressing. Stone-robbing is most unlikely on such a remote peak, so that the defences were probably never much higher than to-day ; doubtless the garrison relied on the natural strength of their position. There is no hint of buildings within the fortress, which must surely be considered as a mountain refuge in times of trouble, not normally garrisoned ; its altitude (about 2,400 m.) is another factor supporting this theory. It was of such strongholds that Sargon spoke, describing them as glittering on the mountain-tops.

#### BOSTANKAYA

This, possibly the site of *Arzaškun*, is a typical Urartian fortress on a natural castle-rock, which is scarred with the characteristic quarry-ledges. The masonry of

the wall remains on the north and west side, at the top of a steep slope. On the south and east there is a rocky escarpment. A lower wall, at the foot of the south end of the rock, would seem to serve no defensive purpose. Within the fortress are two small mounds, obviously ruined buildings, and there is a flat rock platform at the south end. At the foot of the north end of the fortress there is a rock-cut platform, with steps, and a niche in the vertically cut north face: this must surely have had a religious function and recalls the shrine at Van Kale. There are traces of a building

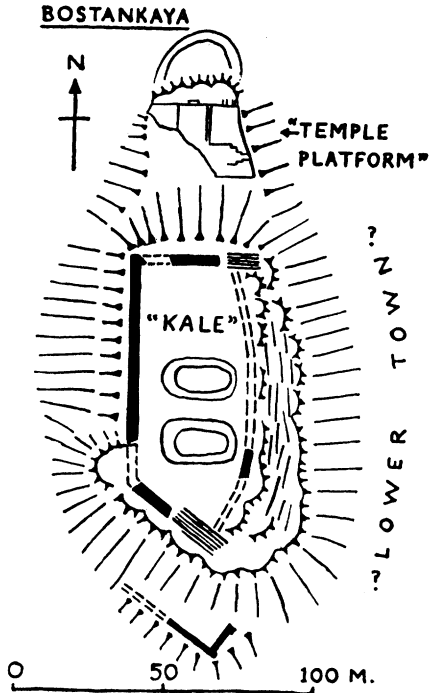


FIG. 14.

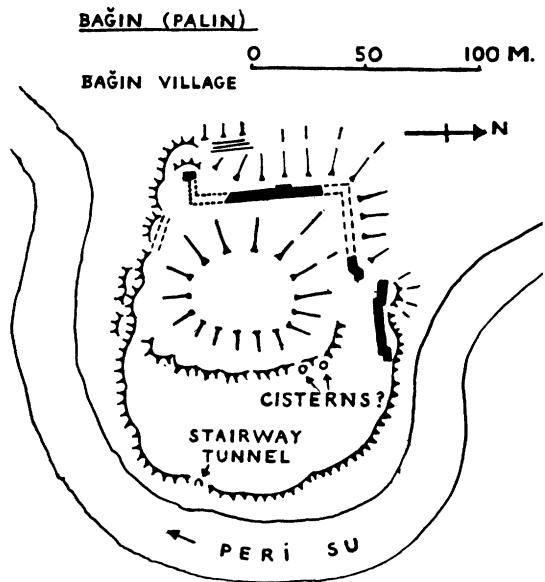


FIG. 15.

immediately north of this, and of buildings in the area east of the castle-rock, possibly a lower town. Among the pottery collected here is "Toprakkale ware".

#### BAĞIN (PALIN)

This fortress is in the mountainous Dersim, in the western domains of Urartu. It stands on an impregnable rock, round whose foot flows the swift Peri Su. On the north and west sides the medieval walls are built directly on the remains of the Urartian, which stand three or four courses high. Nowhere is the contrast between the large, unmortared Urartian ashlar and the medieval masonry of small stones set in mortar more easily seen. A cuneiform inscription confirms the Urartian date of the original defences. Circular pits cut down into the rock, inside the castle, may have served as cisterns. Certainly the purpose of the spiral staircase, cut up from the river in a tunnel through the rock and continued in perilous steps up the cliff-face, was probably to enable the garrison to collect water from a place which the enemy could reach only with difficulty. Comparison with Toprakkale suggests that this staircase belongs to the original Urartian defences.

## OTHER URARTIAN SITES

The majority of those Urartian sites not planned are of minor extent and importance, and all are indicated on the map accompanying this article. But there are some important town sites of which no sketch plan could be made from the remains visible on the surface, or in the time available : these are Karahan, near the N.E. extremity of Lake Van ; Alikelle and Hacıhatun, in the plain of Çaldıran, where there is also a rather small fortress near Şerefhane ; Adılcevaz, probably now mostly submerged ; “ Burun Harabesi,” on a promontory between Ahlat and Adabağ ; traces of a stronghold at old Tatvan, on a promontory jutting into the lake ; a large town site, the likeliest for *Arzaškun*, at Mollakent, near Liz ; a fortified town at Milbar, near Bulanık, with some good ashlar. Palu, on the Murat River, has an impregnable castle-rock, undoubtedly an Urartian stronghold, though no masonry remains : the well-known inscription there shows that this was near the land of *Sebeteria*, where the Urartian king Menuas campaigned.