

IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF THE POTENTIAL FOR THE COEXISTENCE OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN SANLIURFA PROVINCE¹

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ABSTRACT

Located in Turkey's Southeastern Anatolia Region, the province of Şanlıurfa has been continuously inhabited from prehistoric times to the present. Over this period, numerous civilizations have left behind artifacts reflecting their cultures and ways of life. In later periods, people often chose areas with ancient ruins as settlement sites and frequently utilized these remnants to construct new buildings. Today, these settlements, closely intertwined with archaeological sites, are predominantly located in rural areas. The coexistence of rural settlements and archaeological sites sometimes enhances the cultural heritage value of these areas. However, it also poses significant challenges regarding the preservation, management, and evaluation of archaeological sites. Understanding and evaluating the dual relationship between rural settlements and archaeological sites in Şanlıurfa is therefore of critical importance. The primary aim of this study is to identify and evaluate settlements in Şanlıurfa that integrate rural settlements and archaeological sites. Despite the presence of numerous rural settlements situated on or around archaeological sites in Şanlıurfa, no comprehensive academic or scientific study addressing this coexistence has been conducted. Thus, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to the literature by identifying and classifying rural settlements that coexist with archaeological sites in Şanlıurfa. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods and was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, through a literature review and archival research, rural settlements intertwined with archaeological sites and designated as conservation sites were identified. In the second stage, these settlements were analyzed, and the interaction between rural settlements and archaeological sites was evaluated.

Keywords: Rural settlement, archaeological site, identification, documentation, Sanliurfa.

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to its strategic location between Asia and Europe and its favorable physical conditions for settlement, Anatolia has played a prominent role during various periods of human history and has been the cradle of numerous unique civilizations. Being a peninsula with a length of 1,560 kilometers, Anatolia often allowed the

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tribes that arrived to settle in only a specific part of it, typically in either its eastern or western regions. For this reason, except for empires like the Persians, Romans, and Turks, all other states that lived in Anatolia were able to control only a portion of it, and often just a small section. The existence of small, enclosed regions in Anatolia also contributed to the coexistence of up to 60 principalities in the same era (Akurgal, 1995). During this process, each civilization created works that reflected its culture and way of life, and the settlements formed by these works collectively gave rise to unique geographical landscapes. In later periods, these areas either remained uninhabited, transforming into archaeological sites within today's natural environment, developed into urban centers, or took on rural characteristics (Aslan, 2016).

The relationship between archaeological sites and their surrounding environments has long been a subject of studies in the field of cultural heritage preservation. Over time, the focus has shifted from archaeological remains themselves to the physical and social environments in which they are located. Within this scope, research has predominantly concentrated on examining the challenges and potentials of archaeological heritage sites located in urban areas (Yeşilbağ, 2019). Although the number of studies addressing the challenges and potentials of archaeological heritage sites in rural areas has increased in recent years (Altıpat, 2001; Kazıl Aydoğdu, 2012; Harman Aslan, 2016; Şayın, 2016; Topaloğlu, 2017; Yüksel, 2019; Yeşilbağ, 2019; Aynas, 2022; Karan, 2023), it is still insufficient considering the potential of the country. However, most of the archaeological activities currently conducted in Anatolia by local and international teams take place in ruins located in rural areas. Many of these ruins are surrounded by contemporary rural settlements, either in their immediate vicinity or at some distance.

In settlements that have developed over archaeological sites or remains, each layer represents connections formed by the meanings attributed by nature, physical structures, and local communities. These connections between layers continuously influence one another. The current state of these settlements comprises archaeological and rural physical values, geological and climatic conditions that have impacted the area since early periods, and cultural stratifications that have developed over time. The inhabitants of these settlements today maintain a connection with the past due to both the physical structures from previous eras and the existing physical environment in which they were born and live (Karan, 2023).

Within the scope of the research, the province of Şanlıurfa, which has numerous rural settlements interwoven with archaeological sites and has been continuously used as a settlement area from prehistoric times to the present, was chosen as the study area. The reason for selecting Şanlıurfa as the study area is the lack of

comprehensive academic and scientific research addressing the coexistence of archaeological sites and rural settlements, despite the province's abundance of such intertwined locations.

A historical preservation project is seen to involve numerous and sometimes highly complex essential elements. However, one of the most fundamental stages is conducting a comprehensive and multidisciplinary investigation of the historical monument or site and preserving, cataloging, and inventorying the knowledge gained from these studies (Leech, 1999; Carman, 2000; Harding, 2007). Inventories, which are based on identifying and documenting cultural assets, systematically compile, structure, and store data related to them. They also enable the use of this data by different user groups and facilitate its sharing across various platforms, making inventories the initial and crucial tool of the preservation process (Altınöz, 2018). As the first and most critical step in conservation, inventorying serves as the foundation for cities' efforts to preserve memory and build a collective heritage. For this reason, the first step of the research involved identifying settlements in Şanlıurfa that encompass both rural areas and archaeological sites.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Within the scope of the research, the province of Şanlıurfa, located in Turkey's Southeastern Anatolia Region, has been selected as the study area. The material of the research consists of rural settlements situated on or in the vicinity of archaeological sites in the rural areas of Şanlıurfa.

This study, employing both qualitative and quantitative research methods, is designed in two stages: data collection and the analysis and interpretation of the collected data (Figure 1). During the data collection stage, literature review, archival research, and field studies were utilized (Table 1). In the literature review, studies focusing on the coexistence of rural settlements and archaeological sites were examined to gain comprehensive knowledge on the subject. For the archival research, the archives of the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage and the Şanlıurfa General Directorate of Museums were examined to identify rural settlements intertwined with archaeological sites in Şanlıurfa. The registration records of all registered sites in the archive of the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage were reviewed, and a numerical breakdown of the obtained data was prepared. Subsequently, efforts were made to identify settlements in Şanlıurfa that combine rural settlements with archaeological sites using the collected data.

After identifying the settlements, field studies were conducted in 38 settlements located in different districts with varying characteristics to examine their general

features on-site. On-site identification and observation studies were carried out during the fieldwork, including photographic documentation and detailed observations. In the second stage, which involved the analysis and interpretation of the data, the rural settlements intertwined with archaeological sites were analyzed based on various characteristics. The findings and information obtained were then presented, and a general evaluation of the study was conducted.



Figure 1. Method stages

Table 1. Data Collection Methods

Data Collection Methods	Literature Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Books - Master's and Doctoral Theses - Articles - Proceedings
	Archive Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Archive - Şanlıurfa General Directorate of Museums Archive - Şanlıurfa Culture, Education, Art, and Research Foundation (ŞURKAV) Archive - Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) Archive - Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change Archive (Republic of Turkey) - Official Websites of Public Institutions and Organizations
	Field Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field Studies/On-Site Identification Studies - Photography Sessions

3. LOCATION AND BRIEF HISTORY OF ŞANLIURFA PROVINCE

The city of Şanlıurfa is located in the Middle Euphrates Section of the Southeastern Anatolia Region (Figure 2). It is bordered by Mardin to the east, Gaziantep to the west, Adıyaman to the north, and Diyarbakır to the northeast. To the south, the province shares a border with the Turkey-Syria boundary. The city has a total of 13 districts. Karaköprü, Haliliye, and Eyyübiye are central districts, while Harran, Akçakale, Viranşehir, Ceylanpınar, Hilvan, Siverek, Suruç, Bozova, Birecik, and Halfeti are other districts. According to TÜİK data, as of 2022, the city's population is 2,170,110, with 746,375 residing in rural areas.



Figure 2. Location of Sanliurfa province on the map of Turkey
(https://crh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9Eanl%C4%B1urfa_%28il%29)

The history of Urfa spans approximately 12,000 years. Its proximity to significant water sources and agricultural lands makes it one of the earliest settlements. With its favorable natural conditions and location on the Silk Road, the city of Şanlıurfa has come under the rule of many nations throughout history, shaping its cultural identity under their influence to the present day (Çiftçi, 2019).

Archaeological studies in the Urfa region began in earnest towards the late 1970s, except for short-term excavations conducted in the early 1950s at mounds in Sultantepe, Harran, and Aşağı Yarımca. In the 1970s, funding was provided by the State Hydraulic Works (DSİ) for excavations of archaeological sites that would be submerged under dam reservoirs, initiating extensive research and excavation efforts. The results of these studies have shed light on the historical, cultural, and economic structures of the region, demonstrating that Urfa has maintained its significance from prehistoric times to the present day (Çelik, 2008). Findings and remains from these studies reveal that Şanlıurfa possesses a chronological history spanning from the Paleolithic Age, followed by the Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze, and Iron Ages, to the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine (Eastern Roman), and Islamic periods.

4. IDENTIFICATION OF SETTLEMENTS IN ŞANLIURFA THAT INTEGRATE RURAL AREAS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Although Şanlıurfa hosts numerous settlements where rural areas and archaeological sites coexist, there is no comprehensive academic or scientific study focusing on this interaction. Therefore, the first step of this research aimed to identify settlements in Şanlıurfa that integrate rural areas and archaeological sites. The identification process initially relied on data obtained from the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, focusing solely on registered sites. During the literature review and archival research, various sources

indicated the presence of unregistered archaeological sites, particularly in the Harran, Birecik, and Suruç districts, that are located within or near rural settlements. Additionally, it is highly likely that other such settlements remain unidentified. However, identifying all unregistered sites was not feasible at this stage of the study, and these areas were therefore excluded from the scope of the research. Consequently, this study does not claim to create a completed inventory.

In identifying the settlements, “urban conservation areas,” “historical-natural conservation areas,” and “archaeological conservation areas” registered by the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage were examined, with a focus on “archaeological conservation areas.” These areas were then classified based on their locations into two categories: “rural areas” and “urban or district centers.” For the rural areas within the scope of this study, a Google Earth file provided by the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage and registration records from the directorate’s archives was used. Based on their settlement status, these areas were categorized into two groups: “settlement present” and “settlement absent.” Finally, archaeological sites with settlements on or near them were identified (Figure 3).

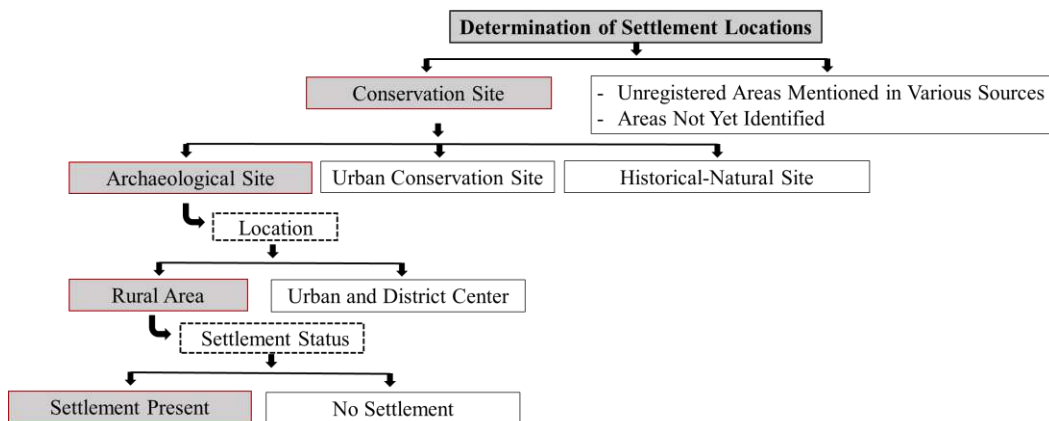


Figure 3. Stages of identification of settlements

The identification of settlements was conducted based on data obtained from the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage on July 23, 2024. Applications are submitted to the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage each month, and the number of these sites continues to increase. According to the data received from the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage on July 23, 2024, there are 889 registered conservation sites in Şanlıurfa. Of these, **881** are classified as “**archaeological sites**,” 6 as “urban conservation sites” and 2 as “historical-natural sites.”

In the next stage, the 881 archaeological conservation areas were classified into two categories based on their locations: “rural areas” and “urban and district centers.” Following the enactment of Law No. 6360 in 2012, Şanlıurfa became a metropolitan municipality, and in April 2014, all villages were converted into neighborhoods under the same names. For this reason, in the areas defined as “rural areas” within the scope of this study, the following criteria were taken into account:

- The continuation of rural settlement characteristics and rural lifestyles,
- The preservation of the rural nature of the existing structures, and
- The ongoing presence of agricultural production and/or livestock activities.

These criteria were established with reference to the “Regulation on Rural Neighborhoods and Rural Settled Areas,” prepared by the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change and published in the Official Gazette on April 15, 2021 (Url-1). Settlements were classified accordingly.

Additionally, the “Sustainable New Urban-Rural” definition was established in the “Urban-Rural Population Statistics, 2022,” published by TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute) on May 11, 2023. This urban-rural classification has been significantly influenced by changes in the administrative division structure resulting from legal regulations, such as Law No. 6360 enacted in 2012. TÜİK classified the urban-rural structure into three levels: “Densely Urban, Intermediate Urban, and Rural.” Densely Urban refers to settlements where at least 50% of the population resides in urban center grids. Intermediate Urban refers to settlements that do not meet the conditions of being classified as either densely urban or rural. Rural refers to settlements where more than 50% of the population resides in rural grids. This classification was presented on a province-based map of Turkey (Figure 4). In this study, this classification by TÜİK was also taken into account when categorizing the locations of archaeological conservation areas.

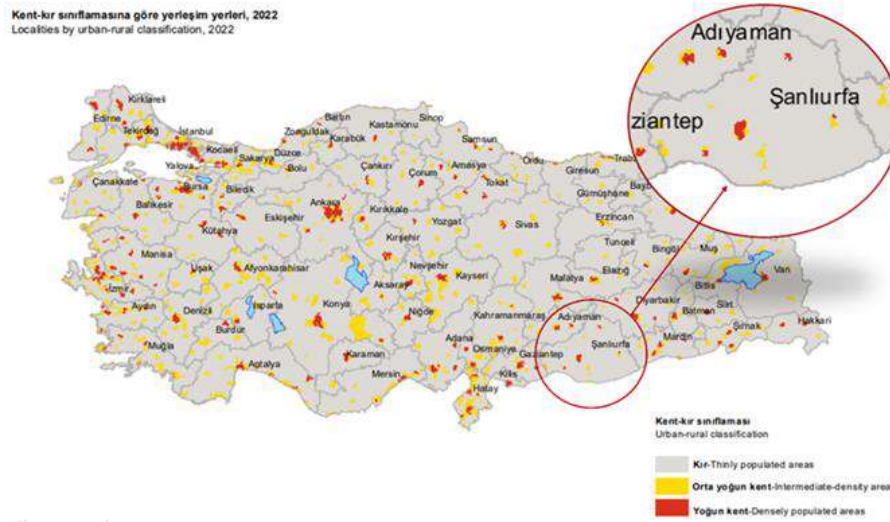


Figure 4. TurkStat, Urban-Rural Population Statistics, 2022

In line with the aforementioned research, settlements were spatially analyzed using the Google Earth file obtained from the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that out of the 881 archaeological conservation areas in Şanlıurfa, 863 are located in rural areas, while 18 are situated within urban and district centers.

Using the Google Earth file obtained from the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage and the registration records from the directorate's archive, **863** archaeological conservation areas located **in rural areas** were analyzed in terms of settlement. As a result of these analyses, it was determined that in **518** of these areas, **settlements exist within and/or in the vicinity of the archaeological conservation boundaries**, while in 345 areas, no settlements or structures were found within or near the archaeological conservation boundaries (Figure 5).

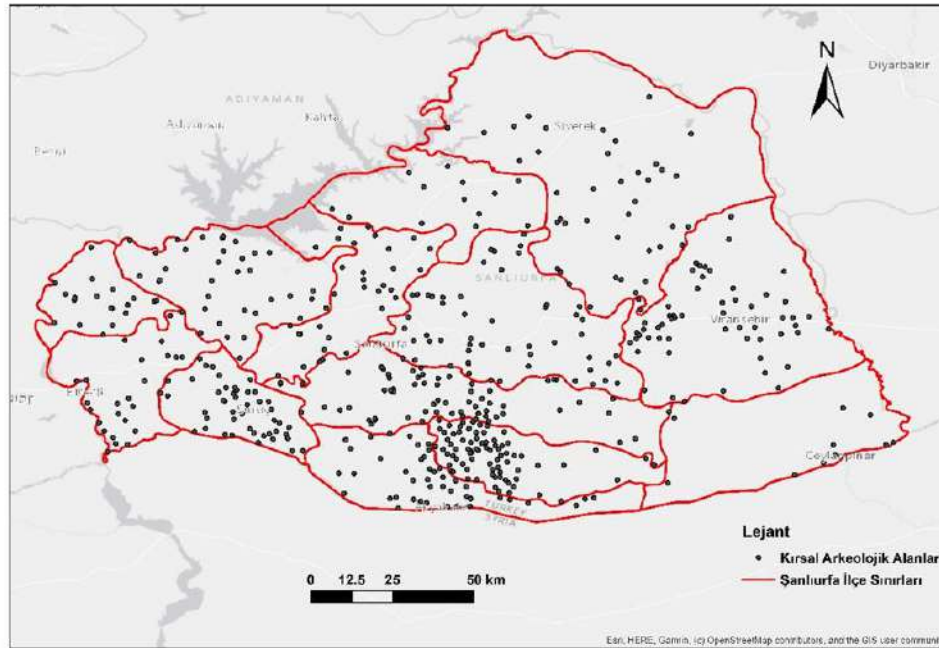


Figure 5. The Distribution of Archaeological Conservation Areas in Rural Şanlıurfa with Settlements Present Within and/or Nearby

5. CLASSIFICATION OF SETTLEMENTS IN ŞANLIURFA INTEGRATING RURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

In Şanlıurfa, after identifying settlements with rural habitation located on and/or near registered archaeological sites, these settlements were classified under two categories, considering differences in conservation approaches:

- Based on their location relative to archaeological sites, and
- Based on the type of archaeological sites.

5.1. Classification of Settlements Based on Their Location Relative to Archaeological Sites

Since ancient times, the lands of Anatolia have hosted various civilizations due to their location and favorable natural and climatic conditions. Within this historical continuity, different civilizations have successively created diverse built environments on the same geography (Altınöz, 2021). People often chose areas with ancient remains for settlement because of their suitable physical conditions for habitation and the possibility of utilizing remnants, infrastructure, and foundations from antiquity to create a built environment. Frequently, they constructed their own structures directly on and/or near these archaeological sites, often incorporating the remains into their new developments (Aslan, 2016).

Today, archaeological activities in Anatolia, carried out by both local and international teams, predominantly take place in ruins located in rural areas. Many of these ruins have present-day rural settlements on and/or near them. Due to the archaeological heritage they host, these rural archaeological settlements are often granted archaeological conservation area status. The boundaries of these conservation areas are determined by teams affiliated with the relevant Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage. These boundaries are drawn based on surface archaeological findings and remains, assuming that the archaeological remnants are contained within them. However, the designated conservation boundaries are subject to debate, as there is a possibility that archaeological remains extend beyond these limits.

When examining present-day settlements that combine rural areas and archaeological sites, it is possible to classify the settlements based on their location relative to the archaeological sites into three groups:

- Settlements located within the boundaries of the archaeological site,
- Settlements located both within and around the boundaries of the archaeological site, and
- Settlements located around the boundaries of the archaeological site.

In settlements where development is only around the boundaries of the archaeological site, rural settlements are less likely to pose significant challenges to archaeological studies conducted in the area. However, in areas where development is located within the boundaries of the archaeological site, the issue of conservation becomes more complex. Therefore, the spatial relationship between the rural settlement and the archaeological site is critical.

In Şanlıurfa, the spatial relationship between archaeological sites and rural settlements was analyzed for 518 archaeological conservation areas located in rural locations where development exists within and/or near the boundaries of the archaeological sites. This analysis was conducted using a Google Earth file obtained from the Şanlıurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, which shows the boundaries of the conservation areas. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that rural settlements are located:

- Only within the boundaries of the archaeological site in **34 areas**,
- Both within and around the boundaries in **378 areas**, and
- Only near the boundaries in **106 areas**.

Settlements Located Within the Boundaries of the Archaeological Site: This category includes areas where development exists only within the boundaries of the archaeological site with no development in the vicinity of the boundaries (Figure

6). In Şanlıurfa, when examining settlements located solely within the boundaries of archaeological sites, it is observed that in some cases, only a few structures are present within the designated site boundary (Figure 6a). In other cases, the entire village settlement, along with a large surrounding area, is encompassed within the site boundary (Figures 6b-c).



a. Gündaş Necropolis Area/
Akçakale District

b. Soğmatar Ancient City/
Haliliye District

c. Delgezal Settlement/
Karaköprü District

Figure 6. Settlements Located Within the Boundaries of the Archaeological Site

Settlements Located Both Within and Around the Boundaries of the Archaeological Site: This category includes areas where development exists both within the boundaries of the archaeological site and in its immediate vicinity (Figure 7).



a. Harabeyi Biçük (Small Ruin)
Flat Settlement/ Karaköprü
District

b. Binekli Three Churches
Settlement/ Bozova District

c. Başbük Late Assyrian
Settlement/ Siverek District

Figure 7. Settlements Located Both Within and Around the Boundaries of the Archaeological Site

Settlements Located Around the Boundaries of the Archaeological Site: This category includes areas where there is no development within the boundaries of the archaeological site, but development exists only in the immediate vicinity of the site boundaries (Figure 8).

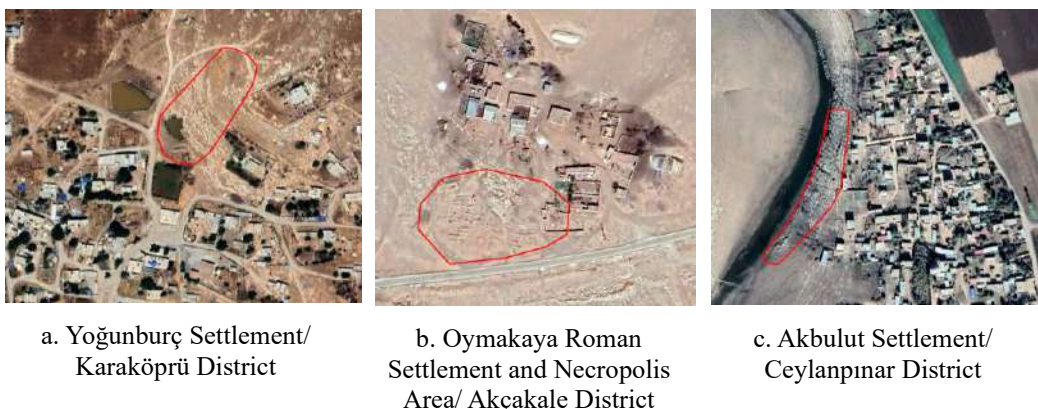


Figure 8. Settlements Located Around the Boundaries of the Archaeological Site

5.2. Classification of Rural Settlements Based on the Traceability of Archaeological Layers/Remains on the Surface

Humanity has a very long history, and for the last 40,000 years, humans have lived almost everywhere on Earth, leaving traces wherever they have settled. All of these traces serve as data for science and provide insights for understanding the history of civilization. Some of these traces, such as ruins and monumental structures, are easily recognizable even to an untrained eye, while others, like mounds (höyük) and tumuli, appear as natural elevations in the terrain unless excavated and can only be distinguished from natural formations by experts in the field. Some remains are buried beneath currently inhabited cities and villages, often unnoticed by their residents. Another significant portion consists of flat settlements or cemetery areas that have survived to the present day (Özdoğan, 2011).

In Şanlıurfa, settlements have been classified into two groups based on the type of archaeological sites:

- Rural settlements located on mounds, and
- Rural settlements located on archaeological sites other than mounds.

When examining the **518** archaeological conservation areas in rural regions of Şanlıurfa where settlements exist on and/or near the archaeological site boundaries, it was determined that settlements are **located on mounds** in **357** of these areas. In the remaining **161** areas, settlements are **located on and/or near archaeological sites other than mounds**.

Rural Settlements Located on Mounds: Mounds, called “tal” or “tel” by Arabs and “tepe” by Persians, are man-made hills formed over time by the accumulation of cultural layers. In the early ages, when humans had not yet adopted a settled lifestyle and primarily lived in tree hollows and caves, mounds did not exist. However, beginning in the Neolithic Age, land-based settlements were established. These

settlements were often destroyed by various disasters and eventually covered by natural layers of soil. Frequently, new communities would settle on these ruins, or the original inhabitants would return and rebuild the city. The reasons for repeatedly settling in the same locations include the area's geographical features, climatic conditions, soil fertility, and availability of water. In the flat plains of Southeastern Anatolia, communities seeking safety or protection from rainwater often established their settlements on mounds or sloped terrains for physical security (Eres, 2013).

Analyses reveal that when rural settlements with ongoing habitation are classified according to the type of archaeological site, the majority (69%) are located on mounds (Figure 9).

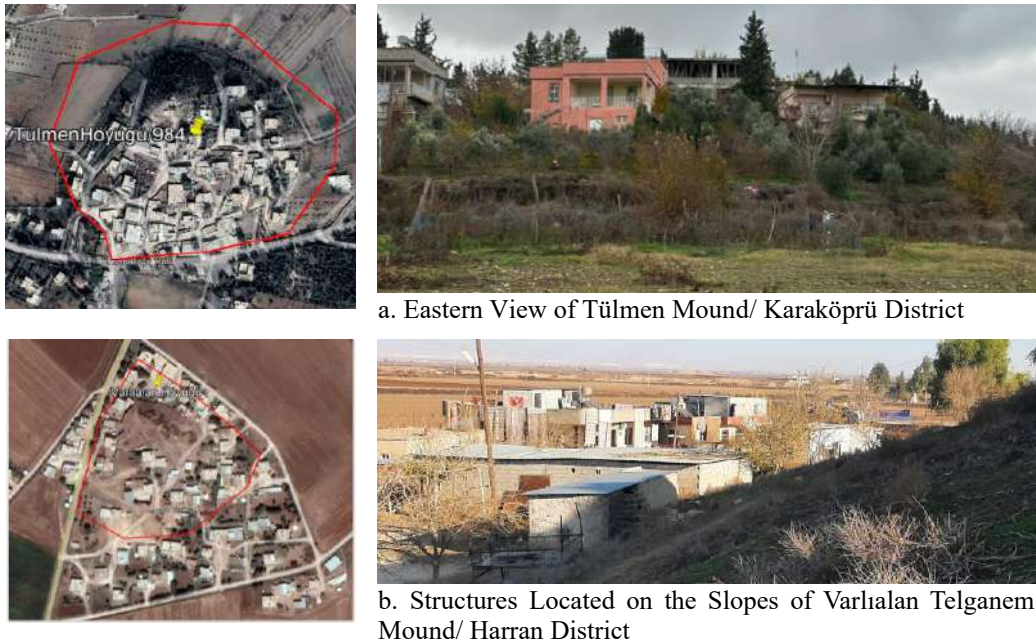


Figure 9. Examples of Rural Settlements Located on Mounds in Şanlıurfa (Çiftçi, 2023)

The continuation of life on a mound indicates that the mound's formation is not yet complete. Such mounds are referred to as “living mounds.” The type of construction on settlements located on mounds affects the mound differently, and these settlements face distinct conservation challenges. Therefore, it is suggested that these settlements be examined under separate headings and that different conservation approaches be employed for their preservation. Settlements on mounds can be classified into three groups based on the type of construction:

- Modern settlements as the last layer of the mound,
- Traditional settlements as the last layer of the mound, and
- Mixed (modern + traditional) settlements as the last layer of the mound.

At the time the archaeological sites were registered, there was no data regarding the rural character and construction status of the area at the time of registration, as the technical personnel from the Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage responsible for preparing the registration records did not include an architect. For this reason, no information about the type of construction in the settlements could be obtained, and due to the inability to inspect all areas on-site, numerical data regarding the types of settlements on mounds remain incomplete in the analyses.

Settlements where structures are built using contemporary construction materials are classified under the category of *“modern settlements as the last layer of the mound.”* The inability of traditional structures to meet the needs of people in line with changing living conditions brought about by modern life has been the primary factor driving people towards modern buildings constructed with contemporary materials. Over time, people abandoned traditional structures or repurposed them as barns, storage facilities, etc. and built new structures with modern materials near these traditional ones. In some cases, traditional structures were entirely demolished and replaced with new buildings. Among the areas surveyed, Kazane Mound (Haliliye District), Tülmen Mound (Karaköprü District), Küplüce Mound (Harran District), and Varlıalan (Telganem) Mound (Harran District) are examples of settlements where modern structures are present as the final layer of the mound (Figure 10). Based on the reviewed registration records and field studies, it has been observed that, despite having first and second-degree archaeological conservation statuses, the number of modern structures on mounds in Şanlıurfa is rapidly increasing due to insufficient oversight.



a. View south from the top of Küplüce Mound



b. Modern buildings located to the west of Varlıalan (Telganem) Mound



c. Modern buildings on the western skirts of Kazane Mound

Figure 10. Examples of modern settlements as the last layer of mounds in Şanlıurfa (Çiftçi, 2023)

Settlements where buildings are built using traditional construction materials and techniques are classified under the category of *“traditional settlements as the last layer of the mounds.”* In the areas surveyed during fieldwork, no settlements were found where only traditional structures exist on the mounds. Research conducted in Harran District, where the highest number of mounds is located, revealed that many areas previously featuring traditional settlements on mounds have transformed over time into mixed or modern settlements (Figure 11).



a. (Yardımcı, 2004)



b. (Çiftçi, 2023)

Figure 11. View south from the top of the Aşağıderen Mound

The question of whether traditional settlements on mounds constitute a cultural heritage that requires preservation has been a subject of interdisciplinary debate. Some archaeologists argue that the settlements on the mounds should be removed to allow the mounds to be excavated for research purposes. On the other hand, many architects believe that traditional rural settlements should be preserved as part of rural architectural heritage. The issue of whether traditional rural settlements

located on archaeological sites are of sufficient quality to warrant preservation has also been a point of discussion among those advocating for the preservation of traditional rural settlements. This is due to factors such as the difficulty of accessing education, healthcare, and cultural services; the changing modes of life and production; and legal restrictions on traditional rural settlements on archaeological sites, leading to abandonment and deterioration. Traditional rural architecture on the mound, which qualifies as a “cultural heritage requiring protection,” is also significant from the perspective of conservation discipline. It indicates that the formation of the mound has not yet been completed and is still ongoing.

Settlements where both traditional and modern building are located on the mound are classified as *“mixed (traditional + modern) settlements as the last layer of the mounds.”* In some of these settlements, the density of traditional structures is higher (Figure 12), while in others, the number of buildings constructed with contemporary materials is greater (Figure 13).



Figure 12. Examples of mixed settlements as the last layer of a mound with a high density of traditional buildings in Şanlıurfa/ Andaç (Hora) Mound/ Harran District (Çiftçi, 2023)



Figure 13. Examples of mixed settlements as the last layer of a mound with a high density of modern buildings in Şanlıurfa/ Sultantepe Mound/ Eyyübiye District (Çiftçi, 2023)

When examining the mounds in Şanlıurfa, it was found that at the time of registration, there was no information about whether settlements existed on or near the mounds, and if settlements were present, there was no data regarding the type of construction, building materials, construction techniques, etc. Furthermore, due to the lack of an opportunity to visit and inspect all the areas on-site, numerical data

regarding the construction status of rural settlements on the mounds could not be obtained.

Rural Settlements Located on Archaeological Sites Other Than Mounds:

Settlements located on archaeological sites, where archaeological remains are visible on the surface, are classified in this group. Based on the type of construction in these settlements, they are classified into three categories:

- Modern rural and archaeological settlements,
- Traditional rural and archaeological settlements, and
- Mixed (traditional + modern) rural archaeological settlements.

Settlements where the structures are built with contemporary materials are classified as “**modern rural and archaeological settlements.**” Examples of modern rural and archaeological settlements from the areas surveyed include the Büyük Alanlı Late Roman Settlement Area (Karaköprü District), Kökenli Settlement (Harran District), and Aşağıkarıncalı Necropolis (Suruç District) (Figure 14). In some modern rural and archaeological settlements with dense development, it has been determined that almost all of the archaeological remains are buried beneath the present-day settlement.



a. Büyük Alanlı Late Roman Settlement Area/ Karaköprü District



b. Kökenli Settlement / Harran District



c. Aşağıkarıncalı Necropolis/ Suruç District

Figure 14. Examples of modern rural and archaeological settlements in Şanlıurfa (Çiftçi, 2023)

Settlements where the structures are made using traditional construction materials and techniques, located on or adjacent to archaeological sites, are classified as **“traditional rural and archaeological settlements”** (Figure 15). In the research conducted across Şanlıurfa province, very few settlements have been found that maintain their traditional fabric. The archival research, including the examination of old photographs of the settlements, reveals that while the settlements typically had a traditional structure in the past, today many of these settlements have seen their traditional fabric damaged and replaced with modern developments.



Figure 15. Example of Traditional Rural and Archaeological Settlements in Şanlıurfa (Çiftçi, 2022)- Bazda Caves Ancient Stone Quarry/ Harran District

Settlements where the structures on or adjacent to archaeological sites consist of both traditional and modern buildings are classified as **“mixed (traditional + modern) rural archaeological settlements.”** In some settlements, the density of traditional structures is higher (Figure 16), while in other areas, modern structures are more prevalent (Figure 17).



a. Soğmatar Ancient City/ Eyyübiye District (Çiftçi, 2022)



b. Han-El Barur Caravanserai and Surroundings/ Harran District (Çiftçi, 2022)

Figure 16. Examples of Mixed Rural Archaeological Settlements with High Traditional Building Density in Şanlıurfa (Çiftçi, 2023)



a. Şuayip Ancient City/ Harran District



b. Harran Walled Area/ Harran District

Figure 17. Examples of Mixed Rural Archaeological Settlements with High Modern Building Density in Şanlıurfa (Çiftçi, 2023)

At the time when the archaeological sites were registered, there was no architect among the technical staff of the Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage who prepared the registration records. As a result, there is no data available regarding the rural characteristics and construction status of the area at the time of registration. Therefore, information about the type of construction in the settlements could not be obtained, and due to the inability to visit and inspect all the areas on-site, numerical data regarding the types of settlements located on archaeological sites other than mounds were not provided in the analyses.

6. GENERAL EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

Sanliurfa Province, throughout history, has hosted numerous civilizations and stands out as a significant settlement area in human history due to its archaeological richness. This study aim to identify, classify, and evaluate rural settlements integrated with archaeological sites in Sanliurfa. The research has made a substantial contribution to literature by examining and assessing the integration of rural settlements with archaeological sites in Sanliurfa. According to the findings, 99% of the registered sites in Sanliurfa Province are designated archaeological sites, with 98% of these located in rural areas. Among the archaeological sites in rural areas, 40% have no settlements within or near the archaeological site boundaries. Of the archaeological sites with settlements, 7% have settlements only within the site boundaries, 20% have settlements exclusively near the site boundaries, and 73% have settlements both within and near the site boundaries.

Although no quantitative data could be obtained regarding the types of structures in rural settlements situated on archaeological sites, archival research and field studies reveal that most of these settlements, which were predominantly composed of traditional structures in the past, have transitioned to modern development over time. The values and threats associated with these rural settlements vary depending on the type of development (modern, traditional, or mixed) present in the settlement, necessitating the application of differentiated conservation approaches.

The identification phase was initially limited to registered sites based on data obtained from the Sanliurfa Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Heritage. Therefore, more extensive field studies are recommended to create a more detailed inventory, documenting specifics such as construction materials and techniques used in these settlements. Legal regulations aimed at preserving archaeological and cultural heritage should be revisited, and their enforceability should be ensured.

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