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# HALEPLİBAHÇE MOSAIC MUSEUM

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REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
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Şanlıurfa is the "City of Mosaics". After the invasion of Alexander the Great one of his commanders, Seleukos Nicator I, founds Seleucid Empire in the years 312 BC - 132 BC, on an old establishment in Urfa based on Greek culture and art. The new city is named after the birth city of Alexander the Great. The City of Edessa. Culture and art reached their climax in the city of Edessa. The Kingdom of Edessa is of great importance in terms of the history of Urfa and mosaics. The mosaic tradition in Urfa started between the years 132 BC and 244 BC during the period of the Osroene Kingdom with a local style and continued in an oriental style during the Roman period.



**Haleplibahçe Mosaic Museum**

Excavations during the year 2007 within the borders of this ancient city, in Haleplibahçe, revealed various mosaics, which are 3,000 years old, with motifs belonging to the broad culture of the Aegean, Black Sea and Anatolia, hunting scenes of the Amazon women who fought against male domination and many more. The Apollon and Artemis Temple and settlements such as Themiscyria, located right next to the Terme River, which is connected to the provinces Izmir, Ephesus, Sinop and Samsun, have been founded by Amazonian Queens. The most important characteristic of the Haleplibahçe Mosaics are that "they are the only example of pictures of the Amazonian Queens together with their names".



**Achilles Mosaic**

You are greeted by a mosaic of one of the heroes of the Trojan War, Achilles, at the entrance of the palace structure. The floor mosaic telling the life story of Achilles has been revealed by the archeologists of the Şanlıurfa Museum.



**Ktician Mosaic**

A great number of mosaics have been found in the palace structure. One of the most important is the Ktician Mosaic, which is accepted as the protective god of the building.



**Warrior Amazon Queen Penthesilea**

After the Ktician Mosaic you will see unique Amazon Mosaics. Since the right lower corner of the main scene couldn't be preserved but normally shows the name of the Queen, it is only believed that it shows Penthesilea, Queen of the Amazons. She sits on a decorated rearing horse with stretched bow and is about to release the arrow on something behind her that is not visible. In front of her however lies a leopard in excruciating pain, which she hunted down earlier with her bow.



**Warrior Amazon Queen Antiope**

The upper right part of the main scene shows the Amazon Queen Antiope with a double-bladed axe, known as labris, joining the hunting scene and being nose to nose to an animal, which is believed to be a bear. According to the Fisherman of Halicarnassus the double-bladed axe is the symbol of Anatolia.





### Warrior Amazon Queen Hippolyte

The upper left part of the main scene shows the Amazon Queen Hippolyte with a sword in her hands, which she thrusts into the neck of a panther, one of the dogs is attacking the panther and another is attacking a wild ostrich with open wings. The lion, which she previously injured with her sword, is walking away from Hippolyte. The fear of the leopard and lion, the pain, the flowing blood and shadows are successfully portrayed in this hunting scene.



### Warrior Amazon Queen Melanipe

The lower left part of the main scene shows Melanipe on the back of a horse with a spear in her hand, with which she is stabbing a lion and a dog attacking the lion. The right part of this scene shows a grouse next to a fruit tree perched on a piece of rock, leaning its head back and watching the scene.



**Beauty of Edessa**

The borders of the hunting scene mosaic consist of geometric patterns, plant patterns, pigeons, wingless cupid, squirrels, ducks, grouses, gazelles and hounds. At the corners of the border the words "Beauty of Edessa" is written to see for the public.



**Orpheus Mosaic**

Another mosaic exhibited in our mosaic museum is the Orpheus Mosaic. According to research, the "Orpheus Mosaic" is dated to the year 194 BC and was taken away from Şanlıurfa in the year 1998. It was found out that the Mosaic was brought to the State Dallas in the United States and on the initiative of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism it was brought back to Turkey in 2012, first to the Istanbul Archeological Museum and then to the Haleplibahçe Mosaic Museum, after the Haleplibahçe structure was completed.

The bathhouse with heated floors belonging to the Roman period, which was brought to light during the excavations in Haleplibahçe, show very clearly that the area belonged to an important settlement. Because all of these characteristics the Ministry of Culture and Tourism decided to open two museum in Haleplibahçe. So the Şanlıurfa Museum and the Haleplibahçe Mosaic Museum were opened to the public on May, 24 2015.