

Kenan Tepe 2001 Small Finds Analysis

By
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Introduction

During the 2001 field season, excavators collected several remarkable small finds that merit description. These objects can be divided into eight categories: seals, figurines, beads, miniature ritual vessels, metal objects, tokens or weights, ceramic kiln stands, and wagon wheels / toy discs. The objects in each of these categories will be discussed as groups, with parallels offered for the seal and wagon wheels.

Seals

A ceramic cylinder seal (KT4132) incised with geometric intaglio design was discovered in Trench F4, Locus 4026. The 27 x 18mm, 9.5g seal is punctured from end to end, but the puncture holes do not bear burnishing, as would result from twine rubbing the surface. The seal has been unevenly fired (or perhaps burnt), such that the majority of the surface is consistently dark grey (Munsell 10YR 4/1) except for an area 15 x 15mm along one side which is very pale brown (Munsell 10YR 7/3). This color difference is visible in the fabric at one end where the seal is badly damaged, revealing very fine grit temper. The seal has relatively straight sides, clearly not convex or concave, but the preserved end bulbs outward in one place. The surfaces of the two ends are not parallel to each other, indicating that the seal was hand formed. The puncture hole at the preserved end is positioned slightly off-center and the edges of each end are rounded to meet the face of the seal.



F4 KT4002, front side

The seal is not painted or burnished and bears no wash. The sole decoration is composed of incised lines resembling a stylized plant accompanied by shallow drill holes. There is no space reserved on the surface for any inscription, and the seal bears no cuneiform writing. The decoration will be read from face to back, where the dark grey face is mostly intact and the pale brown back of the seal is damaged.

The plant pattern on the face of the seal is made up of a single straight line running from damaged 'top' end to intact 'bottom' end, creating a center axis from which curving lines extend to the left and right. Adjacent to the right-hand side of the center axis, two shallow 2mm wide drill holes spaced 3mm apart from each other are punctured. On the left-hand side of the line, one hole is punctured across from the corresponding hole at the lower right. These two lower holes are spaced 3mm apart from each other. In spite of the damage to the seal, it does not appear that there was a fourth hole corresponding the upper right hole, given that 3mm up from the lower left hole, and 3mm across from the upper right hole, the bands of incisions forming the plant design intrude into the space. Thus it can be stated that no room was reserved for a fourth hole in this position. Eight parallel incised bands on the right side of the center axis curve downward in a loose arc, while the nine parallel incised bands on the left side sweep upward. The lines do not touch the center axis nor do they correspond precisely with the lines opposite the center axis. The lines on the right start only at the right edge of the two right-hand holes, and the lines on the left side of the center axis sweep around the hole at the left. This suggests that the holes were punctured before the incised lines were cut.



F4 KT4002, back side

On the damaged back side of the seal, the design is mostly lost. The small amount of decoration remaining on the lower half of the back consists of four vertical incised bands begin at the left, corresponding to the far-right edge of the curved lines on the face that originated at the right-hand side of the center axis. These four bands are irregular and are not parallel to each other. Between the first and second lines (reading right to left), four horizontal hatch marks create a ladder-like design. It appears that two more lines at the base of this ladder aim diagonally upward toward the right, but this portion of the design is lost. It appears that there may have been another 2mm wide hole punctured in the back of the seal at the same level as the lower two holes along the center axis on the face. This possible fourth hole is mostly scraped off by the damage to the seal. Two more badly damaged depressions on the back may have corresponded to holes on the face. These latter two 2mm wide depressions are positioned 3mm apart from each other at the same level as the top and bottom holes at the right of the center axis on the face.

Parallels for plant motif:

Teissier, p. 121, no. 37 (serpentine 13 x 7.5mm c. 3100-2900)

Buchanan, pl. 48, no. 745 (steatite 11 x 9mm 'Jamdat Nasr')

Amiet, pl. 94, no. 836 (coquille 16 x 20mm [Sb1152]; proto-Elamite)

Amiet, pl. 128, no. 1359 (grey schist 11 x 26mm [Sb1171]; proto-Elamite)

Frankfort, pl 21, no. 217 (white stone 4 x 14mm [Khafajah Q42:19]; Jamdat Nasr)

Matthews, pl. 43, no. 52 (fired/glazed steatite 21.5 x 13-14mm [Chagar Bazar L1])

Parallels for drill hole design:

Teissier, p. 119, no. 23 (marble 18 x 7mm c. 3100-2900)

Amiet, pl. 120, no. 1210 (bitumen 8 x 17mm [MT155A(12)]; proto-Elamite)

Amiet, pl. 118, no. 1151 (white steatite 10 x 39mm [Sb1239]; proto-Elamite)

Frankfort, pl. 42, no. 448 (gray stone 39 x 13mm [Asmar As.33:715]; Jamdat Nasr)

Figurines



A4 KT 4067

A fragment of a ceramic animal figurine (KT4067) was recovered from trench A4, L4000. The very fine grit tempered figurine is consistently black (Munsell 5Y 2.4/1) and appears to have been burned or low-fired at the time of production. The animal's preserved head, forepaws and abdomen are chipped at the proper-right ear, tip of the nose, and feet. The 12.9g figurine stands 28mm from foot to ear, is 16mm wide and 33mm long. The surface is pocked by creases and lime inclusions. Other than traces of fingerprints over the entire surface, there is no surface decoration or burnishing and the eyes are not represented. Although the chipped feet cause the figurine to appear disproportionate, on the basis of the appearance of the head, the animal may be either a dog or a sheep.



D4 KT 4060

A broken ceramic animal figurine (KT4060) was recovered from trench D4, Locus 4009. The 32.3g animal is preserved from neck to tail, measuring 54mm long, 22mm wide, and 34mm tall at the neck. The light brownish-grey (Munsell 10YR 6/2) fine grit tempered object bears no paint, wash, or other decoration. The head is broken off, but the gentle slope at the back of the neck suggests that the animal's neck was not especially long. The proper left foreleg is broken almost at the joint with the body although the other three intact legs are short and wide. The hindquarters preserve a long tail that curls down the proper-right rear leg. On the basis of the preserved features, the animal may be a horse, dog, or goat, but the tail is too long to be a sheep and the neck is too low to be a donkey or horse.



D4 KT 4095

A fragment of a painted ceramic animal figurine (KT4095) was recovered from trench D4, Locus 4020. The head and hindquarters are missing, leaving a 17.4g fragment measuring 29mm long, 24mm wide, and 44mm tall at the neck. The fine grit and chaff tempered fabric is reddish yellow (Munsell 5YR 6/6). On the basis of the long neck in proportion to the width of the abdomen (18mm) and length of the legs (15mm) and the presence of a small nub between the legs indicating a tuft of fur, the animal is most likely a horse or goat. The very pale brown (Munsell 10YR 8/3) surface bears a single, wide band of dark brown (Munsell 10YR 3/3) paint extending from the nape of the neck to the tip of the feet. This painted decoration is similar to the painted figurine recovered from trench C2 (KT2306) during the 2000 excavation season.



H1 KT 1039

A fragment of a small ceramic goat figurine (KT1039) was recovered from trench H1, Locus 1008. The 1.5g fragment, measuring 33mm long, 11mm wide, and 22.5mm tall at the ear, preserves the head, forelegs, and part of the abdomen. The tip of one leg is intact, although the other is chipped, but both would have been disproportionately short and wide. The chipped muzzle appears to have once been longer and the face bears no representation of the eyes. A horn or long ear extends from the rear of the head at the proper right; the corresponding horn or ear on the left is broken off at the base. The head is turned slightly toward the proper right and rotated down such that the proper left side faces down at an angle. The abdomen is long and tubular shaped. The dark grey (Munsell 10YR 4/1) surface and very dark grey (Munsell 10YR 3/1) grit fabric suggest that the figurine was burned. The surface bears slight burnishing at the sides of the abdomen, but no other decoration is present.

Kiln Stands

C KT 2529 & C KT 3390

Two Iron Age conical shaped kiln stands were recovered in Area C (KT2529 and KT3390). These objects average 193.6g and stand 68mm tall and 64.5mm at the base tapering to 40.5mm at the tip. These crudely formed, low-fired mudbrick-like kiln stands have dark (black GLEY1 2.5/N and grayish brown Munsell 10YR 5/2) coarse grit fabric and light exterior surfaces (brownish grey Munsell 10YR 6/2 and pale yellow Munsell 2.5Y 7/3).

D5 KT 5124, D5 KT 5375, D5 KT 5403 & D5 KT 5404

Four L-shaped kiln stands were recovered from trench D5. These kiln stands (KT5124, KT5375, KT5403, and KT5404 [broken]) range in weight from 77.5g to 383.9g and measure on average 84.25mm tall and 63.5mm wide at the base tapering to 29mm at the top. Each of these kiln stands resembles mudbrick material with chaff temper and two appear to be burned at the base and back (dark grey interior Munsell GLEY1 4/1). KT5124 appears to be high fired (exterior light brownish grey Munsell 10YR 6/2 with reddish yellow interior Munsell 5YR 7/6).

F1 KT 1108 & F1 KT 1109

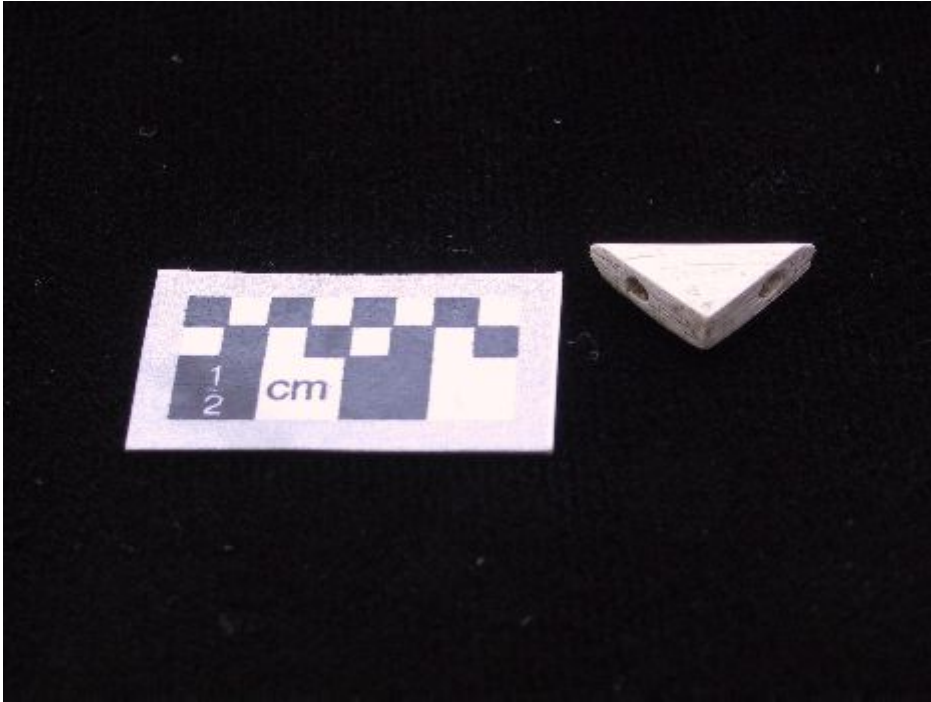
Two conical-shaped hand-formed Early Bronze kiln stands were recovered from trench F1 (KT1108 and KT1109). These kiln stands average 189.4g and measure on average 78.5mm tall and 51mm wide. Both are grayish (10YR 6/2 to GLEY1 5/1) on the exterior but one has reddish yellow (5YR 6/6) fabric while the other has crumbly black (GLEY1 2.5/N) chaff fabric.

F4 KT 4225

An unusual ceramic kiln stand (KT4225) was recovered from an ash layer (Locus 4023) inside a large Chalcolithic oven in trench F4. This kiln stand weighs 163g and measures 101mm tall x 125mm wide x 150mm long. The oval base tapers inward along the short axis and gradually forms a neck along the long axis as the top sweeps out to form opposing arms; these arms are broken. The undecorated pale brown (10YR 6/3) surface bears chaff temper and heavy cracking with burn evidence at the top and on one side.

Beads

A crudely formed orange-red (Munsell 7.5R 5/6) bead (KT1164) measuring 5 x 8mm and weighing 0.7g was recovered from trench A1, Locus 1035. The circumference of the bead is rounded and the edges curve out to join the sides. The bead is punctured by a drill hole that diminishes in width from one side to the other. The bead bears no decoration, although the surface bears a high sheen.



Bead D5 KT 5250

A thin triangular-shaped ivory or bone bead (KT5250) measuring 12 x 7 x 3mm and weighing 0.3g was recovered from trench D5, Locus 5031. The lower tip of the isosceles triangle comes nearly to a right angle. The hypotenuse is curved from front to back of the bead. Both front and back faces are flat and bear no decoration. The two short sides of the bead are cut flat and form a sharp corner where they meet the contoured hypotenuse. A 1mm wide hole is drilled through the width of the bead, positioned just above the median point on the short sides (3mm from the edge of the hypotenuse). The surface is not polished, but is highly refined.

D5 KT 5471

A pale white (Munsell 2.5Y 8/1) round bead (KT5471) measuring 3 x 2mm and weighing 0.1g was recovered from trench D5, Locus 5066. The flat, undecorated sides are punctured by a drill hole and meet the edge of the bead at a sharp angle. The edge running the circumference of the bead gradually comes to a shallow rounded crest. The cortex of the bead material is chipped in one small area, suggesting that the material is shell.

F1 KT 1100

An undecorated round black stone bead (KT1100) measuring 13 x 13 x 5mm and weighing 1.3g (Munsell 2.5Y 2.5/1) was recovered from trench F1, Locus 1020. The top concave face of the seal and the flat bottom face are punctured by a central 3.5mm wide drill hole. The edge at the circumference crests out to a rounded peak. The matte stone

bears mild accretion and has two minor chips on one face and at the inner edge of the drill hole. These chipped areas are shiny, suggesting that the material may be obsidian.



F4 KT 4180

A light blue-green round stone bead (KT4180) measuring 7 x 4 x 4mm and weighing 0.2g (Munsell GLEY1 8/5G) was recovered from trench F4, Locus 4025. The edge around the circumference of the bead is cut consistently smooth. The two undecorated faces are flat, although one face is cut at a minor slant causing one edge to be 1mm thicker than the other. The central drill hole widens at the openings at each face. The stone appears to belong to the quartz family as it seems to be slightly translucent and bears random cracking patterns in the crystalline structure.

Miniature Vessels

B4 KT4066

A miniature ceramic offering stand (KT4066) was recovered from trench B4, Locus 4004. The 34.1g, 40mm tall stand has a shallow (7mm deep) scooped bowl (52mm diameter) atop a wide neck (25mm diameter) attached to three short legs (9mm diameter each). A new chip and two old chips at the rim of the bowl reveal medium to coarse grit temper in the yellowish red (Munsell 5YR 5/6) fabric and the pale brown (Munsell 10YR

6/3) surface shows chaff inclusions. The half of the vessel not covered by accretion reveals light, uniform burnishing; there is no other surface decoration. The heavily accreted interior of the bowl does not appear to be burnished. One of the three legs appears mildly burned, another bears an old break at the base, but the third is wholly intact.

C3 KT 3265

A miniature ceramic chalice (KT3265) was recovered from trench C3, Locus 3032. The 6.5g, 30mm tall chalice is composed of a 22mm wide rounded basin that scoops in to 10mm at the neck and flutes out to 16mm at the base. The straight, rounded rim is damaged by several old chips and an area of loss caused by a new break. The very dark grey (Munsell GLEY1 3/N) fabric of medium grained grit temper indicates low-firing conditions. The pinkish grey (Munsell 7.5YR 7/2) interior bears a residue and corrosion; the exterior is pinkish brown (Munsell 7.5YR 6/2.5). The object is apparently hand pressed; the surface is smooth although a bit wobbly. The side of the bowl with the new break bears burnishing; this burnishing does not continue on the neck. There is no other decoration on the vessel.



C4 KT 4168

A ceramic scepter or finial (KT4168) was recovered from trench C4, Locus 4033. The 195mm tall object has a round cross-section with a shallow convex cap that is flat on top and crests out to an 81mm wide band. A 67mm wide band protrudes 56cm below the top band. The pink (Munsell 7.5YR 7/4) surface is chipped at the tip revealing a reddish

yellow (Munsell 7.5YR 7/6) fabric of chaff temper. The object appears to be hand formed, possibly turned on a crude wheel.

D5 KT 5391

A fragment of a miniature bowl (KT 5391) was recovered from trench D5, Locus 5063. Half of the bowl is preserved and weighs 28.2g; it is 34mm tall and 48mm wide. The rim curves inward from the body and then turns out slightly to a flattened edge; the rim is chipped in several places. A new chip at the broken edge of the base reveals brown (Munsell 7.5YR 4/3) fabric with charred chaff inclusions, indicating low-firing. Striations on the dark grey (Munsell GLEY1 4/N) interior and exterior suggests wheel turning; wobbly sides suggest that the wheel apparatus is hand driven. The exterior is reddish brown (Munsell 5YR 5/4) at the rim, grading to Munsell 7.5YR 4/1 at the base. The thickness of the vessel tapers from base to rim with the thickest area at the edges of the base. There is no surface decoration.

F1 KT 1087

An Early Bronze miniature bowl (KT1087) was recovered from a burial in trench F1, Locus 1021. The 21.1g bowl is 33mm in diameter and 23mm tall. The bowl's crude appearance, wobbly surface, and uneven base suggest that it was hand pressed from a coil. The simple, rounded rim continues from the body without flaring. The surface has uneven coloring, such that the base is dark bluish grey (Munsell GLEY2 4/1 [5PB]) while the body is red (Munsell 2.5YR 5/6) with one side very pale brown (Munsell 10YR 7/4). The rim is slightly burnished in the pale brown area, but this burnishing does not continue across the remainder of the vessel. There is no other decoration.

F1 KT 1118

An Early Bronze miniature jar (KT1118) was recovered from a burial in trench F1, Locus 1021. The 224.5g jar stands 90mm tall and measures 36mm at the neck and 65mm at the body. The body of the coil-formed jar is shaped like a bulb and the rim flares out to a rounded edge. The thick base is slightly flattened but has no foot. The exterior bears a very pale brown (Munsell 10YR 7/4) wash and shows chaff temper. Other than one old chip on the rim and an arc-shaped fracture on the shoulder, the vessel is completely intact. There is no surface decoration.

F4 KT 4300

A shallow, hand-wheel turned bowl with a doughnut-shaped base (KT4300) was recovered from trench F4, Locus 4039. This 262.6g fully reconstructed bowl measures 113mm diameter at the rim, 121mm at the body and 35mm at the base. The base is wobbly and the rim ascends and descends irregularly. The rounded rim hooks inward slightly but is continuous with the sides. The reddish yellow (Munsell 5YR 6/6) exterior is burnished with parallel striations spaced an average of 2mm apart. These striations originate at the nub of the base and extend upwards toward the shoulder at a slight

diagonal. Another set of diagonal burnishing striations extend from the shoulder upward toward the rim. The red (Munsell 2.5YR 5/6) interior repeats the same burnishing pattern. A broken miniature offering stand with circular base (KT8075) was recovered from trench F8, Locus 8007. The 16mm diameter neck and 32mm diameter base are intact, although the sides of the bowl are broken, leaving a cross-bar that measures 13mm x 42mm. The 18.2g fragment bears new chips at the widest edges of the bowl, although the major loss results from old damage. The very dark grey (Munsell GLEY1 3/N) surface shows chaff temper, as does the black (Munsell 5YR 2.5/1) fabric at the breaks. The wobbly neck curves slightly and the rounded base slopes upward toward the neck in a slight twist. The top of the object (the interior of the bowl) is flattened. There is no surface decoration.

Metal Objects



D4 KT 4106

A metal pin (KT4106) was recovered from trench D4, Locus 4022. The 13.2g pin measures 67 x 10 x 5mm and has a light bluish grey (Munsell GLEY2 7/1) surface. The pin is formed by a relatively thick, straight shaft that bends into a needle-eye at the head while the tip of the coil thins and loops around the neck 1.5 times. The blunt end of the pin was sampled, revealing a shiny light colored metal, possibly silver.



F4 KT 4160

A bronze pin with fiddlehead scroll (KT4160) was recovered from trench F4, Locus 4025. The 3.0g pin measures 4mm wide and 55mm long and has grayish green (Munsell GLEY1 4/5G) patina covered by dark greenish grey (Munsell GLEY1 4/5G—VERIFY THE CHART READING CORRESPONDING WITH THE COLOR DESCRIPTION) corrosion. The undecorated shaft of the pin curves very slightly inward and comes to a point while the head of the pin loops around to create a fiddlehead.

Tokens/Weights

C4 KT 4075

A small round stone weight or token (KT4075) was recovered from trench C4, Locus 4010. The dark grey (Munsell 10YR 4/1) object is 20mm in diameter and weighs 9.9 to 10.0g. It bears significant accretion except for one area which reveals the smoothed surface of the stone, that appears to contain quartz inclusions.

Another small round stone weight or token (KT4231) was recovered from trench C4, Locus 4026. This dusky red (Munsell 5R 3/2) slightly oblong ball measures 49mm diameter at the widest point and weighs 124.6g. Three-fourths of the surface bears significant accretion, although a smoothed surface is visible on the remainder.

NB: from Istanbul archaeology museum

Weight units in ancient Mesopotamia:

1 Talent = 3 kg
1 Shekel = 180 grain = ca. 8 g
1 Mina = c. 500 g
Kiln stands

Wheels / Toy Discs



A2 KT 2438

A ceramic toy wheel (KT2438) was recovered from trench A2, Locus 2058. This 134.1g, palm sized wheel measures 97mm diameter. It has wide, narrow sides and a 42mm long central axle with a 18mm diameter puncture hole wide enough to insert a wooden stick. The very pale brown (Munsell10YR 7/4) surface bears chaff temper and two chipped areas at the edge reveal chaff and grit temper. The hand-pressed wheel is not perfectly circular and the surface bears no decoration.



H1 KT 1012

A small ceramic wheel (KT1012) was recovered from trench H1, Locus 1003. This crudely formed 6.3g wheel measures 19mm in diameter with funnel-shaped sides forming an axle measuring 22mm wide. The very pale brown (Munsell 10YR 7/4) wobbly surface has a highly visible chaff temper. The outer edge around the circumference shows wear; parts of the edge are flattened and lighter in color than the faces of the wheel.

A burned ceramic wheel or spindle whorl (KT5420) was recovered from trench D5, Locus 5066. This black (Munsell 10YR 2/1) chaff tempered circular-shaped object measures 30mm x 19mm and weighs 18g. Between its conical top and mildly convex bottom the circumference of the object bears flattened sides with irregular notch impressions. A 7mm wide drill hole punctures the undecorated faces.

Parallels:

Bollweg, catalogue IIIb 22, fig. 41; terra cotta 132mm; Assur [Ass7498]; Neo-Sumerian ca. 2327 – 2042.

Bollweg, catalogue IIIb 18, fig. 39; terra cotta 115mm; Aleppo (Halab); end 3rd millennium

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List of images

Seal: F4132P1A and F4132P1B

Bedpost/mace/club (listed with kiln stands): C4168P1B

Ivory triangle seal: D5250P1A

Blue-green bead: F4180P1D

Large wagonwheel: A2438P1C and A2438P1D

Small wagon wheel: H1012P1A

Needle-eye pin: D4106P1A

Fiddlehead pin: F4160P1C

Figurines: A4067P1C, D4060P1C, D4095P1E, and H1039P1C