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MERSİN ÜNİVERSİTESİ KILIKIA ARKEOLOJİSİNİ ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ (KAAM) YAYINLARI-VII

MERSIN UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH CENTER OF CILICIAN ARCHAEOLOGY (KAAM)-VII

(Özel Sayı)

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SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON ELAIUSSA'S NORTH-EASTERN NECROPOLIS

(LEV. 50-58)

E. Equini SCNHNEIDER*

ÖZET

Elaiussa'nın Kuzey-Doğu Nekropolü Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler

Bu makalede mezarların dağılımı ve konumları incelenerek, mezar sahipleri veya mezarların mimari özellikleri irdelenmektedir. Bu kapsamda farklı mezar tipleri ele alınarak Küçük Asya'nın diğer bölgeleriyle karşılaştırmalar yapılmaktadır. Elaiussa'nın Kuzey-Doğu Nekropolü'nün güneyinde iki yeni kaya mezarı bulunmuştur. Bunlardan, tiyatronun güney batısında bulunan mezar, buluntularından dolayı İ.Ö. 1. yy.'a tarihlenebilmektedir. Bu durum doğu plato eteklerinin çok sayıda tam ve kısmi kaya mezarı ile kaplı olduğunu bize göstermeketedir. Daha sonraları yukardaki teraslar, taş işçiliğine sahip mezarlarla donatılmıştır ve bunlar tiyatronun arkasına doğru veya agora ile büyük hamam etrafına yapılmışlardır. Sonuç olarak Elaiussa'daki mezar tiplerinin çeşitliliğinin veya yayılımının ekonomik gelişim ile koşut olduğu ortaya çıkmaktadır. Nekropol'ün yeni mezarlar ile gelişimini tam olarak ne zaman sonlandırdığını ise kesin olarak söylemek mümkün olmamaktadır.

Some Considerations on Elaissa's North-Eastern Necropolis

Elaiussa's north-eastern necropolis develops along the eastern edge of the plateau which defines the west-by-north-west shore of the northern gulf of the city and extends for a length of about 700m¹ (fig. 1).

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¹ On Elaiussa necropoleis see Machatschek 1967, passim.

The extensive plantations of lemon trees which occupy the whole of the eastern side of the plateau, which slopes down to the sea, disguise the original appearance of the cemetery, which must actually have been an imposing sight, especially in the south and central parts, where the more monumental tombs were dotted along the natural terraces created by the particularly uneven nature of the terrain.

From a spatial point of view, the necropolis does not appear as a unitary body, but as the juxtaposition of separate areas.

In the south part, the identification of two new rock-hewn tombs, during the 2001 excavation campaign –in one case the facade is embellished with moulded blocks and reliefs (fig. 2) and in the other the inside barrel vault is built with regular stones– seems to confirm the greater antiquity of this area in the cemetery's chronological and topographical development. These new data, added to that provided by the rock-hewn tombs already known or identified along the rocky hillside which marks off the ancient harbour basin to the west- in particular the chamber uncovered to the south-west of the theatre, whose burial findings can be dated within the 1st century AD, enables us to state with a degree of certainty that the slopes of the east plateau were initially occupied by rock-hewn and semi rockhewn tombs. Later the terraces above were gradually exploited by funerary monuments in masonry, organized without predefined spatial boundaries and spreading behind the theatre and around the edges of the agora and the large baths. The location of the tombs in the areas closest to the monumental centre reveals the importance of the *proastion* in connection with the burials, i.e. the aristocratical sepulchral nature of the urban periphery in the Hellenistic style². It is therefore clear why, precisely in these sectors closer to the monumental centre, cases of superimposition of tombs are noted over time, as documented by the chamber tomb in masonry on the east side of the southern part, which is built directly over the rock-hewn tomb (fig. 3). An analogous situation is reproduced in the area to the west of the agora. This is an intentional choice of funerary space, which also underlines known criteria of visibility and perhaps of family continuity: indeed, in both cases, the superimposition does not seem to imply an

² Purcell 1987, pp.25-42.

alteration of the bottom structure, which was perhaps still used, and at any rate protected by the norms of sepulchral law.

In general, the south sector is characterized by a greater variety of architectural solutions, not mirrored in the other areas of the necropolis. Apart the rock-hewn tombs which stand out from the others hitherto discovered on this side of the plateau, the house-graves, while maintaining intact the architectural general criteria common to the type, exhibit peculiar structural solutions, in particular as regards the facades characterized by the presence of small arches framing the door, built in limestone alternating with bricks.

On the highest terrace of this same sector stands the only funerary temple with a colonnaded pronaos of the north-eastern necropolis, overlooking the bay beneath. This originally tetrastyle funerary temple, with a cella barrel vaulted, stands on a podium with an inner funerary chamber, and belongs to a well-established tradition of mausolea or temple-tombs in south-western Anatolia (fig. 4,6). There are numerous examples in Lycia, Pisidia and Pamphylia, and also, in Cilicia Tracheia itself, where a group of similar monuments stands to the south and south-west of Elaiussa, between the coast and the inland areas (Demircili-Imbriogon, Cambazli, Olba, Topaların Çesmesi, Karaböcülü, Mezgit Kalesi ³. This imposing tomb of Elaiussa essentially differs from most of these in its use of caementitium and opus signinum in the construction of the roof (a technique which recurs constantly in both temple and house-tombs), in its rear entrance (in fact there is no communication between the pronaos and the cella) and in the presence inside the cella and in the lower chamber in the podium of four small niches on the side walls. These niches however present different sizes and characteristics and suggest a different kind of use.4

³ Demircili-Imbriògon: Machatschek 1974, pp. 251-261, figg. 51-56, pl. 93-98b; Wegner 1974, pp. 575-581; Hild-Hellenkemper 1990, p.275, fig.196; Cormak 1992, pp.18-25, figg. 12-14,17, pl. 3-7,10. Olba-Diocesarea: Keil,Wilhelm 1931,p.85,fig.110, pl..37, fig.109; Cambazli: Keil,Wilhelm 1931, pp. 34-36, figg. 54,56, pl. 17,53 e 18,57; Hild-Hellenkemper 1990, p.223, fig.149;Cormak 1992,p.25,fig.19). Topaların Çesmesi: Keil,Wilhelm 1931, pp.44-45 pl.14; Hild-Hellenkemper, p.450; Cormak 1992, pp. 26-27). Karaböcülü: Hellenkemper-Hild 1986, pp.52-54, figg. 41-43; Hild-Hellenkemper 1990, p.288; Türkmenuşaği (Mezgit Kalesi): Hellenkemper-Hild 1896, p.57, figg.51-53; Hild-Hekkenkemper 1990, p.350)

⁴ In the cella the niches are rectangular and 45 cm deep, barrel- vaulted and 90 cm deep in the lower chamber.

It is possible, even if not certain, that the upper *cella* was not used for burial, but only as a place of reverence, a room of display for the glorification of the deceased, and that the upper niches only had a cult significance⁵; on the contrary there is no doubt that the lower chamber must have contained *osteothecae* or wooden or terra-cotta sarcophagi. We cannot however exclude that the pronaos could include a sarcophagus, even if the space between the colonnade and the front wall is rather narrow and if the podium is apparently inaccessible and particularly high ⁶.

This kind of mausoleum is however extraneous to the local funerary tradition which prefers a different articulation of the facade and also of the inner space, which always contains funerary beds.

A chronology around the mid of the 2^{nd} century AD seems corroborated by the sobriety and features of the architectural decoration, a date which supports the hypothesis of a more ancient development of the south sector of the cemetery.

The central nucleus of the necropolis exhibits a different appearance. In this sector, marked by the presence of large funerary precincts, the original structure cannot easily be distinguished from the alterations which were made subsequently, both in antiquity and in modern times. Indeed, the alterations recently caused by the use of these precincts for farming prevent us, in most cases, from understanding their original size, and the number of their entrances, and also from identifying the floor level and the evidence of any form of burials. The precincts are distributed along a broad projecting terrace, along which the ancient road must have run; some of the largest ones seem to have represented property lots dating

⁵ For niches of the same form and size, opened in the cella walls see in particular the tetrastyle funerary temple of Isauria and the second temple of Gölcük Ören,: Swoboda, Keil,Knoll 1935, pp. 112-119, figg.71-72; Cormak 1992, p.235, fig.24; with regard to their cultural function our niches must also be compared with examples in Antiochia ad Cragum, Selinus e Iotape (Rosenbaum 1971, in part. p.62, tomba III,9°, pl. XVIII,2). Concerning the idea, very familiar to the Greek East,of the funerary monument as a mnemeion see Lavagne 1985, pp.159-165; Fedak 1990, pp.37-46.

⁶ Fragments of a sarcophagus have been found in the pronaos of the only other colonnade funerary temple located on the south-west edge of Elaiussa: Machatschek 1967, p.97, pl.51, fig.67. This tomb is now in a very bad state of preservation, but originally the podium, lower than that of the temple-tomb of the north-eastern necropolis, was fitted with a stairway.

back to the site's original development, within which subsequent divisions may be identified, evidently due to the sale of parts of the larger suburban plots. Of the 27 monuments preserved here, 5 are funerary temples; originally, these tombs appear to have stood isolated: their different positions inside the enclosures seem due, as we have said, to a gradual division of the originally larger areas

Three of these tombs must have featured a simple but carefully executed architectural design. Their temple-like appearance is achieved by the masonry in *opus quadratum*, corner pilasters with Attic bases and Corinthian capitals, the tympanum roof and the stepped basement: the door into the *cella* opened in the middle of the front (fig. 5,7). This was a common type in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, albeit with a certain number of variations, in the regions of south-west Anatolia ⁷.

One peculiarity which seems –on the other hand– to have been typical of Elaiussa and its immediately surrounding area is represented by the other two funeral temples, of which the first is the best known and best preserved of the whole necropolis (fig. 8,9); here, as in the nearby tomb, which is smaller and less well-conserved, the east front is emphasized by a big arched aedicula, with no communication with the cella, which was entered from the other side. The walls of the aedicula stand on an jutting plinth, the projecting stones of which form a three-sided bench, the main function of which is to be sought in the context of the ceremonies in honour of the dead, in particular the funerary banquet, for the celebration of which external furnishings were often regarded as essential parts of the tomb and therefore built in ⁸. The same facade solution is adopted in a funerary temple which stands isolated in the valley to the north of the necropolis, in two tombs in the west necropolis and in the so-called grave of Aba in

⁷ One of the first examples of this type of temple tomb seems to be that of Opramoas at Rhodiapolis, in Lycia, dated, according to its inscription to AD 150 (Petersen, von Luschan 1889, pp.76-113, figg.53-56,63; on the funerary inscription see Kokkinia 2000, pp. 190-199). For further parallels see also the North funerary temple of Selge (Machatschek, Schwartz 1981, pp. 97-98, pl.21, fig.71); the five tombs of Balboura, particularly the East one, perhaps to ascribe to the late-antonine or severian age (Hallet, Coulton 1993, pp.41-68 figg.2-8, pl. II-IV); the tomb X of Xanthos (Coupel-Demargne 1976, 103-105); the mausoleum n. 8 of Ariassos (Cormack 1989, pp.29-40, figg.1-3, pl Ib, II-IV) and a temple-tomb of Hierapolis of Phrygia (Schneider Equini 1972, pp. 118-119, fig.7, pl. XXb).

⁸ On the ritual and the funerary banquet see Scheid 1984, pp.130-139.

Kanytelleis ⁹, and seems to be a unique combination of the funerary temple with *pronaos in antis*, without columns, and the tomb with an arcuated lintel facade¹⁰.

The original size of the sepulchral precinct and the architectural prestige of these tombs are a clear reflection of the wealth and eminence of their owners; the building is the exclusive product of a family universe and its monumental character is proof of financial resources. Even the introduction, certainly later, of more modest *tombs* always at marginal points in the precinct, does not in any way alter the temples pre-eminence and visibility.

Despite the fact that the basic and simplest form of the temple tombs can find comparisons in the surrounding areas, these buildings are difficult to date with a any precision: the architectural decoration is suggestive of the late Antonine-Severian period, which would also appear to be corroborated by the palaeographic characters of the inscription carved on the walls of the *pronaos* of the tomb in Kanytelleis ¹¹.

In the eastern part of the central sector, the shape of the terrain, which descends rapidly, prevents a regular organization and layout of the precincts, and their size appears more contained, on the basis of current evidence. There are looser relations between precincts and tombs, and this irregularity is also due to a changing forms of aggregation over time, which must also have led to alterations and re-adaptations in the structure of the enclosures in this sector too. Indeed, where it has been possible to establish a link between the tomb building and the precinct, it has often emerged that the masonry structures of the enclosure, or parts of it, are subsequent to the building of the grave, the walls of which are used to complete the plan of the precinct itself. The house graves of this sector even if they do not achieve the monumental nature and quality of the tombs of the west side, are nonetheless carefully executed in their overall design and details and suggest the privileged status of the owners of this sector.

⁹ Verzone 1957, p.65, fig.28; Machatschek 1967, pp.92-96, pl.43-47, figg. 64-65; pl. 50, fig.70;

¹⁰ Like the mausolea at Ariassos: Cormak, 1996, p.5, pl.I,a, p. 20, pl.IV,c.

¹¹ Strubbe 1997, p.264, n.390.

While the first sarcophagi are conserved on the north edge of the middle sector, the area in which they are really concentrated is the north sector of the cemetery, which extends for over 250m along the west side of the current road axis, which basically corresponds with the ancient one at this area.

The arrangement of the sarcophagi seems to follow certain constant rules, albeit with some variations on the theme: most often, they are arranged in groups, lined along the edge of the road or standing slightly back, with the front side usually facing east, even though there are several exceptions to this alignment, evidently deriving from the problems posed by the progressive occupation of the available space.

In fourteen cases it was possible to identify the presence of a common funerary enclosure, within which the sarcophagi appear to be arranged in groups of two or three and/or connected to a house tomb, the relation to which is rendered explicit by the position of the chest in the close vicinity of the sepulchral building, aligned with one of its walls.

All are executed in the local off-white, limestone, and almost all of them conform to types common to the whole of southern Anatolia and appear to remain virtually unchanged over time, with few variations. The chest is fairly tall and heavy. It is slightly polished on the front and sides, and usually left rough on the back. Its only decorative element is profiling, more or less elaborated, around the rim and the plinth. The heavy lid is gabled, generally with acroteria at the four angles.

In most cases, the sarcophagus is supported by a basement consisting of one or more rows of squared blocks or, in an easy and certainly cheaper solution, is positioned so as to utilize a rock outcrop.

On the basis of the funerary inscriptions, the chests were rarely monosomatic and, moreover, the existence of a an *hyposorion*, i.e. basement with a burial space inside, has been identified with certainty in 13 cases, while some doubts remain over the others, but it is fairly likely that the use of a funerary space within the base was practised on a large scale, as may be seen in the other necropoleis of south-east Asia Minor, in Phrygia Pamphilia, Pisidia and extensively in Lycia, where, as we know, the sar cophagus raised on an *hyposorion* podium is already the distinct form of burial in the 4th century BC. The lay-out, which is very simple compared

to the solutions adopted in other necropoleis in Asia Minor, consists of a bedrock floor, of sides completed artificially, or built completely of blocks, without any other evidence of burial form apart from a small rectangular.cavity carved out of the rock, which served, as emerges from an investigation undertaken inside the *hyposorion* of one sarcophagus (fig. 10), as an ossuary, for the storage of the bones removed to make room for new burials.

Only six examples with decorated chests stand out from the sarcophagi general uniformity, along with four lids with *tegulae* and *imbrices* sculptured on the sloping sides and acroteria carved with half-palmettes.

All worked in local limestone, the garland sarcophagi follow models in marble imported into Cilicia by different workshops¹² (Ephesos, Aphrodisias and Dokimeion), and by the Attic workshops, probably via Antiochia or Tarsos. Two swags generally covers the front, one or no one the short sides. A sarcophagus with garlands and erotes, now in the Museum of Adana, derives from Attic models of importation¹³ (fig. 11). Two other sarcophagi in particular, with a bucranion in the middle and rams' heads at the corners, Medusa heads or rosettes above the swags, seem to derive from common Asia-Minor models¹⁴, and exhibit varying degrees of execution (fig. 12,13) (Only in one of them the back is carved, albeit summarily).

These sarcophagi with decorated chests may be dated between the middle of the 2nd century AD and the first years of the 3rd century. The

¹² Concerning the sites of main centres for microasiatic garland sarcophagi production see IŞIK 1998, pp.278-294 with all the previous bibliography on the subject and a careful review of the problems related to the location of the "Hauptgruppe"

¹³ The most pertinent comparison can be made with a marble sarcophagus at Antiochia 15948, with two garlands and a flying eros at the center of the front and an eagle with lions heads on the back. On lion motifs inside garlands, quite frequent on attic sarcophagi see Himmelmann 1970, p.8. pl.14-15 and, in general Schauenburg 1995, pp.99-101, pl. 58-60. The influence of Attic sarcophagi on copies executed locally is important in Cilicia (Himmelmann 1970, p.558 s., nt.3): further examples are a limestone sarcophagus with erotes of the Korykos necropolis (Machatschek 1967, p.40, fig. 18) to be compared in particular with Antiochia 8475 and with a sarcophagus at Olba (Koch 1972, p.242), with garlands held by a flying eros. On the same matter see also Giulian 1962, p.50, 275-276 and Koch 1973, p. 221.

¹⁴ On the marble garland sarcophagi imported into Cilicia Tracheia from Asia Minor workshops, see Koch, Sichtermann 1982, pp. 550 ss. pl. 539-542 and Koch 1993, pp. 189-190).

models, copied faithfully as regards their basic design, appear to have been reinterpreted according to the iconographic and formal modes typical of outlying areas, as opposed to the larger centres of production of Asia Minor.

In addition to the sarcophagi, house-graves with or without enclosures, *chamosoria* sunk into the rock face and few chest-tombs are distributed in a linear progression in the north sector. This stretch, the furthest from the city and probably the last to have been occupied develops along the axis of the road, a characteristic shared with most Roman cemeteries (fig. 14).

The house-graves in this stretch are marked by the uniformity of their architectural design and size: generally quadrangular in plan, they are built without exception in *opus caementitium*, faced with irregular small blocks, without any distinguishing features on the outside, and always with a barrel vault on the inside¹⁵ (fig. 15).

The only elements of structural differentiation are the roofs: external barrel vaults, and flat or barely pitched roofs.

The funerary organization of the chamber is also characterized by the same repetitive pattern: beds around the three walls, at roughly middle height and resting on moulded corbels, an architectural peculiarity of Elaiussa and of the surrounding area.

In their homogeneity, these buildings, like the sarcophagi, appear to have been built for a fairly uniform middle class, of average economic resources, which identified with standard architectural solutions.

This is obviously not the case of the 35 *chamosoria*, which are also clustered in this area; carved out of the rocky outcrop and generally gable lidded, with or without acroteria (only in one case is the lid decorated with a large lion head –a very common motif, as we know, on the *chamosoria* in other necropoleis in Cilicia Tracheia, in Lycia or Isauria– these are arranged in no apparent order, but usually in groups, near the tombs and sarcophagi.

¹⁵ The typology of these house-tombs can be compared to those of Anemurium -type I (Alfőldi-Rosenbaum 1971, pp.90-92,) with many funerary buildings of Antiochia ad Cragum, Selinus, Iotape e Syedra (Rosenbaum, Huber, Onurkan 1967, pp. 49-66) of Ariassos (Cormak 1996, pp.13-15, fig.9-11, pl. IIIa,b) and of Iasos (Tomasello 1991, pp.133-227).

As for the sarcophagi, in most cases they were not used for single burials, and this is demonstrated both by a progressive and constant embrasure of the walls towards the bottom, and, sometimes, by the presence of a partition on the burial floor. The presence of a certain number of rectangular or quadrangular significantly smaller *chamosoria* (with a length less than 1 m.), usually carved in the same rock bed as the larger trenches, may be indicative in this sense. Also fairly common in other necropoleis (Korykos, Kanytelleis, Adrassus and Balboura), and commonly thought to be children's graves, these small containers are probably, in many cases, to be identified as *osteothecae* belonging to the main *chamosorion*.

The *chamosoria*, together with the limited number of chest shaped tombs with rounded lids built in small blocks, with individual or multiple burials distributed in various areas of the north sector, were probably reserved for the humblest section of the population. However, for those closest to the richest tombs, the attraction towards the must be indicative of various ties with the family owning the sepulchral building.

In conclusion, the north-east necropolis of Elaiussa is remarkable in several respects: its state of preservation (that we are trying to improve, with many difficulties), for its size and for the peculiarity of some of its graves.

The general layout presents a kind of combination of the typically "Roman" road-side necropolis with the extensive "City of the Dead" more usual in Asia Minor. From the point of view of the building technique, the extensive use of *caementicium* is a sign of the city's openness to western influences. As for the chronology, there are few objective criteria of evaluation: inscriptions are rarely useful in defining the date of the tomb, due to thefew data indicated and the limited reliability of palaeography asa criterion and also due to the practice of reusing the tomb itself, which is clear demonstrated in various cases by the sarcophagi. A little more information can be derived from the position occupied by the tomb in thenecropolis, for working out a relative chronology.

The sculpted and architectural decoration, limited to few sarcophagi and to the better preserved funerary temples, does not provide a precise chronological indication but proposes motifs extensively used in Cilicia and in all south-western Asia Minor within the 2nd and first half of the 3rd centuries AD.

It seems plausible to state that the development of the necropolis coincided with the progressive economic growth of the city, particularly during the full imperial age and to its expansion beyond the limits of the first urban plan ¹⁶.

It is difficult to define the time when the necropolis stopped extending itself with new tombs, even if sporadically, and when it stopped being used. Christian symbols (graffito crosses), epitaphs (certainly late), and changes in the arrangement of the burials inside some of the *tombs* (in one case the transformation of a precinct into a funerary chamber with benches, and in three cases the opening up of graves at floor level, with material datable to the 6th and 7th century AD) prove that the burial area was still being visited at least until this period even though there are not enough elements to define the extent.

¹⁶ see Elaiussa I, pp. 170-172.

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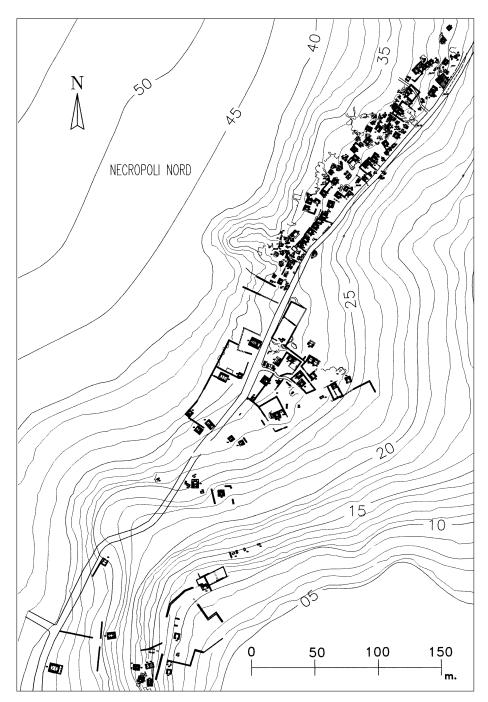


Fig. 1 North-eastern necropolis, general plan



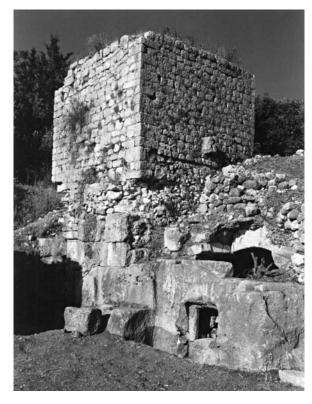


Fig. 2 Rock-cut tomb with façade built in blocks and sculpted reliefs

Fig. 3 Southern sector: rock-cut tombs with superimposed house-tomb in masonry

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Fig. 4 Tetrastyle temple- tomb: view of the façade



Fig. 5 Temple-tomb 54, with precinct

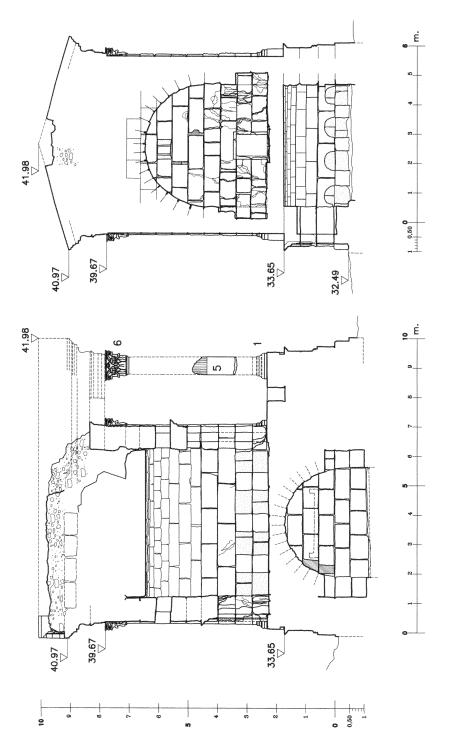


Fig. 6 Tetrastyle temple-tomb: sections

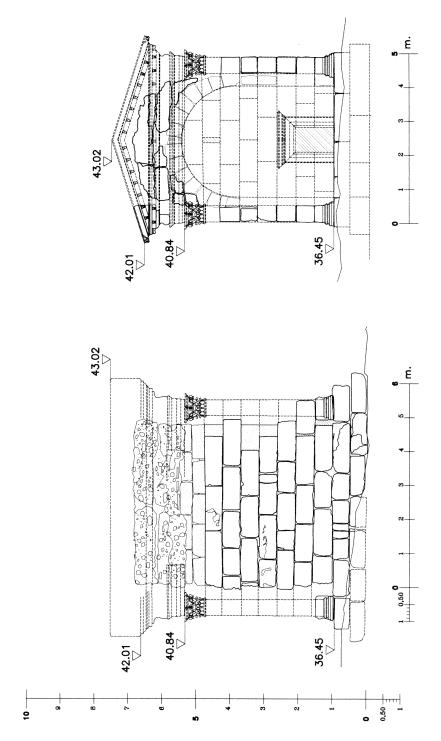


Fig. 7 Temple-tomb 54: elevation and section

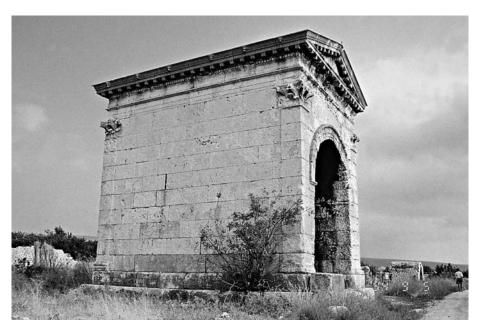


Fig. 8 Funerary temple with aedicula

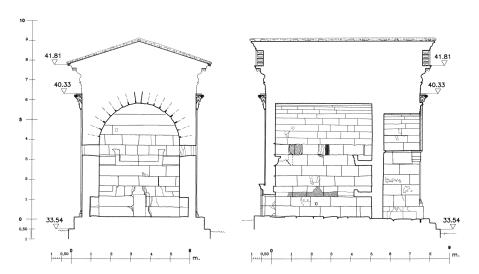


Fig. 9 Funerary temple with aedicula: sections

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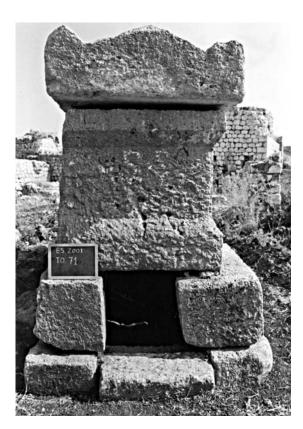
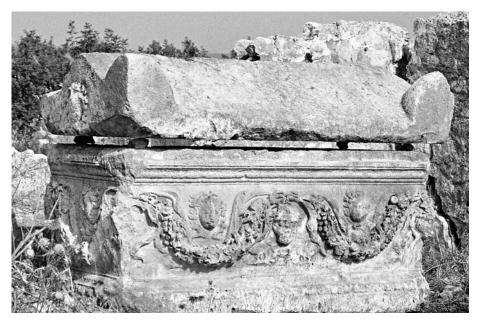


Fig. 10 Sarcophagus with hyposorion

Fig. 11 Garland sarcophagus with eagle and erotes (Adana Museum)







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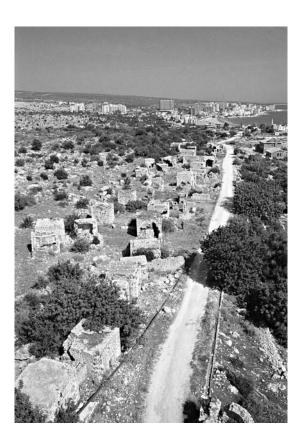


Fig.15 Samples of house-graves of the northern sector

Fig.14 Arial view of the necropolis northern sector

