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Cultural encounters during the LBII and IAI: Hittites and 'Pelesets' in the Amuq (Hatay) Turkey

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Abstract. The analysis of long-dormant archaeological documentation and recent archaeological discoveries concerning the Amuq region (modern Hatay) have shed new light on the period from the Late Bronze Age II to the Iron Age III, reopened old questions concerning the passage from the Late Bronze to the Iron Age, and contributed important historical data to the first centuries of the Iron Age I. This article investigates a specific feature in the debate on the LBA-IA transition, i.e. changes in the material culture that have been linked to the arrival of a non-local culture as a consequence of conquest or migration; in particular it investigates archaeological evidence from the sites of Chatal Höyük, Tell Tayinat and Alalakh, which has been employed by scholars as proof to support both the annexation of the land of Mukiš to the Hittite Empire during the Late Bronze Age II, as well as the arrival of foreign peoples from the Mediterranean during the Iron Age I.

Keywords. Amuq, sea peoples, Hittites, pottery.

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of archaeological research, transformation of material culture represents the main criterion employed for establishing archaeological chronologies and mapping local developments or external contacts; investigating these variations has led scholars to hypothesize various scenarios of contact between different cultural communities, ranging from external contact, commerce, conquest and/or change in production economy.¹ Importation, hybridization, influence and interaction are variables that can lead to the presence in a given assemblage of a specific object that is different from the local culture. As a consequence of this observation, and in an attempt to give meaning to this data, archaeologists associate the observed

¹ For a general overview cf. Eerkens and Lipo 2007.

process with a higher ranked cause that has presumably initialized the process: imperialism, colonization, migration, commerce or simple contact are some of the phenomena frequently employed for drawing conclusions based on the observation of cultural change.

This paper analyses two cultural encounters in the Amuq that have been used to explain material change (pottery in particular) in south-eastern Anatolia and the Northern Levant in Late Bronze Age II and Iron Age I: Hittite imperialism and centralized production for the Late Bronze Age, and Western migration or contact for the Early Iron Age. Because the epigraphic and archaeological data are crucial in hypothesizing influence on the material culture for this period, Section 1 provides a brief overview of the historical and topographic information currently at our disposal, followed by Sections 2 and 3 that examine the archaeological material for the LBA and IA, respectively.

In this article the term Hittite refers to the political entity, the Hittite Empire, and consequently to the material culture produced in the LBII period in north-central Anatolia. The term “Peleset” intends to be provocative and refers to the revitalized discussion concerning the policy “Wa/Palastin”, to the Philistine term that defines a specific type of pottery production from southern Levant as well as to the name of one of the sea peoples. It is employed here simply to provide the supposed migrants with a name, but it does not imply a reference to any specific ethnic group or geographic area of provenance.

1. HISTORICAL PREMISES AND TOPOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The strategic geographic position of the Amuq (Hatay, Turkey), which connects the Anatolian Plateau with inland western Syria, the Levant and the Mediterranean coast, and the absence of a stable political entity in this region over a long period of time made the Amuq a crossroads of different “cultures” during the Late Bronze Age (LBA) II to the Iron Age (IA) III.

During the Late Bronze Age II the region was part of Mukiš (Fig. 1), which was conquered by Šuppiluliuma I together with Karkemiš and Ḫalpa (Aleppo) in the mid-14th cent. BC (Bryce 2005: 167). Mukiš permanently submitted to the Hittite Empire in the 1330s immediately after its “revolt” against Ugarit together with Niḫa and Nuḫḫašše. It is unclear whether a new ruler was set in Alalakh immediately after its conquest; however, a carved orthostat and a bulla found at Alalakh point to the existence of a prince Tudḫaliya (Niedorf 2002, Yener, Peker, and Dinçol 2014), who was contemporary with Mursili II and can possibly be identified with a Hittite ruler sent directly from Ḫattuša (von Dassow 2008: 31-32, Singer 2017).² Although the land of Mukiš was under the control of Karkemiš, the seat of a Hittite viceroy, its capital, Alalaḫ, probably continued governing the region, as the Hittite letters found at Tell Afis seem to confirm (Archi and Venturi 2012, Archi 2016).³ During the LBII, the land of Mukiš was probably still very extensive, reaching inland western Syria and the area of Hama to the south, and surrounding the small territory of Ḫalpa, which mainly hosted religious functions (Singer 2017). Here the dedicatory hieroglyph inscription (Aleppo 1) of Talmi Šarruma (contemporary to the reigns of Mursili II and Muwatalli, grandson of Šuppiluliuma I) was found. He is also quoted in the well-known Aleppo treaty (CTH 75);⁴ here the temple of the Storm God of Aleppo was located already in the Late Bronze Age, as the Late Bronze Age carved orthostats and proteomes found in the later reconstruction of the building (Kohlmeyer 2012) suggest. The most recent epigraphic information at our disposal from the Amuq during the LBA is an oracle text from Atchana (AT454) dating to the second half of the 13th century BC.⁵

² I thank Eva von Dassow for her suggestions concerning the history of Alalah in the 14th-13th centuries, and Giulia Torri for her help in collecting the philological information on the Alalah tablets. Niedorf 2002 suggests that Prince Tudhaliya was related to the Hittite royal family.

³ For the landscape of LBA Mukiš cf. Casana 2009.

⁴ De Vecchi 2010 and references for CTH 75; Meriggi 1975: n.306 p.330 and Hawkins 2000: 18 for Aleppo 1.

⁵ Cf. Singer 2017: footnote 6 and references.

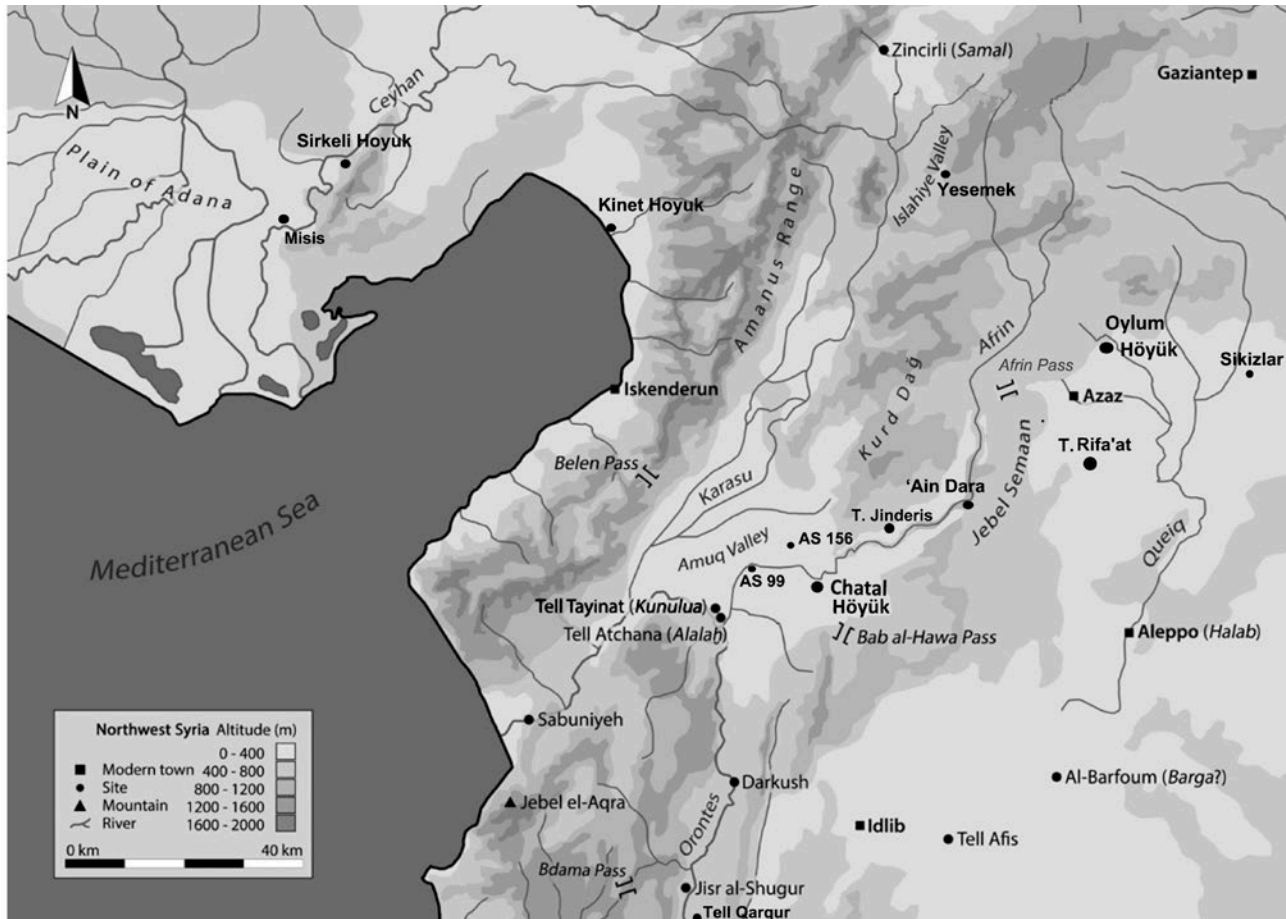


Fig. 1: Map of the Amuq area and neighbouring regions. © Author rearranged from Cohen 2017: fig. 22.2

The archaeological evidence from the Amuq⁶ unquestionably attributed to the LBA is limited to Tell Atchana, Chatal Höyük and Tell Judeidah; further traces of Late Bronze Age occupation have been identified at Sabuniyeh (Pamir 2013).

At Tell Judeidah four “levels” of Late Bronze Age occupation were brought to light over an area of 25 m², i.e. a square 5x5 m in Area D-F 7-10 (Haines 1971). Considering the limited extent of the exposed surface and the limited deposit ascribed to it, it is impossible to determine whether the site was occupied specifically in the LB II period; moreover, since the pottery material is still under analysis, the site has not yet provided any clues about the 14th-13th century material horizon. The evidence at Atchana and Chatal Höyük instead provides very important and apparently homogenous elements. At Atchana, the presence of seven fragments⁷ of Hittite tablets found during Woolley’s excavations, biconvex seals with Hittite hieroglyphs⁸ and the carved orthostat mentioned above (Woolley 1955: 241)

⁶ As Casana states (2017: 165-167, idem 2009: fig. 2), our knowledge of the pottery sequence from the end of the Middle Bronze Age to the end of the Late Bronze Age II is not detailed enough to process the survey material of the Amuq Regional Survey Project and identify the sites in the valley with clear LBII materials. For this reason the maps provided by the survey project do not make any clear statement concerning the LBA II settlement pattern in the region: only future work on Late Bronze Age pottery at Atchana and the detailed process of the survey material will allow a more detailed reconstruction.

⁷ Nidorf 2002 mentions seven fragments, while S. Košak, hethiter.net/: hetkonk (v. 1.97) lists five Hittite fragments from Atchana.

⁸ Among the 12 seals published by Barnett (in Woolley 1955), in my opinion only five can be dated to the LBII (n. 155, 156, 161, 163 and 164 in Woolley 1955: 67). For a general overview on the biconvex seals in the region cf. Gates 2011: 398.

leave no room for doubt on the presence of a settlement during the 13th cent. BC the problem is to clearly identify the extent of the settlement in the second half of the 13th cent. BC.⁹ However, archaeological excavations have clearly shown that the site most likely underwent a significant reduction in size after the end of the 14th century,¹⁰ maintaining an occupation mainly in the temple area¹¹ and possibly in the fortresses.¹² At Chatal Höyük LBaII (Local Phase M)¹³ levels were exposed in two areas over an expanse of 200 square meters and present a clear pattern: in Area II a large building with storerooms was replaced by smaller domestic structures with large open pebbled areas and a storage silo. The archaeological evidence therefore shows a process of ruralisation of the village, which started around the mid-13th century and lasted until the mid-12th century BC (Pucci 2019). Thus both settlements in the Amuq undergo a process of decline, which could be connected with impoverishment and food shortage, perhaps the result of a strong exploitation of the region's resources carried out by the Hittite Empire.¹⁴

Continuity of occupation, even if downsized, from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age is documented at Atchana and Chatal Höyük, while the foundation of a new settlement in the mid-12th century BC is ascertained at the site of Tell Tayinat (Harrison 2014). At all three sites the levels dating to the 12th century present the same pattern: large open areas with cooking installations (at Atchana and Chatal Höyük), with storage silos (at Tell Tayinat and Chatal Höyük) and scattered domestic structures (at Chatal Höyük and likely at Tell Tayinat). A local production of Late Helladic IIIc pottery appears at all three sites at the same time; it is dated to the second half of the 12th century BC and, both at Atchana and Chatal Höyük, takes place approximately a century later than the period of decline and ruralisation of the settlements.

Epigraphic sources in the Amuq disappear from the end of the 13th century until the 11th century BC, however from this period onwards, thanks to the discoveries at Tell Tayinat, Arsuz, and Aleppo, a provisional dynastic sequence of a new regional political entity has been established.¹⁵ Five rulers reigned from the 11th century to the end of the 9th century BC: the first ruler, Taita I, reigned over a new regional political entity and declared himself King of Wa/Palastin with a royal seat in Khunalua (identified with the modern site of Tell Tayinat). Epigraphic data provides scattered information on the 10th century BC and is mainly based on findings not related to stratigraphic excavations (such as the Arsuz stele): they suggest the continuity of a regional political entity in the Amuq until the 9th century BC, when this area is then named in the Assyrian sources as the land of Unqi and became part of the Assyrian empire at the end of the 8th century BC.

Atchana was definitively abandoned by the 9th century, and probably at the same time massive building activities were carried out on the acropolis at Tell Tayinat (building phase 2). These and later (building phase 3) construction on the acropolis significantly compromised the preservation of the earliest levels of Iron Age occupation at the site, particularly in the area south of Building I: the Field Phases 3 to 6 identified¹⁶ underneath Building II, which are dated to the 8th century BC, appear to refer to the very beginning of IA occupation (mid-12th-11th century BC).

Due to the non-representative nature of the village at Chatal Höyük, no invasive building activities were carried out on the site; rather its domestic character preserved a very coherent stratigraphy during the Iron Age. From

⁹ Cf. Casana (2017) and references for an overview of the different hypothesis concerning the 13th century BC at Alalakh. It should however be mentioned that archaeologically it is extremely difficult to clearly distinguish 13th century material culture from that dated to the 14th century.

¹⁰ Cf. Montesanto and Pucci in press.

¹¹ It seems evident that, considering the slab of Prince Tudhaliya reemployed in the steps of temple Level 1b, this phase of the temple's use should be ascribed to a period not only later than the end of the 14th century, i.e. during the 13th century BC, but also to a time when the legacy of the Hittite prince was not in some way given a specific symbolic value.

¹² Cf. Akar 2013 for the problems in dating the fortresses. However, ongoing research will analyse the sequence on both (northern and southern) fortresses.

¹³ Phase at Chatal Höyük are based on the general division of the Amuq phases with a further internal division.

¹⁴ Cf. Singer's (2017: 622-623) suggestion that the addressee of a Hittite royal letter requesting "ships of grain" might be located in the Amuq.

¹⁵ Dinçol, et al. 2015 proposed a royal sequence, which is employed here and it is based on the recent publications on this subject. Weeden 2013, Weeden 2015.

¹⁶ cf. Harrison 2013, Janeway 2017.

the mid-12th cent. BC onwards, the fortified site was progressively more densely occupied, the domestic structures were built the ones adjoining the others, and the silos disappeared from the acropolis. Two fundamental changes in the urban planning of specific areas were identified in the 10th century and at the end of the 9th/beginning of the 8th centuries BC, which correspond to a general rearrangement of selected neighbourhoods. In conclusion, during Iron Age I the regional political entity of Wa/palastin, with its capital Khunalua, controlled a wide area which corresponded to Mukiš, Niḫa and Nuḫḫašše (Harrison 2014). From the end of Iron Age I to Iron Age II the area was known as Patina,¹⁷ and its territory was organized into a three-pier system: Khunalua remained the capital, and other centres in the Amuq, such as Chatal Höyük, gained some form of independence (Osborne 2013: 784-785).

During this long period of political change and instability two external factors are considered to have played a role in influencing the local material culture and consequently are relevant not only as markers for cultural encounters, but also as chronological indicators.

The first factor is related to the Hittite Empire and its impact on the material culture of its conquered territories: both Gates (2001) and Postgate (2007) have hypothesized a connection between the Hittite political presence and, at the very least in Cilicia, the presence of a specific pottery industry, establishing a link between "imperial" centralized production and the consequent standardization and exportation of this model in newly conquered territories. In addition, a specific style in monumental carving and its legacy in the following periods has also been related to the profound Hittite influence on south-eastern Turkey, especially as far as Amuq and northern Syria are concerned.

The second factor, reinforced by recent epigraphic evidence, returns to a migration theory that has connected the beginning of a Levantine production of painted pottery in the IA I to the migration of "Mycenaean/Aegean populations" or "sea people". In southern Levant, this specific painted pottery production has been labelled as Philistine (for a general overview on the research history cf. Dothan and Dothan 1992: 31-34), and it has been linked to the physical presence of migrants in the southern Levant. In the archaeology of the Northern Levant, scholars have taken a more cautious approach in linking pottery production specifically to the presence of migrants, preferring to refer to the pottery more generally as "Aegean style" (Janeway 2017).

2. HITTITES IN THE AMUQ?

The link between imperialism and centralized production is based on the correspondence between a centralized political power and a system of production (primarily visible in the ceramic evidence): not only pottery analysis but also several other sources of information, such as texts and specific archaeological contexts related to the production system, may prove the existence of this relationship.¹⁸ Strictly connected to it is the question of standardization; a centrally-controlled system of production should lead to a high rate of production and consequently a high level of standardization, however ethnographic and metric studies have proven this causal chain wrong,¹⁹ as not all centralized production is standardized. Moreover, considering that standardization is related to specific metric measurements of the vessels, it should not equated with homogeneity, which concerns ceramic assemblages that share the same morphological, decorative and technical (fabric) features.²⁰ In other words, homogeneity of an assemblage is not synonymous with standardization.

¹⁷ Cf. Osborne 2013 for territory and sovereignty in the IAI Amuq and the problems of defining a boundary for Patina.

¹⁸ Duistermaat 2008: 470, Postgate 2010: 29 analysed this relationship concerning the Middle Assyrian Empire.

¹⁹ Cf. the discussion on this matter in Horowitz in press, on the relationship between rate of production and standardization in Roux 2003, on the application of the Coefficient of variability (Eerkens and Bettinger 2001) and its problems in the analysis of Hittite pottery cf. Mühlenbruch 2014: 194; on the connections between standardization and centralized administration cf. Mielke 2016: 161-163.

²⁰ Cf. Mielke (2016) who uses both terms and their distinctions in Mühlenbruch (2014: 191-196 and 214) and who includes this homogeneity factor as only one of the four elements required to define standardization.

2.1 *The Amuq archaeological evidence and pottery production: drab ware and standardization.*

As mentioned above, both the Atchana and Chatal Höyük settlements are characterized by a population decline already during the 13th century BC. At Atchana the majority of the pottery material dates to the 14th century BC (Horowitz in press), while archaeological evidence from the 13th century refers to a sequence identified in one square (42.10) on the acropolis (Montesanto and Pucci in print). As Horowitz has clearly illustrated, ceramic materials from 14th century BC contexts at Atchana do not show any specific features that could be linked to a change in the pottery production system during that century (Horowitz 2015, in press). She does, however, identify several shapes that are considered to belong to a north-central Anatolian tradition; their arrival has been related to contact with the Anatolian plateau and to the Hittite presence in the region, which will be discussed separately.

At Chatal Höyük LBA II assemblages (Phase M_middle and late) included the highest number of different classes, some of which disappear in the IA. The group of simple ware is the richest one, with an overwhelming number of rim-sherds and of shapes in comparison to the other classes. Its fabric covers a large spectrum of textures (fine to medium) and a range of colours from grey to pale brown and from pink to reddish brown. Among the 2107 sherds analysed from these levels, 38% were characterized by a visible straw temper; this percentage seems to decrease in the following periods. Shallow bowls comprise 75% of the whole simple ware inventory; the shape ranges from simple hemispherical bowls and very shallow bowls (almost plates) with incurving rim (Fig. 2a, b and e), to simple (Fig. 2d and f) or internal pointed rims (Fig. 2g). These shallow bowls are extremely popular in this period; the apparently uniform dimensions (the diameters range from 200 to 300 mm, capacity ranges from 0.7 to 1 litre), the high number of specimens, the homogeneity of their appearance (Fig. 3) and their morphology find comparison at Atchana and in Cilicia. However it cannot be considered a standardized production as the clay, shape of the rim and colours vary no potmarks were recorded in the shallow bowls at Chatal and only one in the inventory from Atchana.

At Atchana (Woolley 1955, types 5 and 6, pl. 109) these shapes are produced in several fabrics, and their peak of distribution is during Level IV, i.e. in Late Bronze Age I. At Kinet Höyük in periods 15 and 14 this shape is representative of *drab ware* production and a marker of Hittite influence in the region (Gates 2006: Fig. 8, 2013: 104), following the same criteria employed for Tarsus LBIIa shapes (Goldman 1956: fig. 384), while at Mersin-Soli Höyük *drab ware* is attested to only in sherds with potmarks (Yağcı 2007).²¹ The homogeneity and frequency of this shape, which is also evident at Chatal, together with the appearance of potters' marks on some specimens, absent at Chatal, has led scholars to connect shape and fabric, and use it as a proof of a centralized economic presence or strong Hittite influence.

Because the term “*drab ware*” is frequently used not only as a cultural element (indicating connections to Anatolia and by extension to the Hittite area) but also as a chronological marker (signifying the arrival of the Hittites in the Amuq area), it is therefore extremely important to define its meaning and ascertain its relevance in the Amuq. To my knowledge, this term was used for the first time in 1937 to define a fabric of LBII pottery in Tarsus (Goldman 1937): it identified a poor quality ceramic production that was also present in level LBIIb (a level that is contemporary with IAI levels at all other sites), with brown to red clay and potters' marks frequently visible on its surface (Fig. 4b). According to Summers (1993: 42-43), referring to the site of Tille Höyük on the Euphrates, *drab ware* is characterized by external scrape marks, chaff and grit temper, reddish-brown fabric, and may be burnished (Fig. 4e); according to Gates (2001) it is a monochrome standardized pottery, orange to light brown with gritty fabric and frequent potmarks (Fig. 4d); in Mersin (Fig. 4c) the term has been used to identify simple ware pottery of lev. VI (Sevin and Köroğlu 2004). Outside Cilicia *drab ware* has been tied to LBA II simple ware shallow bowls found at sites where there was a Hittite presence during the LBII, as in Tilmen Höyük (Colantoni 2010), Tell Afis (Venturi 2013) or Tille Höyük (Summers 2013).

When moving to the core of production (i.e. the Anatolian plateau) of this hypothetical mass product, *drab ware* is “the predominant fabric type in any Hittite pottery assemblage, an unslipped ware with completely oxi-

²¹ At Tille Höyük the plates and shallow bowls labelled as *drab ware* and found in Iron Age I contexts present morphological modifications, which also take place at Chatal in the very beginning of the Iron Age. Summers 2010: 195-196.

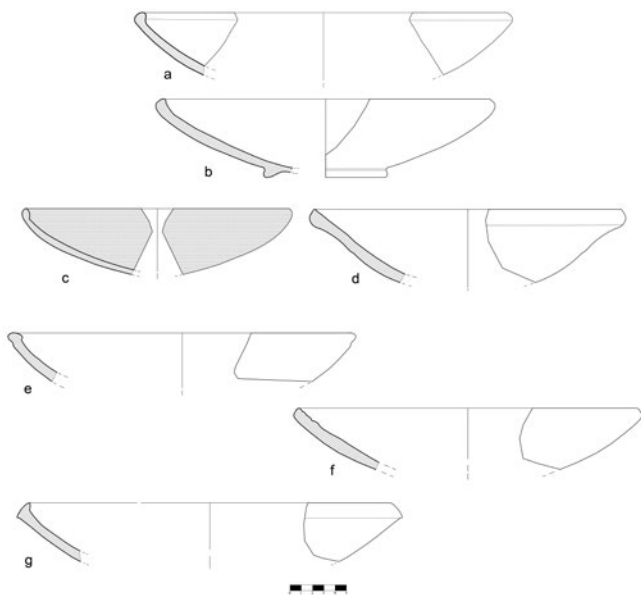


Fig. 2: Phase M_Late (LBII), Chatal Höyük, bowls, drawing © Author



Fig. 3: Phase M_Late (LBII), Chatal Höyük, bowls © Oriental Institute \

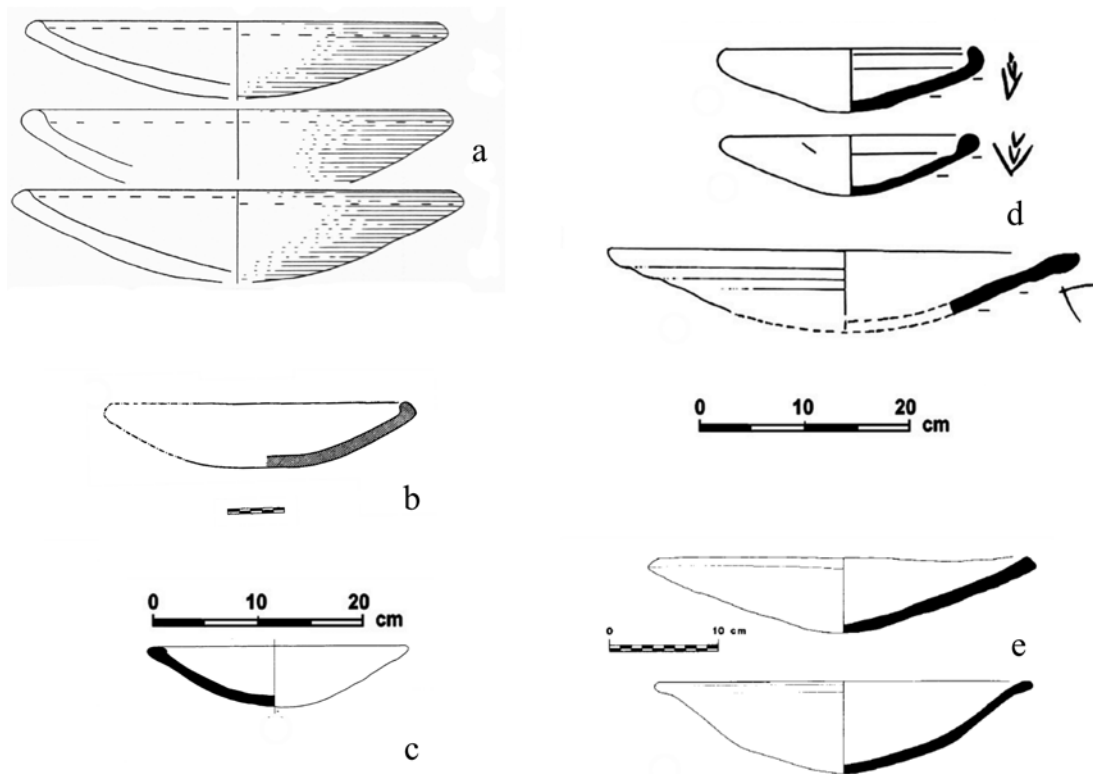


Fig. 4: Examples from so called drab ware bowls from northern Levant and bowls from Bogazköy. A. Bogazköy (Müller-Karpe 1988: S5); b. Bowl from Mersin (Garstang 1953: fig. 157.7); c. Bowl from LBIIa Tarsus (Goldman 1956: fig. 384.1119); d. Bowls from Kinet Höyük lev. 14-13.1 (Gates 2013: fig. 5); e. Bowl from IAI Tille Höyük (Summers 2013: fig. 10 1-3)

dised biscuit and buff colouring. The surface is smoothed without much care” (Schoop 2011: 242). This fabric is employed in all shapes of the second Millennium production; it is known in Anatolia from the Middle Bronze Age and becomes dominant in Anatolia during the 16th century BC (Mielke 2017: 130). The Hittite drab ware from Boğazköy only represents the “poor” version of the simple ware production, while “more than a half of the drab ware pottery is still indistinguishable from older assemblages in terms of quality” (Schoop 2003: 173), and its uniformity has been proven in the sites of the Kızılırmak basin (Gates in print and references). Thus there is a drab ware production of the Kızılırmak basin and a drab ware production of the southern coast, Cilicia; the latter has also been used to define vessels in the Northern Levant.

If we follow the first definition of drab ware, the fabric of the conical bowls with an incurving rim from Chatal cannot be compared to the fabric described as drab ware from Tarsus or Kinet Höyük: it does not look “drab” in comparison to later periods, the grit is not very abundant, nor do they show any potters’ marks or frequent signs of poorly fired clay (only 19.7% of the simple ware rim sherds bear central dark cores), while chaff temper is frequently used. The situation is identical at Atchana (Horowitz in press) as the fabric does not diminish in quality from the LBI.²²

Thus, independent of the discussion concerning Cilician and Anatolian drab wares and their relationship to mass production or a centralized political organization (cf. Gates in print, and references), the Amuq region, as well as the upper Euphrates and the whole of northern Syria as I would suggest, should not be included as belonging to the area where the drab ware fabric was produced and used.²³

A different approach, still strictly connected to the concept of centralized production, concerns the specific shape described above: the shallow bowl with incurving rim. The large homogeneous²⁴ production in the Hittite capital (Müller-Karpe 1988: typ. S5) and in the Anatolian Plateau (Mielke 2010: fig. 5, Mühlenbruch 2014) includes large numbers of shallow bowls with incurving rims; it is the second most common shape in Bogazköy (Fig. 4e) and Sarissa, and Glatz (Glatz 2009: Fig. 2.3) includes it in her group of seven common pottery types of north-central Anatolia. This rim shape on shallow bowls recurs very frequently in both northern Syria and south-eastern Anatolia: in Tarsus (Goldman 1956: Pl. 384), Kilise Tepe (Bouthillier et al. 2014: fig. 46), Kinet Höyük (Gates in print: fig. 8), Ugarit (Yon 2006), Emar (Finkbeiner 2001: Fig. 9g and 11b), and Tell Sukas (cf. Riis et al. 1996: fig. 26). However, outside the Hittite border, we know of a long lasting tradition of shallow bowls with incurving rims in the Levant from the end of the Middle Bronze Age, which continues in the LBI at Tell Arqa (Charaf 2004: 236 and fig. 4), Qatna (Iamoni 2012: pl. 14), in the LBA levels at Hama G and F (Fugmann 1958: figs 161 and 165) and at Tell Hadidi (Dornemann 1981), as well as to the east at Tell Fekheryie (Coppini in press) during the whole LBA I.

Therefore, because this specific shape is very common well beyond the borders of the Hittite Empire and before the LB II, it cannot be taken as a marker of Hittite presence in the Amuq; consequently the production of these bowls at Atchana and Chatal Höyük seems to lack any link to Hittite centralized production. I would suggest that there is only one main morphological feature which differentiates between the production of the Amuq and the Levant from that from Cilicia and Anatolia, which is related not to the rim shape but to the shape of the base of these shallow bowls; a rounded narrow or a cut-off and flat base are considered typical for shallow bowls both in Cilicia and in Anatolia. This is not the case for the shallow bowls identified at Chatal (fig 3), that have a regular ring base.

²² There is only one element which may require further investigation concerning the production of these specific plates: in Cilicia the base is flat or concave, narrow and usually “cut off” with “rilling” and scraping near the bottom. At Chatal Höyük this feature could not be observed, but in the assemblage from the Iron Age I deposits at Atchana some convex bases of open vessels with “rilling” on the external face have been recorded and may refer to the same feature observed in Cilicia.

²³ Recent use of terms such as Hittite monochrome pottery for the simple ware production at Tell Tayinat is even more misleading (cf. Harrison 2013, Janeway 2017) than the term drab ware.

²⁴ Here it is preferable to employ the term homogeneous instead of standardized because the question whether Hittite imperial production was standardized or not is still open. Cf. Mühlenbruch (2014) and Mielke (2016).

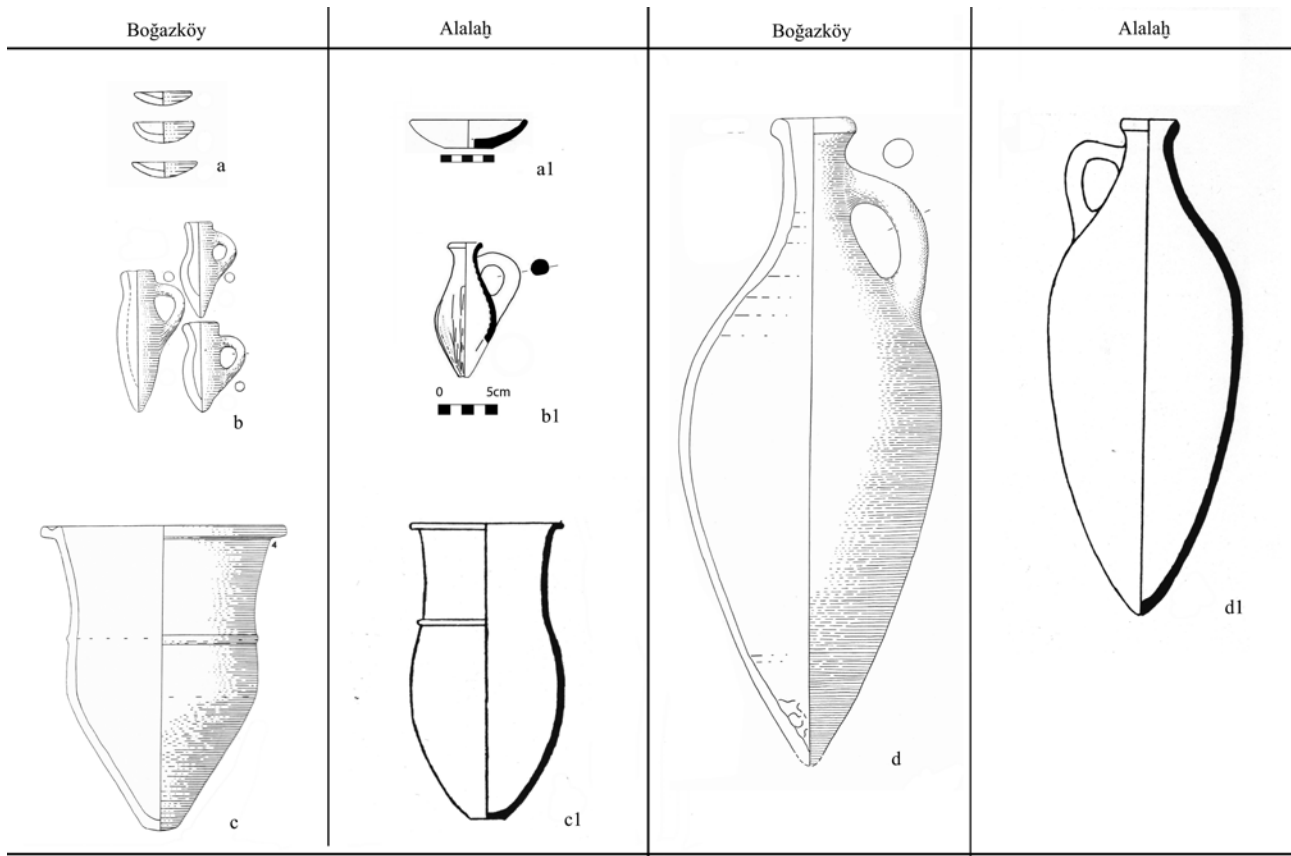


Fig. 5: Pottery Shapes of Hittite tradition at Boğazköy and in the Amuq. a. Miniature plate from Boğazköy (Müller Karpe 1988: N5) a.1 Miniature plate from Alalah (Horowitz 2015); b. miniature juglet from Boğazköy (Müller-Karpe 1988: K12); b.2 Miniature juglet from Alalah (Horowitz 2015); c. Cylindrical pithos from Boğazköy (Müller-Karpe 1988: T15a); c.1 cylindrical Pithos from Alalah (Woolley 1955: pl. 123 n150); d. Pointed jar from Boğazköy (Müller-Karpe 1988: K2); d.1. Pointed jar from Alalah (Woolley 1955: pl. 111 n. 39)

2.2 Hittite habits and behaviours in the Amuq

Even if the ceramic production in the Amuq does not appear to prove any economic impact from the Hittite conquest, cultural contact with the Hittites in the south-eastern territories is often reported when dealing not only with specific pottery shapes, which are considered characteristically Hittite or North-central Anatolian (Glatz 2009, 2011), but also with other objects such as biconvex seals, metal figurines and votive axes. However, considering that the presence of seals and small finds may be the result of the well-known circulation of luxury objects or better to the contacts between administrative Hittite centers, here I mainly focus on archaeological objects that can be used as markers for specific daily activities, such as containers, rather than as the result of steady commerce or of communicating elites.

Five shapes have been considered new LBII in LBII local repertoires of the Amuq and of conquered territories in Syria. Two have already been identified by Glatz (2009: Fig. 2), i.e. the two miniaturist shapes (Fig. 5a, plates N3 and N5,²⁵ and Fig. 5b, pitcher K12). Three further shapes have been identified as “Hittite” in the Amuq rep-

²⁵ This paper uses the shape typology created by Müller-Karpe 1988, which was improved upon and refined by scholars dealing with pottery from the central Anatolian plateau such as Arnhold 2009, Mielke 2006, Mühlénbruch 2014, because it is currently applied to the largest and richest assemblages from the LBA II in central Anatolia and provides observations for each shape concerning their function.

ertoire or in neighbouring regions: the large one-handed pointed jar (Fig. 5d), the so-called libation arm and the high jars with funnel or vertical necks (Fig. 5c, T1/2)²⁶. They appear only in LB contexts in the area (Fig. 5a1, 5b1, 5c1 and 5d1 present examples from Atchana) and are immediately discarded in IAI.

At Chatal Höyük, which was in all likelihood a large village during the LBII period (Casana 2009), not a single fragment of these types of shapes was recovered.

At Atchana evidence of these shapes is also extremely ephemeral and only consists of a few sherds. The best evidence comes from the religious/ritual sphere: miniature plates and pitchers²⁷ were found near the temple area on the acropolis (Horowitz 2015: fig. 7.7). These elements, together with the fragment of a Hittite oracle text near the temple and the Tudhaliya orthostat reemployed in the temple, suggest that the rituals were probably performed in the Hittite manner in the local temple on the acropolis. In this sense their absence at Chatal Höyük, where no ritual/religious contexts dating to the LBII were brought to light, is not surprising. It is more difficult to ascribe to this same functional context the so-called libation arms (Müller-Karpe 1988: La). A complete arm-shaped vessel and a fragment (Woolley 1955: AT37/225 and 226) were found in a domestic environment at Atchana and date to a period earlier than the Hittite occupation of the settlement; however, considering the uncertainty of their function,²⁸ and their large distribution in the eastern Mediterranean basin, they may belong to the group of objects related to commerce Mielke 2006, map.

Two complete piriform jugs were also found in the excavations at Atchana (Woolley 1955: pl. 111 no. 39 lev. II, Horowitz in press, fig. 15 nos 3-5, Montesanto and Pucci in print) in domestic contexts and in very late levels (end of the LBA). Müller-Karpe (1988: K2) associates this shape with the storage of liquids, possibly wine; however, the shape is also likely connected to the transport of liquids and the example from Atchana is very small.²⁹

Tracing the cylindrical pithos as a marker of Anatolian influence is even more complicated because the shape of this specific vessel can be identified only on the basis of large fragments. According to Müller Karpe (1988, T1/2) the shape and size of these vessels points to their use as kitchen aids, most likely as storage containers for dry food. At Atchana two pithoid jars were found in Level IV (Woolley 1955: Pl. 123 no. 150), again in a period earlier than the LBA II, and a third has been uncovered during recent excavations in the same level (Horowitz in press: fig. 15 no. 6) in period 2-1. This shape is not only a rare find, as both authors state, in the LB assemblage at Atchana (three in a total), but, as Horowitz suggests, it could also be related to an Euphratic tradition.

Although Tell Afis is located in a more offset position than the Amuq in relation to the Hittite core, the context of retrieval of these final two shapes is completely different from that of Atchana: these shapes were found in levels VIa-Vb (Venturi 2014: fig.3,7 and 8) on the acropolis. In particular the cylindrical pithoi were recovered also in primary context in a building probably the residence of the local governor, where Hittite tablets (Archi and Venturi 2012) were also recovered. It is possible that the residents of this specific part of the acropolis were part of the Hittitized or Hittite elite (Venturi 2014) and used storage vessels employed in Anatolia. Only further investigations of other LBA II contexts at the site may confirm if this tradition was common also outside this specific building.

Thus, the evidence presented here appears to suggest that Hittite culture left a very light footprint in Mukiš, which is visible only in very specific contexts such as the religious (temple area at Atchana) or the domestic (residence of the local governor at Tell Afis) spheres. Moreover, the persistence of Northern Levantine practices of drinking, eating and cooking, different from those of Anatolia, as well as the strong continuity with the LBA I pottery traditions reflects an extremely low impact of Hittite culture; the LBI Hurrian tradition in pottery and seal production demonstrates stronger traces in the LBA II than in the contemporary arrival of Hittite culture.³⁰

²⁶ At Atchana these are called cylindrical pithos (Horowitz 2015); at Tell Afis crateroid amphora.

²⁷ The religious sphere of use of these vessels in Anatolia seems to be confirmed by their context of retrieval in Boğazköy, cf. Müller-Karpe (1988) shapes N5 and N6.

²⁸ For a general discussion of the functions of these vessels cf. Mielke 2007: map 2, and Pucci 2017.

²⁹ Pedrazzi 2007 stresses the commercial function of these jars and an origin different from those of Anatolia.

³⁰ An ongoing project at the Università di Firenze investigates the eating, drinking and cooking habits of the Northern Levant in comparison to neighbouring regions (Mediterranean, Anatolian and northern Mesopotamian) for the Late Bronze Age and the Iron Age in order to define communities of practice.

2.3 *The Hittite Legacy*

None of the Hittite shapes discussed above continue in Iron Age I production, confirming the ephemeral nature of the impact of Hittite culture on local materials. This fact collides, as Mazzoni (2016: 283-285) has clearly emphasized, with two elements: first, the impact of Hittite iconography and style on the carved decoration at Ain Dara, dating to the end of the 13th century or beginning of the 12th century BC; and secondly and more relevantly, the Hittite legacy visible on the orthostatic decoration of Iron Age I town or citadel gates and on the use of the Luwian hieroglyphic writing in monumental inscriptions.

In fact, from the 10th century onwards the ruling classes at Karkemish (with the Suhi-Katuwas dynasty), Malatya, and Zincirli (with Kilamuwa) established a new iconographic language that focused on exalting the local dynasty and used public spaces on the acropolis for collective performances in order to reinforce the community identity;³¹ this process had already started during the 11th century as Taita's reliefs in the Aleppo temple and possibly some monumental inscriptions at Tell Tayinat appear to demonstrate (Kohlmeyer 2012). The iconographic language employed in the earliest Iron Age monuments strongly reformulates that of the Hittites, ascribing new meanings to specific figures, using a different narrative, and shifting the main focus of the iconographic program of Syro-Hittite centres from the religious to the political sphere (Gilibert 2011, Pucci 2015).

However, the concept of decorating external spaces, the know-how of relief carving on architectural elements, and the style of the Iron Age I reliefs all find their forerunners in the Hittite tradition of urban monuments and rock carvings. This all implies that the Syro-Hittite artisans, especially those in the Amuq in the 11th century, not only were familiar enough with the language to reformulate it, but also had the skills and know-how to apply this transformation. Considering that Hittite monuments are completely lacking in LBA Amuq,³² it is impossible to explain this continuity as an imitation of a preceding tradition already embedded in the region. However it does seem possible to suggest a working hypothesis based on following evidence: the building site at Ain Dara, as well as the one at Yesemek, are the most recent LBA ones near the Amuq (for a date to the 13th century cf. Mazzoni 2013: 473); in particular Ain Dara is directly accessible from the Amuq following the route that leads from Ain Dara to Tell Jindaris (16 km) to Chatal Höyük (16 km) to Tell Tayinat/Atchana (32 km), while the route to Yesemek, i.e. the Kara-Su valley, was probably at the time more difficult to follow, as the survey in that area has suggested (cf. Osborne 2013). Karkemish and Malatya are the only centres that assert not only a Hittite dynastic continuity from the LBA, but also a very strong continuity with the Hittite pottery tradition, mainly visible in Malatya (Manuelli 2013), and with Hittite iconography visible both at Malatya and Karkemish (Mazzoni 1997: 310-316). Therefore it seems likely that these two sites, i.e. the area of the upper Euphrates, may have developed the bridge between the LBA and the IA carving traditions, providing work for an "atelier" during the 12th century and keeping alive the necessary know-how related to it.

3. PELESETS IN THE AMUQ?

The link between change in material culture and migration theory postulated in past research has been revitalized in the last twenty years (Anthony 1990, Hakenbeck 2008, van Dommelen 2014), and it has been repropounded in an effort to explain material change. One of the most innovative approaches to "prove" the presence of foreigners in a local context is related to the analysis of materials as social objects (Knapp and Dommelen 2010). Each object in a given context represents an integral dimension of culture; investigating the use of objects from a social perspective fulfills the need to analyse social relationships and past behaviours, which are crucial in defining com-

³¹ On this subject cf. Mazzoni 1997, Mazzoni 2000, Pucci 2009, Pucci 2008b, Pucci 2008a, Gilibert 2011.

³² The only two carved blocks were mentioned above and consists of one hieroglyphic inscription of Talmi Sarruma and of the carved orthostat of prince Tudhaliya.

munity identity and help in distinguishing migration from other processes of cultural encounters such as hybridization, entanglement and appropriation.³³

Several scholars³⁴ have applied the concept of “habitus” in tracking migration following a simple reasoning: a shared habitus characterizes a community, thus it is not the single object but the act/performance behind it that provides us with the clues for understanding the embedded, entangled, networked or symmetric signifiers of a specific community of reference. It is the way we eat, drink, cook, how we organize the domestic space, and consequently how is the social structure of the household, how we store, bury our dead that emphasize differences and similarities among communities. A quantitative analysis of pottery according to its functional range, rather than according to the morphology of the vessels, provides important data for identifying changes in habits, even in secondary deposits. Only the presence of a “foreign” habit may suggest the presence of a different community, possibly of migrants, while the presence of a single psi-figurine or a violin bow shaped fibula should not be relevant in tracking migration. Several studies on well-known migration phenomena support this method in identifying different cultural groups and their modes of interaction with the local population using archaeological objects and contexts as remnants of a past behaviours.³⁵

3.1 Mycenaean or Mycenaeanizing pottery in the Iron Age I.

Unlike the scattered evidence of Hittite presence during the LBA, the archaeological material from the Amuq concerning a Mycenaean or Aegean impact is extremely abundant and pertains to the sites of Chatal Höyük, Tell Tayinat and Tell Atchana.

During the IA I, the process of re-urbanization of the settlement at Chatal intensified without any evident gaps or interruptions. Phase N, which is identified at Chatal and other sites in the Amuq with the appearance of large quantities of painted pottery, begins at Chatal Höyük in the second half of the 12th century BC and does not correspond to a change in the urban arrangement, in view of the excavations thus far.³⁶

Assemblages belonging to IA I (Phase N) at Chatal Höyük occur in all excavated areas; however, because only in Areas II and V excavations have also reached the preceding Phase M, deposits ascribed to the earliest remains belonging to IA I (N_{beginning}) only relate to these two areas. Area II in particular is the only zone at this site that delivers a sequence from Phases M to N in a significant excavated area (from a minimum of 200 to 600 m²); here a series of small dwelling units with pebble floors, mudbrick silos and burials were identified. Area IVa also provided archaeologists with a sequence from Phases M to N but few clear structures surfaced; the extent of the excavations was also limited and consequently the loci were less reliable. The pottery assemblages from Phase N_{beginning} building levels show an increasing percentage³⁷ per locus of monochrome (with one colour) painted pottery with a very wide range of patterns, both local (oblique lines, cross-hatched triangles, horizontal lines) and foreign: swirls, concentric circles, chequers, wavy lines, and concentric foliated semicircles are the most common and find their direct counterparts in Furumark’s patterns typology of Late Helladic IIIc pottery (Furumark 1941).

The vast majority (97%) of painted vessels have a fabric identical to that of the local simple ware production — semi-porous brownish orange/beige paste with mineral temper, and multi-coloured grit with iron inclusions — and is therefore considered locally made. Moreover the monochrome painted vessels with local fabric lack any slip on

³³ For a general overview of the use of these terms cf. Knapp and Van Dommelen 2015, Van Dommelen 2012; entanglement in particular is employed as one type of object-human relationship Caraher 2016, Hodder 2012.

³⁴ Burmeister 2000: 542 for the use of this concept in tracking migration, cf. also Schiffer and Hollenback 2010, Skibo and Schiffer 2008.

³⁵ Redmond 2007, Yasur-Landau 2010, Brighton 2009, Hills 2015. For a comparison between Anglo-Saxons and Sea Peoples migration cf. Rahmstorf 2017.

³⁶ Mainly the presence of a LHIIIc late production seems to suggest the second half of the 12th century as the beginning of phase N.

³⁷ I have worked with the pottery fragments that were already selected by Braidwood (for the Iron Age there was a total of 12.000 pieces). It seems likely that he selected almost all painted rimsherds and probably discarded part of the simple ware rim fragments. For this reason, the percentage of 94% of painted pottery in the phase N assemblages is obviously false, yet it still mirrors a high number and consequently a possible majority of this class of pottery.

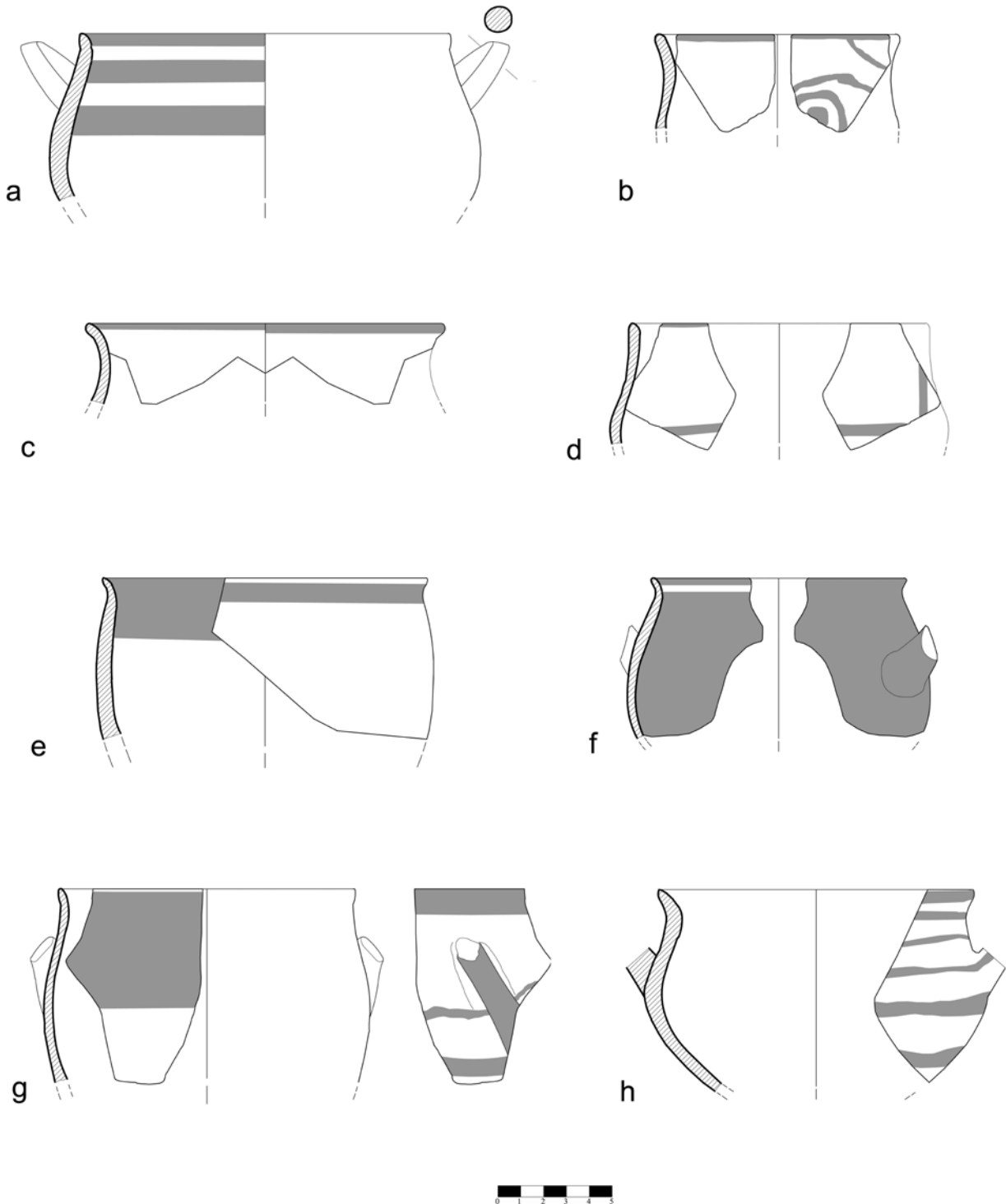


Fig. 6: Painted bowls with outcurving rim from Chatal Höyük (Phase N_Beginning)

the surface, a treatment that could also be observed in the very few painted monochrome sherds with a non-local fabric. Thus ware and decorative patterns suggest that Mycenaean pottery was locally made using patterns and syntax that are typical of the LHIIIC middle style.

When looking at quantities of pottery and their functional categories³⁸ it is possible to provide an even more detailed overview.

Drinking and eating assemblages were influenced the most by the presence of Helladic elements: single-serving eating shallow bowls with incurving rims, which were so common in the previous phase, strongly decrease and then disappear during Phase N. Large quantities of painted monochrome bowls with out-curving rims were identified in Phase N_Beginning at Chatal Höyük (Fig. 6); the rim shape, size (0.8 to 1 l) and number of specimens make the bowl a single-serving eating (or drinking) vessel, which may have replaced the disappearing shallow bowls. A slightly globular body, two horizontal handles, an outcurving thinned rim and a high ring base characterize this shape and identify it with the typical Mycenaean bowl, also called “bell-shaped bowl” (Furumark 1941: FS 284-286, Mountjoy 1999). It is in from LHIIIA (cf. Furumark 1941: 48-49) and its shape changes only slightly regionally and over time: the globular body and the high ring base are typical features of the late LHIIIC middle period, whereas the decorative patterns, the wavy line and the reserved bands belong to the LHIIIC developed style. The bowls are homogeneous in their general features and size, however they differ in rim shape, thickness of the vessel, decoration, and shape of the handle.

The second most common shape in this category is the single serving hemispherical bowl with thinned rim (0.4 l), painted or simple ware, which continues the LBA II tradition. Apparently no traces of the well-known stemmed cups (FS 266), considered typical drinking vessels in the Mycenaean area, are found at Chatal Höyük.

In these contexts there are also several examples of hybrids, i.e. vessels with local and foreign traits, and two of them will be discussed here. The large carinated bowl (Fig.7) with out-turning rim and radial decoration appears to be a new IA creation, typical of the Amuq region, and although generally it is not very prevalent, among the multiple serving eating vessels it is the second most common shape. The handled examples from Chatal (Fig. 7a) may suggest that the original shape was a shallow angular bowl (FS 295), while its size and curvilinear shape make it a local creation, probably deriving from the s-shaped bowls of LBA tradition. The radial painted decoration on the rim is prominent in the local tradition of LBA II, while the narrow painted bands may imitate a decorative pattern on LHIIIC pottery.

The potstand (Fig. 8) is a second example that shows very clear hybridization; the shape is not common in the Mycenaean mainland tradition, as its few appearances in earlier levels is related to an east Aegean influence (Mountjoy 1999, fig. 470), or for the later LHIIIC examples to a Dodecannese influence. The pieces found in Tell Afis (Venturi 2007: 53.2) and the fenestrated stands with simple rim produced in Syria during the Late Bronze Age at Tell Brak (Oates 1987: pl. 64b), Tell Bazi (Otto 2006: Abb. 46, 1-3) and Tell al Rimah (Postgate, Oates, and Oates 1997: pl. 95 no. 1135) point toward a local northern Syrian tradition for this shape. By contrast the narrow painted decoration in registers with triangles are clearly related to an Aegean decorative syntax, and the triple rim of the Chatal example closely parallels the East Aegean tradition (cf. Mountjoy 1998: fig. 12,2 and 3); cross-hatched triangles in a row are both a local Phase N feature deriving from the local painted tradition and a Mediterranean pattern.

Kraters (biconical and amphoroid) were also well known in the preceding LBA phase in Northern Levant as both a local production (Horowitz in press) and as an imported object (Wijngaarden 2002, Steel 2013). The biconical krater was the most common shape among the kraters at Chatal Höyük during LBA II and was the shape more often decorated with local geometric patterns. Both shapes (biconical Fig. 9a and amphoroid Fig. 9b) may belong to the same sphere of use; the opening of the vessels (25-30 cm) and their capacity (8-12 l, although calculated on reconstructions) appear to uphold a tradition well known in the LBA, a period during which kraters were part of the drinking set and employed for communal drinking or appeared in grave goods as a social status symbol.³⁹ During the IA I (Phase N), the amphoroid krater becomes more popular and by the end of Phase N replaces the biconical krater; subsequently the geometric painted patterns of Phase M tradition are replaced by the new repertoire, with the introduction of a few figurative elements inspired by the LHIIIC production, but again locally modified, as in the example presented here (Fig. 9c).

³⁸ For the morphological criteria employed in defining the classes and the functional categories employed in the pottery analysis at Chatal Höyük cf. Pucci 2019, *lev.*, IId

³⁹ On this subject cf. Steel 2013, Crowel and Morris 2015.

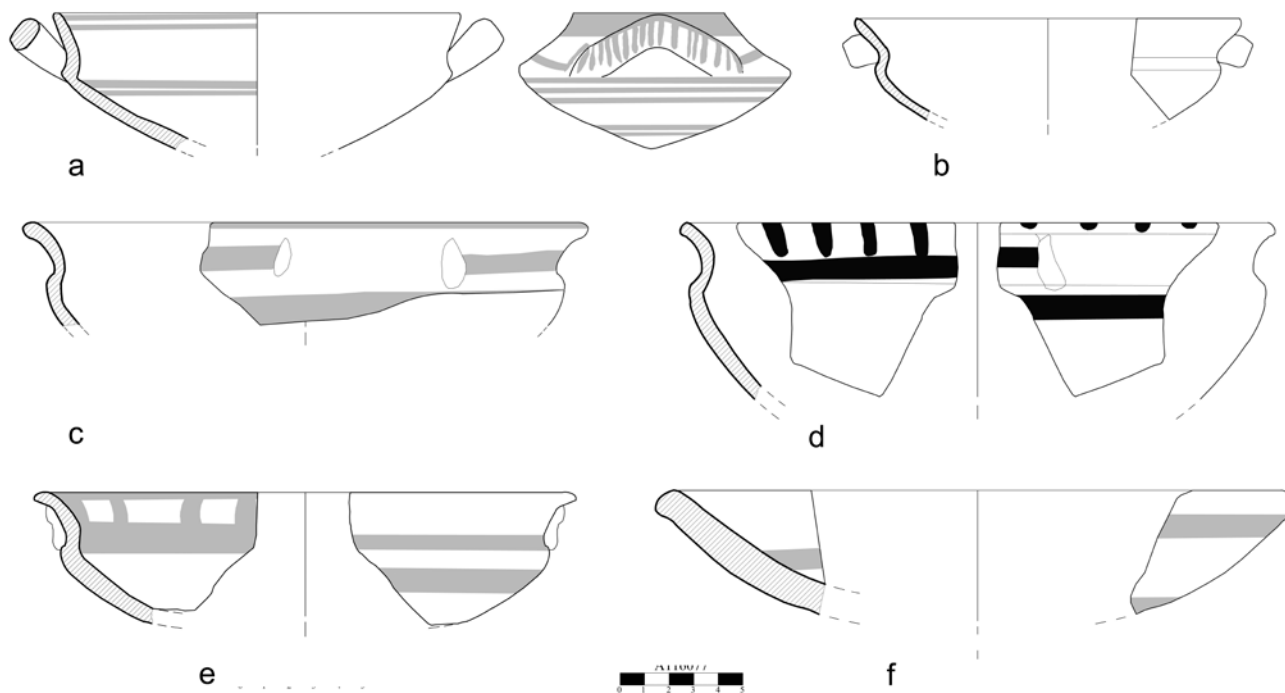


Fig. 7: Carinated bowls from Chatal Höyük (Phase N_beginning and N_Mid).

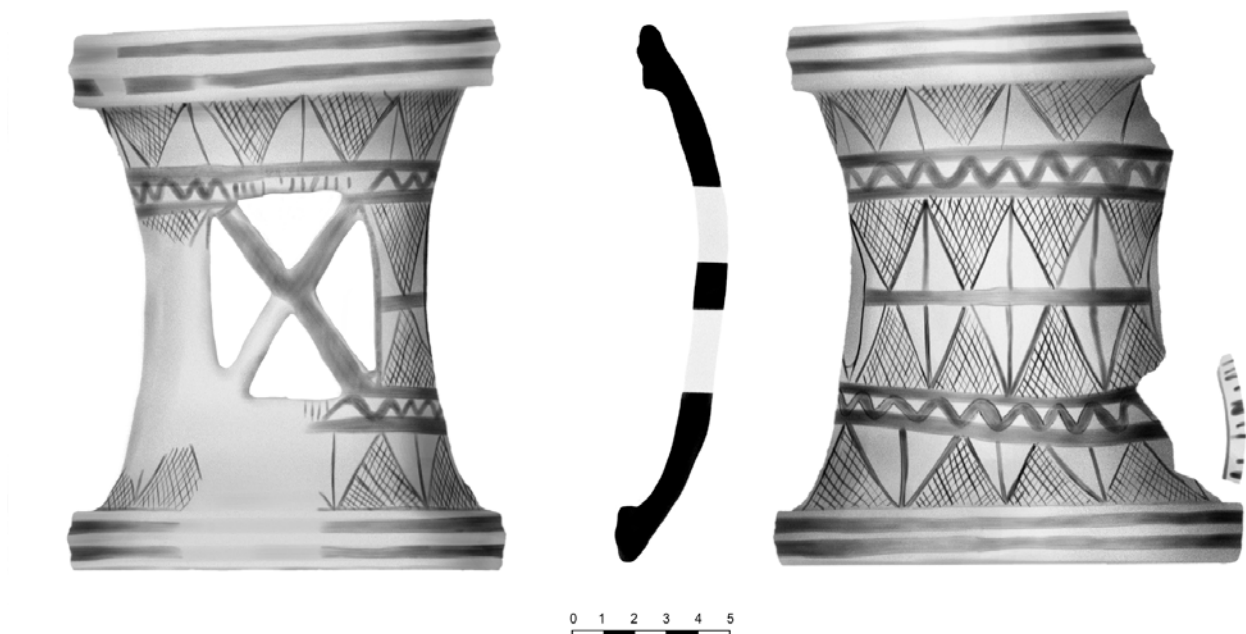


Fig. 8: Painted potstand inv. OIM A 26946 from Chatal Höyük (phase N_Beginning)

As a result, the Chatal assemblage demonstrates a very strong infiltration of external elements in the eating and drinking sets, with the introduction of two new shapes of single serving bowls and also the expert and eclectic use of painted Mycenaean patterns on local shapes. However, these new shapes influenced neither the

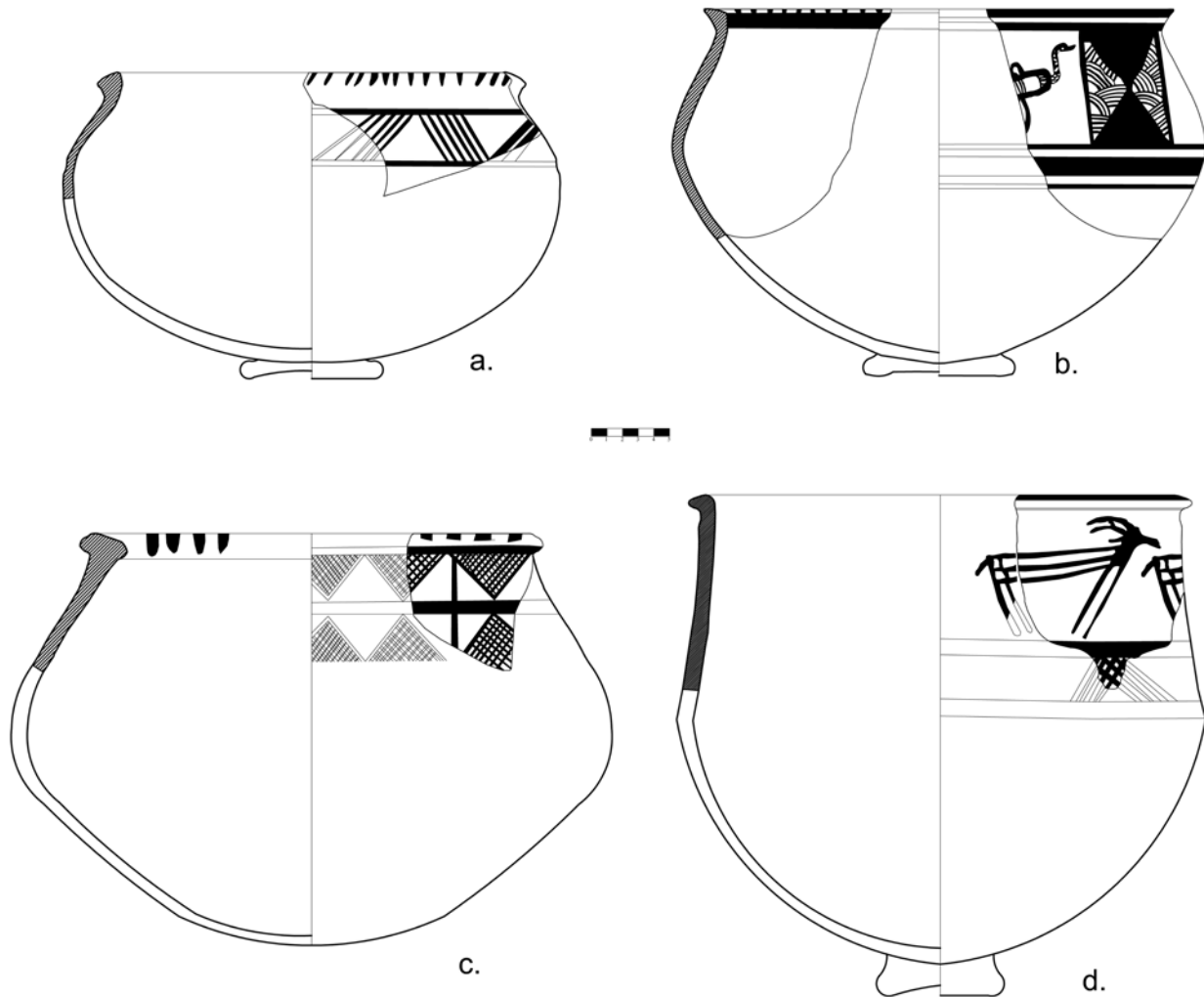


Fig. 9: Reconstruction drawing of kraters found at Chatal Höyük. a. OIM_inv. A134955 (Phase M_Late) b. OIM_inv. A133819 (Phase N_beginning); c. OIM inv. A116400 (Phase N_Beginning); d. OIM_inv. A116407 (Phase N_beginning)

division of food (single serving bowls) nor the method of drinking; kraters remained in use together with the hemispherical small cups. Functionally speaking the Mycenaean drinking cups (mainly kylix, FS 255 with high stem) did not merge with the local tradition, possibly because the way these drinking vessels were employed differed too much from local custom and instead was connected to two other shapes, dippers and cups, which were also absent in the CH repertoire (Rutter 2013: 545). Thus in the table ware there is certainly a shift in the appearance of the ware, which is painted than in the LBA II, but no further change could be observed in the way it was used.

3.2 Tracing migration

Scholars like Yasur Landau (2010: 263), who deals with the Mycenaean or Philistine issue, have pointed out that a common new element in domestic architecture is the presence of central fireplaces, which may indicate a different use of the domestic space, a different way of gathering together, and potentially a different way of cooking. In Chatal not a single installation in any of the building periods indicates the presence of central fireplaces.

The absence of clues is felt even more strongly when examining cooking habits: the well-known Mycenaean cooking pots strongly differ from the common cooking pots found at Chatal and are here completely nonexistent. The local bi-conical cooking pot (of two sizes) with shell temper persists in use during Phases M and N, with some local morphological changes: it is characterized by a rounded base, a short collar and in the IA I has two handles and two major sizes (3 l and 14 l). It clearly belongs to a local tradition that can also be easily found in the nearby site of Atchana.⁴⁰

The same trend towards continuity is visible in other aspects of everyday life; analysis of spindle whorls, for example, also shows that in all three periods the same types of yarn were produced, although it should be said that the number of spindle whorls from Phase M contexts is very small. Also the arrival of the loom weighted warp and of the unbaked spool shaped weights that has been in some occasion connected to Mycenaean people (Cecchini 2000, cf. also Rahmstorf 2005, 2011) is not evident at Chatal.

The IA I archaeological evidence is only partially similar to Tell Tayinat. Janeway (2017) has shown that the general traits of Mycenaean influence on Aegean-style pottery from recent excavations in the Iron Age I levels are similar to the ones outlined for Chatal with a few exceptions. Four fragments of Mycenaean cooking pots (Janeway 2017: pl. 24) were collected in the excavations at Tayinat; the Mycenaean cooking pots differ from Levantine ones in size (much smaller), the presence of a handle, and a flat or tripod base. The use of these vessels may imply a different way of handling the pot on the fire, different fire installations, and a different the number of individuals (Hruby and Trusty 2017). The second point seems to be related to the number of imports; at Chatal Höyük the number of imported rim sherds is below 1% in all assemblages of Phase N_beginning; at Tell Tayinat, Janeway (2017: 121-123) observes provisionally that the number of imports in FP6 (the earliest of the IA phases) is larger than in later phases, suggesting that during the 12th century BC newcomers brought their own pots. Moreover, he uses evidence from the analysis of spinning techniques, as well as figurines, faunal data and Cypro-minoan potters' marks (Janeway 2017: 123 and references) to support the hypothesis that Aegean settlers established during the IA a new kingdom in the Amuq, i.e. affirming the presence of a group of migrants with their own material culture that settled down at Tayinat. It is not the intent of this paper to evaluate the Tayinat evidence, but rather to emphasise how it differs with Chatal Höyük and focus on that specific material change.⁴¹

On the one hand, the "material change" visible in the pottery assemblage at Chatal Höyük does not reflect a change in habits or behaviours, so it is consequently difficult to support the hypothesis that foreigners arrived at the site with their own habits and blended with an existent community. On the other hand, the change in the table set, even if only related to its appearance, exists; local production confirms the knowledge of Mycenaean shapes, patterns and syntax of the decoration, and also demonstrates a certain eclecticism in experimenting with other solutions. Two main questions remain open: how were complex skills such as the painted narrative and specific vessels' shapes transmitted to local producers, and why would a local population in the 12th century BC want to change the appearance of their table sets?

3.3 Hybridization and transformation as a new community identity

During the LBA use and value of Mycenaean pottery in the Amuq, and more generally in the Northern Levant, was strictly related to commerce and to specific vessels, which were appreciated either for the vessel itself or for its content: kraters, stirrup jars, and kylix were the most common types of imported Mycenaean vessels,

⁴⁰ Also in the following passage (N to O) the cooking jars do change in shape, becoming hole mouth, and in some cases change also in fabric, however this doesn't affect the action of cooking or the position of the cook pot on the fire.

⁴¹ Mycenaean style pottery produced abroad has been tied either to the presence of external potters (Vermeule and Karageorghis 1982), considered the sign of a partial acculturation (Åstrom 1998, Sherrat 1999), the response to a decrease of imports (Du Piéd 2008: 181-182, Steel 1996), or the proof for the real presence of an Aegean population or of a culturally related Mycenaean population (Niemeier 1998, Killebrew and Lehmann 2013). Rahmstorf 2005: 145, and Yasur-Landau 2011 deny a mono-causal explanation for this event.

along with others from Cyprus such as milk bowls. The Mycenaean imports provided a means of social distinction, physically representing the wealth of the family that could “afford” prestigious vessels; for this reason, kraters in particular belonged to social performances such as group eating or feasting and retained their role of status symbols even in their secondary use as grave goods (Wijngaarden 2002, French and Stockhammer 2009, Steel 2013, Stockhammer 2014). The diffusion of these imports depends on their proximity to the coast and to the economic status of the inhabitants of a specific settlement. This phenomenon, for example, is elusive at Chatal Höyük as only a few Mycenaean imports (five fragments in all LBA assemblages) were found and the number of imported vessels decreases during Phase N_beginning, while local potters do not produce the same shapes that were imported in the LBA II. Moreover, local production of Mycenaeanising pottery in the IA ranges from very good imitations to extremely sloppy ones, thus it seems likely that local population did not have one or two “good” pieces per household, but instead larger eating and drinking sets for everyday use. Consequently, the local production of Mycenaeanizing or hybrids during IA I could not have fulfilled the same social role as it had during the Late Bronze Age, nor was the local production of Mycenaean shapes intended to replace the decreasing number of imports during the 12th century BC. Therefore the material evidence suggests that local potters learned how to produce Aegean-style pottery not from imported pieces, but rather directly from “foreign” potters who knew the patterns, shapes, and syntax of the decoration on the vessel: a transfer of knowledge that took place most likely in the Amuq itself.

The value of the Mycenaean pottery at Chatal Höyük was no longer related to wealth and prestige (luxury goods) during the IA I, it did not mirror the practice of new habits (real migration on the site); neither its quality (fine fabric, surface treatment or a careful decoration) nor its selected distribution were as relevant as in the LBA. Nevertheless a specific imagery, connected with the Mycenaean pottery style (external appearance of the vessels), permeated all contexts related to practices of food and liquid consumption without changing how these practices were carried out. Two possible scenarios may be considered as an explanation for this phenomenon.

1. Following Renfrew’s models of linguistic replacements (Renfrew 1992: 453-4), in particular the model of elite dominance after a system’s collapse, we may suppose that after the local economic and political system collapsed a new élite arrived with their own material culture, settled down at Tell Tayinat, and built a new polity that dominated (culturally or politically?) the region (Janeway 2017). The surrounding local communities started to construct a polity identity, imitating only in part the daily set of the newcomers, who represented a specific social group, i.e. the ruling elite. The major problem with this hypothesis lies in the absence of archaeological evidence confirming that in the 12th century BC two communities of practice existed (one local, the other Aegean), living in the same region but socially and culturally distinct. The evidence of foreign habits found at Tell Tayinat, although more extensive than at Chatal, remains quite ephemeral.⁴²

2. Following the concept of selective migration (Burmeister 2000), I would infer that small groups of migrants arrived in a context that had experienced a strong economic decay and/or disruption well before their arrival; these migrants were skilled (Tsuda et al. 2015: 21), but were too few to build enclaves and probably encountered no resistance upon their arrival. Their impact on local communities followed the model of direct interaction (Rouse 1986: 10-11): neither of the two communities (local and migrant) was economically and culturally dominant, yet nor were they socially passive; the newcomers, therefore, were not completely assimilated into local traditions but rather both groups merged to build a new identity. If a specific material change can be connected to the process of shaping a new identity, pottery styles may function as a medium to shape communal identity and/or social status (Crielaard 1999b): 64); perhaps a specific style of table ware sets became one of the new mediums used to promote communal identity. After a period of three generations, the process of selection and transformation of every day paraphernalia was so advanced that by the end of the 11th century a painted bell-shaped bowl was no longer a “foreign” element, but rather one element in the material identity of the new community.⁴³

⁴² For Cilicia cf. Lehmann 2017.

⁴³ This phenomenon is undoubtedly demonstrated in the 8th century BC at Chatal: Mycenaean shapes (for example feeding bottles) are completely embedded in the local horizon (Pucci 2016).

In this process of identity building the Hittite legacy discussed above finds a specific place. Once the kingdom of Wa/Palistin in the 11th century BC started a monumental program, its king erected and rearranged the Temple of the Storm God in Aleppo, a practice that simultaneously recalls the monumental LBA activities (construction of the temple at 'Ain Dara, rearrangement of the Temple at Aleppo) and presents a bold innovation, as no king before Taita (Anatolian or Levantine) had placed a representation of himself inside the cella of the temple. The artisans employed for this activity were probably the direct descendants from the LBA "atelier", which most likely stayed active during the 12th century in the northern Euphrates area, in particular at Malatya. Here two stylistically different groups of orthostats have been dated to the 12th century BC: the carved blocks reemployed in the lions' gate (Orthmann 1971: A/3-11) and group of orthostats found in part in the recent excavation (Alvaro 2012: fig. 8, Manuelli 2012: fig. 4) and in part in later buildings (Orthmann 1971: C/1-3) witness an intense carving activity during the 12th and 11th century BC.⁴⁴ In this sense, the rulers of Wa/Palistin follow a local tradition, but at the same time they transform it. The "Hittite" language of power was not a local legacy from previous periods, but rather a current language in use by the only active dynasty in the 12th century BC, i.e. the one of Karkemish and Malatya: a process again of appropriation and transformation.

In conclusion, cultural encounters in the Amuq during the LBA and IA impacted the local material culture in different ways. The Hittite presence is extremely ephemeral and does not appear to be rooted in the LBA material culture; its presence is strong only in 11th century monumental sculpture, probably because it was "transmitted" through the upper Euphrates region, and became one of the markers of the new political identity of the region. In the same period, i.e. during the 12th century BC, the presence of sporadic groups of migrants in the region led to the transformation of the everyday drinking and eating set, leaving a very visible footprint on the appearance of those sets and becoming an embedded feature of the new material culture of the IA Amuq.

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⁴⁴ Orthmann 1971 dated the orthostats reemployed in the lions' gate (Malatya A/-11) to the first style group at the site, whereas the three reliefs (Malatya C/1-3) identical to the two found in the 2010 excavations were dated to the third style group. However, stratigraphic evidence and radio carbon dating of the contexts for the C group have dated the context of use for the C group to the 11th century BC (Manuelli and Mori 2016: 220).

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