

## Painted Pottery Decorative Patterns in the North-Eastern Anatolian Plateau during the Late Iron Age (8<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> century BC to 330 BC)\*

Vēlā dzelzs laikmeta apgleznotās keramikas dekoratīvie motīvi  
Anatolijas ziemeļaustrumu augstienē (8.–7. gs. p. m. ē. līdz 330. g. p. m. ē.)

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**Anete Korbi**, *Mg. archaeol.*

Researcher at the Document Publications and Promotion Department  
of the National Archives of Latvia  
Slokas iela 16, LV-1048, Rīga, Latvia  
E-mail: anete.korbi@kultura.lv

The article offers a brief overview of the painted pottery decorative patterns on the north-eastern Anatolian plateau during the Late Iron Age. In this study, the author has examined painted pottery sherds of nine archaeological sites: Boğazköy, Alaca Höyük, Alişar Höyük, Çadır Höyük, Kerkenes Dağ, Uşaklı Höyük, Maşat Höyük, Kuşaklı-Sarissa, Kaman-Kalehöyük. The total amount of painted pottery sherds examined is 344. Based on the evidence of the decorative painted patterns on the ceramic vessels dated to the Late Iron Age, the author has investigated the frequency and distribution of decorative types among the archaeological sites.

**Keywords:** painted pottery production, pottery analysis, Late Iron Age, Central Anatolia, north-eastern Anatolian plateau.

Raksts sniedz īsu pārskatu par apgleznotās keramikas dekorācijām, kas sastopami Anatolijas ziemeļaustrumu augstienē vēlajā dzelzs laikmetā. Šajā pētījumā autore ir analizējusi apgleznotās keramikas traukus un trauku lauskas no deviņām arheoloģisko izrakumu vietām: *Boğazköy, Alaca Höyük, Alişar Höyük, Çadır Höyük, Kerkenes Dağ, Uşaklı Höyük, Maşat Höyük, Kuşaklı-Sarissa, Kaman-Kalehöyük*. Kopumā aplūkoti 344 keramikas fragmenti. Analizējot apgleznotās keramikas dekoratīvos rakstus, kas datēti ar

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vēlo dzelzs laikmetu, autore ir izpētījusi dekoratīvo rakstu izplatību un sastopamību minētās arheoloģisko izrakumu vietās.

**Atslēgvārdi:** apgleznotā keramika, keramikas analīze, vēlais dzelzs laikmets, Centrālā Anatólija, Anatólijas ziemeļaustrumu augstiene.

## Introduction

The aim of this article is to clarify the degree of homogeneity of the Late Iron Age painted pottery production in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau<sup>1</sup> based on the evidence of decorative elements. Consequently, for this study, the examined painted pottery material originates in nine most significant and extensively excavated archaeological sites situated in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau – Boğazköy, Alaça Höyük, Alişar Höyük, Çadır Höyük, Kerkenes Dağ, Uşaklı Höyük, Maşat Höyük, Kuşaklı-Sarissa, Kaman-Kalehöyük – that have left archaeological evidence of settlements dating back to the Late Iron Age, which began between the eighth and seventh centuries BC and ended around 330 BC.<sup>2</sup>

The main part of this research consisted of providing an accurate analysis of decorative types on ceramic dating to the Late Iron Age, classifying the decorative elements, and elaborating a typology. To obtain better results, it was necessary to describe the technical aspects of all ceramic materials considered. The information required to conduct an analysis of all painted pottery vessels and fragments that have been published and linked to the archaeological site and contexts of interest was gathered in a single database.

The data acquired in the database for each painted pottery sherd included the following:

a) painted ceramic class (monochrome, bichrome, polychrome); b) general pottery morphology, that has been reported when

recognizable; c) technique of production of the ceramic vessel; d) generic colour of slip and decorative painting; e) indication of location on the vessel of the coat and the painting; f) treatment of the outer and inner surface which refers to the methods of surface processing (burnishing, smoothing, polishing); g) appearance of the painted decoration (matte or glossy); h) classified decorative element or description of a figural decorative motif.

After comparing the information in the collected data, the author was able to outline significant results regarding the surface treatment, the use of slip, the frequency of painted ceramic classes, the colour tones of painted decorations, and slip. The further examination considered the following characteristics: the frequency and distribution of decorative types amongst archaeological sites, the recurrence of decorative motifs in relation to vessel morphology, and variations of decorative patterns during the Late Iron Age. Afterwards, it was possible to formulate some thoughts regarding the degree of specialization of painted pottery production.

During the first systematic archaeological research in Anatolia, in the first half of the last century, the ceramic material was decidedly neglected, as the monumental architectural remains and other archaeological finds were considered to be of a greater value. The systematic registration of ceramic material began more recently, and even today there is no standardized system for cataloguing, which makes the comparison extremely challenging. In addition, publications are often restricted to selections of ceramic material and lack detailed descriptions.

The geographical distribution of decorative elements or a specified decorative style can aid in the formation of hypotheses concerning regional contacts and interactions among people in certain regions or

microregions. Central Anatolia is characterized by microregional cultural variation, which limits the dating of local sequences based on pottery manufacture to cultural regions. The analysis of pottery production can improve the understanding of a more precise chronological framework.<sup>3</sup> The study of ceramics and comparisons of ceramic materials from various archaeological sites may provide an insight into the evolution of traditions in the Central Anatolian region.<sup>4</sup>

## Geographical framework

Central Anatolia largely corresponds to the Anatolian plateau, which is an extensive territory defined by a series of mountain chains: the Pontic Mountains to the north and the Taurus Mountains to the south. The Central Anatolia region is characterized by vast reservoirs, such as the Great Salt Lake (Tuz Gölü) and the Konya basin (Fig. 1).

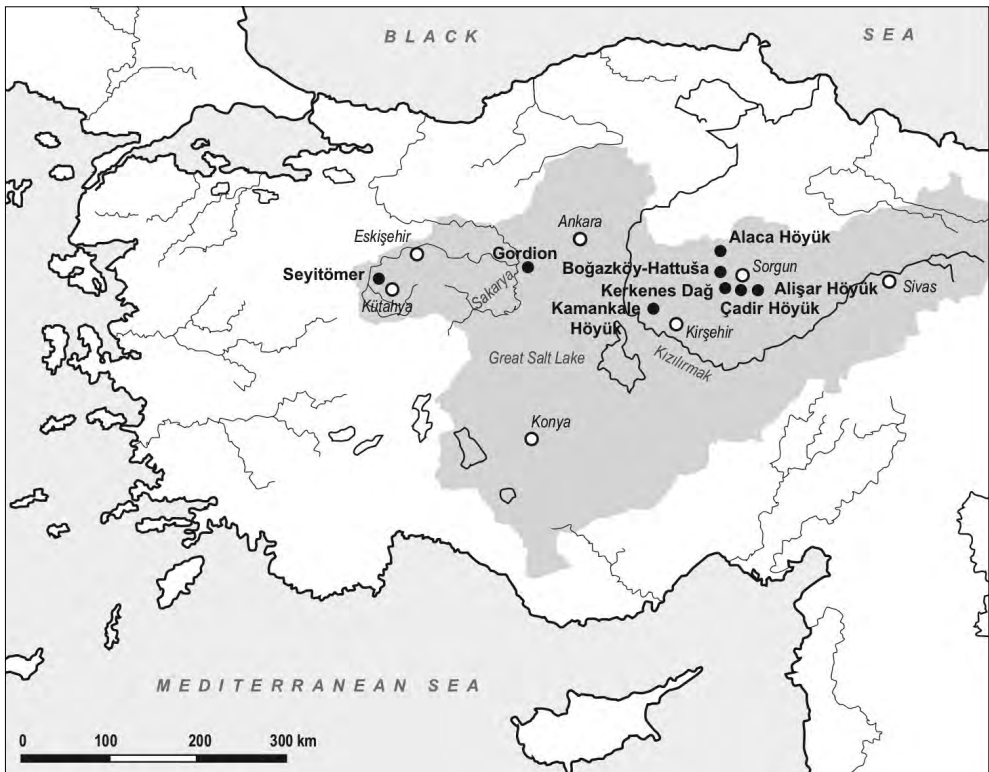


Fig. 1. Map of Anatolia showing the central Anatolian plateau and topography, geographic characteristics, and archaeological sites mentioned in the text: Boğazköy, Alaca Höyük, Alişar Höyük, Çadır Höyük, Kerkenes Dağ, Kaman-Kalehöyük. Uşaklı Höyük, Maşat Höyük, Kuşaklı-Sarıssa are situated on the north-east of the band of the river Kızılırmak. Kutahya, Ankara, Sivas, and Konya are modern cities that defined the boundaries of Central Anatolia.

Figure originally published in: LISA KEALHOFER, PETER GRAVE. The Iron Age on the Central Anatolian Plateau. In: SHARON R. STEADMAN, GREGORY MCMAHON. *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Anatolia (10,000–323 BCE)*. Oxford 2011, pp. 415–442, here, Fig. 18.1.

The Kızılırmak River – the Halys River of the classical age – distinguishes the area of Cappadocia flowing into the Black Sea, as well as the Sakarya River that crosses the entire western part of the Anatolian plateau. The area's topography varies between 600 and 1,200 metres above the sea level. It is characterized by semi-arid climate and poor soil fertility.

The territory of Central Anatolia is defined by the modern provinces of Kutahya to the west, Ankara to the northwest, Sivas to the east, and Konya to the south.<sup>5</sup>

During the Iron Age, the western part of Central Anatolia was occupied by Phrygia. The Phrygian area geographically extends over a mainly mountainous territory that includes the modern provinces of Eskişehir, Kütaya, and Afyon Karahisar,<sup>6</sup> while the north-eastern Anatolian plateau, roughly delineated by the course of the Kızılırmak River, was historically bordered by the Phrygian state to the west and northwest, the Urartian Empire to the east, and the late Hittite principality of Tabal to the south.<sup>7</sup>

## Chronological framework

Conventionally, the Iron Age is divided into three periods: Early, Middle, and Late. The periodization of the Iron Age is based on the correlation of absolute chronology (based on radiocarbon studies and dendrochronology) and relative chronology. Although just a few dates from the absolute chronology of the Iron Age in Central Anatolia are available, the various dating methods sometimes are at odds, making the overall picture unclear.<sup>8</sup> Another issue concerning chronology is the difficulty in connecting the relative sequences of the numerous Anatolian plateau sites, presenting a challenge to determining the beginning and the end of the three Iron Age stages.<sup>9</sup>

The Iron Age began following the collapse of the Hittite Empire shortly after 1200 BC. Aside from the different dating schemes that commonly emerge in publications, exposing considerable divergences among scholars, the date of 330 BC, corresponding to Alexander the Great's victory, is generally accepted as the end of the Iron Age. The process of Hellenization in Central Anatolia differs by region, and it had a complicated and very gradual development. Therefore, even if it may appear arbitrary in other circumstances, this date is used to establish a general historical frame.<sup>10</sup>

It is generally accepted among researchers that the Late Iron Age began between the eighth and seventh centuries BC and ended around 330 BC.<sup>11</sup> Clarifying a regional chronological framework could improve the understanding of the dynamics of the Iron Age. The result of recent archaeological investigations has often altered previous interpretations and relationships in terms of stratigraphic sequences between sites. These findings reveal a rather complex picture.<sup>12</sup> It is important to emphasize that in Central Anatolia, the Iron Age lacks a cohesive chronological sequence.<sup>13</sup>

There are only few archaeological sites that have yielded extended sequences of settlement dating back to the Iron Age. The most important sites for this period are Gordion and Boğazköy, which revealed a nearly 900-year uninterrupted sequence of habitation, including the duration of the Iron Age.

## 1. Pottery analysis

Cultural or historical classification, ornamental analysis, and technological analysis are among the key aspects of the archaeological study of ceramic materials. The study of ornamental motifs, variations, and recurrences in pottery is

the foundation of decorative analysis. The technological analysis instead aims to investigate every step of ceramic production, from clay preparation to surface treatments. It is possible to determine the degree of specialization of ceramic production by investigating these aspects.<sup>14</sup>

Archaeological dating is based on grouping pottery materials according to traits that identify a particular cultural group or a certain period of time.<sup>15</sup> Although a comparative analysis can be useful to draw a general picture of the variation and distribution of decorative motifs present in the geographical area under consideration and dated to the Late Iron Age, there are a few factors to consider. Pottery production can have different developments depending on the geographical area and can also vary from site to site. As a result, one must consider a margin of doubt in chronological terms. For instance, the same decorative type found on ceramics in different sites does not necessarily have the same dating.<sup>16</sup>

Small ceramic pieces provide limited information when examining the ceramic material, because they are only a portion of the vessel. The published ceramic material frequently only includes a representative synthesis of the ceramic assembly discovered and only a sample of ceramic artifacts. For this reason, the attribution of a ceramic class, as well as the statistical comparison of specific ceramic decorative types may not accurately reflect the actual situation.<sup>17</sup>

Large samples of the published painted ceramic material from the Late Iron Age are available from the sites of Boğazköy (147 fragments), Alishar Höyük (76 fragments), Kuşaklı-Sarissa (28 fragments), and Kaman-Kale Höyük (23 fragments). Few pottery samples from the Late Iron Age have been selected by the author and catalogued for the site of Uşaklı Höyük (4 fragments),<sup>18</sup> since the dating of the ceramic material

is still ongoing.<sup>19</sup> The published ceramic material from archaeological sites such as Alaca Höyük (23 fragments), Çadir Höyük (10 fragments), Maşat Höyük (13 fragments), and Kerkenes Dağ (20 fragments) only contains a representative selection of the ceramic assemblage identified. The total amount of painted pottery sherds examined is 344.

### **1.1. Surface treatment**

Surface treatment is one of the technological aspects of ceramic production to be investigated to determine the degree of specialization of ceramic production. When the clay is still wet, partially dried, or dried, certain treatments that change the features of the pot surface are applied.<sup>20</sup> In the region of study, the most common techniques of vessel surface treatment are smoothing, burnishing, and polishing.<sup>21</sup>

Generally, the first term indicates the regularization of the surface of the pot to provide a more regular and finer surface than that of natural formation. A soft, yielding object, such as a piece of cloth, a piece of leather, a handful of grass, or the potter's hand, is typically used for smoothing. The final surface of the vessel, after smoothing, has a homogeneous and smooth appearance.

Burnishing means that the surface is finished by rubbing back and forth with a smooth, hard tool. Since the application of a hard tool to the surface of the vessel creates a typical striped effect and can cover the entire pot or just a portion of it, burnishing is frequently a partial treatment of the surface.

Polishing is an intensive treatment of the entire surface of the pot, giving it a uniform lustre. A polished surface differs from a smoothed surface in terms of execution. Polishing is done on a dry surface, which gives the surface an extremely fine appearance.<sup>22</sup>

Unfortunately, this technological aspect has not always been reported in publications. However, it would seem that most of the painted ceramic fragments of the Late Iron Age are smoothed; more rarely, they are polished; and a small part of the painted ceramic material has been burnished.

A further surface treatment is the use of a slip. A slip is a suspension of clay (and possibly other substances) in water that is applied to a container prior to firing.<sup>23</sup> Slips are typically of a different colour than the vessel's body, and if they are distinctively coloured, they may be applied for decorative purposes. The slip can be applied to the vessel by immersing it in the mixture, by means of a cloth, with the hand, or using a brush. The slip is generally used for decorative purposes, but it can also be used for practical reasons, since it can make the surface waterproof. This can vary in colour. Generally, it is

light in colour, but it can also be dark in shade and can vary in consistency, thus resulting in it being thicker or thinner, glossy or less glossy, and almost opaque.<sup>24</sup>

The collected data demonstrates the use of slip on 51% of the painted ceramic material. The most frequently encountered is the light slip (36%), which varies in shades from white to light yellowish white and chamois colour (buff). The red slip (14%), characterized by a dark reddish-brown and a purple red hue, is less frequently seen and almost always appears on containers where the light slip is present. Only 1% of all the catalogued material is characterized by a slip of dark shades without the presence of the light slip on the same ceramic fragment (Fig. 2).

### 1.2. Appearance of painted decorative elements

The term "painting" refers to the process of applying pigments to the surface of clay pots. The colour can be applied with a brush made of animal hair, plant fibres, or feathers.<sup>25</sup>

Late Iron Age ceramic painting colours range from black, greyish black, dark brown, reddish brown, dark reddish-brown, red, purple red, and white. The most frequently observed is a painting of dark brown and reddish-brown colours, followed by black and dark grey. The white colour has been documented only on two ceramic fragments. The painted ceramic production is mainly monochrome, which represents about two-thirds of all the ceramic material catalogued. One-third is represented by the bichrome ceramic class, and only a few examples have been classified as polychrome.

The appearance of the paint would seem predominantly opaque (32%), compared to 18% of glossy paint. However, this feature has not been documented for 50% of all catalogued material.

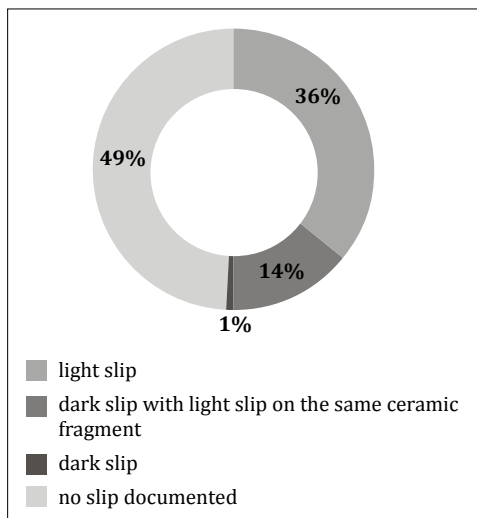


Fig. 2. Percentage distribution of the slip usage on the Late Iron Age painted ceramic vessels in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau: 36% light slip, 14% dark slip with light slip, 1% dark slip, and 49% of the fragments have no slip documented.

## 2. Research results

### 2.1. Distribution of decorative motifs in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau

#### 2.1.1. Geometric decorations

The whole region of the north-eastern Anatolian plateau in the Late Iron Age is characterized by a vast repertoire of predominantly geometric decorative elements. The painted ceramic production of Boğazköy and Alişar Höyük, where it has been found in large quantities, is marked by a wide variety of decorative motifs.

There are numerous different kinds of peculiar decorations that correspond to *unica*. Moreover, they do not match with

the ceramic material from other sites, and differ even within the ceramic inventory from the same site.

Summarizing the results regarding the distribution of decorative motifs in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau, it is noted that the category that includes horizontal band decorations is very frequently observed and represents a high proportion of all the ceramic production of the Late Iron Age. Ceramic fragments with this pattern have been found in all the archaeological sites taken into consideration. However, the band decoration also demonstrates some variations – these can be traced regularly, rhythmically, or in combination with other geometric patterns.

Table 1

Distribution of the most frequent painted geometric decorative motifs on ceramic during the Late Iron Age per site\*\*

Decorative motifs	Boğazköy	Alaca Höyük	Alişar Höyük	Çadır Höyük	Kerkenes Dağ	Uşaklı Höyük	Maşat Höyük	Kuşaklı-Sarissa	Kaman-Kalehöyük
Horizontal bands	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Horizontal wavy lines/Simple semicircles, arranged in horizontal rows	X	X	X	X	X				X
Vertical wavy lines			X			X			
Diamond motifs	X	X	X		X			X	
Concentric circles	X	X	X		X			X	
Zigzag pattern	X	X	X	X	X			X	
Triangle pattern	X	X	X					X	
Squares with different internal backgrounds	X		X		X				

\*\* Table 1 does not contain rare painted geometric motifs that are either not repeated or seldom repeated. Table 1 aims to illustrate the distribution of painted decoration patterns across the north-eastern Anatolian plateau per site, focusing on the most frequently observed decorative motifs.

Very often recur the decorations with wavy lines. In frequency, these are followed by variations of diamond motifs and concentric circles. Variations in zig-zag and triangle patterns demonstrate an equal distribution. The least common are the decorations with squares against different internal backgrounds and those with semicircles, arranged in horizontal rows and intertwined (Fig. 3).

The painted ceramic production found in Kaman-Kalehöyük is not very varied, the monochrome decoration with bands prevails with some examples of wavy lines and a single vessel with a figural decoration.

The painted ceramic production found in Çadir Höyük is limited to a few ceramic fragments characterized by simple decorative motifs and two fragments with figural decorations, probably of birds. In Çadir Höyük and Kaman-Kalehöyük, no decorative motifs with concentric circles have been documented. Concentric circles are very frequently encountered on the Late Iron Age pottery material and come in different variations, while in the Middle Iron Age the concentric circles are present mostly in relation to the silhouette style pottery and with figures of the deer (Alişar IV), or in relation to other geometric decorations, whereas in the Late Iron Age the concentric circles appear isolated and not necessary in combinations with other patterns. Often, decorations consisting of concentric circles are found on the so-called “panels”. It has been documented that in Gordion concentric circles appear as the main motif earlier than in other localities. Hence, it would seem that it spread from Gordion to the north-eastern Anatolian plateau.<sup>26</sup>

The painted ceramic production found at Kerkenes Dağ is characterized by monochrome and bichrome band motifs. There is no shortage of decorations with concentric circles, cross-linked rhombuses, and triangles.

The ceramic finds from Kuşaklı-Sarissa, Alaca Höyük and Maşat Höyük are very fragmentary. These are mostly characterized by monochrome and bichrome decorative motifs with simple bands, with some examples of decorations with triangles or reticulated triangles, reticulated rhombuses and concentric circles exposed in rows on a light coated background.

The Late Iron Age painted pottery fragments analysed from the site of Uşaklı Höyük are characterized by monochrome ceramic class. They display simple horizontal band motifs, band motifs in combination with vertical wavy lines, and crossed triangles.

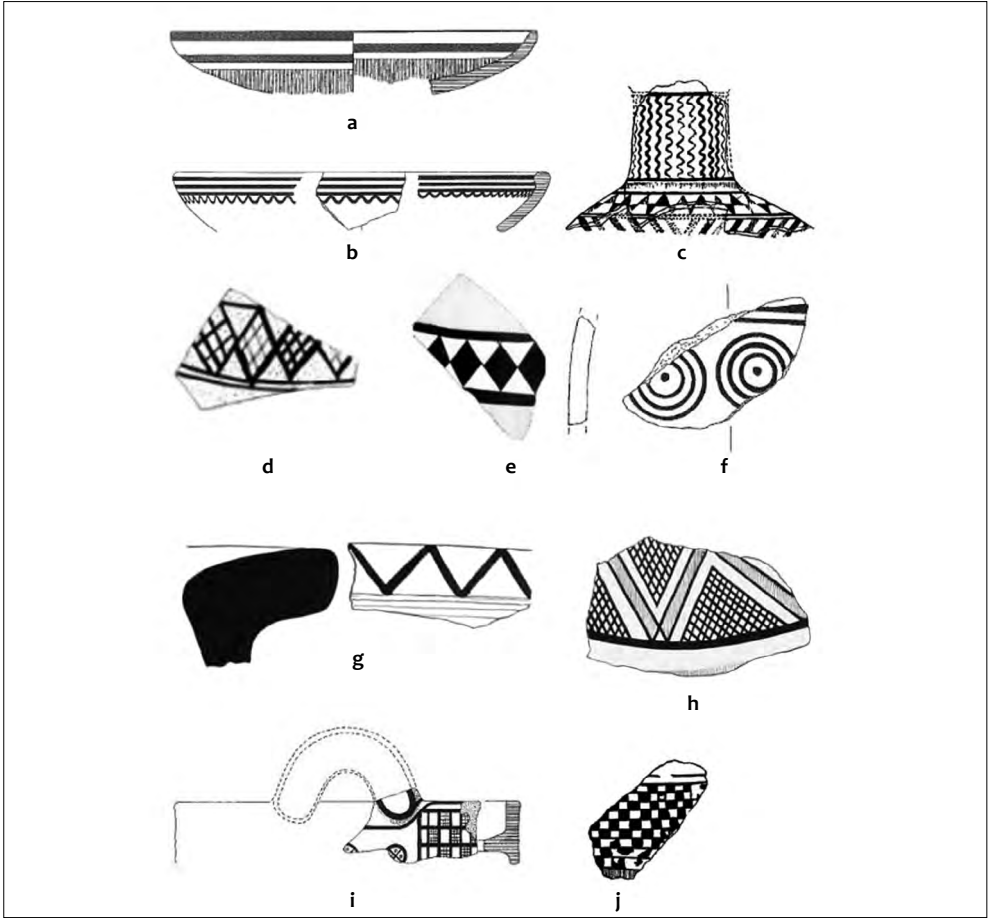
### 2.1.2. *Figural decorations*

Besides geometrical patterns, there are also figural decorations that deserve more attention and comparison. Except for the archaeological sites of Kuşaklı-Sarissa and Uşaklı Höyük, where figural decorations on ceramics dated to the Late Iron Age have not been documented, the other sites of the north-eastern Anatolian plateau, on the other hand, have returned very varied depictions of the animal world and few human depictions (Fig. 4).

Figures of **waterfowl** have been documented in Boğazköy,<sup>27</sup> Alişar Höyük,<sup>28</sup> Çadir Höyük,<sup>29</sup> Maşat Höyük.<sup>30</sup> Those of Alişar Höyük and Çadir Höyük appear very similar in drawing. While those of Maşat Höyük have different characteristics, both in terms of proportions and internal cross-hatching.

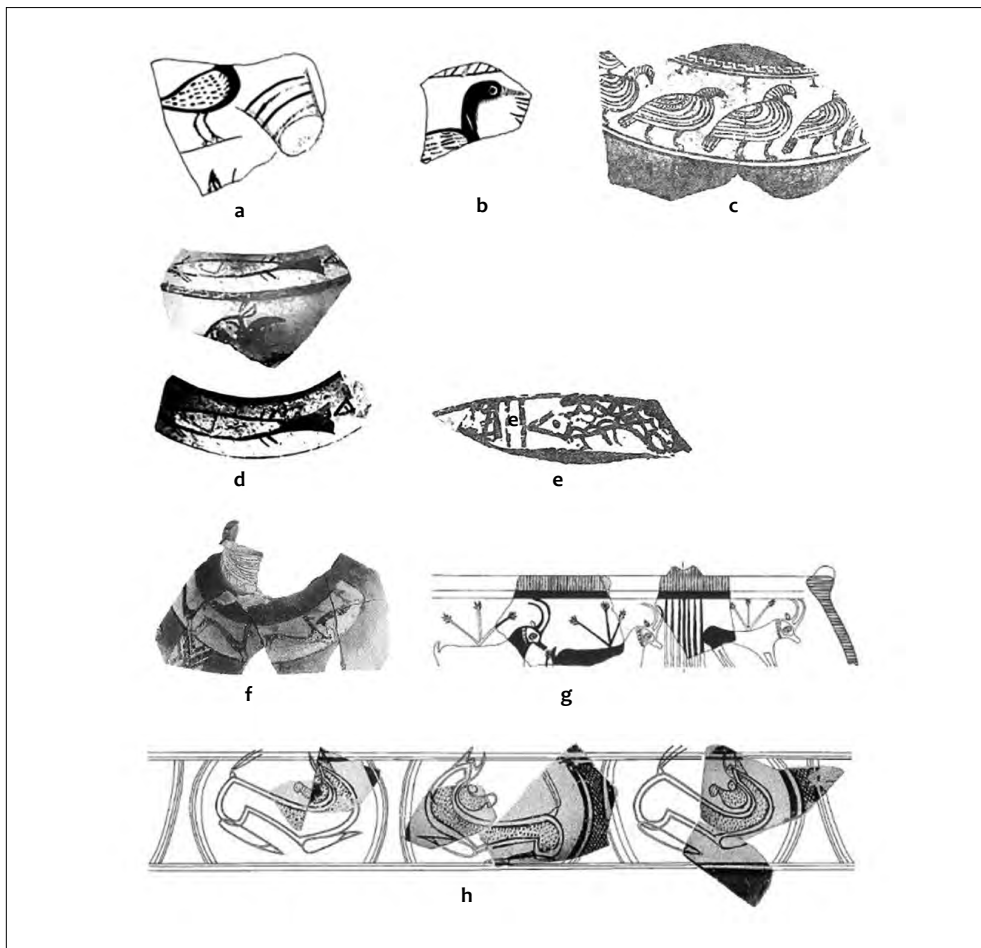
Representations of **fish** have been documented on ceramic fragments found at Alaca Höyük and Maşat Höyük. That of Alaca Höyük<sup>31</sup> has only a contour line and some anatomical details of the head, while the two depictions found in Maşat Höyük<sup>32</sup> are more detailed, with a background inside, which probably represents the scales of fish.





**Fig. 3. Some examples of the most frequent painted geometric decorative motifs on ceramic in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau during the Late Iron Age.**

**a** – horizontal band on ceramic fragment from the archaeological site of Boğazköy. Figure originally published in: EVA-MARIA BOSSERT. *Die Keramik Phrygischer Zeit von Boğazköy*, p. 109; Taf. 68: 757; **b** – horizontal wavy lines/ simple semicircles, arranged in horizontal rows on ceramic fragment from the archaeological site of Boğazköy. Figure originally published in: BOSSERT, *Die Keramik Phrygischer Zeit*, p. 108; Taf. 67: 734; **c** – vertical wavy lines on ceramic fragment from the archaeological site of Alişar Höyük. Figure originally published in: ERICH F. SCHMIDT. *The Alişar Höyük Seasons of 1928 and 1929. Part 2* (Oriental Institute Publications 20). Chicago 1933, here Pl. IX: 900; **d, e** – diamond motifs on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Alaca Höyük. Figure originally published in: HÂMIT Z. KOŞAY. *Ausgrabungen von Alaca Höyük. Vorbericht über die Forschungen und Entdeckungen von 1940–1948.* (Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınlarından V. Seri No. 6) Ankara 1966, Lev. 71, 72; **f** – concentric circles on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Kuşaklı-Sarissa. Figure originally published in: KLAUS J. POWROZNIK. *Die Eisenzeit in Kuşaklı, Kuşaklı-Sarissa. Band 5. Rahden/Westf.* 2010, Taf. 68: 5; **g** – zigzag motifs on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Alişar Höyük. Figure originally published in: HANS H. VON DER OSTEN. *The Alişar Höyük: Seasons of 1930–32.* (Oriental Institute Publications 28) Chicago 1937, p. 54; Fig. 58: 7; **h** – triangle pattern on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Alişar Höyük. Figure originally published in: VON DER OSTEN, *The Alişar Höyük: Seasons of 1930–32*, p. 56; Fig. 61: 1; **i, j** – squares with different internal backgrounds on ceramic fragment from the archaeological site of Boğazköy. Figure originally published in: BOSSERT, *Die Keramik Phrygischer Zeit*, p. 101; Taf. 59: 626.



**Fig. 4. Some examples of figural painted decorations on ceramic in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau during the Late Iron Age.**

**a, b** – figures of waterfowl on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Alişar Höyük. Figures originally published in: ERICH F. SCHMIDT. *The Alişar Höyük Seasons of 1928 and 1929. Part 2.* (Oriental Institute Publications 20.) Chicago 1933. Here, Plate VII: 454; **c** – figures of waterfowl on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Maşat Höyük. Figure originally published in: TAHSİN ÖZGÜÇ. *Maşat Höyük kazıları ve çevresindeki araştırmalar.* Plate 82: 2; **d** – representations of fish on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Alaca Höyük. Figure originally published in: HÂMIT Z. KOŞAY. *Alaca Höyük excavations. Preliminary report on research and discoveries 1963–1967.* (Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınlarından V. Seri no. 28.) Ankara 1973, Lev. XIII: Al. R. 24;

**e** – representations of fish on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Maşat Höyük. Figure originally published: ÖZGÜÇ, *Maşat Höyük kazıları*, Plate 79: 3; Plate 82: 2; **f** – figures of roe deer on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Boğazköy. Figure originally published in: BOSSERT, *Die Keramik Phrygischer Zeit*, p. 72; Taf. 113: 360; **g** – figures of roe deer on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Boğazköy. Figure originally published in: *Ibidem*, p. 53; Taf. 30: 273; **h** – figures of dogs on ceramic fragments from the archaeological site of Boğazköy. Figure originally published in: *Ibidem*, p. 141; Taf. 140: 1291.

Table 2

Distribution of painted figural decorations on pottery during the Late Iron Age per site

Decorative motifs	Boğazköy	Alaca Höyük	Alişar Höyük	Çadır Höyük	Kerkenes Dağ	Uşaklı Höyük	Maşat Höyük	Kuşaklı-Sarissa	Kaman-Kalehöyük
waterfowl	X		X	X			X		
fish		X					X		
deer	X								
horses			X		X				
roe deer	X	X							
dogs	X								
bull			X						
human figures	X								

Two examples have been documented with depictions of **deer** of the Alişar IV type characteristic of the Middle Iron Age that have been found in Büyükkale in the levels datable to the Late Iron Age.<sup>33</sup> In this period, the figures of deer do not seem widespread, while there are representations of figures of **horses** found in Alişar Höyük<sup>34</sup> and Kerkenes Dağ<sup>35</sup> and **roe deer** found on pottery in Boğazköy,<sup>36</sup> Alaca Höyük.<sup>37</sup> These are no longer performed in the so-called silhouette style but feature anatomical details.

In Boğazköy, some examples of depictions that differ significantly from the rest of the decorations have been identified, and these are defined as “bizarre style”. Examples of this style have only been found in Büyükkale, however, it would seem that there are parallels with two depictions found in Kültepe. These depict figures from the animal world, often difficult to identify accurately.<sup>38</sup> Probably these are the figures of **dogs**,<sup>39</sup> while the depictions found in Kültepe represent a bull<sup>40</sup> and

a lion<sup>41</sup> with jaws wide open. The contours of animals are characterized by two parallel lines. These animals are antithetical but sometimes they are arranged one after another or even individually. The lines are very thin. The head is almost always turned backwards or tilted. Their body language communicates movements that have been emphasized by the fluid and wavy lines. It has not been possible to determine with certainty the origin of this style, but it has been hypothesized that it could have come from the Transcaucasian area.<sup>42</sup>

Representations of **human figures** are very rare and are documented only in Boğazköy. These are four depictions, two of which have been executed in the so-called silhouette style. An example is preserved on a fragment of small size,<sup>43</sup> where the head of a man and the tip of the spear that he probably holds in his hand are partially visible (Fig. 5, c). The second example<sup>44</sup> is represented by a fragment of a crater with two human figures – one on horseback with the spear in his hand, and the other standing

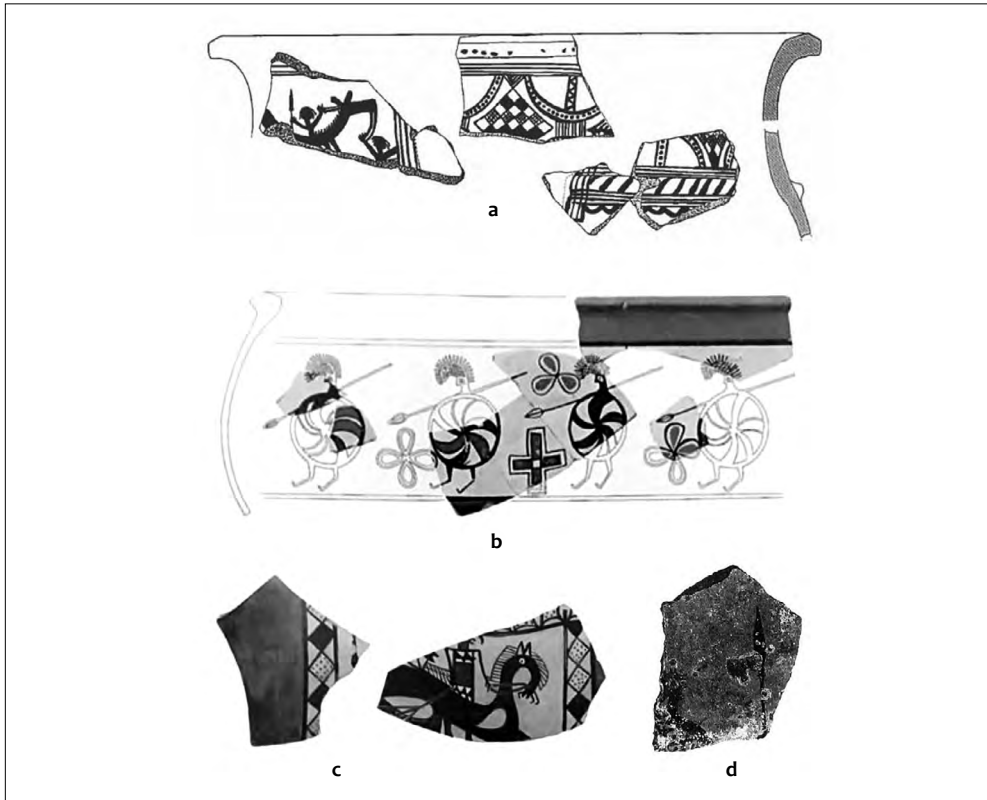


Fig. 5. Representations of human figures on ceramic from the archaeological site of Boğazköy.

**a** – figure originally published in: Herman Genz. Die eisenzeitliche Besiedlung im Bereich der Grabungen am mittleren Büyükkale- Nordwesthang 1998–2000. In: JÜRGEN SEEHER (ed.). Ergebnisse der Grabungen an den Ostteichen und am mittleren Büyükkale-Nordwesthang in den Jahren 1996–2000. Mainz, 2006, 98–158. Here, p. 113, Abb. 16:2; **b** – figure originally published in: BOSSERT, Die Keramik Phrygischer Zeit, p. 53, Taf. C: 265; **c** – figure originally published in: BOSSERT, Die Keramik Phrygischer Zeit, p. 140, Taf. 136:1262; **d** – figure originally published in: BOSSERT, Die Keramik Phrygischer Zeit, p. 72, Taf. 111: 354.

next to it, holding the reins (Fig. 5, a). The third representation of human figures<sup>45</sup> differs significantly from the first two. It is a fragment of *dinos* and is characterized by a bichrome painting with seven or eight warriors moving to the left, around the vase on a light coated panel (Fig. 5, b). The rest of the container has a dark reddish-brown slip. Warriors are armed with cross-linked helmets, shields and spears, their heads have been depicted in profile. The bodies are covered with huge round shields and

only the feet and part of the legs bent at the knee incorrectly are visible. Among the figures of warriors have been inserted some decorative elements, which have the function of the so-called “fillers”. Also, the fourth example<sup>46</sup> with the representation of a human figure is characterized by a light-coloured panel, framed by a reddish-brown slip (Fig. 5, d). The human figure exhibits a rectangle that acts as a torso of the man, probably it is an armour with the internal ornamentation of triangles

exposed in horizontal rows. The arms are drawn with a single line. The head is not visible due to the fragmentary nature of the pottery sherd. In contrast to the human figure, the depiction of the horse is characterized by wavy lines. The horse figure is entirely black; however, some anatomical details have been traced. The figure of the horse appears strongly distorted.

In addition to the representations of human figures as warriors, there is one of a **mythological character**. It is a unique depiction – very complex both from an ideological and compositional point of view, and it is depicted on a fragment of *dinos*<sup>47</sup> found in Büyükkale. The representation is characterized by the figure of *Potnia Theron* in a long robe. Two ferocious lions with wide open jaws, executed in the so-called silhouette style, are placed one on each side, and the space around the figures is filled with inclined lines. This, according to the description of M. Bossert, creates the impression that the three figures are

in a kind of niche.<sup>48</sup> As soon as it is accepted that it is a niche, it is inevitable to connect this representation with the Great Goddess of the Phrygians, depicted on the façade of the monument of King Midas, near the modern village of Yazılıkaya, and the one found in Boğazköy at the gate of the citadel of Büyükkale.

## 2.2. Recurrence of decorative motifs in relation to vessel morphology

Comparing the collected data, it would seem that there is no evidence of the use of a certain decorative motif in relation to vessel morphology. Bowls, amphorae, jugs, and craters, which are the more common vessel shapes (Fig. 6), lack the typical decorative motifs that can be linked to a certain vessel shape. There are some less common vessel shapes, and among these, for example, only one teapot, two *askoi*, and two *pyxides* have been catalogued. Given the rarity of these shapes, it was not possible to compare the use of decorative

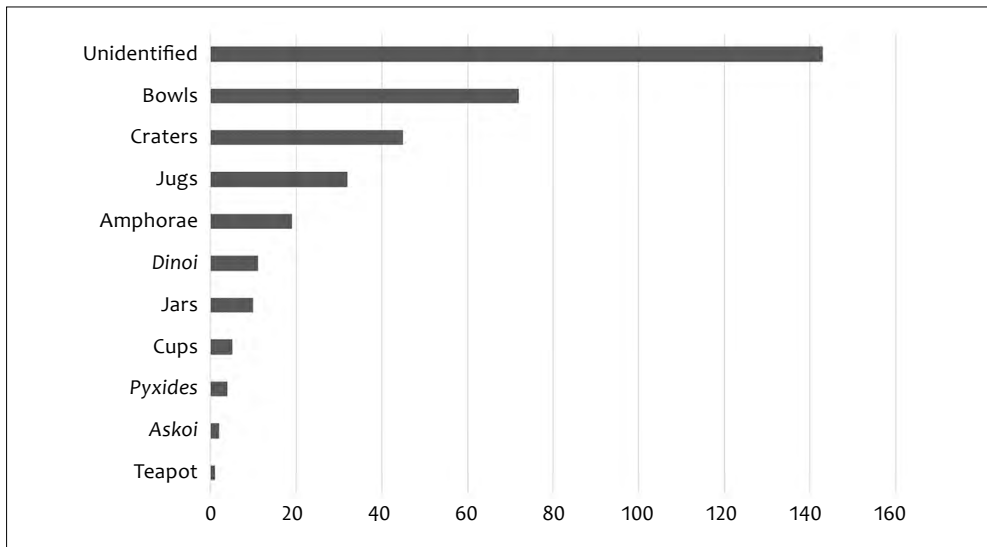


Fig. 6. Vessel morphology in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau discovered in the archaeological sites of Boğazköy, Alaca Höyük, Alişar Höyük, Çadır Höyük, Kerkenes Dağ, Uşaklı Höyük, Maşat Höyük, Kuşaklı-Sarıssa, Kaman-Kalehöyük and dated to the Late Iron Age.

motifs in relation to these pottery types. However, it must be borne in mind that almost half of the ceramic material analysed is composed of fragments of walls, often small in size, hence, it was not possible to determine the vessel morphology.

No differences in pottery morphology have been documented, distinguishing monochrome, bichrome, or polychrome manufacture.

The technical innovation of the painted ceramic production of the Late Iron Age is characterized by a light-toned slip applied to a part of the container, forming a “panel” that framed the painted decoration. This type of decoration is mostly present on closed shapes, such as amphorae, jugs, *dinoi* but some examples of this type have also been documented on craters and bowls. The so-called “panels” are usually positioned on the shoulder and upper part of the vessel’s body. The decorative motifs traced on these “panels” are very varied and range from the simplest monochrome or bichrome band motif to figural representations of the animal world.

### 3. Variation of decorative patterns during the Late Iron Age

Although the Late Iron Age corresponds to a time span of about five centuries, based on the decorative motifs of the Late Iron Age in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau, it is not possible to identify differences in chronological terms. For example, the ceramic material of Kaman-Kalehöyük, where three architectural phases of the Late Iron Age have been identified,<sup>49</sup> does not demonstrate differences in the use of decorative motifs. The ceramic production of Kaman-Kalehöyük is not very varied. The prevailing motif is composed of simple horizontal bands and a few other geometric patterns.

The Late Iron Age in Kuşaklı-Sarissa is represented by two settlements (Period VI and VII) that follow one another over time, probably separated by a hiatus. The settlement of Period VI according to the chronology of Kuşaklı-Sarissa corresponds to a short period of time, ranging from the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC to the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. The settlement of Period VII corresponds approximately to the 6<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> century BC with a possible extension into the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>50</sup> The two settlements of Period VI and Period V according to the stratigraphy of Kuşaklı-Sarissa correspond chronologically to the periods BK I of Boğazköy, 2a 3–5 of Kaman-Kalehöyük, and YHSS 4 of Gordion.<sup>51</sup> The ceramic material is very fragmentary and is characterized by a very limited number of types of decorative patterns: horizontal lines, triangles, and concentric circles. The material does not allow for decorative pattern comparison in chronological terms.

In Boğazköy, where three phases of the Late Iron Age have been identified, the ceramic sequence shows no signs of changing decorative motifs in chronological terms. Although the decorative motifs present numerous variations, in the BK Ia, Ib and Ic phases, which according to Boğazköy’s chronology correspond to the Late Iron Age,<sup>52</sup> all the macro-categories of decorative motifs were represented. Even the figural decorations were found in all three phases of the Late Iron Age; however, it has been documented that the ceramic fragments with the decorations of the so-called “bizarre style” belong to the final phase of the Late Iron Age, instead the two examples of the “bizarre style” of Kületpe were found out of context.

Unfortunately, the other sites of the north-eastern Anatolian plateau are characterized by a poor archaeological documentation of the Late Iron Age, so it

has not been possible to determine the continuity or discontinuity of the decorative motifs in chronological terms. The stratigraphic sequence at the site of Alaca Höyük is insufficiently documented, and the identified levels of the Iron Age are characterized by a strong mixing of ceramic finds.<sup>53</sup> The Late Iron Age in Alishar Höyük<sup>54</sup> and Maşat Höyük<sup>55</sup> is represented by two levels of construction, however, the ceramic material has not been contextualized. In Kerkenes Dağ,<sup>56</sup> no further subphases of construction of the architectural remains found dating back to the Late Iron Age have been identified. The ceramic material found at Çadir Höyük<sup>57</sup> and Uşaklı Höyük<sup>58</sup> is not contextualized in terms of chronological subphases of the Late Iron Age and the documentation of a more precise ceramic sequence is still ongoing.

The lack of a precise sequence of stratified contexts of the Late Iron Age prevents us from recognizing a possible chronological evolution of the decorative motifs in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau. However, in cases where consistent sequences are available, such as in the case of Boğazköy and Kaman-Kalehöyük, ceramic production seems to be characterized by a strong continuity.

## Conclusions

The analysis of painted ceramic material from nine archaeological sites has presented several challenges in examining the manufacturing of painted pottery during the Late Iron Age in the region of the north-eastern Anatolian plateau. Ceramic material has only recently been registered systematically, and there is currently no established universal system for cataloguing, making comparisons exceedingly difficult. Moreover, publications frequently lack thorough descriptions of

ceramic materials and are restricted in their choices.

The Late Iron Age, which spans the duration from the 8<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> century BC to the Hellenistic period, covers a very long period of time, and our knowledge about the evolution of the ceramic production in Central Anatolia is still very limited.

Notably, compared to undecorated pottery, manufacturing of painted pottery declined noticeably throughout the Late Iron Age.

It can be established that, considering the degree of distribution of the decorative motifs, their variations and recurrence depending on the vessel morphology, the painted ceramic production of the north-eastern Anatolian plateau is extremely varied. Hence, based on the available evidence, the painted ceramic production of the Late Iron Age appears relatively little-standardized and not very homogeneous.

Geometric decoration prevails, but there are numerous variations of decorative motifs that are not repeated, or recur rarely. Other decorative motifs, mostly rather simple – with bands and wavy lines, seem more widespread and are present in all the archaeological sites taken into consideration, so one should imagine a painted tradition that unites the whole region of the north-eastern Anatolian plateau. The ceramic production found in Boğazköy and Alishar Höyük is more varied than the painted decorations documented in other settlements. It is likely that Boğazköy and Alishar Höyük represent the driving forces behind painted ceramic production in the north-eastern Anatolian plateau. Nevertheless, even the ceramic production of the sites, such as Kerkenes Dağ, Maşat Höyük and Kuşaklı-Sarissa, has some original elements that do not recur in the ceramic inventory in other locations. However, it should not be excluded that variations in decorative

motifs between different sites may be due to chronological variations.

Few figurative decorations have been documented, and these are also very varied. It has not been possible to identify a style that defines the figural decorations on ceramics of the Late Iron Age. It would seem that there are different expressions which coexist even within the same settlement. However, it is difficult to classify them, since they are represented by individual examples, often fragmentary. As mentioned before, in Boğazköy the so-called “bizarre style” has been identified and documented on four ceramic fragments, distinguished by its originality. Parallels have been identified with two representations found in Kültepe.

Given the complexity of the decorative motifs that appear on ceramics, the accuracy of geometric patterns and figurative decorations, it is likely, regarding the organization of painted ceramic production, that there have been several specialized workshops. However, it is not possible to locate examples, which could be created in the same workshop. This is partly due to the fragmentary nature of the ceramic material, hence, the decorations are often partial, and it is difficult to identify details that could characterize the distinctive features

of one or more workshops. Moreover, although there are numerous attestations of the use of so-called graffiti in the Phrygian language on ceramic fragments, these have not been identified on the painted ceramic material, and no signs of potters have been documented on the catalogued ceramic material. However, it is possible to identify a cursive production and a more elaborate and accurate one that would lead to think of a specialized production and a probably domestic one.

The complexity and variety that characterize the painted ceramic production of this period are very important. In the case of specialized ceramic production, this is a long production process that requires extensive investment of time. This suggests that painted ceramics have a substantial weight in terms of expressing cultural identity values. The style, manner or a certain way of visual expression conveys information about the identity of the society or a group of people of a given place, since every expressive character is based on a cultural system.<sup>59</sup> The results obtained from the analysis of painted ceramic production probably demonstrate the complexity of the society of the Late Iron Age and reflect the socio-cultural diversity of this region.

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## KOPSAVILKUMS

Pētījuma mērķis ir noskaidrot vēlā dzelzs laikmeta apgleznotās keramikas dekoratīvo motīvu izplatību Anatolijas ziemeļaustrumu augstienē. Šajā pētījumā tika analizēta vēlā dzelzs laikmeta apgleznotā keramika, kas atrasta deviņās arheoloģiskās vietās: *Boğazköy*, *Alaç Höyük*, *Alişar Höyük*, *Çadır Höyük*, *Kerkenes Dağ*, *Uşaklı Höyük*, *Maşat Höyük*, *Kuşaklı-Sarissa*, *Kaman-Kalehöyük*. Tās nosedz Anatolijas ziemeļaustrumu augstieni un ir atstājušas arhitektūras liecības, kas datētas ar vēlo dzelzs laikmetu (8.–7. gs. p. m. ē. līdz 330. g. p. m. ē.).

Šajā pētījumā tika veikta uz keramikas virsmām atrodamo apgleznoto motīvu analīze, to klasificēšana un tipoloģijas izveide. Analizējot keramikas atradumus, tika apkopoti un ņemti vērā arī citi keramikas virsmas tehnoloģiskie aspekti.

Salīdzinot visus iegūtos datus par keramikas trauku un lausku kolekcijām, kas pieejami publikācijās, autore nonāca pie interesantiem rezultātiem attiecībā uz keramikas trauku virsmas apstrādi, angobu izmantošanu, apgleznotās keramikas klasi un apgleznoto dekorāciju krāsu toņiem. Tika izdarīti secinājumi par apgleznoto dekoru motīvu izplatību un to sastopamību pētījumā ietvertajās arheoloģisko izrakumu vietās.

Pamatojoties uz pētījumā izmantotajiem datiem, vēlā dzelzs laikmeta apgleznotās keramikas izstrādājumi Anatolijas ziemeļaustrumu augstienē ir raksturojami kā nestandardizēti un ļoti daudzveidīgi.

Dominē ģeometriskie motīvi, vērojams daudz dekoru variāciju, kas neatkārtojas vai atkārtojas reti. Izplatītākie dekoru veidi ir lielākoties vienkārši – ar horizontālām joslām un viļņotām līnijām, tie ir sastopami visās aplūkotajās arheoloģisko izrakumu vietās. Tas liek domāt par apgleznotās keramikas tradīciju, kas vieno visu Anatolijas ziemeļaustrumu augstienes reģionu. *Boğazköy* un *Alişar Höyük* atrastie apgleznotās keramikas trauku dekoratīvie motīvi ir daudzveidīgāki, salīdzinot ar pārējām arheoloģisko izrakumu vietām, kas aplūkotas šajā pētījumā. Iespējams, ka *Boğazköy* un *Alişar Höyük* ir apgleznotās keramikas virzītājspēki Anatolijas ziemeļaustrumu augstienē. Arī *Kerkenes Dağ*, *Maşat Höyük* un *Kuşaklı-Sarissa* ir sastopami oriģināli dekoru motīvi, kas neatkārtojas un nav sastopami citās aplūkotajās arheoloģisko izrakumu vietu keramikas materiālu kolekcijās. Nevajadzētu izslēgt iespējamību, ka dekoratīvo motīvu dažādība var būt saistīta ar hronoloģiskām variācijām. Lai gan vēlā dzelzs laikmeta atbilst apmēram piecu gadsimtu ilgam laika posmam, pamatojoties uz vēlā dzelzs laikmeta keramikas lausku atrašanās vietām un stratigrāfisko datējumu, nav iespējams noteikt apgleznoto dekoru lietojuma atšķirības hronoloģiskā izteiksmē.

Ir dokumentētas tikai dažas figurālas dekorācijas, un arī tās ir daudzveidīgas un neatkārtojas. Nav bijis iespējams identificēt stilu, kas definētu vēlā dzelzs laikmeta keramikas figurālās dekorācijas, jo tie ir atsevišķi piemēri, bieži fragmentāri. Kā arī, analizējot apkopotos datus, nav pierādījumu par konkrētu dekora veidu izmantošanu uz noteiktas trauku formas.

Dekoru daudzveidība, kas raksturo šī perioda apgleznotās keramikas izstrādājumus, liek domāt, ka apgleznotai keramikai ir bijusi būtiska nozīme kultūras identitātes vērtību izpaušmēs. Specializētas keramikas izstrādājumi prasa ievērojamu laika ieguldījumu. Vizuālās izteiksmes stils vai noteikts izpildes veids atspoguļo sabiedrības vai konkrētas vietas cilvēku grupas identitāti. Rezultāti, kas iegūti, analizējot apgleznotās keramikas dekoratīvo motīvu daudzveidību, iespējams, atspoguļo šī reģiona vēlā dzelzs laikmeta sociālo un kultūras daudzveidību.