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A BYZANTINE LOOKOUT NEAR KADYANDA IN LYCIA: BAYRAKTEPE[*]

Lykia'daki Kadyanda Yakınlarındaki Bir Bizans Gözetleme Noktası: Bayraktepe

Orçun ERDOĞAN[**]

ABSTRACT: Located in the area of Bayraktepe in the Yeşilüzümlü Neighborhood of the Fethiye district in Muğla Province, the site lies on the northern slopes of Tekirlik Hill, on which the ancient city of Kadyanda is situated. Discovered largely by our team during the archaeological surveys in 2024, Bayraktepe is a small hill partly surrounded by fortification walls and cliffs. Inside the enclosed area stand a few remains, including a cistern, rock-cut structures, terrace walls, and other structures whose function is yet to be identified. In addition to these remains, which form the site of Bayraktepe Hill, there is an ancient road leading to Kadyanda immediately to the south, and some other structures situated in the immediate vicinity, including Classical-period tombs on either side of the road, rock-cut votive niches/ a press bed, and five tile tombs. While the presence of these structures suggests that the site may have already been used prior to the Byzantine period, the characteristic of the wall remains and the tile tombs, along with the pottery sherds indicate that the site gained particular importance during the Middle Byzantine period. Given the small size of the site and the limited number of structures, it is reasonable to conclude that Bayraktepe, which cannot be associated with such settlement types as a village, sacred site, monastery or a farmhouse, appears to have functioned as a lookout point with its commanding position over the entire Yeşilüzümlü Plain to the north. Focusing on this point of view, this study examines the characteristics and the periods of the buildings, as well as the possible military identity of the site within the context of the Middle Byzantine local defence system.

Keywords: Middle Byzantine Period, Tile Tombs, Watch Point, Byzantine Fortifications, Byzantine Cisterns

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ÖZ: Muğla'nın Fethiye İlçesi, Yeşilüzümlü Mahallesi, Bayraktepe Mevkii'nde bulunan yerleşim, zirvesinde Kadyanda Antik Kenti'nin yer aldığı Tekirlik Tepesi'nin kuzey eteklerinde konumlanmaktadır. Büyük bir bölümü 2024 yılı yüzey araştırması çalışmaları kapsamında tarafımızca keşfedilen Bayraktepe, etrafı kayalıklar ve tahkimat duvarları ile çevrili, içinde kaya oyma yapılar, teras duvarları, bir tane sarnıç ve işlevi tespit edilemeyen bir başka yapıdan oluşan küçük bir tepeden ibarettir. Bayraktepe'yi oluşturan bu kalıntılar dışında, hemen güneyde Kadyanda'ya yönelen antik bir yol, bu yolun iki yanında Klasik dönem mezar anıtları, doğuda muhtemel bir işlik ya da adak nişleri ve son yıllarda kaçak kazılarla ortaya çıkarılmış Bizans dönemi toprak gömü mezarları bulunmaktadır. Söz konusu kalıntıların varlığı, tepenin Bizans dönemi öncesi de kullanılmış olabileceğine işaret etse de seramik kırıklarının yanı sıra duvar kalıntılarının ve Bizans mezarlarının karakteristikleri, alanın özellikle Orta Bizans döneminde önem kazandığını gösteriyor. Az sayıdaki yapı kalıntısı, bu kalıntıların karakteri ve kısıtlı yerleşme alanıyla bir köy, çiftlik, kutsal alan ya da manastır gibi bir dokuyla bağdaştırılması mümkün olmayan Bayraktepe'nin, kuzeydeki tüm Yeşilüzümlü Ovası'na son derece hakim konumuyla bir gözetleme noktası işlevine sahip olduğu önerilebilir. Bu bağlamda bu çalışmada söz konusu tepeüstü yerleşim ile çevresindeki kalıntıların mimari tasviri yapıldıktan sonra, alanın erken dönemdeki Kadyanda kenti ile olan bağlantısı ve Bizans döneminde kazandığı olası askeri kimliği Likya kronolojisi bağlamında incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Orta Bizans, Kiremit Çatkı Mezar, Gözetleme Noktası, Bizans Tahkimatları, Bizans Sarnıcı

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Introduction

Recent research on the countryside of Lycia has shed light on the settlement patterns in southern Asia Minor during the Roman, Late Antique and Byzantine periods and paved the way for the development of new insights into the rural settlement types in the region, such as fortresses (*kastra*), villages, hamlets, farmsteads, monasteries and sacred precincts, as well as independent structures such as olive oil/wine workshops, threshing floors and so on. However, in comparison with the rest of the region, this is especially not true of western Lycia, where much is still unknown about the ancient and medieval countryside and most of the rural settlements have yet to be discovered. In this respect, the archaeological surveys being conducted in rural Kadyanda have played a key role in understanding the variation in settlement patterns in the Lycian hinterland more broadly. In this context, the newly-discovered hilltop settlement of Bayraktape, along with the nearby remains, displays an example of such rural settlements in western Lycia and is worth examining in that it provides significant information about the presence of Middle Byzantine countryside.

A Brief Description of the Site (Figures 1-10)

The site is located in the area of Bayraktepe (north of Maşgebesi) in the Yeşilüzümlü neighbourhood of the Fethiye district in Muğla Province. The

remains are situated at an altitude of approximately 700 metres and lie on the northern slopes of Tekirlik Hill, which is notable for the ancient city of Kadyanda. The Bayraktepe area contains a cluster of remains dispersed around two locations. The first is a small fortified hilltop settlement with a few structures, while the rest of the remains lie immediately to the east, northeast and south of this hilltop settlement and consists of the structures including an ancient road leading to Kadyanda to the south, a few Classical-period tombs, a rock-cut structure with a platform and five tile tombs.

Description of the Remains

This chapter provides a comprehensive description of the structures located on Bayraktepe Hill, along with the other remains immediately outside the hill, including the tile tombs and the rock-cut structure.

Bayraktepe Hill (Figures 1-4, 9-10)

The toponymy of Bayraktepe derives from the Turkish flag standing on top of the hill. Shaped like an ellipsoid, the site is a sort of fortified lookout point with commanding views over the Yeşilüzümlü plain and is surrounded on three sides by steep cliffs and slopes forming a natural defence system. It is also enclosed by a fortification wall that extends only along the southeast side. The hill covers an area of approximately 130 x 90 metres and contains a number of structures including a fortification wall with a gate and several steps cut out of the rock; a cistern and an unidentified building, both of which are also cut out of the rock; a few terrace walls, two semicircular rock-cut structures, and small-scale quarries on top of the hill. The small number of fragments of roof tiles detected during the survey may also indicate the presence of other structures (of wooden or stone) or may have belonged to the roofs of the visible remains. The summit of the hill appears to have been left as a flat platform made up of bedrock, which constitutes the majority of the site. Although most of the visible remains lie within dense vegetation, our intensive archaeological survey indicates that the site originally did not contain a large number of buildings.

An irregular *fortification wall*, with some partial breaches, extends only along the lower levels of the southeastern slopes of the hill, since this part is the least defensible in comparison with the rest of the slopes, which are limited by cliffs. Today, the extant section of the fortification consists of two independent walls that were originally attached to each other: an east-west oriented straight wall, measuring approximately 13 m along the southeastern slope and another wall with a gate and several re-entrant branches extending to the west and northeast. The thickness of the walls ranges from 60 to 100

cm, while the well-preserved sections, particularly in the northern part, stand to a height of over 3 m. Due to the poor state of preservation, it is difficult to determine, but there appears to be a tower located adjacent to the north of the gate. All the fortification walls are built of heavily mortared rubble faced with roughly cut stones. Most of the interstices of the walls can still be seen to have originally been filled with bricks and roof tiles. Occasionaly, fragments of bricks and/or roof tiles surround the stones in a manner reminiscent of the rough *cloisonné* technique, which is a characteristic of Middle-Late Byzantine masonry. Immediately southeast of the fortification are three irregular rock-cut steps leading directly towards the gate. Each step measures approximately 15 x 50 cm.

The cistern is located in close proximity to the summit of the hill, on the southern slope. It is a rectangular building measuring 4,70 x 8,00 m. The walls are about 0,50 m. wide and stand only to a height of 1,50 m. Due to its bad state of preservation and the dense vegetation, as well as the debris covering the building, it is not possible to identify its original roof and floor today. The walls are built of mortared rubble faced with roughly cut stones with occasional fragments of bricks and/or roof tiles filling the interstices. The presence of pinkish and waterproof hydraulic coating on the wall of the northwest corner demonstrates that the building functioned as a cistern. Further, the slightly curved form of this smooth plaster at the corner is a well-known feature of rectangular and square cisterns documented across the region. The location of the cistern also suggests that it was deliberately placed immediately below the rocky hilltop to easily catch the run-off water.

Another building stands a few meters south of the cistern. It forms an asymmetric rectangle of about 4,70 x 6,70 m. The hardly visible walls covered by the debris and the dense vegetation, seem to have been built of mortared rubble and faced with roughly cut stones. As with the walls of the aforementioned cistern, gaps between the stones are rarely filled by brick fragments. The wall stands to a height of some 1 m., and no clues have been obtained regarding its function.

Two *semicircular rock-cut structures* are located on the western slopes of the hill. They are separated from each other by a mortared rubble masonry. Each has a radius of about 80 cm and stands to a height of 1 m. The one to the south contains some remains of pinkish plaster. The surviving remains do not enable us to ascertain the exact function of the structures. These semi-circular structures, which are oriented to the east, at first glance, suggest a chapel or simply an oratory. However, both the small size of the structures

and the presence of the slopes becoming steeper immediately to the west reduce the plausibility of this possibility. If the remains of plaster belong to a waterproof coating, we may then associate the structures with a similar circular rock-cut structure in Lyrboton Kome (Erdoğan, 2019: 116), indicating a water-related mechanism.

The hill contains several more structures that are in a very poor state of preservation. These include a number of *terrace walls* and *remains of quarries*. While the terrace walls built of rubble masonry stand particularly on the less-steep southwestern slopes of the hillside, the traces indicating the quarrying can be seen on top of the hill, where the bedrock formation is most apparent.

Döğerli-Başerkafaoğlu also speaks of a Hellenistic masonry lying on top of the hill (Döğerli-Başerkafaoğlu, 2024: 9, 16, 25-26). However, apart from the possible quarries and the flat bedrock covering the top of the hill, no remains have been found at this location during our two visits to the site.

The Remains in the Immediate Vicinity of Bayraktepe (Figures 2, 5-8, 10)

As mentioned, at the site immediately outside Bayraktepe Hill stand a number of structures including an ancient road, a group of rock-cut tombs, a rock-cut structure with a platform, and five tile tombs. Since they have no direct association with the Late Antique and Byzantine period of the site, the ancient road and the tombs are not the focus of this article. Nevertheless, I will briefly examine these remains in both this chapter and the conclusion section when dealing with the pre-Late Antique period.

The earliest structures on the site are *the rock-cut tombs* dating from the 5th and 4th c. B.C., which attest to the presence of the Dynastic period (c. 550-360 B.C.) in and around Kadyanda (Tietz, 2016: 345-346; Döğerli-Başerkafaoğlu, 2023: 218-220).

The remains of *the ancient road* leading to the ancient city of Kadyanda is situated some 80 m. south of Bayraktepe Hill. The visible section of the road passes through two small rock masses for several metres and extends towards the south.

The tile tombs are located on a small elevation, immediately to the northeast of the ancient road. They were documented for the first time by our archaeological survey team in 2024 following a recently-conducted illegal excavation, which resulted in the destruction of the bones and the tiles. It should be noted that the measurements given are approximate, as the

majority of the tombs and their components are partly excavated and heavily damaged. The present-day burial site contains at least five earth-cut pits. These inhumation burials, lying next to each other are oriented to the east and are cut into the earth in a shape of anthropoid. The pits are approximately 50 cm wide, at least 150 cm long and 90 cm deep below the surface of the ground. Two of the burials contain skulls. However, it is unclear whether their positions at the west end of the grave is original. The majority of the clay tiles that originally covered the burials are scattered around the site. Some of the tiles, however, remain in-situ, enabling us to reconstruct their original design: considering the dimensions of some of the partly-preserved roof tiles (approximately 60 x 40 cm), we may suggest that the burials were covered over by at least six concave rectangular roof tiles (*tegulae*), three on either side. These tiles are arranged in the form of a pitched tent, by being pitched against one another, a method termed the 'inverted V tent-like form' (Brodribb, 1987: 21-22). Although it is a characteristic of such tombs to cover the top of the joints at the apex with imbrices (Brodribb, 1987: 22) and to create a floor with tiles, surviving tile pieces do not indicate whether a similar method was employed here. Many of the tegulae have shallow wavy and straight lines incised on the surfaces. These must have been made using a stick or fingers.

The rock-cut structure is located at the northern foot of Bayraktepe. Consisting of a platform and a vertical section, it is cut into the outcrop of a large monolithic rock mass. The bedrock surface slopes slightly southwards. The vertical section contains two roughly-cut rectangular niches on either side. Their dimensions and levels from the rock-cut surface differ. While the part of the bedrock surface in front of the eastern niche is slightly concave, it is unclear whether the other niche contains a counterpart, since a piece of rock has fallen onto this part of the platform. The surface of the structure is limited by vertically formed bedrock at the east edge.

It is usually difficult to determine the function of rock-cut structures, as they provide little evidence concerning their original appearance. Numerous examples in the literature demonstrate that such structures may have various functions such as cult places, olive/wine presses or multipurpose rooms.[1]

[1] For similar cult places from Pamphylia, Cilicia, and Commagene see Akçay, 2008: fig. 64; Çokay-Kepçe, 2006: fig. 64; Taşkıran, 2017: 435; Schütte-Maischatz and Winter, 2004: pl. 32/2. For typical rock-cut rooms from Lycia, Cilicia, and Caria see Çevik, 2015: 353; Mörel & Özdemir, 2022: fig. 36.D2; Süzmen, 2023: figs. 28-29. For the comparable olive/wine presses with two *fulcra* on different levels from Lycia and Cilicia see Kolb, 2008: pls.

Considering the possible open-air nature of the structure, the absence of a row of beam holes characteristics of rock-cut rooms and the irregular shape of the top of the bedrock, which does not make it possible to build a regular roof, I believe that the structure did not function as a room. Döğerli-Başerkafaoğlu focuses on the possibility that it may have been used as a cult place (Döğerli-Başerkafaoğlu, 2023: 218), which is a reasonable hypothesis given the presence of the aforementioned tombs nearby. On the other hand, the present state of the structure suggests that it originally, or in its second phase of use, functioned as an olive/wine press based on reliable evidence and a large number of similar examples. In this case, it is plausible to assume that the niches were used as *fulcra* (for press beams) and that the platform was used as a press bed/treading floor. The sloping and concave structure of the bedrock surface also indicates a function related to pressing. Although not visible, a collecting vat may have been placed to the south of the bedrock surface. However, no other evidence (i.e. *orbis* and *trapetum*) was identified to determine whether the building was used as an olive or a wine press.

Evaluation: Suggestions Concerning the Chronology and Function of the Site

This chapter discusses the evolution of the site from the Classical to the Middle Byzantine periods, focusing on the chronology and function of Bayraktepe Hill and the other remains situated in the immediate vicinity.

Pre-Byzantine Period (Figures 1-6)

The earliest datable structures at the site are *the rock-cut tombs* from the 5th and 4th c. B.C., which attest to the presence of the Dynastic period (c. 550-360 B.C.) in the vicinity (Tietz, 2016: 345-348; Döğerli-Başerkafaoğlu, 2023: 218-220). As mentioned, if *the rock-cut structure* had originally functioned as a cult place, then it could indeed have become part of the Necropolis of the Dynastic period. The first phase of the *the ancient road* running through the necropolis and leading to Kadyanda can also be attributed to the same period, considering the remains of the other contemporary tombs on the same route. There is also, albeit not securely attested, the possibility of a Dynastic settlement in or around Kadyanda (Tietz, 2016: 348). Neither the surface sherds nor the architectural remains provide any clue as to whether the site was inhabited during the Classical period. The topography of the site does not reflect the standart settlement patterns of the time either. Nevertheless, Bayraktepe Hill, which appears to

LXXXIII/10, XCI/22, XCIII/32; Aydınoğlu, 2009: fig. 152. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Ümit AYDINOĞLU for sharing his valuable opinions on this *rock-cut structure*.

be too small to have functioned as a regular fortified settlement, may have been used as a lookout for Classical Kadyanda, given its strategic position overlooking the Yeşilüzümlü Plain, through which important passes run. Such an observation post would have been highly useful, given the conflicts amongst the local cities of Lycia, and the external threats towards Lycia during the Classical period (İşler, 2021: 217). In recent years, several lookouts and small hilltop settlements dating from the Classical period have been documented in the territories of Tlos (Korkut, 2015: 37-42, 47-65), Xanthos (Üstündağ, 2022: 417), Limyra (Lotz & Seyer, 2017: 250-251, 255), and Myra (İşler, 2021: 213-215) in Lycia.

No solid evidence has been discovered to date concerning the Hellenistic period of the site. Claiming that Bayraktepe Hill contains some architectural remains from the Hellenistic period, Döğerli-Başerkafaoğlu suggests that the hill functioned as a watch point for the Acropolis of Kadyanda, without providing any detailed description or visual evidence (Döğerli-Başerkafaoğlu, 2024: 9, 16, 26). Although our archaeological survey yielded no evidence of such remains, the author's assertion seems reasonable given that the city of Kadyanda had already been founded on top of the Tekirlik Hill as a *polis* by the Hellenistic period, and it is reasonable to speculate that the defence system of the city consisted not only of citywalls, some of which are visible today, but also of additional lookouts in the close vicinity. A number of strategic watch points or fortified places associated with the typical Hellenistic defence system[2] are known from the territories of Lycian cities from the Hellenistic period, including in Tlos (Korkut, 2015: 37-42, 47-65), Xanthos (Üstündağ, 2022: 418), Limyra (Lotz and Seyer, 2017: 250-251, 254), and Myra (Borchhardt, 1975: 49-56). We can also assume with certainty that *the ancient road* must have been one of the functioning routes between the plain and the Kadyanda, judging by the presence of prosperous city of Kadyanda in the Hellenistic period (for the Hellenistic period of Kadyanda, see Frézouls et al., 1986: 225-238; Tietz, 2016: 348-349).

It is uncertain whether the site retained its significance during the Roman period, when Kadyanda was at the height of its power (for the Roman period of Kadyanda see Frézouls et al., 1986: 225-238; Tietz, 2016: 348-349). With the exception of a few sherds, no direct evidence was found to suggest a substantial Roman Imperial presence at the site. Nevertheless, it is

[2] For the defence system of the Hellenistic cities in Lycia and the security measures taken in the countryside of Lycia in the Hellenistic period against bandits see Hellenkemper and Hild, 2004a: 232-233; Öztürk, 2006: 191.

reasonable to assume that the importance of *the ancient road* remained unchanged. It likely formed part of a route between Kadyanda and the Yeşilüzümlü Plain, along which the main Roman road between Xanthos and Telmessos passed (for the Roman roads nearby see Onur and Tekoğlu, 2020: 14-15; Onur, 2022: fig. 2). Although cities and territories required far less defensive organisation during the *Pax Romana* than in the past, various internal security measures are known to have been taken against brigands and rebellions in Lycia during the Roman Imperial period (Öztürk, 2006: 145-150, 187-195; Çevik & Bulut, 2007: 115-116; Bennett, 2007: 152-153; Gürer, 2012: 5). Therefore, Bayraktepe Hill may have continued to be used, at least as a temporary lookout point for mobile security patrols rather than as a permanent fortified place.

Byzantine Period (Figures 1-4, 6-10)

The majority of the visible remains suggest that the site was of particular importance, especially in the latter part of the Byzantine period. *The rock-cut structure*, which may have functioned as a cult place when the Classical necropolis was in use, was most likely designed as an olive/wine press originally or in its second phase in the Byzantine period. It would be misleading to attribute the structure to a specific time frame, since the designs of most presses have remained unchanged throughout the ages (Aydınoğlu, 2009: 10, 26, 80-81), and no elements of the pressing mechanism that would indicate a particular period were identified at the site. For this reason, olive oil or wine presses are usually dated based on the period of the settlement in which they are located. The large number of sherds found by the press, including those from after Late Antiquity, and a number of glazed pottery fragments dating specifically from the early Komnenian period to the early 13th century, indicate that the press was in use during the Middle Byzantine period. The adjacent Bayraktepe Hill, the Byzantine phase of which is discussed below, also supports the presence of the pressing mechanism in the Middle Byzantine period with its pottery finds[3] and characteristic walls similar in date.

Without evidence from archaeological finds, it is usually difficult to accurately date tombs that consist only of earth-cut pits and roof tiles. Therefore, in the absence of reliable data, I will focus on the stylistic features

[3] I would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sinan MİMAROĞLU and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erkan DÜNDAR for sharing their invaluable insights on the pottery found at the site. For the characteristics of the presses in Lycia in Antiquity and the Byzantine period see Bulut, 2018: 684-696. For Cilicia see Aydınoğlu, 2009: 25-83.

of *the tile tombs* at the site. Firstly, these *tile tombs* differ from other types of tile tombs in that the roof tiles covering over these tombs are arranged in the form of a pitched tent. Such tombs are known to have been widely used in both cities and rural settlements, particularly by low income people from the Hellenistic through the Byzantine periods (Atalay et al., 2020: 177). Another feature of the *tile tombs* could help us to narrow down the time period in question. As mentioned, the *tegulae* of *the tombs* bear shallow wavy and straight lines incised on their surfaces. This type of *tegula* with incised lines became widespread during the Byzantine period (Özyiğit, 1990: 159-161, 177; Coşkun, 2007: 14-15; Bilir, 2020: 201). On the other hand, Byzantine tombs featuring tiles arranged in the form of a pitched tent, particularly date to the period between the 4th and the 7th centuries (Coulton, 2012: 175-176; Özüdoğru, 2020: 286, 585; Atalay et al., 2020: 179; Kaya & Tan, 2006: 43; Türktüzün & Pekşen, 2019: 204), while a few examples are also known from the Middle Byzantine period (Sezgin, 2020: 160; Yaylalı, 1991: 174; Gürsel, 2016: 78; Ürkmez, 2019: 240) as well. Therefore, given the consistent use of lines on the tegulae throughout the Byzantine period, and the dominant presence of the Middle Byzantine period at the site in particular, it is reasonable to conclude that these tombs were constructed during the Early or, more likely, Middle Byzantine period.

The site's presence during the Middle Byzantine period can be traced directly on the hill of Bayraktepe, based on the remains of sherds and *the fortification wall*. As was the case for *the rock-cut structure* (olive/wine press) located immediately outside the hill, a number of glazed sherds discovered on the surface suggest that the final occupation phase of Bayraktepe Hill dates from the early Komnenian period to the early 13th century. This period is further evidenced by the stylistic characteristics of *the fortification wall*. As described above in detail, *the fortification wall* features a rough/crude form of the *cloisonné* technique. This masonry technique is known to have been introduced in Greece and neighbouring regions in the 10th century and continued to be employed until the end of the Byzantine period (Trkulja, 2004: 34; Kontogiannis, 2022: vii). Whether the technique used is regular or irregular, the vast majority of the Anatolian examples are attested on the western and southern coasts, and are usually dated to the Komnenian and/or Laskarid periods (Foss, 1982: 145-205; Crow, 2017: 102). With respect to the parallel masonry techniques in settlements near the site in western Lycia, these are mostly ascribed to the period between the

11th and early 13th century by analogy[4], with the exception of a few possible examples whose first construction period may date back to the 10th century.[5] Considering both the pottery finds and the comparable examples of the fortification masonry, we can attribute the last and most visible phase of Bayraktepe Hill to the period between the 10th/11th and the early 13th century, along with the remains including the cistern, steps leading to the gate of the fortification and the other remains of unidentified structures.

My final focus will be a consideration of the possible function of Bayraktepe Hill in the Byzantine period. Given the small size of the settlement and the characteristics of the limited number of remains, the hill cannot be associated with such settlement types as villages, hamlets, farmsteads, monasteries, sacred sites, *kastra*, and so on. Rather, as assumed for the pre-Byzantine period, Bayraktepe Hill must have functioned as a watch-point in the Middle Ages. However, since the available archaeological and written evidence provide no occupation phase roughly after the 4th/5th century in Kadyanda (Tietz, 2016: 349), Bayraktepe Hill cannot be associated with a possible defense network of Kadyanda anymore in 'late' Late Antiquity. Therefore, the hill, with its strategic position overlooking the Yeşilüzümlü Plain, may be considered to have functioned as a look-out, where maybe a small garrison was stationed, with a view to protect the nearby local population (in the immediate environs of the Yeşilüzümlü Plain) and the agricultural produce by watching the roads and the mountain passes, as well as by communicating with other surrounding look-outs[6] as part of an early warning system (for the *beacon* system see Pattenden, 1983). Unlike Byzantine *kastra*, the site is too small to have accommodated even several hundred people and animals in times of attact. Therefore, the site should not be considered as a variation of a regular Byzantine fortress.

Whether the hill functioned as a look-out during the Early Byzantine period and the Dark Ages (Early Middle Ages) is uncertain, since no

[4] Foss, 1994: 17 (Aperlae/fortifications); Kunze & Varkıvanç, 2010: 46, 83, 100 (Patara/Doğucasarı, Medieval fortifications, Medieval Town Church); Ceylan & Duggan, 2022: 1088 (Patara/City Basilica/Medieval Chapel); Ceylan & Erdoğan, 2016: 214 (Patara/City Basilica/Medieval Chapel); Üstündağ, 2022: 57-65, 105, 108 (Xanthos, fortification walls); Foss, 1994: 5 (Telmessus/fortifications).

[5] Kunze & Varkıvanç, 2010: 46, 83, 100 (Patara/Medieval fortifications, Medieval Town Church).

[6] Several fortified sites have been documented in the vicinity of Bayraktepe, suggesting the existence of a local *beacon* system. For Hisar in the Yeşilüzümlü Plain see Bean, 1948: 50, fn. 11. For the sites near Kocaçay, see Wörrle & Wurster, 1997 (Dereköy/Söğütlüdere); Ruggieri & Zaffanella, 2000: 72, fn. 4 (Alaca Kale and Avlan Kale).

concrete evidence was discovered. While the former was one of the most prosperous periods in the history of Lycia, with only minor threats from brigandage and the occasional revolt (Foss, 1993: 16-20), the latter was characterized by frequent Arab attacks against Lycia, which focused on pillaging rural areas (Foss, 1993: 20; Kontogiannis, 2021: 51; Küçükaşçı, 2006: 376-381). Therefore, the hill may be assumed to have functioned as a watch-point particularly during the attacks/potential threats of Arabs towards Lycia that continued into the early 11th century (Küçükaşçı, 2006: 381), given the aforementioned evidence of pottery and the fortification masonry. The final and the most likely phase of Bayraktepe is the Komnenian period, when a large number of settlements and strategic points were fortified, especially against the Seljuk Turks, whose threats are well documented in the region (Zimmermann, 2016: 71; Kontogiannis, 2021: 52-54; Foss, 1993: 20-23; Duggan, 2010: 48-51; Ceylan & Duggan, 2022: 1088-89). Therefore, Bayraktepe Hill may well have functioned as an element of a wider chains of Komnenian fortifications in Lycia as evidenced by various examples[7], or merely as a local look-out until the late 12th or early 13th century at the latest, when Lycia fell to the Seljuks (Duggan, 2010: 47-48).

Conclusions

Surveyed by our archaeological team during the 2024 and 2025 summer seasons, the Bayraktepe site has yielded sufficient evidence to establish its chronology and to interpret its function, which had evolved toward a defensive character by the Byzantine period. As discussed above, the earliest datable structures of the site are the Dynastic-period tombs attesting to the presence of a settlement nearby at that time. However, no solid evidence was discovered that might indicate the use of the site between the Dynastic (Classical) and the Roman periods, although the remains of the road suggest a direct association with the city of Kadyanda, and Bayraktepe Hill may have functioned as one of the city's lookouts.

The vast majority of the remains -including the press, tile tombs, cistern, fortification walls, and the sherds- date from the early, or more likely, the Middle Byzantine period. Considering the small size of the site and the limited number of structures, it is reasonable to suggest that after Late Antiquity, Bayraktepe functioned as a lookout point commanding the entire Yeşilüzümlü Plain. This Byzantine phase cannot be linked to a possible

[7] For the examples in the countryside of Lycia see Wörrle & Wurster, 1997; Jacobek, 1995: 868, 871; İşler, 2021: 219; Kunze & Varkıvanç, 2010: 46; Doğan, 2004: 190-91, 194; Doğan, 2005: 78-80.

defense network of Kadyanda, since the available data indicate no occupation in the city after the 4th/ 5th century. Therefore, Bayraktepe Hill, with its strategic position, may be considered to have served as a local lookout built to protect the nearby population against the threats posed by Arab or Seljuk incursions.

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FIGURES



Figure 1. Map of Western Lycia showing Bayraktepe and the ancient routes (Fatih ONUR)

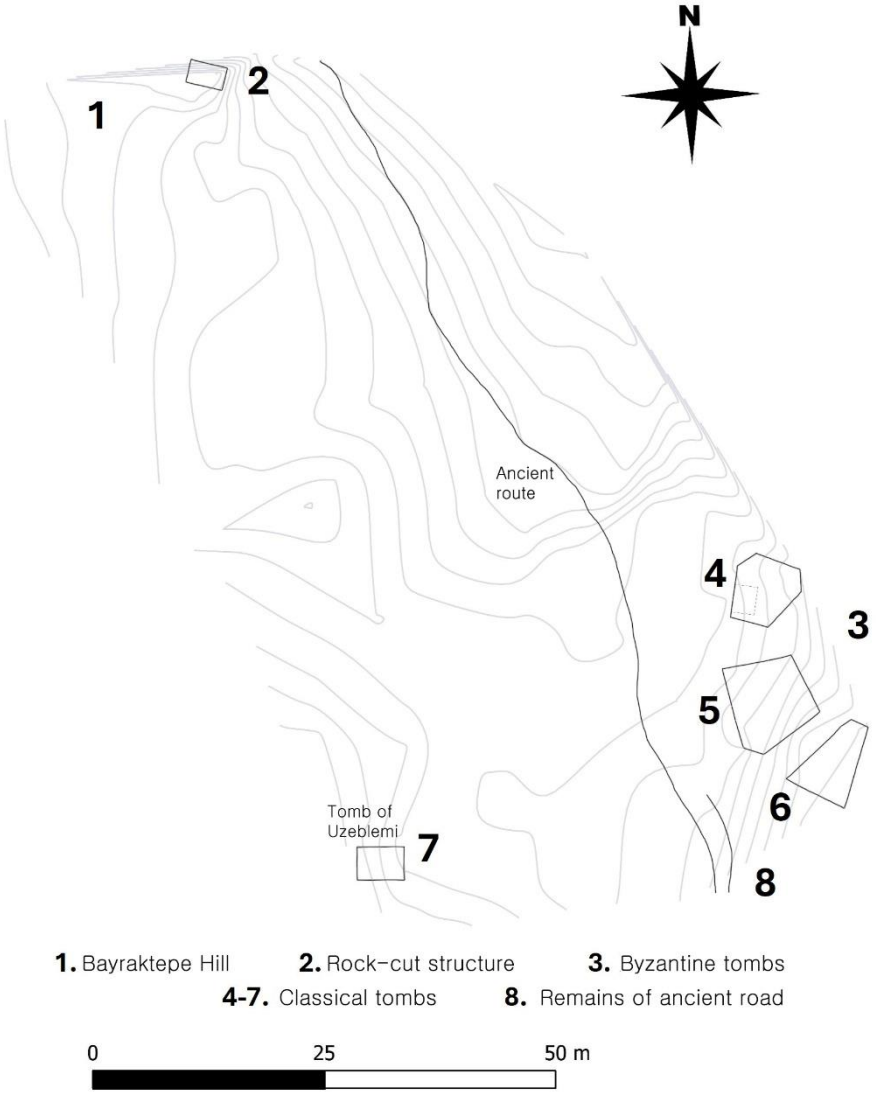


Figure 2. Map of the site (Fatih ONUR-Orçun ERDOĞAN, after Döğerli-Başerkafaoğlu, 2023, fig. 4)

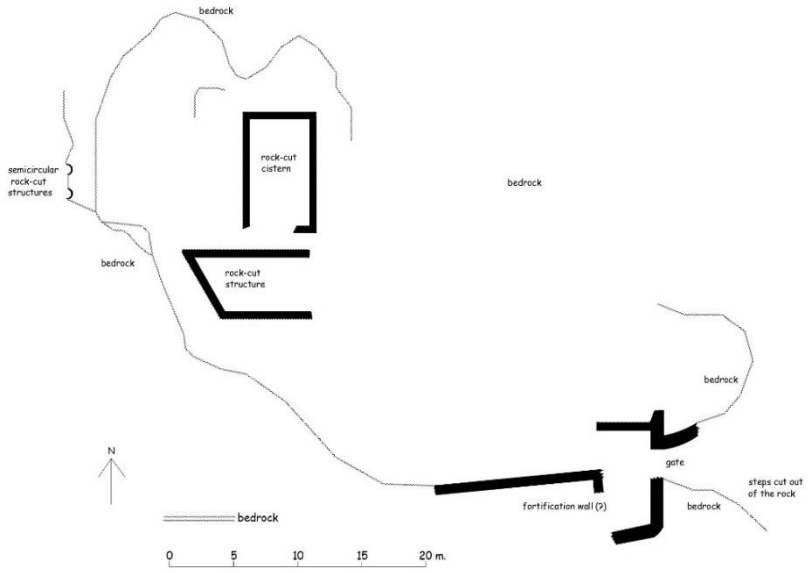


Figure 3. Sketch plan (not-to-scale) of the Bayraktepe Hill (Aslıhan ERDOĞAN-Orçun ERDOĞAN)

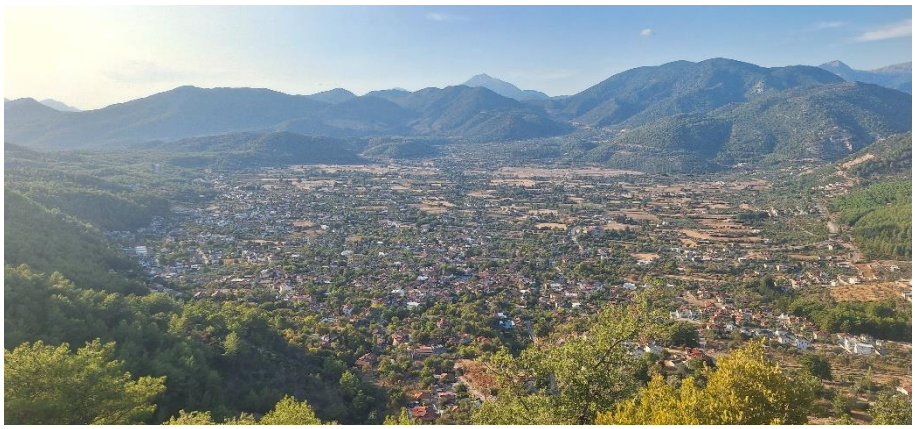


Figure 4. Yeşilüzümlü and İncirköy from Bayraktepe Hill



Figure 5. Ancient road



Figure 6. Rock-cut structure



Figure 7. Tile tombs



Figure 8. Tile fragments from the tile tombs



Figure 9. Middle-Byzantine masonry of the fortification

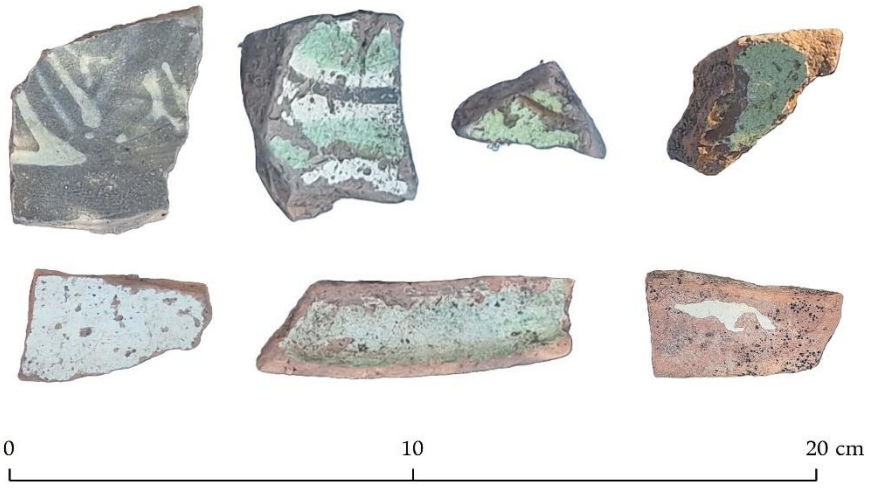


Figure 10. Middle- Byzantine sherds