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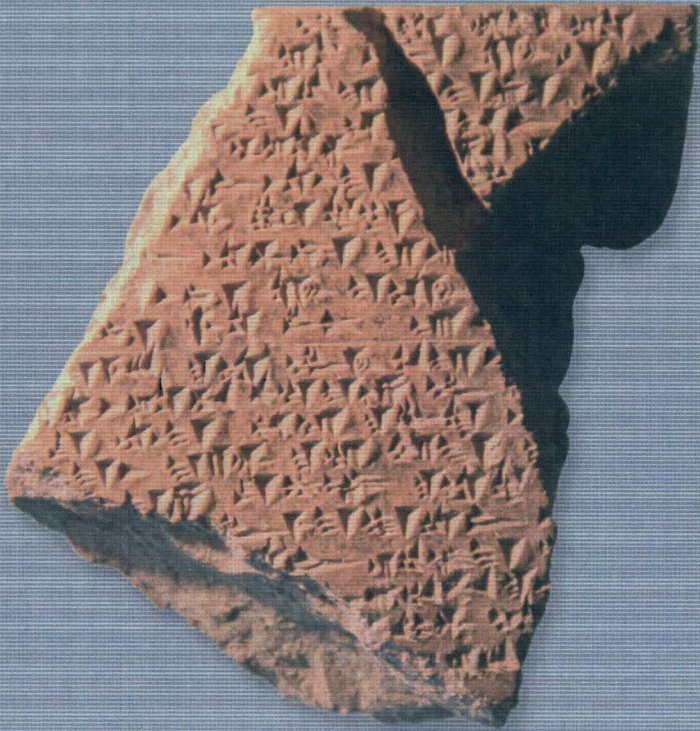
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# Şanlıurfa - Yeni Mahalle Höyüğü in the Light of Novel C14 Analysis

## Yeni Karbon-14 Analizleri Işığında Şanlıurfa-Yeni Mahalle Höyüğü

Bahattin Çelik

### Özet

*Şanlıurfa-Yeni Mahalle yerleşiminden elde edilen karbon örnekleriyle daha önce yapılmış olan iki adet C14 analizi dışında, 3 adet C14 analizi daha yapılmıştır. Bu analizler ışığında, I. Terazzo evresi ve II. Terazzo evresi olarak nitelendirilen evreler üzerine yeni bir değerlendirme yapılmıştır. Bunun sonucunda, Şanlıurfa-Yeni Mahalle Çanak Çömleksiz Neolitik dönem kültür tabakalarının daha çok Erken Çanak Çömleksiz Neolitik Dönem B (EPPNB) evresine ait tabakalar olduğu anlaşılmıştır.*

Şanlıurfa - Yeni Mahalle Höyüğü is located within the ancient town center of Şanlıurfa, north of Balıklıgöl sacred area (Fig 1). Today, the entire mound is located within the ancient town center and is underneath single-storey dwellings. During the recent road construction works performed at this area, a section of approximately 15 m length, 60 cm thickness and 2 m height is revealed (Fig. 2). A salvage excavation is then initiated at this section in year 1997 as directed by Şanlıurfa Museum Directorate with Harran University Archeology Department acting as counselors. As a result of the studies conducted therein, 13 cultural levels are discovered, all of which are understood to be from Pre-Pottery Neolithic period.

Prior to the studies performed at the revealed section of Şanlıurfa - Yeni Mahalle Höyüğü in year 1997, the lifesize sculpture<sup>1</sup> of a man with approximately 1.90 cm length and an unshaped feet section was retrieved during the "Balıklıgöl Landscaping Work Project" procured by Şanlıurfa Governorate in 1993 (Fig. 3). This sculpture is modeled as holding his genitals with both hands, with a chevron pattern located around its neck.<sup>2</sup> The chevron pattern is also present on the "T" shaped pillars, which are well-known from the Neolithic settlements in the region.<sup>3</sup> The ocular section

of the sculpture, the mouth section of which is not shaped, is recessed with blade pieces made from obsidian are inserted inside. The sculpture presents identical properties with the sculptures retrieved from Nevali Çori<sup>4</sup>, Göbekli Tepe<sup>5</sup> and Karahan Tepe<sup>6</sup> settlements, which are dated to Pre-Pottery Neolithic Period and the sculpture<sup>7</sup> currently on display at Gaziantep Museum. Furthermore, this sculpture appears as continuation and successor of the tradition of "T" shaped pillars discovered at Nevali Çori<sup>8</sup>, Göbekli Tepe<sup>9</sup>, Karahan Tepe<sup>10</sup>, Hamzan Tepe<sup>11</sup>, Sefer Tepe<sup>12</sup> and Taşlı Tepe<sup>13</sup> settlements and the pillar currently on display at Adıyaman Museum<sup>14</sup> (Map 1).

When the small artifacts retrieved from the salvage excavation conducted at the discovered section are examined from the technologic and typological aspects, domination of the Big Arrowheads Industry (BAI) can be clearly observed.<sup>15</sup> The arrowheads exhibit similarities with the arrowheads retrieved from Byblos, Aswad, Cheikh Hassan and Mureybet settlements.<sup>16</sup> Almost all arrowheads are made on blade extracted from bipolar core.<sup>17</sup> In particular, Yeni Mahalle Paleolithic tool industry appears to be contemporaneous with Mureybet IVa and IVb epochs.<sup>18</sup> Based on the these similarities, it is concluded that the arrow-heads at the settlement are identical with the arrowheads observed at Early Pre-Pottery Neolithic Period B epoch.

1 Çelik 2000a: Fig. 3. ; Hauptmann 2003: Abb. 1-4.

2 Hauptmann 2003: Abb. 1-4, 626-628,

3 Hauptmann 2011: Fig. 37.

4 Hauptmann 2007: 144, fig. 11a-b, 12a-b, 13a-b, 14a-b.

5 Schmidt 2010: Fig. 20.

6 Çelik 2011a: Fig. 16. ; Çelik 2011b: 91-95, fig. 1a-d.

7 Çelik 2005: 28-29, figs. 1-3; Bulgan and Çelik 2011: 85-90, figs. 1-3, 5.

8 Hauptmann 2007: Fig. 9.

9 Schmidt 2010: Fig. 4, 6-10.

10 Çelik 2000b: Fig. 1; 2011a: Figs. 8-10.

11 Çelik 2004: 3, fig.4; 2006a: 222, fig.5; 2010: 258, fig.2.

12 Çelik 2006b: Fig. 2.

13 Çelik *et al.* 2011c: 225-236, figs. 7a-b.

14 Hauptmann 2000: Abb. 8-10.

15 Çelik 2007: 163-166, figs. 20-21, 26; 2011d: 143-145, figs. 20-21, 26.

16 Abbes 1993: Figs. 7-8, 10, 13-14; Cauvin 1994: 79, figs. 24/1, 3.

17 Çelik 2011d: Fig. 25.

18 Çelik 2007: 165.

The remnants of two round architectural buildings were revealed at the section where the salvage excavation was performed. Furthermore, terrazzo floor coverings, which are understood as an architectural element and part of such buildings were also discovered (Fig. 4). Moreover, terrazzo floor covering examples that do not belong to any building were also encountered. Both the terrazzo floors and the round buildings are building traditions prevalently encountered at the region during Epi-Paleolithic and Neolithic period.<sup>19</sup>

The round building architecture present at Yeni Mahalle section is a civilian structure, which is an architectural aspect presently not encountered at Urfa region except for Göbekli Tepe and Hamzan Tepe. The round architecture discovered at Hamzan Tepe pertains to a civilian building.<sup>20</sup> The round buildings discovered at Göbekli Tepe, on the other hand, are characterized as cult structures by the excavators.<sup>21</sup> In general, Round Buildings are an architectural tradition that appears at Levant, Mesopotamia and Southeastern Anatolia Region during Epoch A of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic Period for the first time.<sup>22</sup> The most striking aspect of the round buildings at Şanlıurfa-Yeni Mahalle section is that the buildings have terrazzo coverings at their floors.

Two distinct dates came up as a result of the C14 analyzes conducted in year 2004 with the charcoal samples collected from Yeni Mahalle section. One of the dates falls around 11210±90 BC, which is considered as the *Terrazzo I* epoch, and the other date dates to 8690±100 BC, which is considered as the *Terrazzo II* epoch. In particular, the date 11210 BC appears to be a date that is adequate for the architectural findings. The date 8690±100 BC, on the other hand, is a date that is adequate for the small artifacts.

The section inside the Şanlıurfa - Yeni Mahalle Höyüğü pertaining to the Pre-Pottery Neolithic period must date to 8830-8650 BC. The date 11210 BC is a period that rather represents the Epi-Paleolithic period in the region and no small artifacts are discovered from

such period in the section. Furthermore, the last three C14 analyzes performed recently also did not produce any earlier dates. However, the round architectural building remnants revealed at the section may point out the possibility that levels pertaining to the Epoch A of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic period. This type of buildings both with round plan and with terrazzo floorings only appeared with the round cult buildings only discovered at Level III of Göbekli Tepe and date to Epoch A of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic period.<sup>23</sup>

During the excavations recently performed at Göbekli Tepe, a large round structure with terrazzo flooring from Level II was unearthed.<sup>24</sup> This structure dates back to approximately 8600 BC.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, by virtue of the presence of this round structure with terrazzo flooring discovered at Level II at Göbekli Tepe, it wouldn't be wrong to indicate that the round buildings discovered at Şanlıurfa-Yeni Mahalle section are from around 8800 BC.

In conclusion, in the light of the recent C14 analyses carried out with the charcoal samples collected from the section<sup>26</sup>, it is clearly understood that Şanlıurfa-Yeni Mahalle settlement is first founded during Epoch B of the Early Pre-Pottery Neolithic Period on the bedrock for the flint stone tool find obtained from Yeni Mahalle Höyüğü correlate with the C14 analyses results (Table 1). For this reason it's appropriate to date the settlement to PPNB period.

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- 19 See. Watkins 2006: 71-85; 1990:343; Watkins *et al.* 1995: 3-7, figs. 2-4, 2.10-13; Kozłowski and Aurenche 2005: 32, maps 12: 1-6.; Sicher-Akman 2001: 389.
- 20 Çelik 2010: Figs. 3-4.
- 21 Schmidt 2010: Fig. 2, Anlage F.
- 22 Sicher-Akman 2001: 389-394; Stordeur and Ibanez 2008: 33-85; Karul 2011: Figs. 4-5, 11; Özkaya 2011: Figs. 2-5; Rosenberg 1999: Figs. 2, 6-8; 2011: Figs. 2-5.; Özdoğan 1999: 41-44, figs. 6-7, 9.
- 23 Dietrich and Schmidt 2010: 82-83, fig. 1; Kromer and Schmidt 1998: 8-9.
- 24 Schmidt 2010: Fig. 2, Anlage F.
- 25 Pustovoytov *et al.* 2007: 836-838.
- 26 Many thanks to Dr. Utz Böhner and Prof. Dr. Ofer Bar-Yosef for C-14 analyzes.

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Fig. 1: Urfa Citadel, Balıklıgöl and Yeni Mahalle view (photo. B. Çelik).



Fig. 2: Profile of Urfa-Yeni Mahalle (photo. B. Çelik).



Fig. 3. Urfâ-Yeni Mahalle Statue (photo. G. Tan).

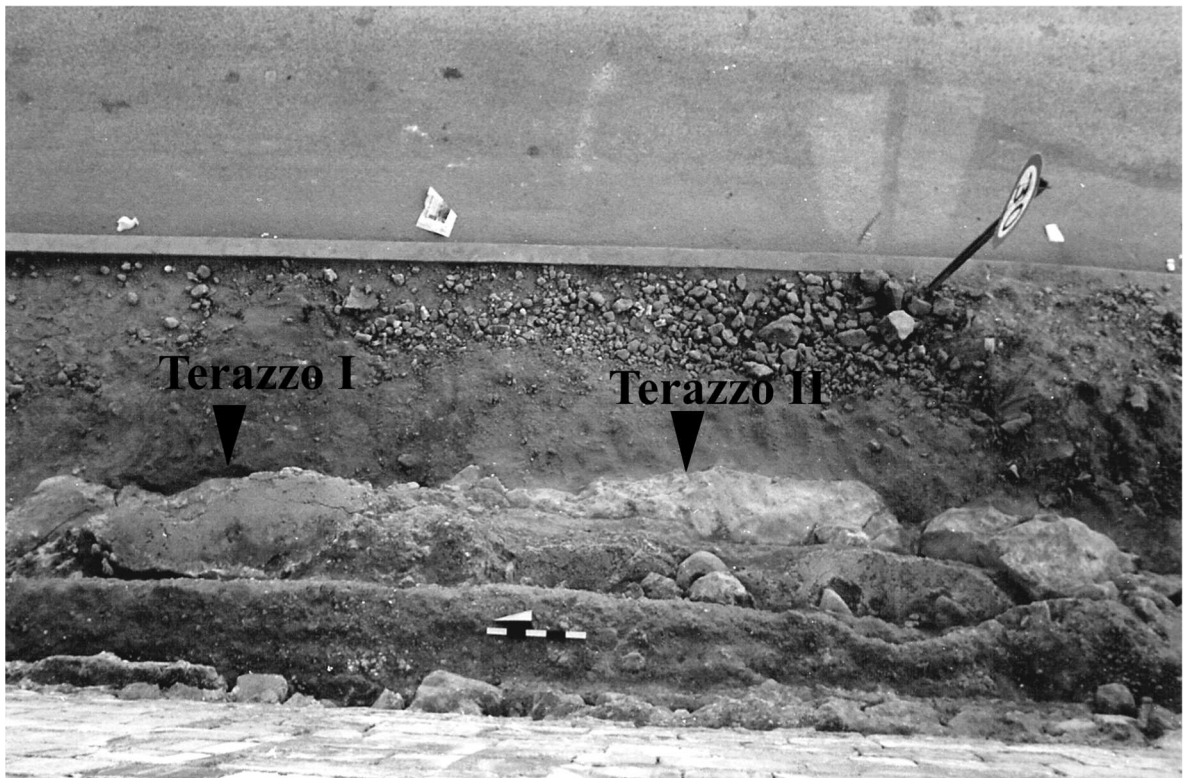
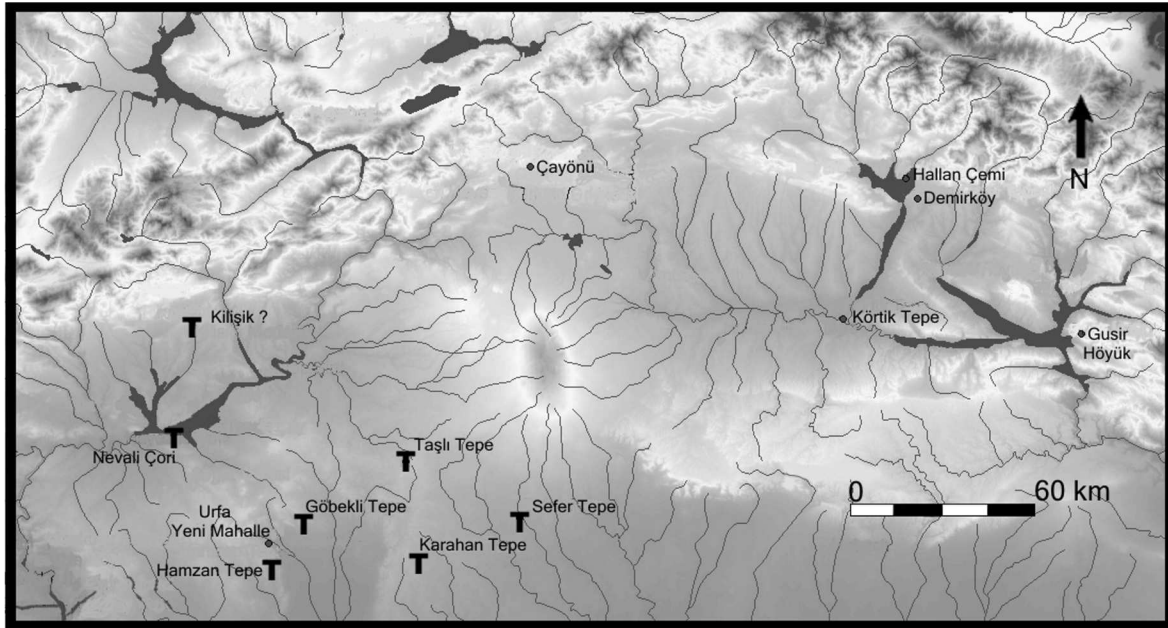


Fig. 4: Terazzo floor from above (photo. B. Çelik).





Map 1: Pre-Pottery Neolithic settlements.

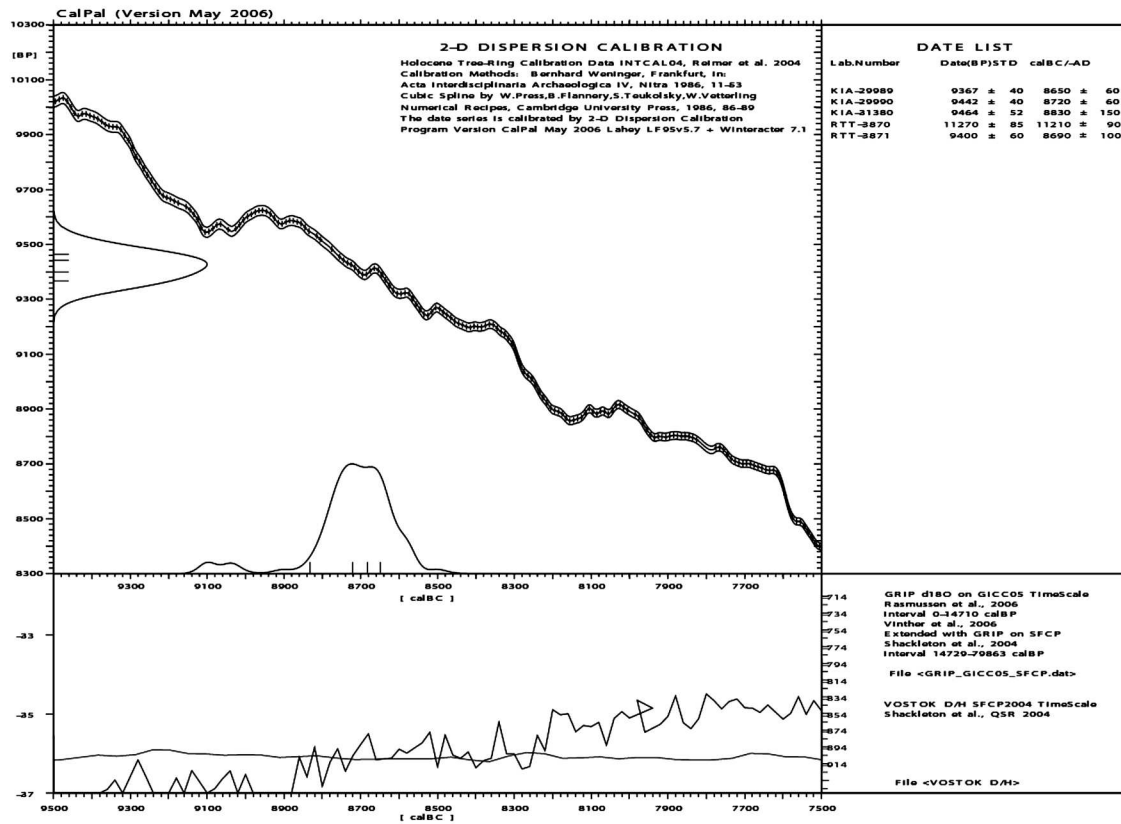


Table 1: Urfa-Yeni Mahalle C14 dates.