

A VESSEL IN THE FORM OF A HUMAN OF THE ASSYRIAN TRADING COLONY PERIOD

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The recovery of this find with few parallels owes much to the high level of accomplishment reached today by the Turkish Historical Society, established under the guidance of Atatürk. The success of the excavations carried out by the Society is in large measure due to the strong influence of its General Director Uluğ İğdemir. On the occasion of his eightieth birthday, I would like to express my deepest admiration for his valuable contributions and my gratitude for the opportunity to add to this volume of *Belleten* presented in his honor.

An important part of the burial gifts from graves belonging to building level Ia in quadrant cc/21 of the Karum Kaniš were stolen, broken or scattered during ancient times. Among these finds, our attention is drawn to a vessel in the form of a human, whose body is preserved but whose neck and head are now missing (Pl. I-II; Fig. 1-4).

In these quadrants (T-ff/16-30) in building level Ib have been unearthed a closely - built arrangement of houses, blocks or quarters, streets and open courts (Pl. III-IV). We have also examined in detail the central part of the site from the point of view of town planning¹. These districts consisting of buildings constructed in the same manner, with houses of similar plan, dimensions and inventory, including burial gifts, attest to an advanced organization and an equality of social level. Most of the houses contain a kitchen, a cellar, an oven room, a large living room and two to three additional rooms. The smallest houses are composed of three rooms. Hearths, fire pots and ovens, as well as large vessels for the storage of grain, have been recovered in a good state of preservation (Pl.V); moreover, the cellars were found filled with vessels of all sizes and varieties (Pl. VII). In most of them were also found cuneiform tablets, stamp and cylinder

¹ Tahsin Özgüç, Kültepe - Kaniš, Assur Ticaret Kolonilerinin Merkezinde yapılan yeni arařtırmalar - New Researches at the Center of the Assyrian Trade Colonies, Ankara 1959, P. 67-79.

seals, and metal and stone artifacts. The grain storage vessels, kitchen equipment and large bathtub vessels were arranged along the walls in orderly rows, their position often reinforced by small stones. The floors of small rooms, or parts of the floors of the larger rooms, were paved with flat stones. This arrangement was no doubt a solution for reducing the dampness of the earthen floors. Between the rooms in most of the houses were doors, steps, pivot stones, hand - mill stones, and hand - bellows, vessels all in a good state of preservation (Pl. III-IV). For this reason, the reconstruction of buildings of Level Ib present no difficulties.

In this late phase of the Assyrian Colony period, the dead were buried under the floors of rooms in earth graves, pots, under sherds of broken vessels, and in stone cist - graves². Pot graves and stone cist - graves form the majority of these burial types. The most beautiful and unique finds of the city of Level Ib, especially precious stones, metal objects, and cosmetic boxes, have been recovered from the stone cist - graves.

The stone cist - graves of Level Ia³ are sometimes found in the debris covering the houses of Level Ib and sometimes at a depth of 10 to 20 cm under the floors of the Ib houses (Pl. VI). The graves of Level Ib itself are found at a considerable depth, at 1.30 to 1.60 m below this level (Pl. VI).

The vessel in the form of a human published here was found in a stone cist - grave in a house of Level Ib in quadrants cc/21. During the robbing of tomb gifts in ancient times, the head and neck of this vessel were thrown aside and lost. In my opinion, the most important point regarding the significance of this vessel is its use as a burial gift.

The vessel measures 13.3 cm in height, 14 cm in width, is of buff color, wet - smoothed without slip or burnish, and well - fired (Pl. I-II; Fig. 1-4). It widens from top to bottom, is empty inside, and contains a hole in its wide bottom. Its legs are short and its small feet rest on the floor. The space between its knees is very wide. It is

² Tahsin Özgüç, Kültepe Kazısı Raporu 1948 - Ausgrabungen in Kültepe 1948, Ankara 1950, P. 160-169; Tahsin - Nimet Özgüç, Kültepe Kazısı 1949 - Ausgrabungen in Kültepe 1949, Ankara 1953, P. 147-152.

³ Tahsin Özgüç, Maşat Höyük Kazıları ve çevresindeki araştırmalar - Excavations at Maşat Höyük and investigations in its vicinity, Ankara 1978, P. 85.

clear that the vessel represents a male figure. Around its neck and waist are irregular grooves. Attached to its back is a pot which, moreover, is held by its hands and arms which reach from front to back. The five fingers of each hand are roughly incised, depicting two hands which hold the edges of the pot. This pot has a simple profile; it is handleless, with a wide mouth and pointed base. The vessel thus represents a male figure carrying on his back a large pot which he holds with both hands. An important part of his arms, as well as his head and neck, are missing. Among the vessels of Levels Ib and Ia of Karum Kaniš are not a few examples whose spouts depict arms or hands⁴. In these the fingers are rendered in the same manner as on the vessel just described (Pl. VIII).

The human - shaped vessels are related in meaning to the human figurines standing on a pair of horses on the handles of vessels of Karum Kaniš Level II⁵. In addition, on a black - slipped, well - burnished vase again found in Level II are the head of a woman on one side and the head of a man with long beard on the other, both in relief⁶ (Fig. 5-7). That this vase was used as a ritual medium of some kind is clear from the pointed protuberances in the shape of bulls' horns which are shown on the vessel's neck and shoulders. Moreover, in the same form are a woman and a long - bearded man in relief on the lower part of a vase with brownish red and burnish, found in a monumental building on the Kaniš mound in a level contemporary with Karum Level II (Pl. X-XI; A). These finds document the diffusion of this type of vase with religious significance. In my opinion, these terracotta vases are imitations of examples in precious metal.

A male head of terracotta found in the debris of a Level Ia street in Karum Kaniš in 1949 is depicted in frontal view⁷. It is clear that it belongs to a vessel in the form of a human. The head is brown slipped and burnished, and executed in an elaborate technique. It measures 6.2 cm in length and 5.9 cm in width. Our human - shaped vessel

⁴ Kutlu Emre, The pottery of the Assyrian Colony Period according to the building levels of the Kanish Karum (Anatolia VII, 1963 Pl. 25.).

⁵ Nimet Özgüç, Kültepe Mühür Baskılarında Anadolu Grubu - The Anatolian Group of cylinder seal impressions from Kültepe, Ankara 1965, Lev. 35; ve Kurt Bittel, Die Hethiter, München 1976, Fig. 56.

⁶ Kültepe - Kaniš, p. 113, Pl. 47, 1-2.

⁷ Kültepe Kazısı 1949 - Ausgrabungen in Kültepe 1949, p. 202, Taf. 40, 279 a-b.

with missing head may be restored following the attributes of this head, with large round eyes, large ears, small mouth, and on his forehead a hairband decorated with small curved lines. These particular features represent the style of this period. The known number of finds of this style is more than a few (Pl.IX,1-2). A vessel in the form of a nude female was found by Sedat Alp during his excavations at Karahöyük in 1953⁸. The Karahöyük vessel is the best preserved example of this type of vessel. My colleague Professor Alp has kindly provided the following information: "The inside of the vessel is empty; at the bottom is a hole. The arms holding the breasts are very thin. The thin legs, knees and toes are clearly indicated. The handle of the vessels is formed by a long hairband at the back of the head." Although this vessel represents a female, its head is in the same style as that of the male head found in the Karum Kaniš. These finds of vessels in the form of men and women, in addition to vessels in the form of animals, prove their use for religious purposes in the Kayseri-Konya region during the late phase of the eighteenth century B. C.

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- 2 Back view.
- II, 1-2 Anthropomorphic vessel side views (Fig. 1-4).
- III One of the best preserved parts of the Karum Kanish Ib city in squares CC/22-23. The mudbrick and stone walls, the doors, the hearth and ovens. The stone foundations rise four courses above the level of the floors before the mudbrick begins.
- IV Houses of Karum Kanish Ib on both side of the street in squares bb - dd/23-24. In this phase all areas of the Karum Kanish were densely settled.

⁸ Belleten XVIII/71, 1954, p. 403.

The outer doors of the houses open on to these streets. The street is paved with stone. The I a-b streets vary in width from place to place, averaging 1.80-3.00 meter. The level of the streets used to rise rapidly as broken pottery, bones, small stones were thrown out into them. The width of the steets in Level Ib permits the use of wagons.

- V A section of the Karum Kanish city in squares CC - dd/18. Stone walls, the floors of the level Ib houses, the hearths and large jars *in situ*. The floors in the rooms are of stamped earth. The stone foundations rise two courses above the level of the floors before the mudrick begins. The flat stones are well - smoothed on all sides and patiently fitted together.
- VI Houses of Karum Kanish Ib in squares D/20-21. Two stone cist graves of Level Ia were found in a room of a level Ib house. These cist graves had been robbed. The pits for the tombs were cut into the debris covering the house of Level Ib and disturbed the habitation floor of Level Ib. The buildings of Level Ib were erected closely together, i.e., the various units are made to stand side by side and back to back. Complexes consisting of several buildings also occur.
- VII A cellar of Level Ib. Water jugs, provision pots, jars, plates, bowls and pans are found in the cellars and kitchen, around the fire - place, fire - pot and against the base of the mudbrick or stone walls (in squares dd-22-23).
- VIII Pitcher with lateral, slightly tapering tubular spout set at right angles to handle, and ring base. Buff paste with gray core; fine well made ware; well fired; brownish red slip on exterior. The upper part of the body is hemispherical; below the carination, the body narrows down in concave profile to a ring base. Archaeological Museum, Ankara. Kt. 1/k 167.

- IX, 1 Typical head of a human being in clay from Level Ib of the Karum Kanish. It has a prominent nose, large - eyes; buff paste; moderately fired. The finish of the clay figurine is crude. Height 2.5 cm., width 2.6 cm. Archaeological Museum, Kayseri.
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- Fig. 5-7 A vase from Level II of the Karum Kanish II in square R/25. It is 15 cm. in maximum height. Fine well made ware; buff paste; well fired; black slipped and well polished. It has on one side, in relief, a man's head, bearded, large - eyed, with flat upright ears, on the other side, a woman's face. The other two sides of the vase have three bull's horns each. It has two more horns below the rim. Archaeological Museum, Ankara.
- X-XI; A Lower part of a vase, found on the city mound of Kanish, in a level contemporary with Karum Level II. Hight: 5.6 cm. width: 6.5 cm. Fine, well made ware; well fired; brownish red slipped; and nicely polished. Archaeological Museum, Ankara.