

# Late Bronze Age Painted Pottery Traditions at the Margins of the Hittite State

Papers Presented at a Workshop Held  
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Edited by

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## Foreword

The idea to bring the ‘Late Bronze Age Painted Pottery Traditions at the Margins of the Hittite State’ in the focus of supra-regional research was born at the beginning of 2017. At that time, both editors worked at the Freie Universität Berlin, where our researches were shaped in a bustling atmosphere with lots of exciting projects. Moreover, a decisive factor was that both of us were engaged in the study of painted ceramics from the Anatolian Late Bronze Age world in the context of our own projects. In addition, there were other scholars dealing independently with similar findings from their excavations...it seems that sometimes certain issues are in the air. Accordingly, we developed the idea to organise a workshop about the different painted pottery traditions that were apparently clustered around the ‘unpainted’ core region of the Hittite State in the framework of the 11th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (ICAANE). Many colleagues accepted the invitation to the workshop with great enthusiasm and we all met together at the Ludwig-Maximilians Universität München on the 4th of April 2018. The workshop was very intensive and the fruitful exchange produced a great gain in knowledge for all participants. But the volume on hand is not only the result of this workshop. For the publication, the research topic was supplemented with further contributions that expanded the knowledge of the phenomenon in question. Therefore, we wish to express, first of all, our gratitude to all the contributors of the volume, both those that participated in the original workshop and those who decided later to join this project. A special word of gratitude is needed to Hermann Genz and Geoffrey Summers, who have accepted the double effort of carefully reviewing all the papers and writing the final remarks of the volume: their patience and enthusiasm have been fundamental for its successful publication. We extend our thanks to the Archaeopress team for having supported this project and have provided us with all the necessary technical support. Moreover, we are thankful to the organizers of the 11th ICAANE, and in particular to Michael Herles, for their help and hospitality in Munich. Lastly, it should be stressed that the publication of this volume was possible due to the research project awarded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG project #324049112). With the awareness that the painted pottery traditions at the margins of the Hittite State represents an outstanding and to date unexplored phenomenon, we trust that the book will find its own place in the scientific community and the subject gets its due attention within the research topics of Late Bronze Age Anatolia.

Federico Manuelli and Dirk Paul Mielke

*Berlin/Rome and Münster, August 2022*



# Introduction – Throwing Some Colour on a Plain World

Federico Manuelli and Dirk Paul Mielke

The different but closely related ‘Late Bronze Age Painted Pottery Traditions at the Margins of the Hittite State’ that are in the focus of the present volume represent a specific phenomenon of cultural history. To achieve deeper insights into this previously neglected topic, it is necessary to look at the cultural-historical conditions in which these pottery traditions developed, as the latter can then be explained as a spatially and temporally limited structure of production. The framework in which this phenomenon appeared is given by the Hittite pottery, the dominating ceramic tradition of Late Bronze Age Anatolia, which profoundly influenced the neighbouring regions especially during the imperial period. Leaving aside the discussions on the different labels applied to this ceramic tradition, it is here important to stress that we are dealing with the pottery connected with the genesis and development of the Hittite State and its society.<sup>1</sup>

In the course of its near 500 years of history, the Hittite State developed from an ‘Anatolian kingdom’ to an Ancient Near Eastern empire.<sup>2</sup> Especially in the 14th and 13th century BC, the empire of the Hittites was one of the dominant great powers of the Ancient Near East. In contrast to the sphere of influence casts by other polities, the material culture of the Hittites was mainly restricted to its core region, i.e. the northern parts of the Central Anatolia plateau, roughly marked by the course of the Kızılırmak. But with the exception of some visualisations on general maps, the borders of this core have never been systematically defined and the distribution of Hittite pottery within these maps is anything but obvious.<sup>3</sup> Recently scholars have pursued a better definition of this region and especially of the interactions between core and peripheries by analysing Hittite material culture and, above all, pottery distribution,<sup>4</sup> although a comprehensive reconstruction and interpretation supported by all sets of available data is still missing.

In the early years of research it was thought that Hittite pottery was mostly characterised by the fine Red Slip Ware (**Figure 1.1**), but this type of production was restricted to few selected forms such as the famous beak spouted jugs and represents an older phenomenon of the Hittite pottery sequence. However, after the first publications of the pottery assemblages from different sites such as Boğazköy-Ḫattuša and Alaca Höyük it became evident that the so-called Plain Ware – often disparagingly denominated as ‘Drab’ Ware – was the dominant production of Hittite pottery (**Figure 1.2–14**). This led to another extreme interpretation that is commonly shared by scholars. Indeed, nowadays Hittite pottery is mostly seen as a Plain Ware wheel-made mass production, a definition that obviously does not match the more complex reality.<sup>5</sup> The existence of a wide set of painted pottery traditions found around the Hittite core is further evidence of the multifaceted and intricate situation that characterized the development of this Central Anatolian power and especially its relationships with the surrounding regions. But how can the appearance of these painted traditions be explained and how do they concretely interweave with the history and development of Hittite pottery and material culture?

<sup>1</sup> For the general characteristics of Hittite pottery see Mielke 2017; 2022.

<sup>2</sup> For the history of the Hittites see the comprehensive studies of Klengel 1999 and Bryce 2005.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Schachner 2011 (back cover); Bittel 1976, Fig. 344 with a more extended area.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Glatz 2009; Manuelli 2013, 399–423; Matessi 2017; Glatz 2021, 76–99.

<sup>5</sup> For the research history of Hittite pottery see Müller-Karpe 1988, 1–3; Mielke 2006, 13–23. For the dominance of Plain Ware in the Late Bronze Age see the contributions presented in the volume edited by C. Glatz (2015).



**Figure 1:** Late Bronze Age Hittite Red Slip and Plain Ware pottery, 16th to 13th century BC. 1) Red Slip beak spouted jug from İnandiktepe (after Özgüç 1988, Pl. E.2); 2-14) Plain Ware from Oymaağaç Höyük/Nerik (photos: Oymaağaç project/Henning Marquardt).

The studies presented in this book aim at providing some answers to these and further questions. The volume represents an assemblage of contributions written by scholars working at those Anatolian sites where remarkable amounts of painted pottery repertoires have been brought to light in association with the Late Bronze Age levels. Nevertheless, we make no claim at completeness and some relevant sites, e.g. Kilise Tepe, are not appropriately represented. It should be stressed that painted pottery has hardly been taken into account in previous studies conducted on this period. Indeed, painted assemblages have been usually considered exclusively in the framework of the Mycenaean or Aegean imports, and only in recent years have a substantial number of local painted repertoires been acknowledged and studied from some Anatolian Late Bronze Age sites.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, there has been no super-regional analysis and accurate comparison of these materials to date and many essential research questions have been left unanswered or are still neglected. For instance, are we dealing with different and independent local painted traditions or is there to any extent a common root? Can we connect the appearance of this trend to specific exchanges of ideas or movement of material and people?

<sup>6</sup> E.g. Yağci 2010; Manuelli 2013, 203–212; Dedeoğlu and Konakçı 2015; Ünlü 2015; Mielke 2016b, 42–52; Jean 2019–2020.



The main reason for this lack of interest probably relates to the fact that all these Late Bronze Age painted pottery assemblages are characterized by similarly simple and unsophisticated geometric red-brown coloured motives. This has made it seem that studying them would be rather monotonous and, on the other hand, it makes the definition of their chronological, historical and cultural framework rather puzzling. But as said, painted pottery is just one piece of a more complex cultural puzzle and to understand it we cannot ignore the context and events that characterized the development of the Hittites and other Anatolian societies as well as their ceramic cultures.

Therefore, the first question that we have to try to answer follows a more ‘centripetal’ perspective, i.e. why we do not have a painted pottery tradition during the Late Bronze Age in the core of the Hittite world? One fundamental problem in the assessment of Hittite pottery is the scarce consideration given to the fact that this pottery is the result of an ongoing process that took place over nearly 500 years of history. Despite the hotly debated question of a Hittite or Indo-European immigration to Asia Minor,<sup>7</sup> the development of Hittite material culture is an autochthonous phenomenon best characterised by the heading ‘from Anatolian to Hittite’.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to go little further and look at the foundations of the Hittite pottery. In doing so, we of course need to pay special attention to the painted ceramics attested in the earlier periods in North-Central Anatolia.

It must be stated that the main characteristics of pottery technology used by Hittite potters had been applied for several centuries before the Hittites entered the area.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the first pottery in Anatolia was produced around 7000 BC.<sup>10</sup> In the 6th millennium BC, the first painted decorations appeared, especially in the Lake district. In Central Anatolia, the northern part of which was first settled during the Chalcolithic period, smaller amounts of painted pottery are also attested from the few excavated sites such as Alişar Höyük, Alaca Höyük or Büyük Güllücek (**Figure 2.1–4**).<sup>11</sup> This Chalcolithic pottery is mainly decorated with geometric motifs applied by different methods of painting in combination with incisions. However, it cannot be ignored that nowadays there are still several unexplained aspects of the appearance of painted pottery tradition in North-Central Anatolia.

An increasing specialization in the field of pottery production can be seen from the end of the 4th millennium BC or the beginning of the Bronze Age when complex societies formed.<sup>12</sup> This is testified by the first appearance of up-draft pottery kilns with separate firing and pottery chambers in the Early Bronze Age (ca. 3100–2100 BC).<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, the later pottery kilns of the Hittite period, examples of which are known from Boğazköy-Ḫattuša, Kuşaklı-Şarišša and Eskiyaşar, show the same technological characteristics.<sup>14</sup> However, the most important technological aspect for our topic here is the introduction of the potter’s wheel, which appeared in Anatolia during the last quarter of the 3rd millennium BC, in the Early Bronze Age III period (ca. 2400–2100 BC). Yet it must be noted that this was only one of the last steps of a long and multifaceted process that took several centuries to be completed and was finalised only during the first half of the 2nd millennium BC, in the Middle Bronze Age.<sup>15</sup> The so-called Kārum period (ca. 2100–1700 BC), can be considered a peak moment in the development of pottery technology in Anatolia. In this period a dense network of supra-regional trading posts was established in proximity

<sup>7</sup> For this topic see Bryce 2005, 8–20; Collins 2007, 23–25.

<sup>8</sup> Mielke 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Mielke 2017, 121–125.

<sup>10</sup> Thissen 2007.

<sup>11</sup> See the short and now outdated overview provided by Orthmann 1963, 96–100. For the complex developments of the Neolithic and the Chalcolithic period see Düring 2011, 47–256 and Schoop 2005; 2011b.

<sup>12</sup> Düring 2011, 257–299.

<sup>13</sup> Mielke 2017, 125.

<sup>14</sup> For the Hittite pottery kilns see Mielke 2016a, 164–169.

<sup>15</sup> Mielke 2017, 122–123 with further references.



**Figure 2:** Chalcolithic pottery and Early Bronze Age Intermediate Ware. 1-2) Chalcolithic pottery from Büyük Güllücek (after Koşay and Akok 1957, Pl. XI); 3-4) Chalcolithic pottery from Alişar Höyük (after von der Osten 1937a, Pl. 2.2-3); 5-8) Intermediate Ware from Alişar Höyük (after von der Osten 1937a, Pl. 4.8-9, Fig. 233.c2264, Fig. 235.6). Not to scale.

to the most important Anatolian cities and an amazing and highly developed pottery production is observable. The high quality of this production is demonstrated by the use of different wares and their technological characteristics as well as the numerous associated vessel forms.<sup>16</sup> It is important to note that the pottery production of the Kārum period shows genuine Anatolian characteristics and is not influenced by Northern Mesopotamia, what could be expected. Moreover, it was of great importance for the cultural genesis of the Hittite ceramic tradition. Therefore, the most significant foundations of Hittite pottery had been set from the end of the Early Bronze Age to the following Middle Bronze Age. These considerations are also crucial for our topic, since after the first appearance in the Chalcolithic, geometric painted pottery seems to significantly gain importance during the Early and Middle Bronze Age in the sub-regions of Central Anatolia surrounded by the Kızılırmak river. However, the state of the research on these painted ceramics is still puzzling. Indeed, the painted pottery of the Early and Middle Bronze Age was first brought to light at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century AD, mainly through unprofessional diggings, so its correct chronological classification was unclear due to the lack of stratigraphic excavations.<sup>17</sup> Since this pottery was often found together with the so-called ‘Cappadocian tablets’, i.e. the cuneiform clay tablets of the Assyrian Colony/Kārum

<sup>16</sup> Emre 1963; Özgüç 2003, 142–232.

<sup>17</sup> Chantre 1898, 81–91, Pl. VIII–XIV. The material from the excavations of Chantre in Kültepe and of Grothe (1911) in Cappadocia was later published by H. de Genouillac (1926) and L. Curtius (1911) respectively. The best knowledge of this material at that time was actually presented by Myres 1903, 377–390; Frankfort 1927, 156–161; Meyer 1914, 52 and later by Bossert 1942, 41–43. For the early research history of this pottery see Bittel 1934, 13–14, 70–71, 109–111.



**Figure 3:** Early and Middle Bronze Age Cappadocian/Alışar III Ware from 1) Kültepe (after Özgüç 2003, Fig. 151–152); 2) Alışar Höyük (after von der Osten 1937a, Fig. 241.c226); 3) Kültepe (after Bittel 1934, Pl. VII.3); 4) Alışar Höyük (after von der Osten 1937a, Fig. 239.d2493); 5) Alışar Höyük (after von der Osten 1937a, Fig. 237.c801); 6) Alışar Höyük (after von der Osten 1937a, Pl. V). Not to scale.

period, it was similarly labelled as ‘Cappadocian (painted) pottery’ (**Figure 3**). The first overview of this production was given by Henri de Genouillac in 1926.<sup>18</sup> At that time, the painted pottery was associated with the ‘Hittites’ by many researchers, but this was due to the above-mentioned lack of stratigraphic excavations which led early scholars to assign the material culture of the Hittites only speculatively. Moreover, it was almost impossible during this time to distinguish the Bronze Age painted pottery from

<sup>18</sup> De Genouillac 1926.

that of the later Iron Age,<sup>19</sup> which was well-known since the early excavations in Gordion by Gustav and Alfred Körte.<sup>20</sup>

A first important step in assessing the Early Bronze Age painted pottery was the start of the excavations at Alişar Höyük in the province of Yozgat by a team of the Oriental Institute of Chicago under the direction of Hans Henning von der Osten and Erich Schmidt, between 1927 and 1932. The excavations provided the first stratigraphic information on this pottery; however they also contributed to creating new confusion, because the interpretation of the stratigraphy and the findings were changed several times by the excavators.<sup>21</sup> Much of the interpretation and above all the often inadequate contextual information, which are the result of a rather rough stratigraphic excavation, are problematic and the stratigraphy of Alişar Höyük is still nowadays controversially debated.<sup>22</sup> Since the painted pottery occurred mainly in period III of the site, the denomination 'Alişar III Ware' was quickly established by the scholarship, sometimes alongside the old 'Cappadocian Ware'. However, the excavations at Alişar Höyük allowed us to understand for the first time that the painted pottery was dated mainly to the Early Bronze Age and that this production was older than the plain and red slipped wheel-made pottery. Therefore, the painted Cappadocian/Alişar III Ware could no longer be associated with the Hittites.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, this ware was still associated with questions of ethnicity, mostly related to the potential migration of Indo-Europeans or early Hittites to Anatolia.<sup>24</sup> In this context, the painted pottery of the Early Bronze Age was often seen as an 'alien' phenomenon.<sup>25</sup> But the excavators of Alişar Höyük also detected an older group of the Cappadocian/Alişar III Ware which was called 'Intermediate Ware' (**Figure 2.5–8**), thus labelled because it was seen as a link between the so-called 'Copper Age' and Early Bronze Age layers of the site.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the excavations at Alişar Höyük, as well as those at Alaca Höyük, Büyük Güllücek and other sites, further demonstrated that the tradition of painted pottery in North-Central Anatolia started in the Middle Chalcolithic period (ca. 5500–4000 BC),<sup>27</sup> as it was summarised by Tahsin Özgüç in 1947.<sup>28</sup>

Both groups of the painted pottery, i.e. the Intermediate Ware (**Figure 2.5–8**) and the Cappadocian/Alişar III Ware (**Figure 3**), were generally handmade, although wheel-made examples are also known.<sup>29</sup> The fabric of the Cappadocian/Alişar III Ware is very coarse because it was tempered with high amounts of organic material. Therefore, the vessels have often thick profiles. In contrast, the Intermediate Ware shows more mineral temper and finer organic inclusions, which produced thinner vessel walls. A limited spectrum of cups, bowls, jugs and jars characterise both painted pottery groups but these shapes also occur undecorated. A rich variety of painted decorations, mostly geometric patterns such as triangles, zigzag bands and rhombus, often with a metope-shaped outline, can be observed on the Cappadocian/Alişar III Ware vessels. The Intermediate Ware has instead generally a simpler geometric pattern consisting mainly of thin lines. However, it should be stressed that the complex designs of the Cappadocian/Alişar III Ware were generally executed in wide stripes that do not really match the vessel body. Some examples of this ware are also decorated with floral ornaments.

<sup>19</sup> See Curtius 1911, CCLXXVII–CCLXXVIII.

<sup>20</sup> Körte and Körte 1904.

<sup>21</sup> The best overview of the pottery can be found in von der Osten 1937a, 230–258, which was intended as a sort of 'final report' of the excavations at Alişar Höyük (see von der Osten 1937a, vii).

<sup>22</sup> See Bertram and İlgezdi Bertram 2021, 28–50.

<sup>23</sup> Bittel 1934, 13–14.

<sup>24</sup> See the discussion by Özgüç and Özgüç 1953, 193 with further references and Bittel 1950, 50–51; Götze 1957, 43–44.

<sup>25</sup> See the discussion by Bittel 1934, 111 and Öktü 1973, 143–144.

<sup>26</sup> Von der Osten 1937a, 230–258; Nowadays, the 'Copper Age' is considered part of the Early Bronze Age (see Bertram and İlgezdi Bertram 2021, 41–48).

<sup>27</sup> Orthmann 1963, 96–100; Schoop 2005.

<sup>28</sup> Özgüç 1947, 317–323.

<sup>29</sup> For the technical features of these wares see von der Osten 1937a, 230–258; Öktü 1973; Omura 1991a, 146–149.

While the Intermediate Ware is dominated by red-brown colours, the Cappadocian/Alışar III Ware mainly shows black, dark/brown and sometimes also red or combined matt painting, generally set on a red or brown polished slip. In any case, it must be considered that the distinction between these two wares is sometimes not easy to recognize and in some publications they seem to have been assigned to one or the other across the board without any knowledge of the original definitions given by Hans Henning von der Osten.

The second important step in the history of research on the painted pottery of North-Central Anatolia is marked by the excavations in Kültepe-Kaneš conducted by the Turkish Historical Society under the direction of Tahsin Özgüç from 1948 onwards.<sup>30</sup> The excavations provided more details about the absolute dating of the Intermediate and Cappadocian/Alışar III Wares.<sup>31</sup> The Intermediate Ware was found on the mound level 12 and the Cappadocian/Alışar III Ware on the mound levels 11–8 and Kārum level IV to II. Therefore, both pottery groups must be dated to the Early Bronze Age III (ca. 2400–2100 BC). Moreover, a continuation of the Cappadocian/Alışar III Ware into the Middle Bronze Age (ca. 2100–1720 BC) became evident. In the earlier levels the percentage of painted pottery seems to be very high, while in the later ones it is very small.<sup>32</sup>

But the excavations at Kültepe have also confirmed the existence of another category of North-Central Anatolian painted pottery that was already known before, but only from isolated pieces and could not therefore be classified precisely.<sup>33</sup> This pottery (**Figure 4, 7.1**) comes mainly from the Kārum layers III-Ib which encompasses chronologically the entire Middle Bronze Age.<sup>34</sup> It seems to originate from the Cappadocian/Alışar III Ware, but in contrast it is mostly wheel-made and mineral tempered. The vessels were generally coated with a red polished slip, which often covers only their upper parts (**Figure 4.1–3**). Moreover, a whitish-cream coloured coating, which served as painting ground, was applied in bands, metopes or even covering the entire surface of the vessels (**Figure 4.4–7**). As for the Cappadocian/Alışar III Ware, geometric patterns were usually made in black, brown or red colours. Wavy lines are also frequent, which quickly led to the denomination ‘Wavy Line Pottery’.<sup>35</sup> Stylized water birds can also be found in combination with the above-mentioned motifs. However, it should be said that the designation Wavy Line Pottery is rather unfortunate because wavy lines do not always occur and they also characterize the Cappadocian/Alışar III Ware (**Figure 3.4**). In addition, this pottery was labelled by the excavators as ‘Hittite’ like all the wheel-made pottery from the Kārum,<sup>36</sup> but this definition is inappropriate, since the term should be applied only to the pottery of the Late Bronze Age.<sup>37</sup> According to an estimate of the excavators, this pottery represents 4–5% of the whole ceramic production. Together with the earlier painted pottery wares, the Wavy Line Pottery has a limited repertoire of forms that also occur in Plain Ware. Furthermore, this ware also evolved over time, as can be observed especially in the last phase of the Kārum Ib period, when the geometrical motifs and arrangements were more prominent.<sup>38</sup> The Wavy Line Pottery also occurred at other sites, such as Boğazköy,<sup>39</sup> but surprisingly, to date no overarching work on this pottery exists.

<sup>30</sup> Since 2006 the excavations are directed by Fikri Kulakoğlu from Ankara University.

<sup>31</sup> Özgüç 1950, 195–198; Özgüç and Özgüç 1953, 188–193; Emre 1963, 92–93, 95; Hrouda 1957, 31–33; Öktü 1973, 38–58 (Intermediate Ware); Emre 1989, 117–119; Omura 1991a, 9–54 (Cappadocian/Alışar III Ware); Ezer 2014, 11–16.

<sup>32</sup> Özgüç and Özgüç 1953, 188–189; Emre 1963, 87; 1989, 112, 119.

<sup>33</sup> E.g. Curtius 1911, CCLXXXIII, Taf. XVI, 1–2; Bittel 1936, 14, Abb. 6; Bossert 1942, 41, Nr. 388–403.

<sup>34</sup> Özgüç 1950, 190–195; Özgüç and Özgüç 1953, 182–188; Emre 1963, 90–91, 93–94; Hrouda 1957, 31–33.

<sup>35</sup> This designation probably goes back to Bossert 1942, 41 (cf. Özgüç and Özgüç 1953, 188).

<sup>36</sup> Özgüç and Özgüç 1953, 182; Emre 1963, 87; 1989.

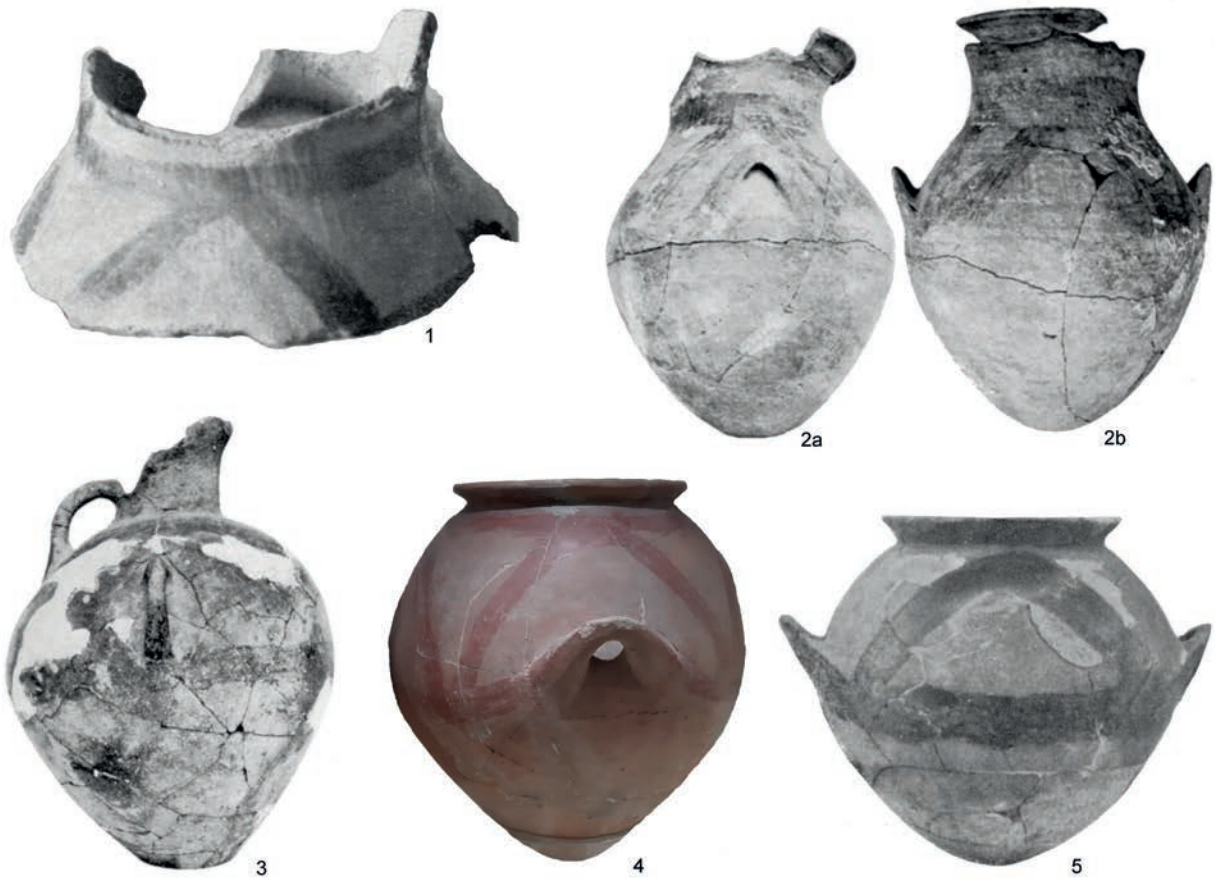
<sup>37</sup> Mielke 2022, 657.

<sup>38</sup> Emre 1963, 92–94.

<sup>39</sup> Fischer 1963, 132–133.



**Figure 4:** Middle Bronze Age Wavy Line Pottery from Kültepe. 1-3) Red slipped examples (after Özgüç 2003, Fig. 139 [layer Ib], Fig. 142 [layer II], Fig. 140 [layer Ib]); 4-7) White slipped examples (after Özgüç 2003, Fig. 185 [layer II], Fig. 150 [layer II], Fig. 122 [layer II], Fig. 123 [layer II]). Not to scale.



**Figure 5:** Middle Bronze Age band decorated pottery from 1) Kültepe (after Özgüç and Özgüç 1953, Fig. 347); 2) Alişar Höyük (von der Osten 1937b, Fig. 197); 3–5) Maşat Höyük (Özgüç 1982 Pl. 93,2, 51.1; colour photo: D.P. Mielke). Not to scale.

The Kültepe excavations brought to light another interesting painted pottery group characterized by band decorations. A single broken fragment of a big pot, the upper body of which was decorated with thick red/brown bands forming a zigzag motif, has been discovered from layer Ia of the Kārum period (Figure 5.1).<sup>40</sup> Complete vessels with similar decorations have also been excavated at Alişar Höyük (Figure 5.2),<sup>41</sup> while a huge number of such pots and jars came to light from the Kārum period layer V at Maşat Höyük (Figure 5.3–5).<sup>42</sup> Recently, a complete example has also been found in Boğazköy.<sup>43</sup> It should also be noted that from the Kārum level II and IV at Kültepe a few pieces of imported Syro-Cilician Ware have been found (Figure 6.1–4),<sup>44</sup> while the so-called Khabur Ware is reported from level Ib (Figure 6.5–7).<sup>45</sup>

In the course of the early years of the Turkish Republic, many archaeological studies allowed the new discovery of Early and Middle Bronze Age painted pottery, but the findings from Kültepe and Alişar Höyük were still predominant. The dissertation of Winfried Orthmann from 1963 presented the first overview of excavated and surveyed sites in Central Anatolia where Early Bronze Age painted pottery

<sup>40</sup> Özgüç and Özgüç 1953, 187, Fig. 347.

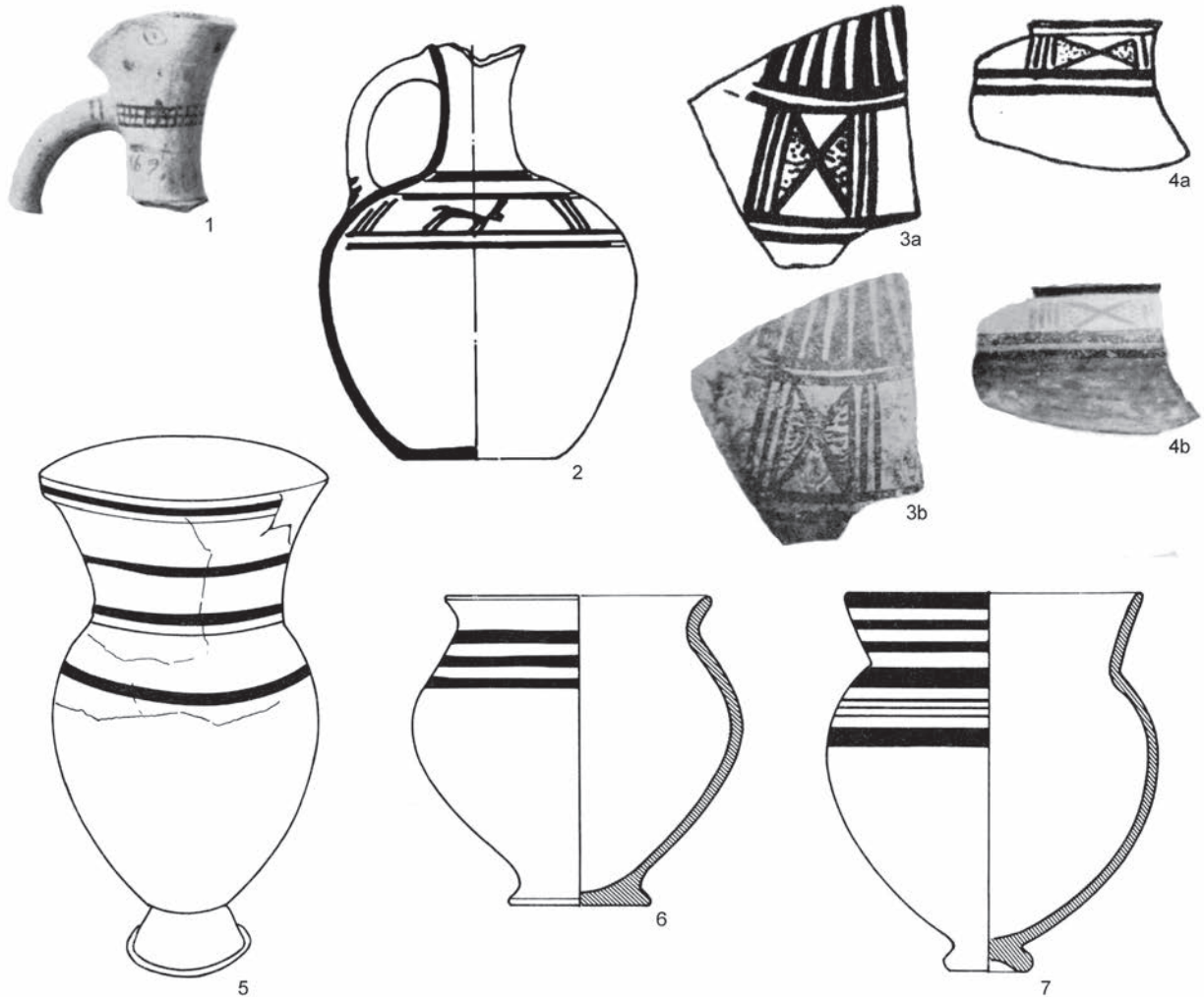
<sup>41</sup> Von der Osten 1937b, 138, Fig. 197.

<sup>42</sup> Özgüç 1982, 107–109, Fig. 61, 64, 68–69, 71, 75, 80, Pl. 51.1–2, 92.2, 93.2.

<sup>43</sup> Schachner 2012, Abb. 9.

<sup>44</sup> Özgüç 1950, 198–199, Pl. 60.327, 328, 341; Hrouda 1957, 31, Taf. 13.2; Özgüç 1955, 461, Pl. 29a–b.

<sup>45</sup> Özgüç 1953, 115–116, Abb. 17–18, 25–26; Emre 1963, 95, Pl. 25.1; Hrouda 1957, 31, Taf. 13.3–4; Özgüç 1986, 92–93, Pl. 134.3; Hrouda 1989, 205, Fig. 2; Oguchi 1998, 129; Bieniada 2009, 171–174; Kulakoğlu and Kangal 2010, Cat. n. 17–19.



**Figure 6:** Imported painted pottery from Kültepe. 1-4) Syro-Cilician Ware from layer IV and II (after Özgüç 1950, Pl. LX.341, 327, 328; Hrouda 1957, Pl. 13.2; Özgüç 1955, Fig. 29a.); 5-7) Khabur Ware from layer Ib (after Hrouda 1989, Fig. 2). Not to scale.

was found.<sup>46</sup> With this important presentation it became clear that pottery from North-Central Anatolia had a proper autochthonous development which started in the Late Chalcolithic and was characterized by many local and regional peculiarities. These regional and sub-regional diversities also affected the painted pottery. Unfortunately, the following study of painted wares in North-Central Anatolia is marked by overviews written as published or unpublished doctoral theses that are not always easily accessible. In 1973, Armağan Öktü published her PhD dissertation entitled 'Die Intermediate Keramik in Kleinasien'.<sup>47</sup> Some aspects of this work are problematic and not easily comprehensible, like the broad definition that also includes many pieces of the Cappadocian/Alişar III Ware and the division and descriptions of pottery variations, but the classification of the available findings provided the first overview about this painted pottery group. Furthermore, the author compared the Intermediate Ware with other painted ceramics groups like the Cappadocian/Alişar III Ware and the so-called 'Çiradere Ware'. The Çiradere Ware was identified 10 years before by Orthmann following a short-term survey conducted at the eponymous site in the vicinity of Boğazköy.<sup>48</sup> In any case the catalogue presented by

<sup>46</sup> Orthmann 1963.

<sup>47</sup> Öktü 1973.

<sup>48</sup> Orthmann 1963, 63.



Öktü shows the distribution of all known pieces, offering a useful overview of these wares.<sup>49</sup> Further local peculiarities that characterize the Early Bronze Age painted pottery in North-Central Anatolia have been shown by the investigations at Maltepe/Sivas,<sup>50</sup> where the painted pottery here discovered was sometimes considered as an independent ceramic group.<sup>51</sup>

However, the most important painted pottery group of the Early and Middle Bronze Age, i.e. the Cappadocian/Alışar III Ware, was never comprehensively approached until the study conducted in 1991 by Sachihiko Omura.<sup>52</sup> Unfortunately, this important PhD dissertation, with its extensive catalogue structured according to the find spots of this ware and detailed distribution maps, has not yet been published. In this study, Omura also included material from his own surveys conducted in Western-Central Anatolia, and the definition of another new local group of Early Bronze Age painted pottery, which was called ‘Delice Ware’.<sup>53</sup>

The interest shown by the scholarship in the study on the Early Bronze Age North-Central Anatolian painted pottery seems to decrease on the cusp of the new millennium, leaving many doubts still open and a generalized bewilderment about the topic. Nevertheless, some new work has been done in the last years, mainly within the framework of processing material from single excavations. In 2012, Tarık Emre in his master thesis treated the ‘Camihöyük Alışar III seramiği’, presenting next to the findings of the site an updated distribution of this ware.<sup>54</sup> Recently, another new group of Early Bronze Age painted pottery was defined in the region west of the Kızılırmak river by Jan-Krzysztof Bertram and Güçin İlgezdi Bertram.<sup>55</sup>

Finally, the PhD dissertation ‘Painted Ceramic Traditions and Rural Communities in Hittite Anatolia’ by Joshua Warren Cannon, defended in 2020 at the University of Chicago, also needs to be mentioned here.<sup>56</sup> Unfortunately, this work presents many scientific problems and it must be treated with full caution. For example, the author claims that the Cappadocian/Alışar III Ware was used by rural communities until the Late Bronze Age without supporting this result with any clear evidence. However, at least, the painted ceramics from Çadır Höyük are correctly presented in the study.

To sum up, in the current unsatisfying state of research it clearly appears that the painted pottery of the late Early and Middle Bronze Age in North-Central Anatolia represents a heterogeneous phenomenon that includes several categories of material and that urgently needs a fresh re-evaluation to dissolve old conceptions and out-of-date denominations.

But what happened after the end of the Kārum age? Following a short ‘dark’ period in the historical tradition the Hittite State developed during the 17th century BC, forming the first great state structure in Anatolia. However, as previously mentioned, the pottery production does not show any striking break in its development. The ceramics from the early Late Bronze Age, i.e. the Old Hittite period (ca. 1700–1400 BC), show strong connections to the wheel-made slipped and plain pottery of the Kārum age, especially visible in the occurrence of the fine Red Slip Ware. Moreover, few examples of painted decoration, which undoubtedly have their roots in the latest phase of the Kārum period, can be found. The most interesting piece in this respect is a pot with funnel-shaped neck from İnandiktepe (**Figure 7.2**).<sup>57</sup> Although most of

<sup>49</sup> Öktü 1973, 113–145, 233–258.

<sup>50</sup> Orthmann 1963, 52–54.

<sup>51</sup> Öktü 1973, 136.

<sup>52</sup> Omura 1991a.

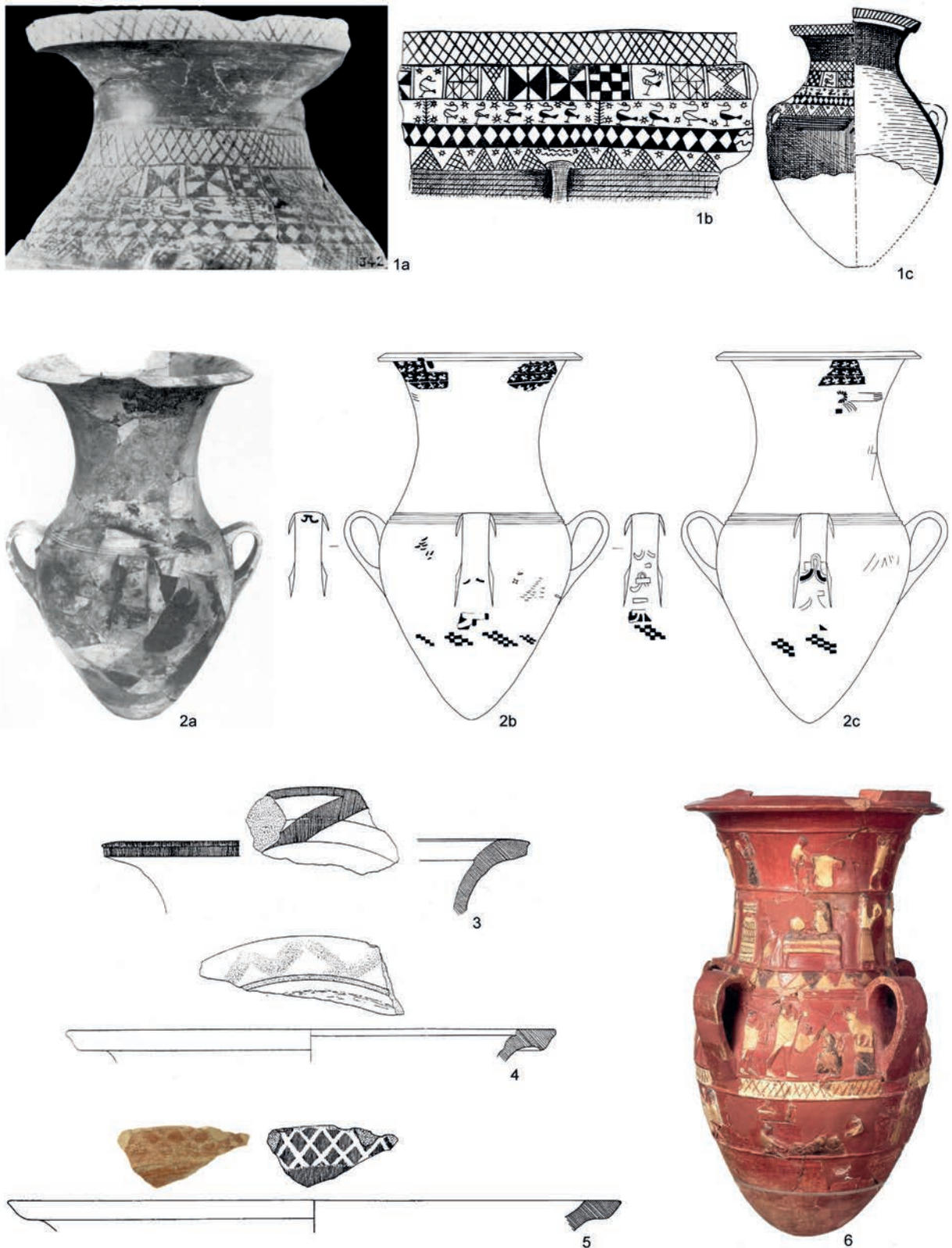
<sup>53</sup> Omura 1991b.

<sup>54</sup> Emre 2012.

<sup>55</sup> Bertram and İlgezdi Bertram 2020.

<sup>56</sup> Cannon 2020.

<sup>57</sup> Özgüç 1988, 83–84, Fig. 25–26, Pl. 35, Ia–b.



**Figure 7:** Hittite painted pottery. 1) Kültepe layer Ib (after Özgüç and Özgüç 1963, Pl. XLIII.342, Pl. LI.469); 2) İnandıktepe (after Özgüç 1988, Pl. 35.1a, Fig. 25-26); 3-5) Boğazköy-Ḫattuša (after Fischer 1963, Taf. 15.159, Taf. 17.213, Taf. 14.154, colour photo: Boğazköy-Excavation); 6) İnandıktepe (after Schoop 2013, Fig. 11). Not to scale.

the paint disappeared, a vessel with a complete decoration characterized by floral motifs, chequerboard patterns, a winged sun disk, arch signs and possible figurative elements can be identified. Few fragments of funnel-shaped neck pot with painted decoration, probably dated to the Late Bronze Age, are also known from Boğazköy-Hattuša (**Figure 7.3–5**).<sup>58</sup> The shape of the above-mentioned İnanlıktepe vessel is closely comparable to the famous relief vases,<sup>59</sup> whereof one of the most well-known examples comes from İnanlıktepe itself. The vase dates to the Old Hittite period and shows a painted decoration between relief friezes and moulded figures (**Figure 7.6**).<sup>60</sup> It is important to note that the funnel-shaped neck vessel had a special function within the Hittite pottery repertoire, since not only the painted examples just mentioned belong to this type but also some of the most special decorated specimens of the Hittite period, like the so-called ‘tower or battlement vases’.<sup>61</sup> As said, this vessel form with special decoration as well as function started during the Kārum period (**Figure 4.1, 7.1**) with forerunners in the Early Bronze Age (**Figure 3.1**). At this point it is essential to note that the few vessels from İnanlıktepe and Boğazköy-Hattuša just mentioned represent the only clear examples of Hittite painted pottery, marking a break in the long tradition of painted decoration in North-Central Anatolia.<sup>62</sup>

A substantial change in pottery production can be observed at the end of the Old Hittite period, with a decrease in the shape variability and ware quality. Indeed, from now on the Plain Ware becomes completely dominant. In this process, which continued with further developments until the end of the Hittite Empire at the very beginning of the 12th century BC, earlier shapes slowly disappear and a repertoire of homogeneous wares and forms increases standardization over time.<sup>63</sup> In this framework, the pots with funnel-shaped neck, which, as said, represent the only examples of Hittite painted pottery, also lost their special function. The background of this development can be seen in the specific socio-political structures of the Hittite State and its society, since during the Late Bronze Age material culture was strongly entangled within the specific social and political conditions of the Hittite world, marking implications also related to the production and consumption of pottery.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, the development of the Hittite pottery repertoire reflects specific centralized economic and social needs in which painted decoration obviously did not play any significant role, to the contrary of what happened in other regions. This connection between state, its economy, its social structure and material culture led to a quick disappearance of the Hittite pottery tradition after the collapse of the empire at the end of the Bronze Age.<sup>65</sup> In this respect, it is very interesting to note that during the Early Iron Age geometric painted pottery appears once again in North-Central Anatolia, following a pattern clearly related to the previous traditions of the late Early and Middle Bronze Age.<sup>66</sup> But this, of course, implies that these painted traditions have been preserved somehow over time, probably in rural peripheral regions where the Hittite influence was not so dominant.<sup>67</sup>

This last piece of evidence allows us to bring the subject back to our main topic. Indeed, each of the contributions included in this volume show that the painted pottery traditions that emerged at the margins of the Hittite State hardly came out of the blue during the Late Bronze Age, rather they always represented the development of previously known Middle Bronze or even Early Bronze Age heritages. But the exact process that led to each single tradition is of course difficult to track. So, are these wares

<sup>58</sup> Fischer 1963, no. 154 (Büyükkale, unter Schicht III), 159 (Büyükkale, unter Schicht III), 213 (Büyükkaya).

<sup>59</sup> See Mielke 2017, 125–126 with further references.

<sup>60</sup> Özgüç 1988, 84–106, Fig. 27, 64–65, Pl. F–K, Pl. 36–58.

<sup>61</sup> See Mielke 2022, 673–676 and Fig. 13.6.

<sup>62</sup> In the still dominant publication of Franz Fischer (1963, 32–34), more painted pottery assigned to the Late Bronze Age can be found. But most of them should be now definitively dated to the Early Iron Age or connected to the Late Bronze Age Geometric Painted Pottery of the Central Black Sea region (see the contribution of D.P. Mielke in this volume).

<sup>63</sup> For the development of the Hittite pottery production see Schoop 2011a; Mielke 2017; 2022.

<sup>64</sup> See Mielke 2016a; 2022.

<sup>65</sup> Summers 2017, 257–258, 267–268 with further references.

<sup>66</sup> Seeher 2010. See also the detailed discussion presented in this volume in the contribution by D.P. Mielke.

<sup>67</sup> Seeher 2010 with further references.



**Figure 8:** Painted pottery traditions at the margins of the Hittite State. Pottery regions, mains sites presented in this volume and further comparisons (map: D.P. Mielke).

the consequence of local continuities, the re-emergence of old traditions, or the result of more complex mutual influences and trajectories of cultural development?

In order to appropriately deal with these topics and all the above-mentioned problematics, the articles presented in the book follow two main perspectives. Chronologically, they aim at identifying what characterizes each single site or region before and after the appearance of the Late Bronze Age painted pottery phenomenon, while geographically they intend to recognize cultural borders as well as potential contacts and interactions. Indeed, each contribution presents a detailed analysis of the local painted pottery repertoire from a distinctive site belonging to a specific region. Pottery decorations, associated forms, fabrics, and main contexts of discovery are analysed. Moreover, wider regional and extra-regional connections are highlighted so as to pursue chronological, geo-political and historical aspects. Complementary multi-disciplinary approaches involving archaeometrical analyses are also adopted for evaluating the relationships and possible origins of the painted productions in the Early or the Middle Bronze Age as well as aspects of continuity or discontinuity into the Iron Age.

The book takes into consideration the Late Bronze Age painted pottery traditions of six main regions (**Figure 8**). The first two articles are devoted to the situation of the Central Black Sea area and specifically the site of Oymağaç Höyük (by Dirk Paul Mielke / Mustafa Kibaroglu, Sonja Behrendt, Tillmann Viefhhaus and Dirk Paul Mielke) and the connections between the Hittites and the so-called ‘Kaška’ peoples. The painted pottery tradition of South-Western Anatolia and its connections with the Aegean world is the topic of the paper by Fulya Dedeoğlu and Erim Konakçı, mostly dedicated to the analysis

Ware Groups	Wares' Definition	Site	LBA Chronology	Potential Distribution	Possible Origin	Further Contacts
Geometric Wares	Late Bronze Geometric Ware	Alalakh	Period 6-1	Amuq	Syro-Cilician and Khabur wares	Jezirah
	Geometric Painting	Arslantepe	LBA I-LBA II	Upper Euphrates	Syro-Cilician and Khabur wares	Cilicia, Jezirah
	Local Painted Pottery	Beycesultan	Level Ib/5a-4/1a	Upper Meander Basin		Mycenaean Coastal Anatolia, Cilicia
	Geometric Painted Pottery	Oymaağaç Höyük	LBA	Central Black Sea Region	Central Black Sea Region, North-Central Anatolia	North-Central Anatolia
Cross-Hatched Wares	Hatched-decorated pottery	Ovaören	Hittite Imperial Period	Cilicia, South-Central Anatolia	Cilician Cross-hatched Ware	
	Cross-hatched Ware	Sirkeli Höyük	LBA II	Western Cilicia		
	Cilician Painted Ware	Tarsus	LBA IIb	Western Cilicia		
	Cross-Hatched Red Painted Pottery	Yumuktepe	LBA II	Western Cilicia	LBA Cilician Red Painted pottery	
Wavy-Line Wares	Monochrome or Bichrome Painted Wavy-line Ware	Sirkeli	LBA I-LBA II			
		Tarsus	LBA I-LBA II	Cilicia		
Syro-Cilician Wares	Syro-Cilician Ware	Alalakh	Period 7-6	Cilicia, Amuq	Alalakh 16-8	
	Syro-Cilician Painted Ware	Porsuk	LBA I	Cilicia, Amuq, South-Central Anatolia	MBA Syro-Cilician region	
		Sirkeli Höyük	LBA I	Cilicia, Amuq	MBA Syro-Cilician region	
Red Band Wares	Banded Ware	Alalakh	Period 6-1	Cilicia, Amuq	MBA Khabur	Jezirah
	Red Slip Ware					
	Decorative slip	Arslantepe	Period VB-IV	Upper Euphrates, Cilicia	MBA South-Central Anatolia	Jezirah
	Red band plates, bowls and jars	Ovaören	Hittite Imperial Period			
	Red Slip Ware	Sirkeli Höyük	LBA I-LBA II	Cilicia	MBA South-Central Anatolia	Syro-Mesopotamian Region
	Red-edged Ware					
	Red-banded Ware					
	Red Slip Ware					
	Bowls with band decorated rims	Tarsus	LBA I-LBA IIb			
Red Band Decorated Pottery	Tepebağ	LBA II	Cilicia	MBA South-Central Anatolia	Jezirah, North-Central Anatolia	
Other Wares	Local Nuzi Ware	Alalakh	Period 4-1	Alalakh	Mitannian-Khabur region	Minoan world
	Drip marks	Arslantepe	LBA I	Arslantepe		Upper Tigris

**Table 1:** Late Bronze Age painted pottery. Ware groups definition, chronology, distribution, origin and spread (for correspondences between the chronological abbreviations used in the table and the absolute dating see the single contributions in the volume).

of material from Beycesultan. The situation of South-Central Anatolia and the Cappadocian region is described in two articles presenting material from Ovaören (S. Yücel Şenyurt and Atakan Akçay) and Porsuk (Alvise Matessi) which emphasize fascinating connections between the proper Hittite core and the southern territories. The Cilicia plain reveals itself as a very fruitful region within the topic; the four articles by Éric Jean (Yumuktepe), Elif Ünlü (Tarsus), Deniz Yaşın and Belgin Aksoy (Tepebağ) and Ekin Kozal (Sirkeli Höyük) show the manifold ways in which the local traditions, the Hittite influence and the Levantine cultural sphere interweave. The following two contributions illustrate the situation of the Upper Euphrates area and especially the role played by the site of Arslantepe (Federico Manuelli / Pamela Fragnoli and Alexandra Rodler) within a complex pattern of multidirectional interactions. Lastly, the importance of the Northern Levant, as a crossroad between several cultural worlds and systems, is shown through materials coming from Alalakh (Mara T. Horowitz). In a concluding section, Hermann Genz and Geoffrey Summers offer some final remarks concerning aspects of regionalism and community associated to this topic and more in-depth considerations about the historical significance related to the lack of painted traditions in Hittite North-Central Anatolia.

Putting the contributions for this book together it clearly appears that, despite the existence of cultural and geographical borders, some of the above-mentioned regions are deeply interrelated. Indeed, the painted pottery treated in these articles can be gathered into six main ware groups which show both elements of local development as well as extra-regional relationships (**Table 1**). The ‘Geometric Wares’ group does not represent a proper coherent category, but rather an assemblage of wares that are characterized by similar patterns that do not share specific common roots, as is especially evident for the Geometric Painted Pottery of Oymaağaç Höyük and the Local Painted Pottery of Beycesultan, which are strictly related to the Central Black Sea and the Coastal Anatolian traditions respectively. However, some affinities can be seen in the Geometric Painting of Arslantepe and the Geometric Ware of Alalakh, which both show potential developments from the Middle Bronze Age traditions of the Syro-Cilician Wares and the Khabur Ware, rather than possible contacts with the Cilician Wavy-Line Wares. The ‘Cross-Hatched Wares’ group represents in contrast a consistent collection that originated and spread during the Late Bronze Age and up to the transition to the Iron Age in Western Cilicia only, with some sporadic connections with South-Central Anatolia. Similarly, the ‘Wavy-Line Wares’ group appears to be a regional phenomenon restricted to Late Bronze Age Cilicia, although influences and mutual contacts with the Geometric Wares of the Upper Euphrates and Northern Syria cannot be excluded. In contrast, the Wavy Line pottery of the Kārum period of North-Central Anatolia (**Figure 4**) is a completely different phenomenon. The ‘Syro-Cilician Wares’ group coherently developed from the Middle Bronze Age traditions of Northern Syria and Cilicia, showing a wide range of contacts and influences that reach South-Central Anatolia and the Upper Euphrates. Definitely more heterogeneous is the ‘Red Band Wares’ group, which includes great varieties of wares, whereof the distinction between proper band painted decorations and decorative coloured slips is of course not always definable. However, the wares gathered in this group, which mostly spread in Cilicia but are also attested north of the Taurus mountains in Cappadocia or along the Upper Euphrates river, most probably originated from the Middle Bronze Age tradition of South-Central Anatolia, although fascinating contacts with the Syro-Mesopotamian world are also plausible. Lastly, the category ‘Other Wares’ includes local examples of Nuzi Ware from Alalakh and Drip Marks from Arslantepe that emphasize contacts with the Khabur and Upper Tigris regions, respectively.

It is therefore interesting to stress that while the painted pottery traditions of South-Western Anatolia and the Central Black Sea region mostly show two independent and isolated regional developments in the current state of research, the areas eastwards and (mostly) southwards of the Hittite core unveil instead a manifold system of interrelations. The Red Slip Ware of Middle Bronze Age South-Central Anatolia, which was well-attested in the Hittite motherland at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, seems to

spread with its variations to Cilicia through South-Central Anatolia itself in the exact moment when its popularity decreases within the Hittite world. In this respect, the findings of Ovaören on a unique band decoration on Hittite pottery forms are of particular interest. The continuity of the connections that have linked South-Central Anatolia to Cilicia as well as to the Amuq in the Middle Bronze Age through the development of Syro-Cilician Wares, which seems to have reached, to a lesser extent, also the Upper Euphrates, is shown during the Late Bronze Age by the spread in these regions of the Red Band Wares, although connections with Northern Mesopotamia cannot be excluded. Moreover, further relationships between South-Central Anatolia and Cilicia are also emphasized by the presence of Cross-Hatched Wares as well as by the very fascinating cases, in both regions, of typical Hittite shapes with painted decorations, a phenomenon which, as said, is completely unknown to the Hittite motherland.

In the following pages the detailed data from which these observations originated from are presented in great detail. The intent is to break through the boundaries usually imposed by the study of the 2nd millennium BC pottery production in Anatolia and to reconstruct a comprehensive scenario concerning the appearance, evolution and related historical meanings of the Late Bronze Age painted pottery traditions at the margin of the Hittite State.

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