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ARSLANTEPE

I. ULUSLARARASI ARKEOLOJİ SEMPOZYUMU BİLDİRİLERİ

ARSLANTEPE

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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE RESEARCHES ON THE EAST ANATOLIAN KURA-ARAS CULTURE: TWO KEY SETTLEMENTS TWO LEADING FIGURES

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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE RESEARCHES ON THE EAST ANATOLIAN KURA-ARAS CULTURE: TWO KEY SETTLEMENTS TWO LEADING FIGURES

MEHMET IŞIKLI- SEFA KÖSE

Introduction

With its extraordinary geography, throughout all historical periods, the East Anatolia Region has always had a distinct status among the network of the relations that have been developed between the lands of Caucasia, Mesopotamia and Anatolia (with the East- West and North South directions). Among these periods, the most outstanding one is Early Bronze Age. In this period when urban cultures developed in most of Near East, the developed settled life and/or semi-nomadic country culture created by stock farming-agriculturalist societies in the East Anatolia and nearby lands assert itself. This cultural phenomenon mostly known as Kura- Aras Culture within the Near East Archaeology, makes its presence felt for more than a millennium in the mountainous zone between the Caucasian and Taurus Mountains (Fig.1). This culture, known with its unique traditions of ceramic and architecture, settlement organisation, socio-economic structure and belief system, has a lot of problems that needs further solution due to its magnitude of chronology and geography (Burney and Lang 1971). (Sagona 1984) (Palumbi 2008) (Kohl 2007) (Işıklı 2011a) (Palumbi and Chataignier 2014) (Frangipane and Palmieri 1983, 523-574) (Frangipane 2003b, 19-21) (Frangipane 2014).

Essentially, the researches regarding culture has a history that exits a hundred years. In the early 1900s and in 1920s for the first time at the mound of Khirbet-Kerak in Palestine, through the excavations of W.F Albright, the black-red polished ceramic of the culture is detected and the existence of culture is defined for the first time. Initially, mostly through the researches focussing on Levant and South Caucasia, current knowledge on culture increases day by day (Sagona, 2014, 21-32). As the Mountainous East Anatolia highland, which is one of the most crucial areas of cultural extension, is taken into consideration, it is identified that it is through the sounding of Erzurum Karaz by Koşay during the 1940s that the existence of culture in this place was detected and defined. (F.g.2). Earlier than this research, no substantial data regarding the existence of culture is attained in the early period excavations carried out in the centers within the extension range of culture, inclusive of Arslantepe, Van Castle mound and Tilkitepe Van. The focus of the archaeological researches that began at the end of the 1800s and carried out at the highland of East Anatolia is mostly the Urartian remnants within and around the Lake Van (Işıklı 2011b, 1-12).