

EXAMPLES OF OFFERING PLAQUES FROM GIYİMLİ (HIRKANIS)

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Ten kilometres west of the town of Gürpınar in the County of Van and about 250 metres south west of Giyimli (Hırkanis) in the area locally known as "Serbartepe", the local populace, while excavating rock for the construction of a mosque, discovered a large group of plaques of bronze with figures on them executed in relief. These were later dated to the Urartian period. A year later in the summer of 1972, a group under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Afif Erzen conducted an excavation in this area which brought to light much new information concerning the Giyimli Urartian bronze treasure¹. As far as has been ascertained, the Giyimli bronzes consist of about 2000 pieces, of which about 250 are in the Adana museum, and consist of offering plaques, pieces of belts and quivers, pendants and bridle head-pieces². 150 or so more pieces are collected in the Van Regional Museum, the Ankara Museum of Anatolian Civilisations, the İstanbul Archaeology Museum, and in the Konya, Karaman, Gaziantep and Kahraman Maraş Museums, and it is known that an even greater number of these pieces has been taken abroad. For example, it is very possible that the Urartian hieroglyphic offering plaque in the Budin collection is of Giyimli origin³.

In the researches we conducted on all the pieces found in Turkish museums, it has been established that they all date between the rise

¹ See. A. Erzen, *Giyimli Bronz Definesi ve Kazısı*, *Belleten* 38 (1974), p. 191 ff.; TAD. 21-1 (1974), p. 13 ff. Appreciation is extended to Muhtar Gücüm for translating my article and to Dr. Lisa French, Ülge Göker, and Claudine Weatherford for making necessary corrections, also I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Ord. Prof. Dr. Ekrem Akurgal who offered invaluable assistance and support.

² A large number of these pieces were bought by the Adana Regional Museum (with the other Urartian finds) by the writer, the Director of this Museum. Many of the pieces were offering plaques.

³ See R. D. Barnett, *The Hieroglyphic Writing of Urartu*, AS. Presented to H. G. Guterbock, İstanbul, 1974, pl. XI.

and fall of the Urartu period (ca. 750-585 BC) and a large number of them date from some time around 600 BC⁴.

This publication has been produced in order to present for the first time to the scientific world those items from the Giyimli Bronze find which were designed for a religious purpose (perhaps to be placed in a temple) and have been labeled by us offering plaques. Some of these have previously been used as belts and have been re-worked and transformed into offering plaques. They display Urartian Gods, priests, devils, or other various figures carrying offerings to the Gods or indulging in other activities. They carry the typical signs of Urartian workmanship as well as some examples of a degenerating art which are to be found in the greater number of the examples. In the same find there are a number of examples of stylised human heads and human figures which cannot be assigned to any particular culture but which are studied together with the others simply because they were all found in the same place. The attempt will be made here to present mainly the Giyimli bronze offering plaques now in the Adana Regional Museum which carry the characteristic particulars of the genre. The whole will be presented in three groups:

- I. Those which have characteristic Urartian features
- II. Those which have degenerate Urartian features
- III. Other plaques.

But however much the difference in craftsmanship between Example 1 and Example 30 is obvious, in the transition between group I and group II the difference between plaques 10 and 11, and similarly in the transition between group II and group III the differences between plaques 20 and 21 are not so obvious. All these examples which will here be briefly described and inventoried, could,

⁴ A fragment of belt from among the Giyimli bronzes has been dated at the middle of the 8th century BC. See O. A. Taşyürek, *The Urartian Belts*, Ankara, 1975, no. 14. It has also been suggested by the writer that a pendant in the same museum is to be dated around 650 BC. See. O. A. Taşyürek, *Urartian Jewellery and Needles in the Adana Regional Museum*, TAD. 22-2 (1975), p. 144. Also it has been suggested by the writer that an offering plaque in the Van Museum can be dated around 650 BC. See. O. A. Taşyürek, "Some Inscribed Urartian Bronze Armour, Iraq, 37/2 (1975), pl. XXXVI, a. All these examples suggest that the Giyimli bronzes date from the middle of the 8th century BC. to the decline of the Urartian civilisation.

without danger of error, be classified as being in what "van loon" describes as the popular style⁵.

I. Offering plaques which have characteristic Urartian features :

1. Van Regional Museum.

height 6,3 cms. width 4,6 cms. (Pl. 1)⁶.

The top edge of this offering plaque, which is in the Van Regional Museum, has been cut like a saw edge. On it, on a raised base at the bottom, is the God Haldi on the left, standing on the back of a lion, winged, or with two quivers and with a single horn on his headdress, his right hand slightly forward and raised, holding extended before him at waist height a square sceptre with a handle, and wearing an embroidered cloak, open at the front, and, standing in front of him at waist height a square sceptre with a handle, and wearing an embroidered cloak, open at the front, and, standing in front of him, wearing a scarf, and a robe coming to the ground, her hands in front of her and slightly forward, stands a woman; above her head is a number of Urartian hieroglyphic signs. This example has a hole in each corner and was apparently made to nail on to a surface.

2. Gaziantep Museum. Inv. no 44-49-73.

height 10,6 cms. width 7,8 cms. (Pl. 2)

On the left of this plaque, advancing towards the right, is a god, with one horn on his headdress bearing two quivers, dressed in a cloak with embroidery, open at the front from the waist down, holding a pomegranate branch in the left hand with the fruit down, his right hand extended towards the sceptre held by the woman to the right in front of him, the woman is wearing a long dress with her head covered, carrying a square sceptre in her hand. The spaces are filled with circular swellings. This example has all the signs of classical Urartian craftsmanship and seems to come from the hand of a master craftsman. A row of holes along the bottom of the plaque indicates that it had been cut from a belt.

⁵ van Loon has classified Urartian art as being in either the "Palace" or the "Popular" style. See M. N. van Loon, *Urartian Art*, (Istanbul, 1966), p. 166.

⁶ See. O. A. Taşyürek, *Iraq*, 37/2 (1975). pl. XXXVI, a.

3. Adana Regional Museum. Inv. no. 117. 7. 1971.

height 19,6 cms. width 6,5 cms. (Pl. 3).

The top of the plaque has a crenellated edge and depicts on the left the figure of a god, with two quivers, a headdress with a single horn, long hair, wearing a long embroidered dress, and holding extended before him in his left hand what is apparently a type of rosary. Standing in front of him is a woman, shorter in stature, wearing a long dress, holding extended down in front of her apparently a rosary, and holding a square sceptre in her other hand. In an attempt at decorating the piece the spaces between the figures have been filled by protuberances, each containing four smaller bumps and with the edge marked by small dots.

4. Adana Regional Museum. Inv. no. 19. 3. 1973.

height 11 cms. width 8,8 cms. (Pl. 4).

The plaque is a rectangle with rounded corners; the borders consist of two parallel lines. On the left is the figure of a woman turned to the right, long-haired, wearing a long embroidered dress, holding a square sceptre in her hands with a goat walking beside her; in front of her is the figure of a man, perhaps a priest, turned to the left, wearing a pointed headdress, with long hair and wearing a long embroidered dress. These figures have been executed by incision and slight relief work and the hands of the figure on the right are extended towards the sceptre. The spaces on the plaque have been filled by small protuberances which have been delineated with small dots.

5. Adana Regional Museum. Inv. no. 117. 2. 1972.

height 13,2 cms. width 9,5 cms. (Fig. 1, Pl. 5).

This plaque is oval and is framed by two parallel lines. On it on the left is the figure of a man facing right, with a quiver on his shoulder, headdress and long hair, apparently holding a bow in his hand, and opposite him, facing left, the figure of a woman with hair covered and wearing a long dress, apparently holding two ears of wheat⁷.

⁷ Cf. E. Akurgal, *The Hittites* (London, 1962), pl. 114.

6. Adana Regional Museum.

height 11,2 cms. width 8,6 cms. (Fig. 2, Pl. 6).

The top right corner of this plaque is broken and displays: advancing from left to right, the double quivered figure of the God Haldi standing on the back of a lion, wearing an embroidered cloak and a garment beneath it. His right hand is forward and raised; in his left hand he may be holding a bow. The most interesting aspect of this figure is that the God's mouth is depicted by five lines one above the other. Also, the upper jaw of the lion is depicted in the same manner as the lions on the shield of Rusa III (625-586 BC) and consists of a round swelling⁸. The rest of the plaque is decorated with round swellings delineated with dots.

7. Adana Regional Museum.

height 12,5 cms. width 6,4 cms. (Fig. 3, Pl. 7).

The double quivered figure of a god is depicted advancing to the right, wearing a long embroidered dress and with one horn on his headdress. The top right hand corner of the plaque is broken off but the other three corners have narrow slits in them which may indicate that it was nailed onto some surface with flat nails. The figure has been depicted in high relief; the right hand is held up and forward and the God is holding some object in his left hand. He has long hair and is wearing an earring⁹. The nose is large and the eye is depicted as from the front. The mouth has been worked in exactly the same manner as in the Scythian objects of 600 BC.¹⁰

8. Adana Regional Museum.

height 7,5 cms. width 4 cms. (Pl. 8).

The plaque depicts the figure of a double quivered God advancing to the right, wearing a long robe, a single horn on his headdress, his right hand forward, holding perhaps a string of beads in his left hand; there is embroidery on his dress. He has a wide belt round his

⁸ Cf. E. Akurgal, *Urartaische und Altiranische Kunstzentren*, (Ankara, 1968), abb. 31.

⁹ Cf. E. Stromenger, *The Art of Mesopotamia* (London, 1964), pl. 224.

¹⁰ Cf. I. Artamanov, *Treasures from Scythian Tombs* (London, 1969), fig. 2, 62.

waist, his eye is depicted from the front, and his mouth consists of two lines one above the other. The spaces around the figure have been filled with round bumps. The left top and bottom corners are missing

9. Gaziantep Museum. Inv. no. 44. 48. 73.

height 10,5 cms. width 8 cms. (Fig. 4, Pl. 9-10).

The plaque was first used as a belt (Pl. 9) and subsequently the other side has been re-worked as an offering plaque. On the opposite side (Pl. 10), advancing towards the left, a male figure with a quiver carries an object in his hand his eye is depicted from the front, and his mouth consists of three lines one above the other. The spaces around the figure are filled with round bumps.

10. Adana Regional Museum.

height 13,5 cms width. 5 cms. (Pl. 11).

This plaque has a hole near each corner. The design is drawn by short incised lines spaced close together. It depicts a male figure walking towards the right, with a headdress and long hair, wearing a long embroidered garment, and carrying a crescent-shaped sceptre in the right hand¹² and what appears to be a knife in the left hand. His eye is depicted from the front and his mouth by three lines one above the other. The back part of its body concealed by the human figure, travelling towards the right, its horn curved towards the back, there is the figure of a goat, perhaps being taken to the temple as a sacrifice. The outline of this figure is a single incised line; the figure is in low relief and shows quite good workmanship. The spaces have been filled with round bumps.

II. Offering plaques exhibiting poor quality Urartian workmanship:

In all the examples presented up to now Urartian characteristics have been obviously displayed, whereas from here on the craftsmanship will progressively deteriorate and the signs of high quality Urartian craftsmanship will become increasingly rare.

11. Adana Regional Museum.

height 7,6 cms. width 6,6 cms. (Pl. 12).

¹¹ Cf. O. A. Taşyürek, *The Urartian Belts*. No. 30.

¹² Sec. p. 235 Crescent-shaped emblems.

On the left of the plaque there is the figure of a man (priest) facing right, wearing an embroidered robe and a headdress. The figure's eye is depicted from the front and he holds a square emblem in his left hand; his right hand is extended forward and up. His mouth is shown with three lines one above the other. Before him stands the figure of a woman also wearing a long embroidered dress; her eye is shown from the front and her mouth is shown as three lines one above the other. She appears to hold a string of beads in each hand and seems to be offering one of them to the male figure. The spaces on the plaque have been filled with a series of round bumps.

12. Gaziantep Museum.

height 15,7 cms. width 13,2 cms. (Pl. 13).

The top of this plaque has been cut in crenellated form. The scene portrays in symmetrical arrangement the figures of two women facing each other. Each has long hair and their robes come down to their ankles; their eyes are portrayed from the front and their mouths by six lines. The figure on the left holds a square emblem in her left hand and has extended her right hand in front of her. The figure opposite her holds a similar emblem in her right hand. The scene portrayed on the plaque possibly illustrates some religious ceremony.

13. Adana Regional Museum.

height 11,7 cms. width 9,7 cms. (Pl. 14).

This plaque is framed by a double row of small bumps as a border and portrays on the left the figure of a man with long hair, wearing a belt and a long embroidered robe, holding a square emblem in the left hand, and perhaps a string of beads in the right hand; opposite him with the same features, but holding perhaps a plant in the right hand, there is another male figure. The hair and details of the robes of these figures have been brought out by closely spaced small dots. There is a hole at the top and bottom edge of the plaque. From the point of view of style the figures seem to be worked under the influence of the art of Luristan and particularly show a close resemblance to the figures on the Hasanlu Bowl¹³ and the gold Luristan belt¹⁴.

¹³ Cf. M. O. Mellink, *The Hasanlu Bowl in Anatolian Perspective*, *Iranica Antiqua*, VI (1966), fig. I a, b.

¹⁴ Cf. A. Godard, *Die Kunst des Iran*, 1964, pl. 32.

14. Adana Regional Museum.

height 6,2 cms. width 5,6 cms. (Pl. 15).

It is probable that this plaque was first used as a belt. It portrays a winged robed figure carrying a square emblem in his right hand and a string of beads in his left hand. It is a male figure facing the right. The workmanship is rather poor; the wings, robe and waist area have been decorated with small dots.

15. Adana Regional Museum.

height 10 cms. width 6,3 cms. (Pl. 16).

The top of this plaque is crenellated and there is a border of a double row of small bumps. Inside the resultant rectangle, facing right, holding a square emblem in the right hand, is a male figure. It is drawn roughly by the use of narrow indentations; the eye is from the front and the mouth consists of five lines one above the other and the spaces around the figure are filled with small bumps.

16. Adana Regional Museum.

height 11 cms. width 9 cms. (Fig. 5, Pl. 17-18).

This plaque, which has been cut from a belt the design of which still exists on the back (Fig. 5, Pl. 18)¹⁵, depicts the figure of a woman carrying a bucket in the left hand and what appears to be an ear of barley or wheat in the right hand (P. 17).

17. Adana Regional Museum.

height 10,7 cms. width 6,8 cms. (Fig. 6, Pl. 19).

This example has been cut from a belt and sideways, worked in thin triple lines on the left, there are apparently the hindquarters of lions, in the centre galloping bulls with their tails curved over their backs and on the right the figures of lions¹⁶. The top of this plaque has a sawtooth edge. The offering plaque side of this object depicts a female figure walking towards the right. In her left hand

¹⁵ On the reverse side of this piece there are on the left, Urartian warriors riding on galloping horses repeated three times, and on the right, repeated three times the tree-of-life motif (Fig. 5). The style of execution of the horses make it probable that the belt was made towards the end of the 7th century BC.

¹⁶ Cf. O. A. Taşyürek, *Urartu Kemerleri*, Pl. 38.

there is a bucket depicted in stylised form by the use of short indentations one over the other, and in her right hand there is an ear of wheat or barley. She is wearing a scarf and a long dress. Her mouth is interesting in that it consists of seven lines one above the other. The spaces are filled with circular bumps.

18. Adana Regional Museum. Inv. no. 19. 1. 72.

height 11 cms. width 7,8 cms. (Pl. 20).

The top edge of this plaque is crenellated. It shows the figure of a woman walking to the right wearing a long dress and carrying a square emblem in her hands. Behind her is the figure of a goat with only the front portion of its body visible. The woman's eye is depicted from the front and her mouth is shown as five lines one above the other. The spaces are filled with round bumps.

19. Gaziantep Museum. Inv. no. 44. 5. 73.

height 10,3 cms. width 9,2 cms. (Fig. 7, Pl. 21).

The lower right corner of this plaque has been broken; it depicts the stylised front view of a human figure which has wings and a helmet, almond-shaped eyes, a longrobe decorated with narrow chisel marks. The figure stands with legs apart and arms raised above the head. The workmanship perfectly portrays Luristan influence¹⁷; the area around the figure has been decorated with round protuberances.

III. Other plaques :

As mentioned before, this group of plaques shows no resemblance to what is accepted as being typical Urartian craftsmanship. It is highly possible that these plaques were executed during the decline of the Urartian civilisation; they consist mainly of very simple illustrations executed on old sections of belts with shallow lines depicting various figures or faces. This type of plaque constitutes almost half of the Giyimli deposit.

20. Gaziantep Museum. Inv. no. 44. 54. 73.

height 11,3 cms. width 10,3 cms. (Pl. 22).

The top of this plaque is cut in crenellated form. It shows, on the left, marked out with chisel marks, a standing figure facing right,

¹⁷ E. Porada, *Iran Ancien (L'art dans le Monde)*, 1963, fig. 59.

holding a bowl in his right hand which is held forward and raised. He has his left hand extended towards a table in the centre of the composition; this figure has long hair; his eye is depicted from the front; his mouth is depicted by two lines; he wears a long robe. Opposite this figure, on a smaller scale, is another figure seen seated on a chair facing left. The eye is depicted from the front and the mouth consists of two lines. This figure has his left hand raised and seems to be holding a bowl while his other hand is extended towards the table. In the top left hand corner of the plaque is a star emitting seven rays and in the top right hand corner is a crescent with a star connected on the concave side. On the table in the centre there are two loaves one inside the other and a stylised tree motif. The plaque seems to have no connection with Urartian art and seems to show a banquet scene often found in particularly Neo-Hittite art¹⁸.

21. Gaziantep Museum.

height 7 cms. width 6,5 cms. (Pl. 23-25).

This plaque has been previously used as a belt and the back surface has been divided with diagonal lines (Pl. 24)¹⁹. Inside these divisions, on the left, seen facing towards the left and holding a crescent-shaped emblem upside down, is a human figure and below it, perhaps symmetrical to it, is another figure in the next division. Between them is an Urartian winged disc. At the top right hand corner there is another winged disc and below it the figure of a dragon with a lion's body and stags antlers, blowing flames out of its mouth, and riding on it another Urartian God with his hands extended up and forward (Pl. 23). On the front of the piece which has been used as an offering plaque there is a simple stylised figure walking to the right, winged, wearing a long belted robe, carrying an ear of wheat or barley in his right hand (Pl. 25).

22. Adana Regional Museum.

height 7,8 cms. width 5 cms. (Pl. 26).

¹⁸ Among the Giyimli artifacts in the Adana Museum there are some other examples of banquet scenes such as this (Cf. O. A. Taşyürek, *Urartu Kemerleri*, fig. 21 for a banquet scene on an Urartian bronze belt.)

¹⁹ The diagonal divisions on the back surface of this example bear a resemblance to the Ani-Pemza and Zakim belts (See E. Akurgal, *Urartäische und Altiranische Kunstzentren*, abb. 8, 9).

On this plaque, executed in simple unskilled lines, is a quivered male figure walking to the right wearing, headdress and a long belted robe. The plaque has a hole on the left and right edge. An attempt has been made to decorate the figure with bumps in the spaces around it.

23. Adana Regional Museum.

height 9,6 cms. width 9,7 cms. (Fig. 8, Pl. 27-28).

On the back of this plaque, which has previously been used as a belt, to the right, in an area surrounded by a decorative motif, there is a figure of the God Haldi riding on the back of a lion (Fig. 8, Pl. 27). On the front, executed in a double line of dots, there is a figure with his hands raised at the sides; the legs are also extended to the sides. The spaces around the figure have been filled with round bumps (Pl. 28).

24. Adana Regional Museum.

height 7,5 cms. width 6 cms. (Pl. 29).

The top left hand corner of this plaque has been broken off. It depicts by a row of dots a double-headed figure. Both the arms are extended up at the sides and he holds in each hand the stylised form of an ear of wheat or barley. To the right and left of the figure there is a round bulge surrounded by dots, apparently decorative²⁰.

25. Adana Regional Museum.

height 8,5 cms. width 5,7 cms. (Fig. 9, Pl. 30-31).

This plaque has been used previously as a belt, and on the back surface there are three winged lions one above the other. When the style of the lions is taken into consideration, it can be suggested that the belt was made in the era of Rusa III (625-585 BC.) (Pl. 30). On the offering plaque side, executed in the simplest lines, is seen frontally a bearded male figure. With a pointed headdress. He carries a square emblem in his left hand and an ear of wheat or barley in his right hand. The spaces on the plaque have been filled with round bulges (Pl. 3).

²⁰ Cf. P. R. S. Moorey, *Some Ancient Metal Belts, Iran V* (1967), p. 87, fig. 2.

26. Adana Regional Museum. Inv. no. 117. 6. 1971.

height 11 cms. width 10,5 cms. (Pl. 32-33).

This plaque had been previously used as a belt. On the back there is a design of interlocking spirals and on the left hand side, one above the other, there are five bulls with wings and the bodies of birds (Pl. 32)²¹. On the offering plaque side, there are two front views of faces shown by lines of small dots. The mouths consist of two lines; the rest of the space has been filled with round bulges.

27. Adana Regional Museum.

height 10,7 cms. width 7,8 cms. (Fig. 10, Pl. 34-35).

The top edge of this plaque has been cut in a saw edge form and both sides have been used as offering plaques. On the side which seems to have been used first, there is the figure of a god with wings and horns, wearing a long robe and carrying a bucket. He is advancing towards the right (Fig. 10; Res. 34 Pl. 34). On the other side there are two faces, front view, made with dotted lines, and the rest of the space is filled with round bumps.

28. Konya Museum.

height 6,7 cms. width 5,3 cms. (Pl. 36).

This shows only the front view of a human face with the mouth depicted as three lines one above the other; the workmanship is very poor.

29. Adana Regional Museum. Inv. no. 117. 12. 1971/1.

height 6,2 cms. width 7 cms. (Pl. 37).

The top edge of this plaque has a saw edge and displays a front view of a face worked in a double row of small bumps. The eyes of the figure are round protuberances and the mouth is a triple row of small dots²².

30. Adana Regional Museum.

height 6,1 cms. width 8,8 cms. (Pl. 38).

²¹ See A. Erzen, *Belleten*, 38 (1974), III. 40.

²² A face resembling this and perhaps belonging to the same period was found in the Megara Hyblaea excavations in Italy. Cf. A. W. van Buren, *News Letter from Rome*, *AJA* 67 (1963), fig. 24.

Outlined by three rows of closely spaced dots, five ape-like human faces are shown. The brows have been made by chisel blows on the back surface and the eyes each consist of a dot. The mouths are a series of double lines. The remaining area of the plaque is partially covered by a series of round bumps.

DISCUSSION

The Giyimli Urartian offering plaques that have been catalogued above have, at the present time, no parallels in the rest of Urartu. Even though the gold and silver pendants and medallions found at Toprakkale²³ and Karmir-Blur²⁴ bear certain resemblances to the double-figured Giyimli plaques, the greater number of them seem to have the exact characteristics of some of the gold plaques in the Oxus find²⁵. For example, the women in headdresses in 1 and 2 have exactly the same characteristics as on the gold plaques of the Oxus find²⁶.

Research conducted on the Giyimli finds has led to some new theories on the religion of the Urartian people and related subjects. These may be summarized:

1 — All the Urartian Gods have a single horn and some of them have wings, therefore the winged figures on the Altuntepe and Arinberd wall frescoes could possibly be Gods and not geniuses as they have previously been described²⁷.

2 — In an overall study of these offering plaques it appears that offerings to the Gods were mostly goats and sometimes a bull or a sheep²⁸.

²³ See. S. Lloyd. *Early Highland Peoples of Anatolia* (London, 1967), 111. 112-113.

²⁴ B. Piotrovsky, *Urartu* (Nagel), 1969, III. 122-123.

²⁵ O. M. Dalton, *The Treasures of the Oxus* (London, 1964), pl. XIV-XV.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pl. XV, 93.

²⁷ T. Özgüç, *Altuntepe I*, 1969, p. 17 ff.

²⁸ According to the inscription on the "Mehr gate" it is apparent that usually the sacrifices to the Gods are either sheep or bulls (see B. Piotrovsky, *II Regno di Van*, 1966, p. 319 ff). But in studies on the offering plaques only one plaque depicting a bull and one plate depicting a ram was found. Since the plaques were predominantly made around the 6th century BC. it would appear that during the decline of Urartu goats were more often offered to the Gods.

3 — The Urartians used certain emblems in their religious ceremonies (see. p. 235).

4 — Urartian craftsmen preferred to show their male figures without beards. In all the Urartian figures there are not more than a few male figures with beards. This includes the Budin plaques²⁹.

5 — The figures on the plaques give a considerable amount of information on Urartian dress (see p. 238).

IV. Dating The Plaques :

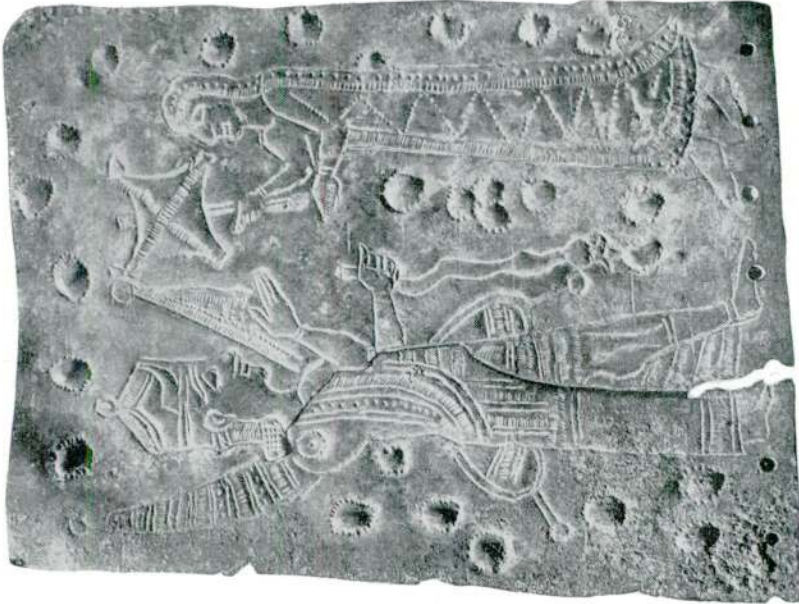
It is possible to date some of the Giyimli plaques by relying on the style of execution of some of the figures on the plaques. For instance, the fashioning of the mouth on the lion (see. Pl. 1) on the Van plaque has caused Prof. Akurgal to date it to the middle of the Urartian period³⁰. The style of execution of the mouth is accepted as being significant in the dating of these pieces. In six of the plaques examined here (for example see, Fig. 2, Pl. 6), the lion figure in the composition has been dated by Prof. Akurgal to the late Urartian style (Cubic Style), and therefore can be dated around the end of the 7th century BC and the beginning of the 6th. But the fact that in the same composition the mouth of the Haldi figure is shown by five lines, and the mouths in most of the human figures in the offering plaques are made of from three to seven lines is considered sufficient reason for them to be dated around the 6th century BC; in fact, a very large number of these figures are so drawn³¹.

Due to the details of the mouth, the lion figures on the side of the plaques that were previously used as belts indicate that, as belts, they were made in the era of Rusa III and then later the reverse sides of these belts were re-worked with simple lines and made into offering plaques, which indicates that they were made in the declining years of the Urartians, or about 590 BC (see Pl. 19-27). Thus it can also be assumed that the examples 20 to 30, which, although they came out of the Giyimli find, do not appear to be a product of Urartian art, were also the results of the Urartian decline. Relying upon the

²⁹ See Note. 3.

³⁰ See O. A. Taşyürek, *Iraq*, 37/2, (1975), pl. XXXVI, a; Cf. E. Akurgal, *Urartaische und Altiranische Kunstzentren*, abb. 25.

³¹ See. O. A. Taşyürek, *The Urartian Belts*, footnote 25.



Res. 2



Res. 1



Res. 4



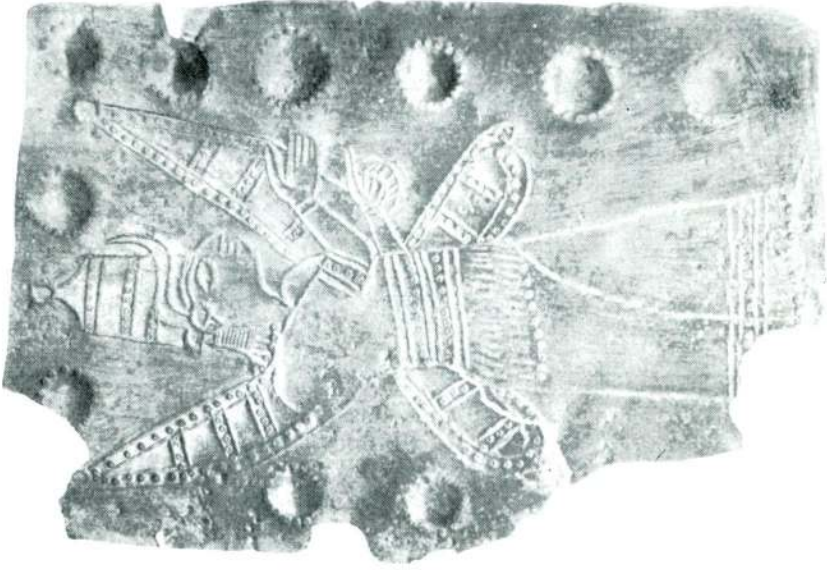
Res. 3



Res. 6



Res. 5



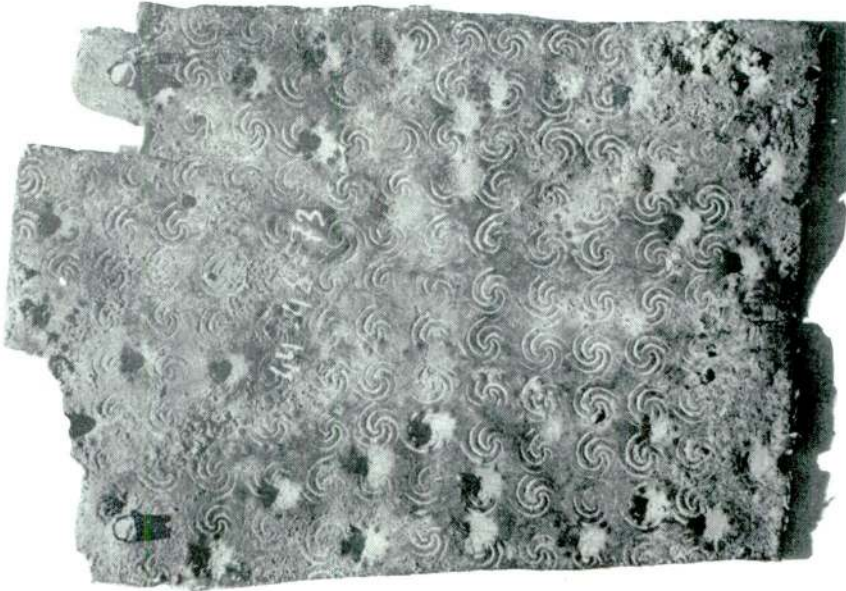
Res. 8



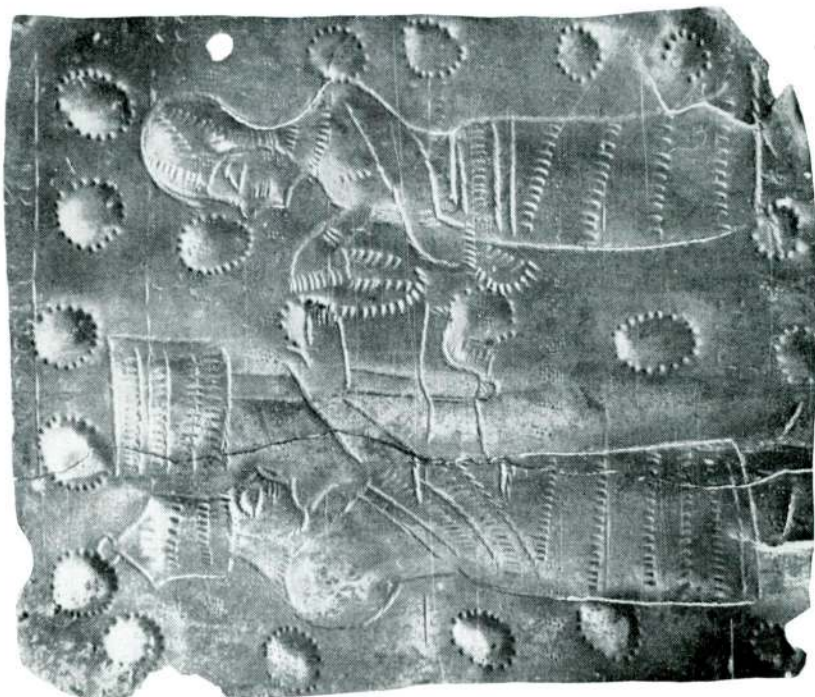
Res. 7



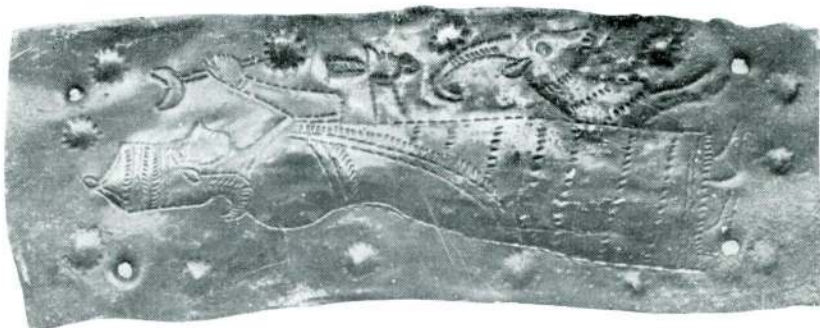
Res. 10



Res. 9



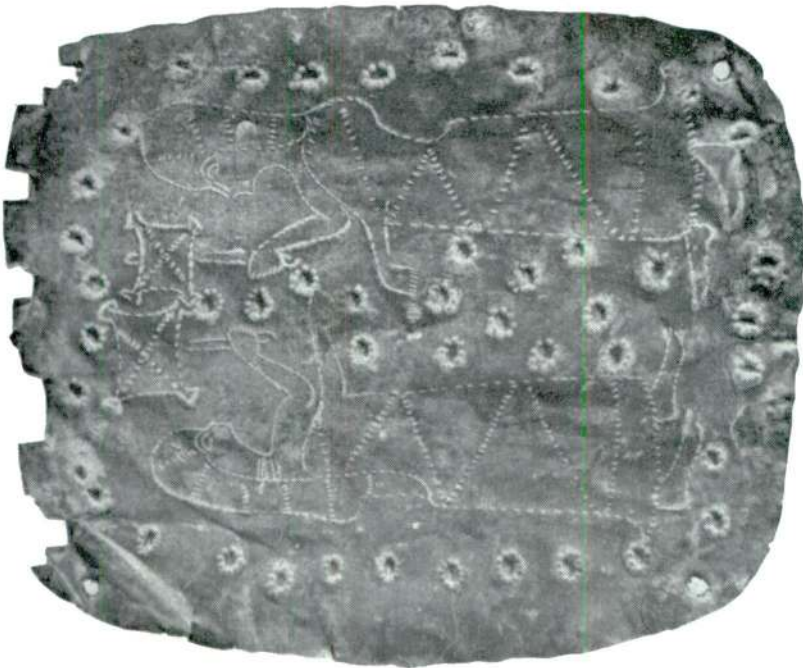
Rcs. 12



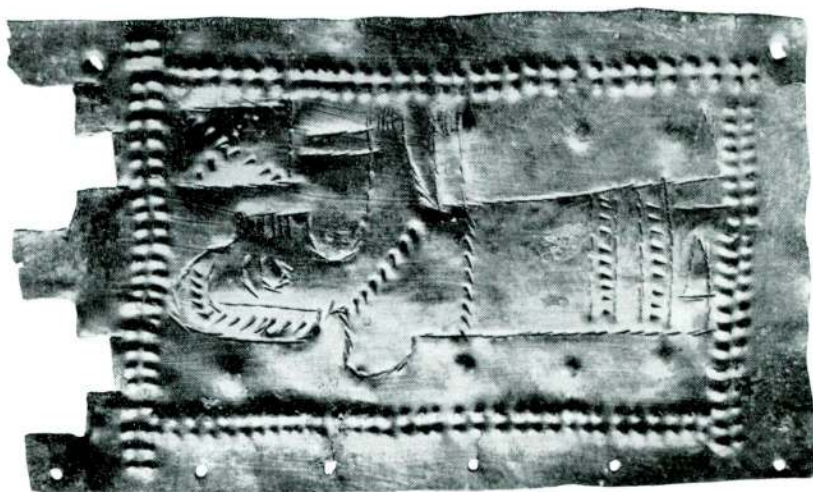
Rcs. 11



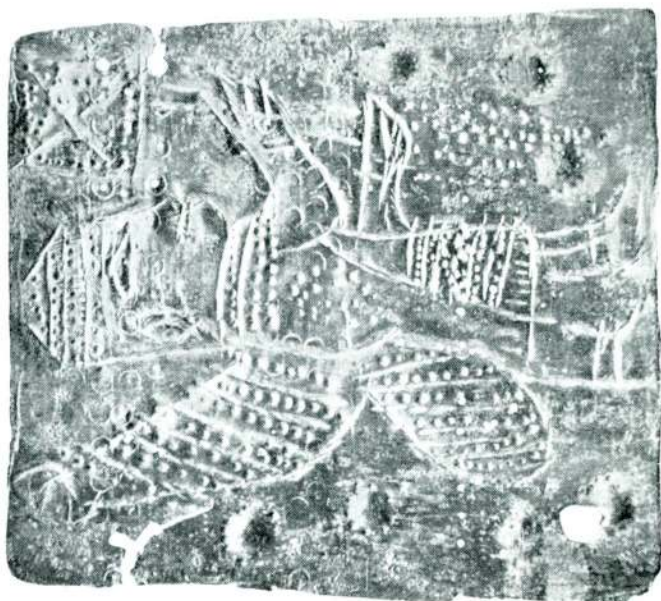
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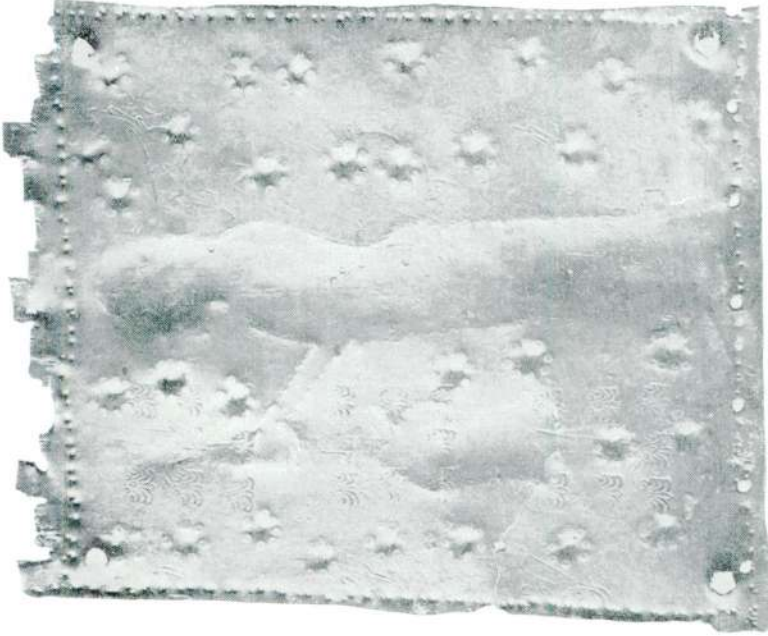
Res. 13



Res. 16



Res. 15

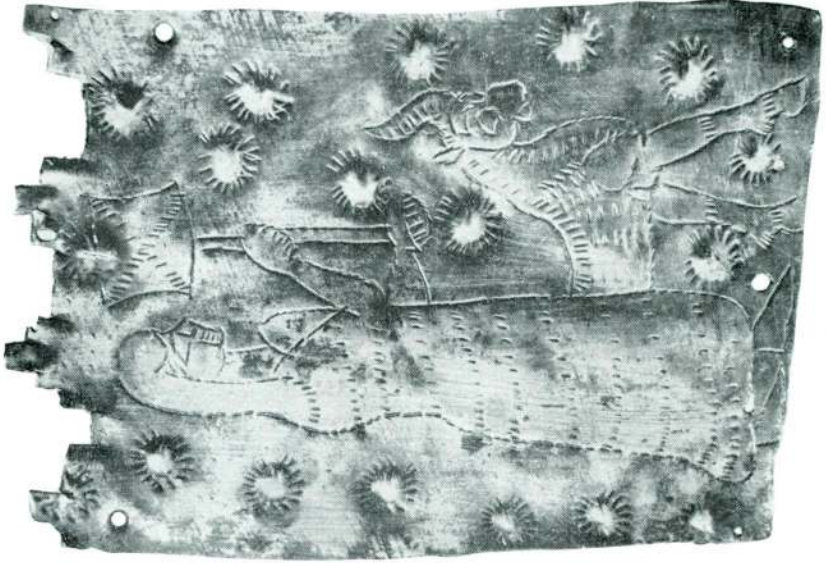


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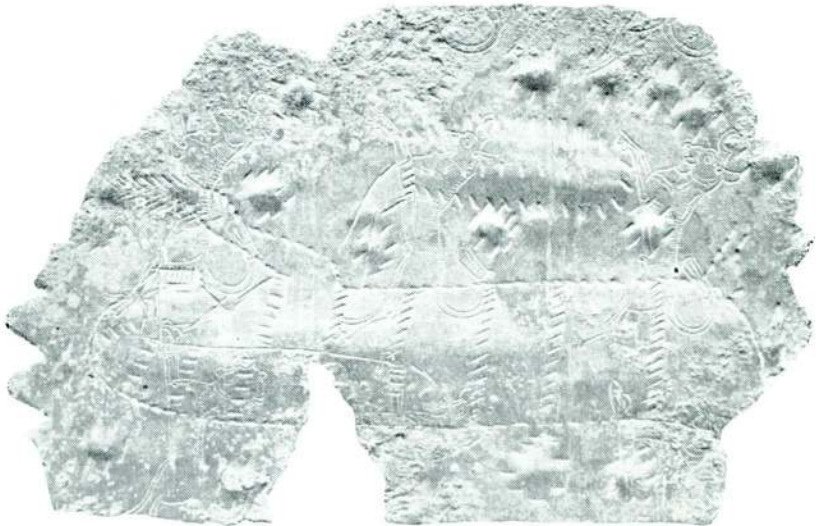


Res. 17

O. A. Tasyürek



Res. 20



Res. 19



Res. 22



Res. 21



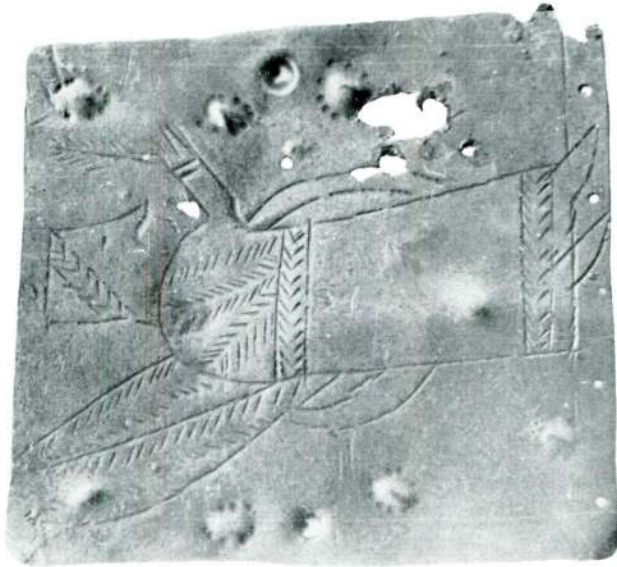
Res. 24



Res. 23



Res. 26



Res. 25



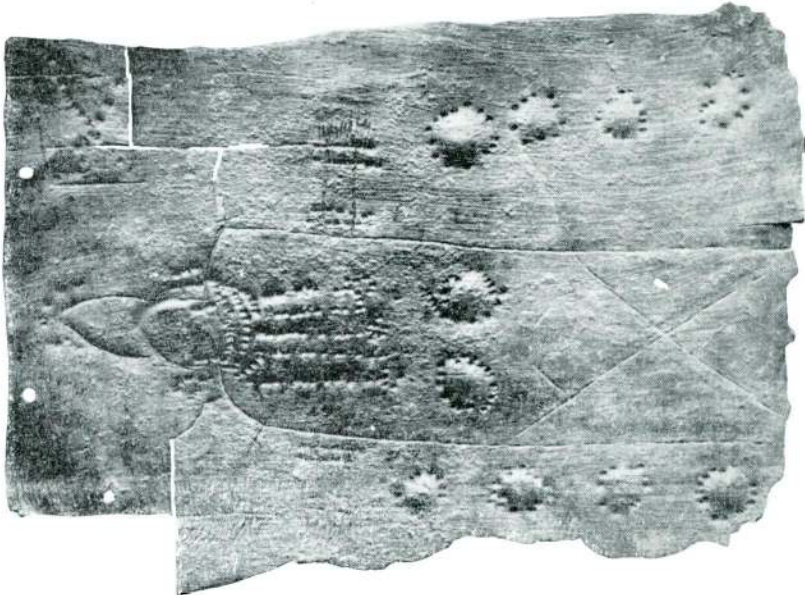
Res. 28



Res. 27



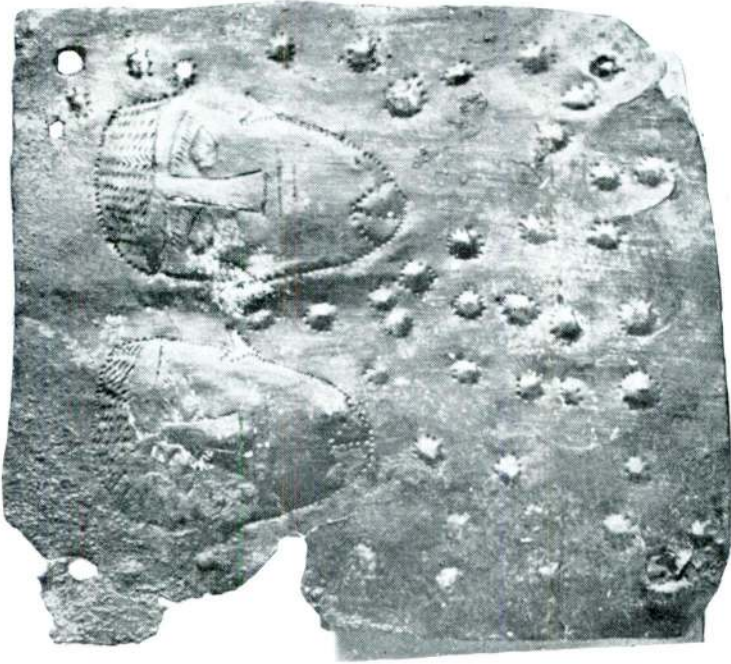
Res. 29



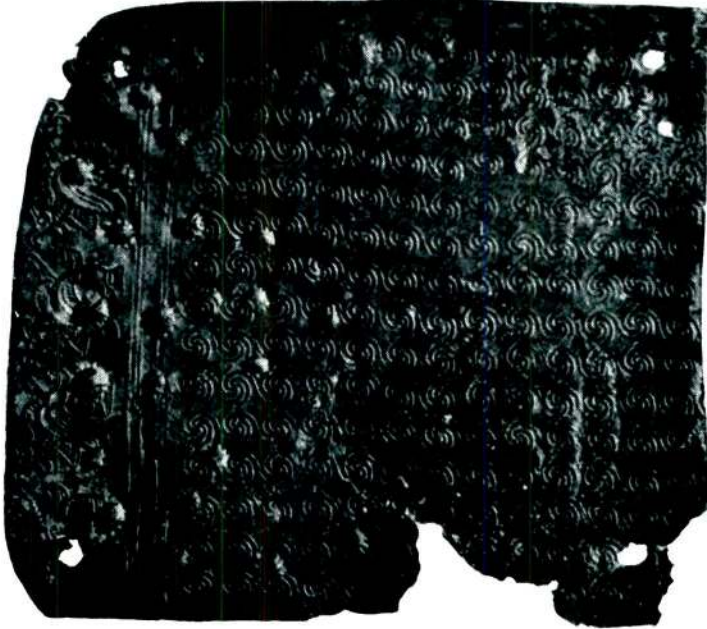
Res. 31



Res. 30



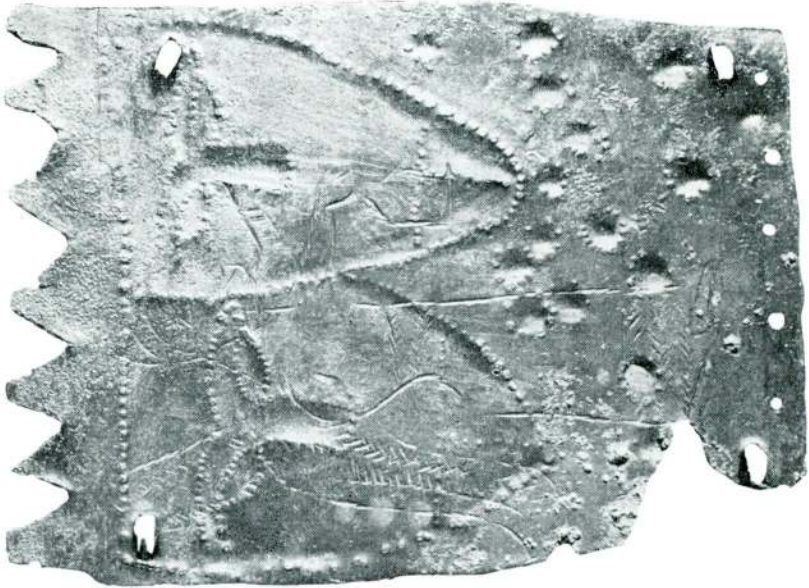
Res. 33



Res. 32



Res. 35



Res. 34



Res. 36



Res. 37

O. A. Taşyürek



Res. 38

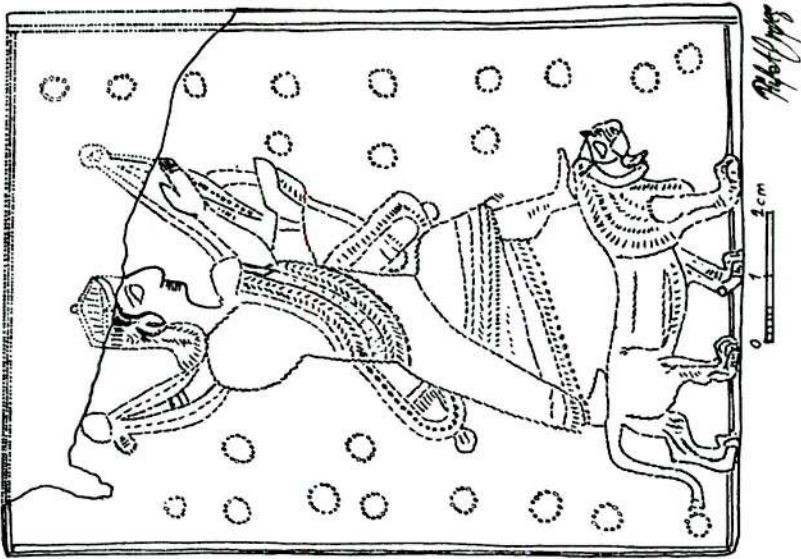


Fig. 2

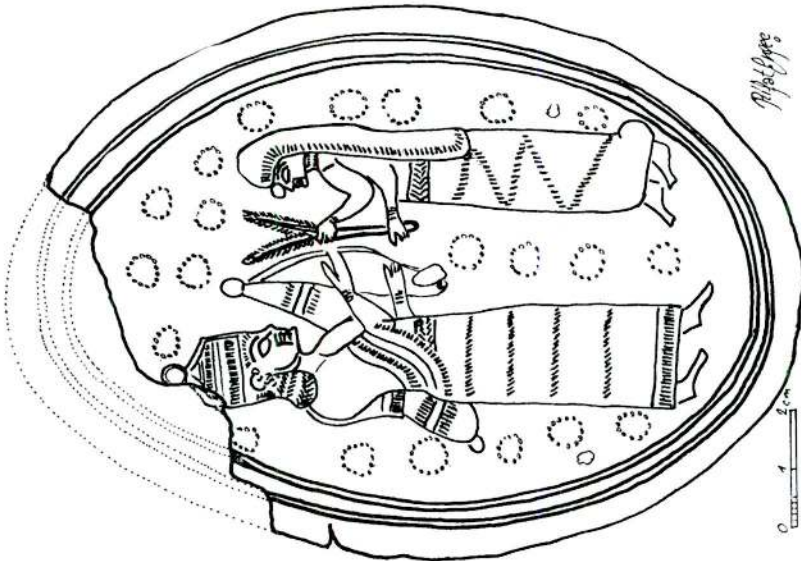


Fig. 1

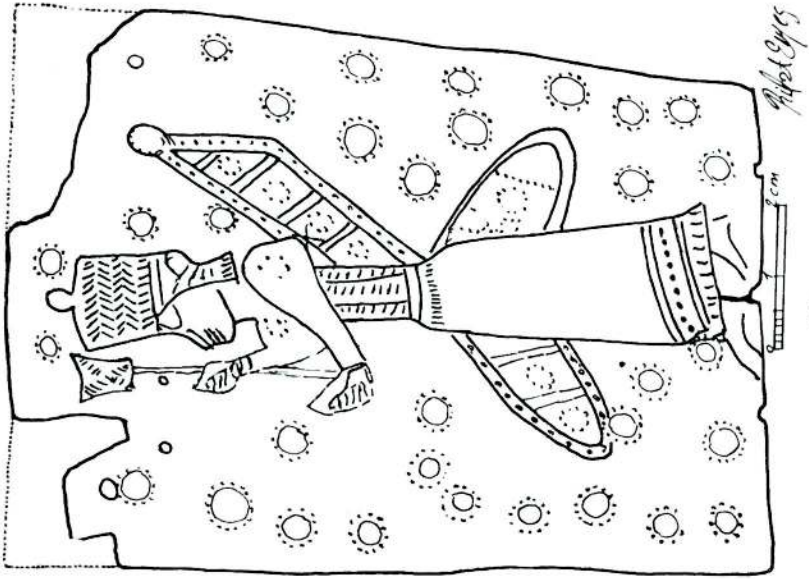


Fig. 4

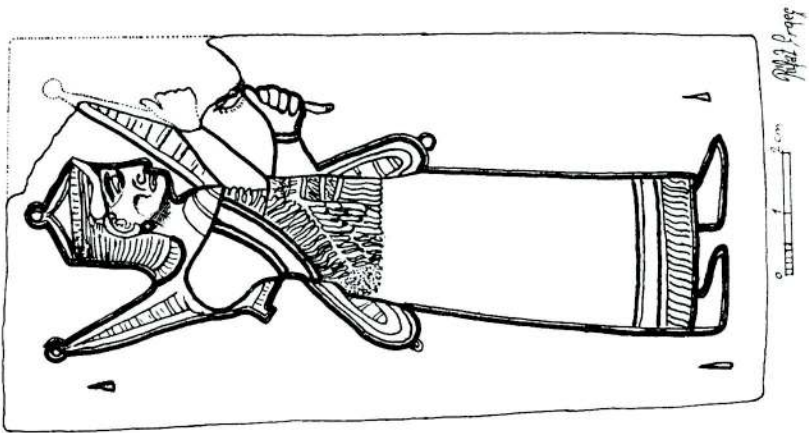


Fig. 3

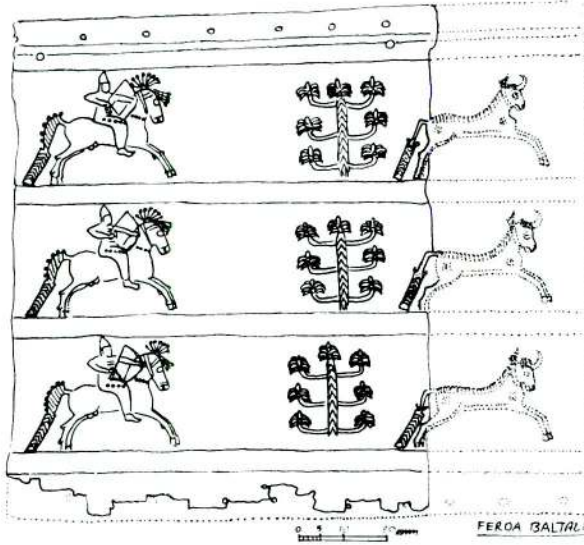


Fig. 5

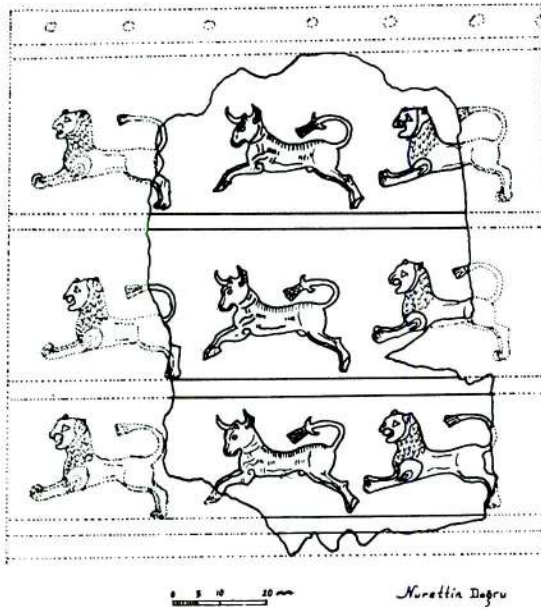


Fig. 6

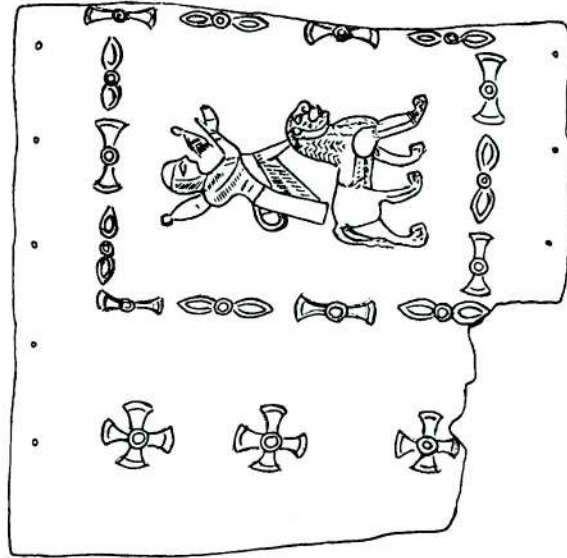


Fig. 8

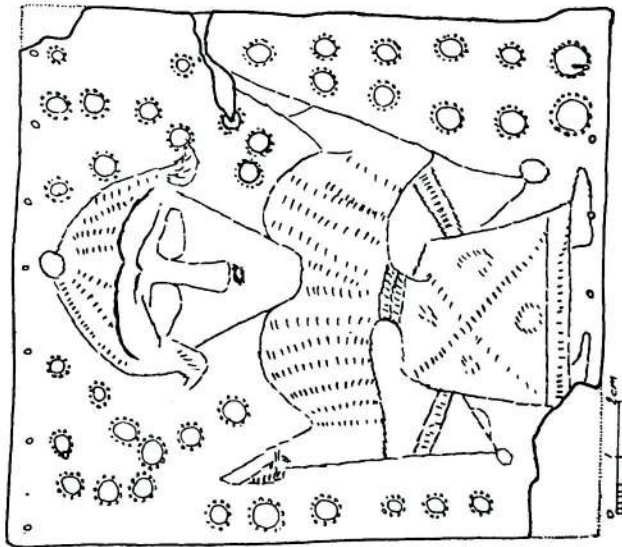


Fig. 7

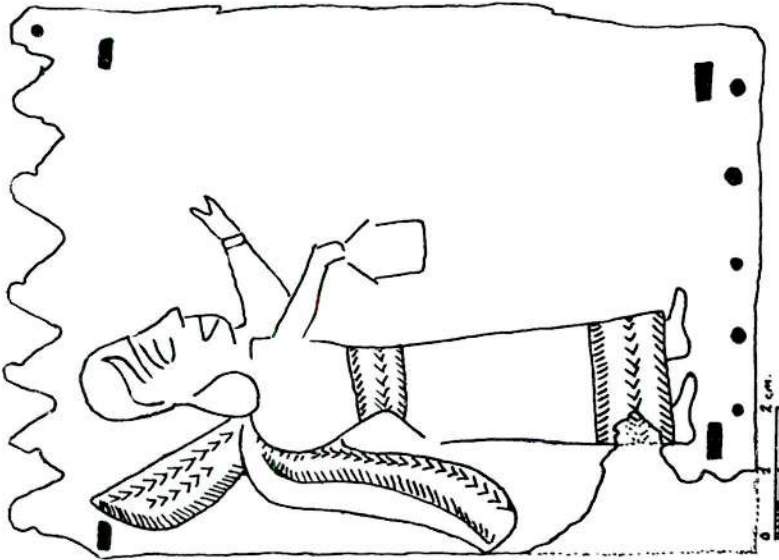


Fig. 10

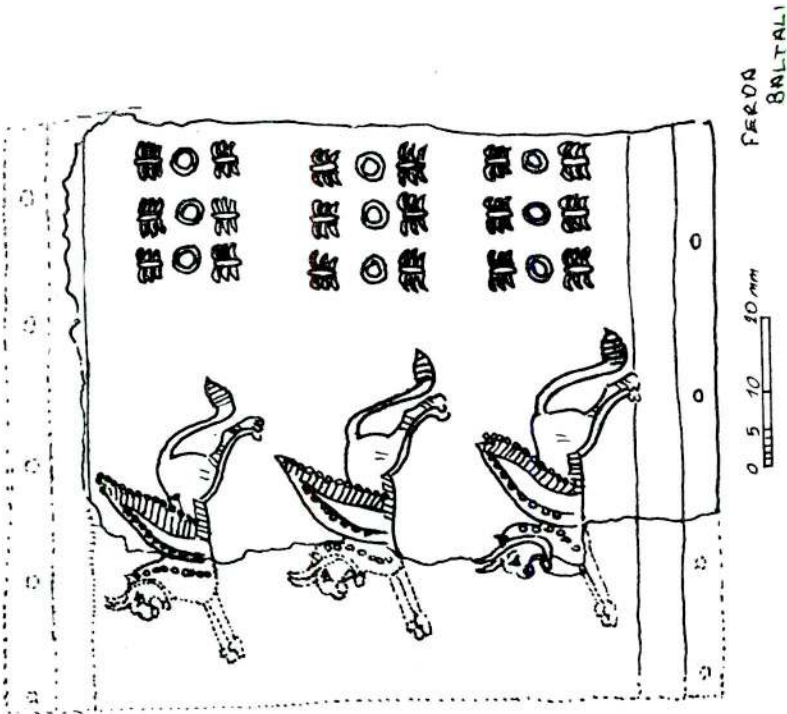


Fig. 9

evidence presented by the examples of Urartian art studied in this text, it would not be erroneous to conclude that the Giyimli offering plaques date from the years between 650 and 585 BC.

V. The Symbols on the offering plaques:

In studying the artifacts, particularly the seals, of the Assyrian, Ancient Babylonian, and Hittite civilisations, all of which had a considerable influence on Urartian art, it becomes apparent that, in the religious ceremonies of ancient Anatolia and Mesopotamia, a number of symbols were used. A number of emblems were found in the Alaca Hüyük Royal graves³² and also there were many different types of symbols found in Assyria.

As seen on the offering plaques examined here, The Urartian religion included some different types of religious symbols that were concerned with the celebration of their cults.

A. Square or rectangular-shaped emblems with a handle: This type is found mostly on the plaques showing one or two figures, but studies of the artifacts from various periods do not give any clues as to the origin of this type of standard. This type of emblem is first seen in Urartu, in the Giyimli find, and it can be supposed that they were used for the first time by the Urartians. The God Haldi holds an emblem of this type on the Van plaque (see. Pl. 1) and thus we are given a clue that the square emblem was used in ceremonies to do with this deity.

B. Crescent-shaped emblems with handles: An example of this type of emblem made of silver was found in graves of Kültepe (Kanish) level Ib³³. They are called Lunulae³⁴ and are seen from time to time on Urartian offering plaques (see. Pl. 11). In the second millennium BC in Akkad³⁵ in Syria³⁶ in Assyria in the Hammurabi period³⁷, also in the first Babylonian Dynasty³⁸ and on the Izin Larsa seals of the same period,³⁹ to name but a few examples of this symbol

³² Ibid, pl. XXVI. cb.

³³ See E. Akurgal, *The Hittites* (1962), pl. 1-12.

³⁴ N. Özgüç, *Kanish Karumu Ib Katı Mühürleri* (Ankara, 1968), p. 9.

³⁵ T. ve N. Özgüç, *Kültepe Kazısı* (1949) (Ankara, 1953), III. pl. 592.

³⁶ H. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals* (1939), pl. XXXIX.

³⁷ Ibid. pl. XLIV.

³⁸ H. Prinz, *Altorientalische Symbolik* (1913), taf. XIII: 7.

³⁹ H. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals*, p. 164, pl. XXVIII (in the left hand of the God Amurru, whose left foot is on a wild goat)

can be found from which it can be deduced that this standard has its origins in Mesopotamia; Further when one finds them on Urartian offering plaques it can be deduced that this type of crescent-shaped emblem with a handle was used in ceremonies concerned with the Moon God.

C. A star inside a crescent or a star by itself: In the plaque depicting a banquet (Pl. 22), the star inside the crescent seen in the top right hand corner, and also the lone star in the top left hand corner, can be considered among the group of astral symbols. The only other example of a similar star in Urartian art can be seen over the head of the Teisheba figure in the Adilcevaz basalt relief⁴⁰. The crescent-shaped symbol is very often seen on seals of Anatolian and Mesopotamian origin dating from the third millennium BC.⁴¹ On some examples of Mittannian seals, the crescent can be seen inside the sun symbol⁴². A seal from the Hittite Empire period portrays only a crescent⁴³ while a relief showing Aramaic influence from the late Hittite period has a sun disc inside the crescent⁴⁴. But this type of sun in the Hittite period could also be an ideogram of the Sun god⁴⁵.

It seems apparent that astral symbols such as the star and the star and crescent have their origin in Mesopotamia, but these motifs appear to be established more under the influence of the Assyrians than the Urartians. One often finds this type of star or crescent on Urartian seals⁴⁶.

D. The upside down pomegranate branch with one fruit and a flower on it: this symbol can be found on the plaques carrying one or two figures (Pl. 2). These pomegranate symbols are carried in the left hand of winged male figures on the fragments of belts found at Karmir-Blur, but the figures on these pieces are seen riding on lions

⁴⁰ E. Akurgal, *Urartaische und Altiranische Kunstzentren*, abb. 66.

⁴¹ Some examples of the crescent were found in Mesopotamia in the Khafajah-sin Temple from the Jemdet-Nasr period (L. Goff. *Symbols of Prehistoric Mesopotamia* (1963), fig. 442, and also in Tepe-Gawra from the Gawra period (Ibid. fig. 556).

⁴² N. Özgüç, *Kültepe Mühür Baskılarında Anadolu Gurubu* (1965), p. 32.

⁴³ M. Riemschnieder, *Die Welt der Hethiter* (1954), taf. 98.

⁴⁴ E. Akurgal, *The Hittites*, pl. 131.

⁴⁵ H. G. Guterbock, *Belleten*, VII (1943), p. 277.

⁴⁶ M. N. van Loon, *Urartian Art*, p. 150, pl. XXXV; B. Piotrovsky, *Urartu* (Nagel), pl. 40-42.

or bulls and have been identified by both Piotrovsky and by van Loon as being Teisheba and the God Haldi⁴⁷. In Urartian art the pomegranate motif is most often seen on the tree of life⁴⁸, and the motif of three pomegranates on an upside down branch can often be seen on reliefs and seals of the Assyrian period⁴⁹. One finds Gods holding pomegranates in the late Hittite period. For instance, in one of the Carcamish reliefs the Goddess Kubaba is seen holding a pomegranate⁵⁰, which leads one to consider that this may have been a sacred fertility symbol and to have come to the Urartians with the same meaning. In Anatolia the pomegranate is a symbol of fertility even today.

E. Wheat or barley ears: It is also thought that the wheat or barley ears held in the hands of the figures on the offering plaques are some kind of fertility symbol (Pl. 5, 14, 17, 19). This type of composition exists on late Hittite reliefs as well; for example, the women carrying ears of wheat in their hands in a religious ceremony at Carcamish⁵¹. The rock reliefs at Ivriz of the god of fertility and King Warpalawas confronting each other, can be given as an example of this⁵². On a gold medallion found at Toprakkale is depicted a Queen or Goddess sitting on her throne, and in front of her a female figure is presenting her with an object that resembles that found on the fifth offering plaque examined here⁵³. This makes it possible that this kind of activity depicted on the Urartian offering plaques is also to be connected with fertility.

F. Prayer beads: The strings of beads carried by the male and female figures on the offering plaques (see Pl. 3, 14, 15) also have religious significance.

⁴⁷ B. Piotrovsky, *Urartu* (Nagel), p. 173, pl. 80; M. N. van Loon, *Urartian Art*, p. 122, fig. 14 (van Loon describes the upside down pomegranate branch in the hands of the gods as being a mace, but these symbols are plainly visible on the offering plaques. One should also point out that the gods and kings of Mesopotamia and Anatolia did not carry their maces upside-down).

⁴⁸ M. N. van Loon, *Urartian Art*, p. 78, pl. VII ve p. 155, pl. XXVIII.

⁴⁹ H. Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*, (Penguin Books), 1970, p. 173, fig. 199.

⁵⁰ E. Akurgal, *The Hittites*, p. 128, III. 115.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* p. 127 Ill. III.

⁵² *Ibid.* p. 14; cf. Ill. 4.

⁵³ R. D. Barnett, *Iraq*, XII (1950), fig. 18.

There is apparently a similar string of beads in the hands of the god Adad on the cylindrical seal dating from the period of Assurnasirpal (883-859 BC⁵⁴). This would appear to indicate that this symbol comes from Mesopotamia.

VI. Clothes in Urartu According To The Offering Plaques :

It is possible to tell from these plaques a certain amount about what the people of Urartu used to wear. Until now, the information acquired from Urartian sculptures, reliefs, bronze plaques and similar objects has not been satisfactory, but a certain amount can be acquired from these offering plaques.

It cannot be said that the figures studied are all Gods, priests or important persons. It must be borne in mind that some of the figures are of the figures of ordinary people, from which we can conclude that all Urartian dress was ankle length and embroidered in various ways. Sometimes, on the men, there appear to be cloaks, some of them enclosing the shoulders, sometimes down to the waist, sometimes coming further down, sometimes right to the ground. Both men and women are occasionally seen wearing belts. The female figures in religious ceremonies seem to be wearing cloth head coverings that come down to the middle of the back.

On the subject of dress the Urartians and the Assyrians have many similarities which can be brought out with many examples⁵⁵.

VII. The Artistic Influences On the Offering Plaques :

It is immediately apparent to the writer that there are definite Assyrian, Aramaic, Hittite and Luristan influences on the artistic style of these plaques. In the works numbered 13 and 19 here the influence of Luristan art is obvious (see. Pl. 14-21). But, all the examples showing high quality workmanship show Assyrian characteristics⁵⁶. In the banquet scenes made by the Assyrians and late Hittites, a number of similarities can often be seen with these offering plaques⁵⁷, which would indicate that these offering plaques have been influenced by Hittite and Assyrian art.

⁵⁴ R. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals*, pl. XXXIII; E. Stromenger, *The Art of Mesopotamia*, pl. 190.

⁵⁵ Gif. I Cf. E. Stromenger, *The Art of Mesopotamia*, pl. 224, fig. 18; *Ibid.* pl. 226 (It is possible to give more examples).

⁵⁶ See illustrations 1-8, cf. E. Stromenger, *The Art of Mesopotamia*, pl. 224-7.

⁵⁷ See no. 20, illustration 22, note 18