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A STRATEGIC POINT ON THE EASTERN ROMAN BORDER: ADILCEVAZ CASTLE

ROMA'NIN DOĞU SINIRINDA STRATEJİK BİR NOKTA: ADİLCEVAZ KALESİ

Emine TOK*

ABSTRACT

Adilcevaz Castle is located on a dominant hill with a steep slope on the edge of Lake Van in Adilcevaz district of Bitlis province today. This hilly area is the low elevation extensions of the volcanic mountain formation, most of which covers the borders of Bitlis province, descending into the lake. The hill on which the castle was built is connected to the main rock only with a narrow passage from the north while possesses extremely steep slopes on the east, west and south**.** At first glance, the volcanic rock fleets on the east and west give the impression that they clamped the hill on two sides**.** These slopes resembling steep walls are actually the reason why the castle was built here**.** The traces show that there was a continuous settlement on the hill accompanied by a fortification since the early times and as the settlement expanded, with the new additions to the fortification, the whole area turned into a fortified urban center. During the late Roman - early Byzantine period, Adilcevaz was one of the frontier fortifications of the Eastern Roman Empire and the center of the diocese and due to its geographic location it was also located on an important road network. The secondary main road from Edessa to Ani and from there to the North was running through Adilcevaz. So the city has changed hands among many civilizations throughout the history, the walls protecting the settlement were destroyed in the wars and repaired. In addition, earthquakes in various periods also caused the city walls to collapse. Although most of the walls have been demolished today, three phases were identified according to the construction technique, inscriptions and additional traces.

Keywords: *Adilcevaz Castle, Arkenabu, Zat al-Cavz, Ad al-Cavd, Alcavaz*

* Doç. Dr., Ege Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Sanat Tarihi Bölümü, İzmir.
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9095-7022 ♦ E-mail: emine.tok@ege.edu.tr

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ÖZ

Adilcevaz Kalesi, günümüzde Bitlis ilinin Adilcevaz ilçesinde, Van gölünün kenarında sarp yamaçlı hakim bir tepe üzerinde yer alır. Bu tepelik alan, büyük bölümü Bitlis il sınırlarını kapsayan volkanik dağ formasyonunun göle inen düşük yükseltili uzantılarıdır. Kalenin üzerine kurulduğu tepe, sadece kuzey yönden dar bir boyun ile ana kayaya bağlıdır; doğu-batı ve güney yönlerde ise son derece dik yamaçlar üzerinde yükselir. İlk bakışta doğu ve batı yönlerindeki volkanik kaya filonları, keskin yamaçlar şeklinde tepeyi iki yönden kıskaç içine almış izlenimi verir. Bazı kesimlerde düz bir duvar gibi yükselen bu sarp yamaçlar, aslında kalenin burada inşa edilmesinin de sebebidir. Günümüze ulaşan izler, erken dönemlerden itibaren tepenin tahkimatlı olarak sürekli iskan gördüğünü ve iskan genişledikçe yeni eklenen surlar ile tepenin tamamının kalekent'e dönüştüğünü gösterir. Burası Geç Roma Erken Bizans döneminde doğu Roma imparatorluğunun sınır tahkimatlarından biri ve piskoposluk merkezi idi. Önemli kentlere ulaşım sağlayan yol ağı üzerindeydi. Edessa'dan Ani'ye, oradan da kuzeye uzanan ikincil ana yol, Adilcevaz'dan geçiyordu. Stratejik önemi nedeniyle tarih boyunca birçok medeniyet arasında el değiştirmiş; yaşanan savaşlar ve tahrip gücü yüksek depremler sırasında beden duvarları yıkılmış ve her seferinde yeniden onarılmıştır. Gerek iç kale, gerekse dış surlar tepenin topografyasına göre şekillenmiştir. Günümüzde surların büyük bölümü harap halde olsa da farklı dönemlerde inşa edilen sur hatları tanımlanabilmiştir. Ancak dış surların bir bölümü Van Gölü suları altında kalmıştır. Araştırmamızda farklı duvar inşa teknikleri, ek izleri ve çoğu günümüze ulaşmayan, ancak belgelenen yazıtlara göre kalede üç yapım evresi tespit edilmiştir.

Buna göre ilk önce tepenin en üst noktasındaki alan surla çevrilmiş olmalıdır. Akropol surlarının genel planı çarpık üçgen şeklindedir. Sarp yamaca bakan kesimlerde kule inşasına gerek duyulmamış sistemde, saldırıya açık bölümler kulelerle kuvvetlendirilmiştir. Muhtemelen artan iskan veya güvenlik sorunu nedeniyle iç kalenin kuzeyine, kulelerle takviye edilmiş yeni bir sur inşa edilmiştir. İkinci evre surlarının ana girişi bindirmeli tiptedir ve kapı önce dar bir avluya açılır. Bu tasarım tamamen savunma ile ilgilidir. Çoğu kayıp olsa da kalan izlerden 2. Evre surlarının orijinalde kesmetaş kaplama ile örülü olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. III. evre surları ise tepenin doğu ve batısından göle doğru inen sarp andezit filonların üzerine inşa edilmiştir. Kayalık topografya bir yandan doğal savunma hattı oluştururken, diğer yandan, üzerinde inşa edilmiş surların yüksekliğini de belirlemiştir. Aşağı surların göle doğru uzanan alt kesimleri ne yazık ki günümüze ulaşmamıştır. Gerek göl seviyesinin yükselmesi gerekse yüzyılın ortalarında hızlanan inşa faaliyetleri sırasında, aşağı surlar temel seviyesine değin tamamen yıkılmış, bir bölümü ise göl suları altında kalmıştır.

Aşağı surlara doğu yönde açılan kapılardan biri tahrip halde günümüze ulaşmıştır. Çifte kuleyle takviye edildiği anlaşılan kapının gerisinde seyirdime çıkış merdivenlerine ait izler kısmen takip edilebilmektedir. Bu veri, savunma hattının kapı kesiminde dişli tipte planlandığını netleşmiştir. Doğu yönde, göl kıyısında başka bir kapıdan haberdar isek de ne yazık ki bu girişe ilişkin hiçbir arkeolojik veri günümüze ulaşmamıştır. 1930 lu yıllara ait eski bir fotoğrafta kapının yuvarlak kemerli bir açıklık şeklinde olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Aşağı surlara batı yönden açılan kapı ya da kapılara ilişkin tüm izler tamamen kaybolmuştur. Evliya Çelebi seyahatnamesinde, kente batı yönden de bir giriş bulunduğu nakledilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Adilcevaz Kalesi, Arkenabu, Zat al-Cavz, Ad al-Cavd, Alcavaz*

Adilcevaz Castle is located on a dominant hill with a steep slope on the edge of Lake Van in Adilcevaz district of Bitlis province today[1]. This hilly area is the low elevation extensions of the volcanic mountain formation, most of which covers the borders of Bitlis province, descending into the lake. The hill on which the castle was built is connected to the main rock only with a narrow passage from the north while possesses extremely steep slopes on the east, west and south**.** At first glance, the volcanic rock fleets on the east and west give the impression that they clamped the hill on two sides **(Fig 1).** These slopes resembling steep walls are actually the reason why the castle was built here **(Fig. 2).** The traces show that there was a continuous settlement on the hill accompanied by a fortification since the early times and as the settlement expanded, with the new additions to the fortification, the whole area turned into a fortified urban center.

Researches in the region have shown that the first settlement goes back to the Early Bronze Age. The first known name of the settlement in the vicinity is the sacred center "URUHaldiei", which was established in the name of the God Haldi. This sacred center is dated to the reign of the Rusa II (685 BC), the Urartian king[2]. Although the researches and publications are focused in the Kef Castle, it is understood that the coastal area suitable for the settlement was used in the Urartu period[3]. As a matter of fact, traces of waterway and sacred areas carved into the rock found on the lower slopes of the castle are important data from this period **(Fig. 3).**

There is no clear information about the history of Adilcevaz after the Urartu period. However, it is known that the region came under the rule of the Medes, Persian, Roman and Byzantine empires respectively. During the late Roman - early Byzantine period, Adilcevaz was one of the frontier fortifications of the Eastern Roman Empire and the center of the diocese[4] and due to its geographic location it was also located on an important road network. The secondary main road from Edessa to Ani and from there to the North was running through Adilcevaz[5].

During the Arab raids in 640-641, the region was captured by Muaviye. After exchange of rule between the Arabs and the Byzantines, it finally came under the rule of the Arab emirates subordinate of Jazeera Governorate. After the increasing pressures of the Byzantine Emperor Romanos Lecapenos in the region, the Arab emirates offered their allegiance to the Byzantine Empire in 928. At the end of the 10th century, Adilcevaz Castle and its hinterland came under the rule of Mervanis[6].

1 Coordinates: 38 ° 48 '06' N., 42 ° 44' 06 '' E.

2 In this castle, which is known as "Kef Castle" today, a palace and numerous chamber tombs have been identified along with the Urartian fortification walls. For more info: Sevin, 2005, 87; Öğün-Bilgiç 1968, 45-50; Bilgiç-Öğün 1964, 65-92; Bilgiç-Öğün 1967a, 119-121; Bilgiç-Öğün 1967b, 1-9; Bilgiç-Öğün 1974, 31-35.

3 Bilgiç-Öğün 1966, 67.

4 Honigman 1970, Map 1.

5 Bibicou 1963, Map 2.

6 For the struggle of the Arab Emirates in the region against the Byzantine Empire, see: Sümer 1990, 47-50.

Fig. 1: Adilcevaz Castle. (from Google Earth)

Fig. 2: General view of the hill.

During the 10th century, Adilcevaz castle was named "Arcke", "Arcker" or "Arkenabu" both in the records of the Byzantine Empire and among the locals. On the other hand, the Arabs called the city "Zat al-Cavz", "Ad al-Cavd" or "Alcavaz", which means "plenty of walnuts"[7].

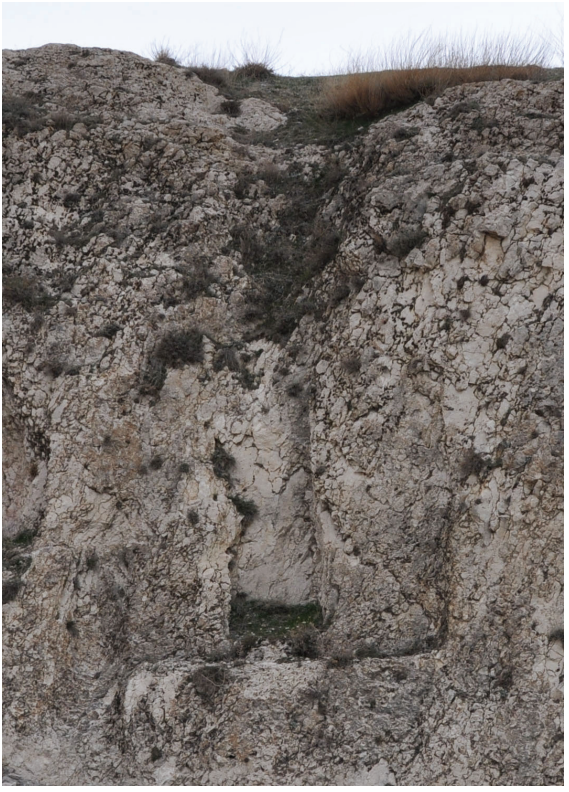


Fig. 3: Sacred niche which carved into the rock.

The city was captured by the Seljuk Sultan Tuğrul Bey in 1054-1055[8]. After the Battle of Manzikert in 1071, first, the Marwanoğulları then Ahlatşahlar took over the region[9]. As from this period, it often changed hands among many civilizations. In 1203-1204 Ayyubids[10], the following years Georgians and Harzemshahs dominated the region[11]. In the vacuum of authority formed by the Mongol threat, Alaaddin Keykubad annexed the region to the Seljuk territory in 1232-1233[12]. In this period, publics works started in the region and the material needed such stone, lime or timber were provided from Adilcevaz. Material from as many as a thousand quarries founded in Adilcevaz was transported by animals to wherever needed.[13]. These stones are likely to be andesite blocks or limestone, which are common in the region and have been used since the Urartu period[14].

7 For more info see Honigmann 1970, 180-205; Uluçam 2002, 162; Sümer 1990, 49; Tekin 2000, 55; Özfırat 1999, 4.

8 Honigmann, 1970, 171. Although it is stated that the castles in the region were taken by Tuğrul Bey during these attacks, Chronicler Mateos states that Tuğrul Bey retreated after a month's siege when he could not take the castle . For more info see . Mateos,1987, 100.

9 For more info see. Sümer 1990, 51-53; Çay 1993, 9; Turan 1993, 90; Tekin 2000, 50.

10 Erdem 1998, 61-63.

11 For more info, Gordlevski 1988, 56.

12 Sümer 1990, 54-56; Turan 1993, 27; İbni Bibi 1996, 426.

13 İbni Bibi 1996, 427; Tekin 2000, 88.

14 Belli 2000, 418.

After the Battle of Kösedag in 1243, the Mongols became the dominant power in the region, as they were to be in all Anatolia until 1335. Many cities and castles were damaged during this period and local principalities reappeared. Adilcevaz changed hands among Karakoyunlu (1365-66), Akkoyunlu (1472/73) and then Safavids[15]. With the three campaigns organized by Suleiman the Magnificent between 1533 and 1555, city finally came under Ottoman rule[16]. From this date on city was one of the *sanjak* centers of the Ottoman Empire until the end of the 19th century; extensive repairs were quickly carried out on the castle (25 May 1574)[17].

Although current sources state that the medieval castle was an insignificant settlement in the late period[18], it is understood from the archive documents that it actually preserved its importance. Historical data on Adilcevaz Castle are limited as Ibn Bibi, Mateos of Urfa and Abu'l-Farac, who gave information about the region, did not give clear information about the castle[19].

The earliest source describing the castle and the settlement in detail is the Evliya Çelebi's *Seyâhatnâme* (book of travel). Çelebi, who came to the city at the beginning of the seventeenth century, gives detailed information about the history and general appearance of the castle along with the city. In his notes, there is considerable information about the castle, although there are some numerical exaggerations. He says that the castle was built by Tacceddin Alişan and conquered by Suleyman Khan the Magnificent in 940 (H). In his depiction, it is reported that the perimeter length of the fortress was four thousand steps, it was made in the form of a circle rising to the north, there was no ditch around the inner fortress due to the rocky terrain, and it was reinforced with thirty-eight towers. It is stated that in the fortress, there were seventy earth-roofed small houses with no garden, a mosque, arsenals, granaries, cisterns, mehterhane (prison) tower, castellan units (Dizdarhane) and it was protected by big artillery.

Çelebi reports that the lower fortress was built with large solid stones. Its perimeter was six thousand steps in length, and it had three gates. He emphasizes that the door in the south was leading to Ahlat and the door in the east was leading to Ercis, while the door in the north was kept closed continuously. He also reports that the artillery toward the harbor were very large, the fortress was protected by a total of seventy-six canons, and there were three hundred stone houses without gardens in the lower castle[20].

The problem here lies on the works of the late travelers, who came to the region after Çelebi, and the modern researchers focused on the remains of Urartu monuments;

15 Tekin 2000, 110, 119; Turan 1993, 197; Sümer 1984, 111, 120; Sümer 1990, 60.

16 For the Ottoman Safavid wars in the region, see Sümer 1990, 62, 67; Tekin 2000, 121-123.

17 It is learned from the documents that 150,000 asper (Akçe) were sent to repair the castle. Kılıç 1999, 86; Baykara 1988, 107, 118, 203.

18 Bilgiç-Öğün 1966, 67.

19 On the other hand there is no detailed information about Adilcevaz Castle in the publications of researchers such as Burney, Lawson and Hulin.

20 For more info see, Evliya Çelebi, 1993, 1201-1202.

they did not give detailed information about Adilcevaz castle. The earliest study among the current researches belongs to Abdürrahim Şerif. He said that the castle remained from the Roman era; and saw a Latin inscription on the Bitlis Gate, and there was a Kufi character repair inscription belonging to the Alaeddin Keykubat period in the northern walls of the upper fort. He adds to his notes that he also saw other repairment inscriptions from the Ottoman era[21]. A. Şerif's observations on the inscriptions are important. Especially the presence of an inscription, which is said to have been located at the entrance of the castle, is notable about the early history of the castle. It's probably from the Byzantine period, but has not survived to the present day. It is understood from Şerif's observations that he personally saw the inscriptions which are pointing to the constructions or repairs of the Ottoman period. However, despite all these observations, he did not put any text or photographs in his publication, except for the inscription in the north.

The later publications and research reports contain limited information. İ. Kafesoğlu says that the castle was repaired in the age of the Seljuks and that the name of Sultan Cihanshah was read in an inscription which was on the side of the gate on Ahlat road[22]. E. Honigman states that Adilcevaz was the ancient Arkenabu[23]. O. Kılıç reports that extensive repairments were done in the castle in 1574[24]. Later publications are generally iterative of each other[25].

Architecture:

As seen above, the city has changed hands among many civilizations throughout the history, the walls protecting the settlement were destroyed in the wars and repaired[26]. In addition, earthquakes in various periods also caused the city walls to collapse[27]. As needed, new defensive constructions were added in different periods and the entire hill was fortified **(PL. 1).**

Wars, natural destructions-earthquakes, harsh climatic conditions-, abandonment, the removal of castle stones and the use of spolia as material in other buildings are the factors that damaged this monumental structure. Nowadays, it is possible to see spolia material taken from the castle on the walls of modern civilian dwellings. In addition, fragments broken from walls are scattered in the surrounding area along the slope.

21 For more info see, Şerif, 1932, 28, 32, 33, 63, 64.

22 Kafeslioğlu1949, 186-187.

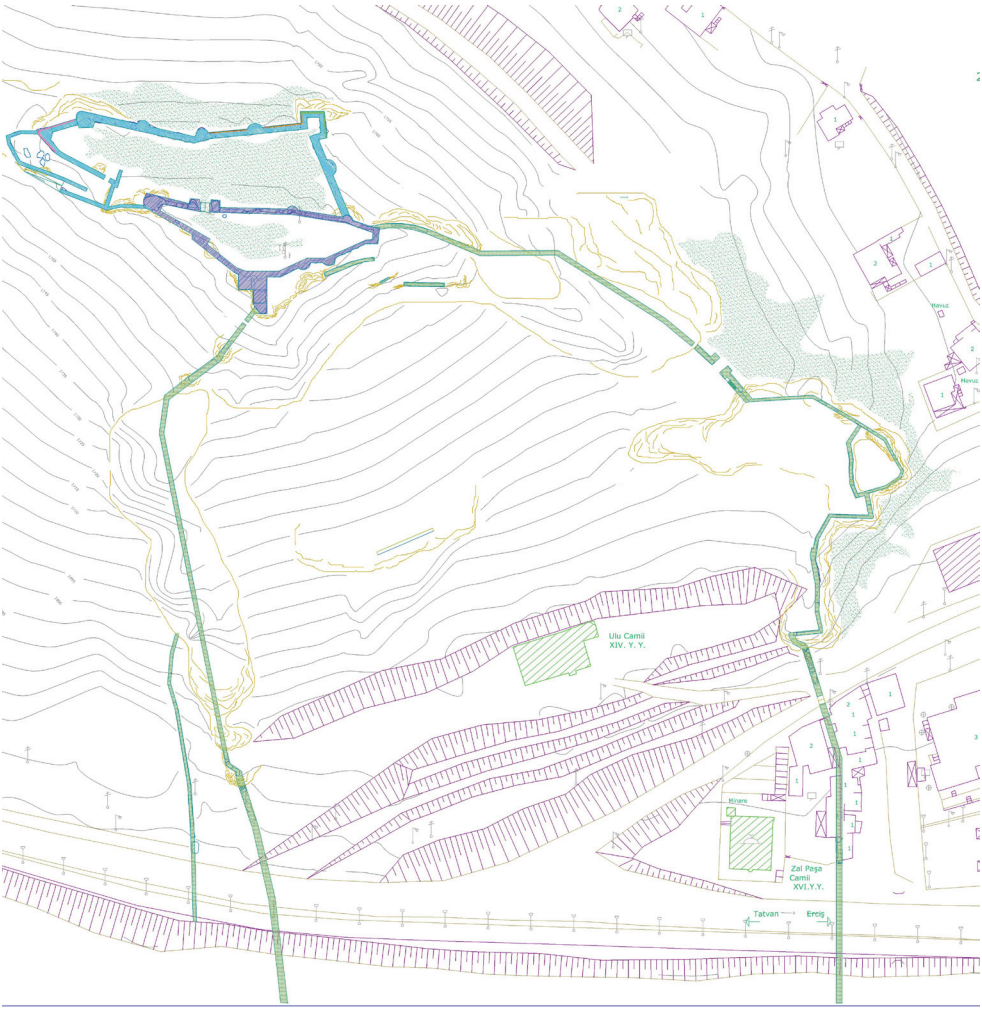
23 Honigman, 1970, 205.

24 Kılıç, 1999, 86.

25 Tuğlacı 1985, 8; Yaşa, 1992,81-82; Uluçam 2002, 162-164; Top 2012, 123-132.

26 In the Ottoman Archives of the prime ministry, two repair documents made in the Castle during the Ottoman period are recorded. One of the documents is dated to the 16th century. The other is the practice made during the Ottoman-Russian War. See. BOA, DN.97, GN.4801, FK.C..HR.. (Date 05 Z. 1243 H./19 May 1828 M.)

27 For records of some earthquakes that occurred during the late Ottoman period, see. BOA, DN. 370, GN.27732, FK.BEO (Date 30 Ş 1311 (H.); BOA, DN.1812, GN.38, FK. DH.MKT. (Date 14 B.1308 H.); BOA, DN.1219,GN.95427,FK.İ..DH. (Date 02 B. 1308); BOA, DN.1807, GN.114, FK. DH.MKT, (Date. 01 B 1308).



PL. 1: Adilcevaz Castle Plan (drawn by Architect Hasan Fevzi Çügen).

Material and Construction Technics

The stones used in the castle are mostly in basalt and andesite group. Both materials should have been provided from the immediate vicinity of the castle. The fossil remains on some of the stones used as building material in the castle are also noteworthy. Cut stones used as building material in the castle were produced in two ways. Some of them were processed as smooth shaved cut stones, while some of them were processed as rectangular blocks of which front faces were roughly shaved. It was also determined that some reused materials (spolia) and wood were used in the walls. These building materials were attached with lime mortar. On the other hand, wood also appears as a building material in the wall in some parts of the fortress.

Masonry workmanship belonging to different phases were found in the castle. The Opus *Spicatum technique*[28] identified among wall construction techniques should be dated to the first construction phase**.** Smooth cut stone work was common during the Seljuk and principalities period. Some parts of the castle were built with the same size cut stones placed on top of each other. In some sections, a row of large and a row of small size cut stones were placed alternatively. The walls on the lower slopes have less elaborate stonework. Small stones were filled in the spaces between the rough hewn stones while binding element was lime mortar.

Although most of the walls have been demolished today, the plans of the city walls built in different periods, it was possible to draw the plan of them. In our study, three phases were identified according to the construction technique and additional traces. Unfortunately, the inscriptions that were said to belong to the Byzantine and Ottoman periods have recently disappeared. Only a portion of the kufic inscription in the upper fortress is preserved.

Phase I: *Citadel*

First, the area at the top of the hill should have been surrounded by a fortification. The fortification system of the citadel was adopted to the topography of the hill. Probably, the upper part of the cone-shaped hill was cut and a flat area was obtained; the walls were built on the edge of the steep slope. Thus, the steep slope, on the one hand, formed the foundation for the city walls, on the other hand, made the castle much safer in these sections. The general view of the acropolis walls is in the shape of an irregular triangle **(see PL.1).** Inside of the castle is filled with soil and rubble today. In places, illegal digging pits attract attention **(Fig. 4).**

The hill has extremely steep slopes in four directions. Transportation can only be provided through northwestern direction that is less steep. It is also noted that the towers

28 This technique has been widely used since the 2nd century. It was applied on the rubble of acropolis walls. Facades should have been covered with cut stone blocks. As the cut stones were removed over the time, the workmanship that looks like “herringbone” has emerged today. For information on the Opus Spicatum technique and its examples in Roman structures, see Opus Spicatum. Adam 1989, 144 et al.

Fig. 4: Citadel; view from interior. (Phase I)

Fig. 5: The northern gate.

that reinforce the fortification walls are placed at more frequent intervals in the north direction. Massive tower buttresses sitting on the bedrock were placed in three corners. These buttresses are for static purposes. The entrance to the citadel is provided by two gates opened in the north and south.

The northern gate is reinforced with two towers rising on either side of the entrance **(Fig.5)**. They have survived to the present day but the upper sections have been demolished and the facade stones have been removed. The door has lost its original appearance. However, the remaining traces suggest that the entrance was in the form of an arched opening. Even so, no clear data on the shape of the arch survived. It is thought that this door was also probably in the form of a round-arched opening; because of the fact that the first fortified part of the hill is the inner castle and the entrance to the south is in the form of the round arch seen in the Roman and Byzantine periods.

The south, the east and the west sides of the hill are surrounded by steep cliffs. The walls in these directions follow the topography with sharp turns. There was no need for tower construction in these areas. In the southeastern part, there is a second gate, which is reinforced with two towers. The towers, which strengthen the defense of the gate, also have a circular plan here. The door was collapsed and the its interior was filled with soil and rubble up to the upper sections. But originally it is thought to have been a round-arched opening. Access to this gate is provided by a ramp-shaped path along the steep slope **(Fig. 6).** This road rises uphill, making zig-zags next to the steep rock on the east. While, some parts of the the road was planned as a flattened path by carving rock, some parts built with stones. After the gate, the wall follows steep cliffs and joins with the northern fortification.

Neither original height of the wall, nor parados and paraphets has survived today. Traces show that the facade was covered with smooth cut stones. But, in many sections, the facade stones have been removed or broken. The gaps seen in some sections were probably caused by the demolition of the original embrasures.

Phase II: ***The wall, adjacent to the north of the citadel***

A new fortification wall should have been built to the north of the inner castle, probably due to increased settlement or for security reasons **(see PL. 1).** It is understood from the wall technique and the adjacent lines between the two walls that this wall was added to the inner fortress later.

This system starts in front of the circular tower to the northeast of the citadel and continues to the north, then turn to west and go ahead till northwest. Here, there is a buttress built on bedrock. With a sharp turn to south from this section, the wall is attached on the inner castle. The system rises above natural rock in places, so the fortification line was determined by the topography. The second phase wall is supported by a total of six towers, five of which are circular in plan and two of which are rectangular **(Fig. 7).**

The entrance to the second stage fortification system is formed with a special design **(see PL.1)**. The gate does not directly open into the castle; firstly, it opens into the narrow long rectangular shaped courtyard. Then the inner area can be reached, by a second door, opened to the southeast of the courtyard. This design makes the defense stronger.

The first gate in the Southwest is destroyed today. In front of the gate, there is an earth road that runs westwards and then goes towards north. Probably, this road was an extension of the road network, which provided access to the castle in medieval times. Indeed the churches and monasteries, located about 5 km away to the Northwest, are located on this road network. The topography, sloping in an east-west direction in front of the gate, has been solved by building a ramp. Although the ramp system was partially destroyed over time, it still maintains data on its original appearance **(Fig. 8)**. The width of the ramped road and the door are big enough to allow vehicles to enter or to exit**.** The door system is of overlay plan type. Gates of this type are planned by placing the walls on top of each other **(see PL.1).** This planning is known and applied in Anatolia since the Hittites.

Fig. 6: Ramp-shaped path along the steep slope.

Fig. 7: The wall, adjacent to the north of the citadel (Phase II)

Fig. 8: Gate in the Southwest.

Fig. 9: Islamic inscription.

The second gate, which opened from the courtyard into the fortification, is completely demolished. However, the limits of the entrance are still clear. The heavy destruction in this part of the fortress indicates that the attacks took place in this direction. Probably the road leading to the gate should have allowed the war machines to get close to the front of the gate.

The eastern facade of the city wall faces an extremely steep slope. It was largely destroyed. No trace of neither the original height of the wall nor the paradox and epakhion has survived. There is a circular tower in the middle of the facade. It is still possible to follow the wall even though it collapsed to the base level. Traces show that the facade was originally covered with cut stone.

The square-shaped tower in the northeast should probably have had at least two floors originally. Two embrasures in the upper part of the north facade of the tower have survived to the present day. An inscription was observed on an Islamic character in one of the stones on the southern facade but could not be read.

The northern facade of the wall facing the steep slope is supported by five towers. The walls were preserved at higher elevation than the other sections. However, neither the parapet nor any traces of the parados wall have survived to the present day. Most of the facade is smooth cut stone. On the upper part of the northwest corner, there is a kufi inscription, most of which is lost **(Fig. 9)**. In some parts of the wall, rough cut stone wall masonry is remarkable. Apart from that, partial restoration traces made in the 1950s have taken its place among the repairs.

The most destroyed part of the fortification is the southern facade. From the remaining traces, it is understood that the facade was originally covered with smooth cut stones.

Phase III: ***Lower Fortification Walls***

Third stage fortifications were built on steep andesite fleets descending towards the hill on the east and west. While the rugged topography was forming a natural defense line on the one hand, it also determined the height of the fortifications built on it. Since

the upper sections of the walls were destroyed; no data on the original balustrade/parapet walls and parados have survived. In addition, the lower parts of the walls extending towards the lake have not survived. Either the construction activities that accelerated in the middle of the twentieth century or during the rise of the water level of the lake, the remaining walls were completely destroyed. Another problem with the lower walls is that they were under constant repair due to their long-term use. These walls must have been used not only during the Ottoman period, but also during the principalities. As a matter of fact, the settlement of the principalities period concentrated in the low-elevation sections of the hill[29].

The lower walls should have protected the city from all attacks. During any threat, the public must have taken refuge in the acropolis walls. Although the lower walls fall during the attack, the upper castle could withstand the threat for a long time with its topographic position and defensive design. Most probably, the majority of the military equipment was in the acropolis.

The walls extending from the east towards the lake are relatively protected on the upper parts of the slope **(Fig. 10, 11).** It is thought that the original height of the walls was not much, because of the cliff. Indeed, it is almost impossible to attack to the parts built on the rocky sections. Due to the advantages provided by the topography, building towers was not required except for the entrance gates. The walls were built higher in the sections where the andesite fleets are divided into blocks. These walls are preserved 4-5 m. in height in some sections**.**

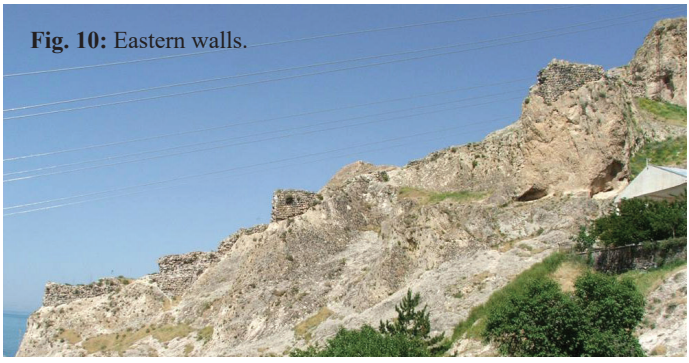


Fig. 10: Eastern walls.

Fig. 11: Eastern walls.

The only gate of the lower walls that survived is the gate in the east. The gate is placed in the space between two large

29 See. Top 2012, 126 at all.

Fig. 12:
The gate is placed in the space between two large andesite rocks.

Fig. 13:
Traces of stairs inside the wall.

andesite rocks. It is understood that originally, gate was reinforced with a double tower. The towers are square in plan. The tower on the left is partially in good condition. Although the tower on the right has collapsed, its foundation can be followed clearly on the rock it rises on. No trace of the shape of the door has survived. However, from the traces on the upper parts of the rock, the original height of the gate could have been around 9 m. As for Inside the wall, traces of stairs that leading up to the parados (protected walkway) can be seen **(Fig. 12, 13)**. Although the façade stones disappear, the traces show that the walls were originally covered with cut stone.

It is known that another gate was located on the lake shore in the east. Unfortunately, no archaeological data on this gate has survived today. During the constructions in the middle of the last century, the walls extending towards the lake and the gate were lost. In a photograph from the 1930s, the collapsed door is partially seen. More remarkable trace in the photograph is the presence of another wall, running parallel to the fortification wall in front of the gate. This wall also has not survived today. In fact, this design can also be seen in front of the walls in the west. In the recent research excavations, part of the wall has been unearthed. Construction technique of this wall is the same as fortification wall.

Just like the walls in the east, the wall extending from the west towards the lake was completely shaped by topography **(Fig. 14, 15).** In the higher elevation, walls in the west are preserved partially. Most parts are destroyed to the base level. It is thought that the original height of the walls was not much, because of the cliff. Indeed, it is almost impossible to attack rocky sections. Due to the advantages of topography, tower construction was not required. A rocky cliff disappears towards the lake. In this area, the wall was tried to be strengthened by building an embankment wall. Evliya Çelebi says that there was another entrance to the city from the west. However, due to the rise of the lake level and the subsequent constructions, no traces of the gate(s) (?) here has survived to present day.

Recent underwater surveys have recorded walls within the lake. As a result of researches in and around the harbour, it has become clear that the structures identified under the water belong to the missing southern walls of Adilcevaz Castle[30].

30 For more info see, Gündüz 2020.

Fig. 14: Western walls.

Fig. 15: Western walls.

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