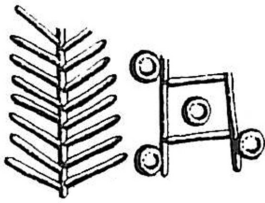


INTRODUCTION

The Early Bronze Age in Western Anatolia



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The Early Bronze Age in Western Anatolia is a transformative period that witnesses social, political, and economic changes, which reflect the distinctive local character of the region, and document increasing sociopolitical complexity and urbanization over time. The Early Bronze Age falls between the Late Chalcolithic, which is characterized by a tradition of personal and communal symbolism (Kouka 2011:44–45) and proto-urban settlement layouts (Efe and Ay Efe 2007; Erkanal 1996), and the Middle Bronze Age, which is characterized by centralized social and political institutions and trade relations with the expanding Assyrian Empire. Developing a better understanding of the Early Bronze Age—which spans the third millennium B.C.—thus informs our understanding of long-term change, while drawing attention to smaller-scale issues, such as social organization, interregional relations, and political institutions. This volume contains English-language articles about Early Bronze Age Western Anatolia that shed light on the region’s material culture, architecture and settlement, regional-scale developments, and trajectories of social and political development. The authors in this volume bring a wide variety of expertise to bear on these key questions, and in doing so, they discuss a great deal of material culture from recently excavated sites (Figure 1.1).

The collective aim of this volume is to gain a broader and deeper understanding of the culture and chronology of Early Bronze Age Western Anatolia. The authors call attention to a number of key issues in the field, which include: the longstanding debate over the timing of the start and the end of the Early Bronze Age; the boundaries of cultural regions in Western Anatolia and their changes over time; the relationship of cultural regions to administrative centers; the characteristics of local pottery traditions; the reconstruction of pan-regional trade routes; the distinctive characteristics of urbanism; the changing role of sacred spaces throughout the Early Bronze Age; and the relationship between cemeteries, settlements, and society.

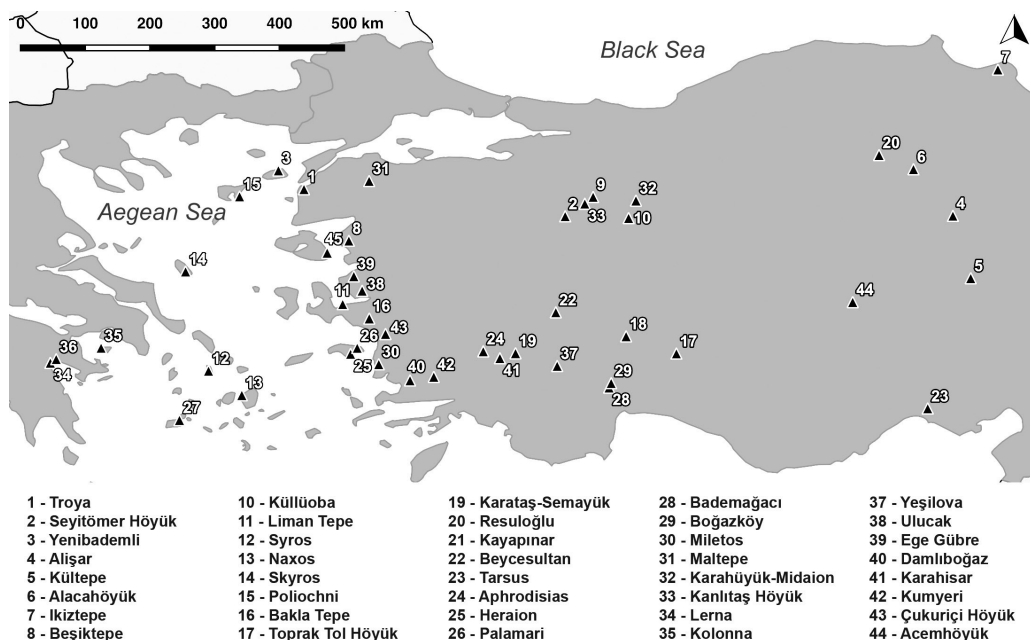


FIGURE 0.1. Map of Anatolia showing location of sites mentioned in this volume.
Credit: Laura K. Harrison.

CHRONOLOGY AND REGIONAL SURVEY

Several articles in this volume address issues of Early Bronze Age chronology, the boundaries of regional cultural groups, and the nature of the relationship between them (Table 0.1). Efe's chapter discusses current unresolved issues in Early Bronze Age archaeology in Western Anatolia, and he draws attention to three problems: the imperfect synchronization of local chronologies; gaps in understanding cultural and political developments; and the problematic use of competing or unclear Turkish terminology to describe temporal periods (for example, "İlk Tunç Çağı" and "Erken Tunç Çağı" both mean "Early Bronze Age" in Turkish, and are used interchangeably in publications) (Efe, this volume). Efe argues that more research would clarify these chronological and archaeological issues, and that adopting a standardized terminology would increase the intelligibility of archaeological reports and publications. Efe also calls for the publication of excavation reports from Central Anatolian sites, and highlights a need for research into the absolute and relative chronology of the EBI and EBIII periods in Western Anatolia, which is necessary to clarify the chronology of the start and end of the EBA.

Like Efe, Akarsu points out that a key challenge faced in understanding the shift from the Early Bronze Age to the Middle Bronze Age in Western Anatolia is the limited number of well-stratified, excavated sites in the region (Akarsu, this volume). This

TABLE O.I
RELATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF EARLY BRONZE AGE
IN WESTERN ANATOLIA

	Seytömer	Troy	Demircihöyük	Küllioba	Beycesultan	Poliochni	Thermi	Aegina	Lerna	Aegean
1900	V-A	V								
2000	V-A									
2100	V-B	IV								
2200	V-B	III		IID-E	XII	Yellow		III	IIID	Kastri-Lefkandi I
2300	V-C	IIId-h		IIIA						
2400	V-C	IIc		IIIB						
2500	V-C	IIb	Hiatus	IIIC	Hiatus			II		
2600		IIa	Q	IV-A		Red				
2700		Id		IV-B	XIIa		IV			
2800			O-P	IV-C	XIIc-b					
2900			N-M		XIV					

Credit: Laura K. Harrison.

chapter draws attention to a longstanding debate about whether the changes in material culture and the widespread destruction of sites at the end of EBIII are due to migration, trade relationships, or a crisis brought about by a severe drought (Forsén 1992, Mellaart 1958, Mellink 1986, Staubwasser and Weiss 2006). In order to address this issue, Akarsu analyzes the settlement organization and material culture of EBIII and MBI levels of Beycesultan, and presents a survey of the Çivril Plain that incorporates observations about site number, site size, pottery fabric, and small objects. While noting changes in architecture that suggest cultural and political transformation, and a shift in the regional settlement pattern from EBIII to MBI, Akarsu overall argues for general continuity in the cultural development of Southwestern Anatolia.

Several authors in the volume deal explicitly with pottery assemblages of chronological significance to Early Bronze Age Western Anatolia. Türkcan and Topal argue that there is a similarity in the style and surface treatment of Early Bronze I-II pottery from the Kuzfindık Valley and Phrygia, and that EBII pottery is most ubiquitous (Türkcan and Topal, this volume). They analyze the style and relative frequency of EBI, EBII, and EBIII pottery at six EBA sites: Kanlıtaş Mound, Esnemez's Road Mound, Kuzfindık Dam Mound, Erenköy I, Erenköy II, and Yeniköy Mound. The pottery from the survey area, which is located in the Kuzfindık Valley in the Inonu district of Eskişehir, resembles assemblages from neighboring sites. The authors point out specific parallels with material from Demircihöyük, Küllüoba, Seyitömer, Çukurhisar, Bahçehisar, Aharköy, and Yeniköy. This comparative analysis improves our understanding of the regional chronology of the Kuzfindık Valley, and encourages future research into the dynamic Early Bronze Age occupation of the region.

Caymaz addresses the chronology of the Chalcolithic through the Early Bronze I in Central Western Anatolia with a comparative analysis of pottery from Beycesultan and other sites in the region. One key difference Caymaz highlights between the Late Chalcolithic and the Early Bronze Age is the disappearance of cheese pots and horned handles in the Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age. Caymaz introduces new data for use as comparanda in future relative dating projects and clarifies the Late Chalcolithic/Early Bronze I transition. He argues for the existence of a deeply rooted tradition of Chalcolithic pottery that begins in the mid-sixth millennium B.C. and continues into the Late Chalcolithic and eventually the Early Bronze Age. In addition, Caymaz notes a convergence in styles between the coastal region and the inland region in Early Bronze I, which suggests increased cultural affinity between the two regions.

For more than a century, the pottery sequence of Troy has been fundamental to our understanding of Early Bronze Age chronology (Horejs and Weninger 2016; Ivanova 2016; Pavúk; Yakar 1979). The Trojan sequence remains the longest and most complete in the Western Anatolia region, and remains crucial for cross-dating sequences from neighboring sites. In this volume, two articles deal specifically with the relationship of pottery from the Troad region to local assemblages in Western Anatolia. Hüryılmaz addresses the relationship between pottery styles and cultural groups through an analysis of Yenibademli Early Bronze II pottery, and contextualizes it with assemblages from

surrounding Northwestern Anatolian sites, including the Troia I assemblage, Kumtepe IC, Beşik-Yassitepe, Thermi, and Poliochni (Hüryılmaz, this volume). She suggests that the widespread occurrence of tubular lugs indicates a shared pottery tradition in EBII Northwestern Anatolia, and concludes that overall, the potters of Yenibademli worked under influence and imitated pottery from the Troad region during the Troia I period.

In addition, Yılmaz's chapter suggests using the diagnostic Near Eastern style volute motif as a marker of the late EBIII/early MBI period in Northwestern Anatolia, the northern Aegean, and the Izmir region (Yılmaz, this volume). She argues that this motif originates in Western Anatolia and is important because it is found in distant regions from the eastern Aegean islands to the Balkans and Cilicia, indicating interregional cultural relations. Therefore, it is useful in cross-dating contexts that date to the end of the Early Bronze Age/beginning of the Middle Bronze Age. In addition to showing cultural relations between the Troad and surrounding regions, the volute motif substantiates evidence for long-distance trade between the Anatolian coast and distant areas of Syria, Mesopotamia, the Balkans, the eastern Aegean, Central Anatolia, and Cilicia in EBIII.

Murat Türkteki discusses the pottery of Küllüoba in the EBIII period, makes observations about changes in the pottery repertoire between the Early and Late phases of this period, and proposes a chronological equivalency between Küllüoba IIC and Troy IIc and Tarsus Phase 3a on the basis of diagnostic pottery forms (M. Türkteki, this volume). He suggests that the potter's wheel expanded the fluidity and plasticity of pottery shapes in the EBIII period, and notes that intensive trade relations with distant regions during this period are responsible for the local appearance of imported goods, including a Syrian bottle and a beaker, at Küllüoba. One of the most significant changes between Early and Late EBIII he observes at Küllüoba is an increase in the use of the potter's wheel in the Late phase, to make vessels such as platters.

Sarı's chapter approaches the question of defining cultural regions in Western Anatolia from an innovative, figurine-based perspective (Sarı, this volume). She outlines the boundaries of five cultural regions in EBA Western Anatolia, and summarizes the diagnostic pottery traditions that characterize each. She then chronologically analyzes the development of various figurine types of the EBA, and maps their geographic distribution, in order to test their adherence to the traditional model based on pottery styles. Her paper demonstrates a strong correlation between figurine traditions, pottery styles, and cultural boundaries, which supports the use of figurines as indicators of group affiliation in future studies of cultural regionalism in the Early Bronze Age.

Sinem Türkteki considers the EB I cultural region surrounding Beycesultan and proposes the existence of a Beycesultan pottery zone that lies within a broader geographical region that encompasses the middle of inland Western Anatolia (S. Türkteki, this volume). This pottery zone highlights the question of whether the developments of this period represent an uninterrupted sequence from the Late Chalcolithic or whether there is a gap between the Late Chalcolithic and EBIA. The chapter combines insights from the distribution and chronology of a diagnostic Beycesultan pottery zone, within a broader geographical region that encompasses the middle of inland Western Anatolia.

ARCHITECTURE, SETTLEMENT, AND SOCIOPOLITICAL ORGANIZATION

In the Early Bronze Age, fortified citadels with tightly packed rowhouse-style megaron buildings appear throughout Western Anatolia. These megaron buildings are either grouped together in house blocks, as seen in the Aegean littoral sites of Poliochni (Cultraro 2007), and Thermi (Aslan 2006:138) or arranged radially around an open space, often with a freestanding architectural complex at the center, as seen at Demircihöyük (Korfmann 1983), Küllüoba (Efe and Fidan 2008), Seyitömer Höyük (Bilgen 2011; Bilgen and Bilgen 2015; Harrison, 2019), and Troia (Aslan 2006). These changes in the built environment accompany increasing urbanization in the latter half of the third millennium B.C., as the number of sites decreases and their size increases (Bachhuber 2015, Becks, this volume; Çevik 2007).

Population growth during the Early Bronze Age spurred an increase in the number of sites in Western Anatolia during EBII (Dedeoğlu 2008:591–592), and led to transformations in social, political, and economic organization. These changes are reflected in the appearance of elaborate elite architectural complexes (Efe and Fidan 2008, Fidan et al. 2015:70), and planned settlement layouts (Cultraro 2007:63; Efe and Ay Efe 2007:254–256; Korfmann 1983), which reflect the increasing complexity of sociopolitical organization at this time (Dedeoğlu 2008:591–592; Erkanal 1996:79–81). In addition, fortified settlements with upper and lower towns reflect incipient social ranking (Efe and Ay Efe 2007:257; Düring 2011; Fidan et al. 2015:70; Korfmann 1994), and craft workshops and public storage facilities provide evidence for the rise of specialized economies (Harrison 2016:172–179; Korfmann 1983:283; Kouka 2103:577).

This volume adds to our understanding of these changes, with chapters that develop a locally specific working definition of urbanism in Western Anatolia (Fidan, this volume); discuss Early Bronze Age fortifications in light of new data and in the context of extant data from surrounding regions (Aykurt and Erkanal, this volume); and identify regional centers and settlement hierarchies in the EBII period (Becks, this volume). Bilgen evaluates evidence for incipient sociopolitical complexity at an Early Bronze Age production center (A. N. Bilgen, this volume), and Harrison (this volume) and Dedeoğlu (this volume) consider the role of ritual practice in EBA society. Observations by Yalcikli (this volume) and Kara (this volume) add further depth to our understanding of EBA social ranking, as reflected in funerary deposits.

Our knowledge of urbanism in EBA Western Anatolia has grown steadily over the past several decades, raising the issue of whether to investigate these changes in the context of earlier Mesopotamian examples or to view them primarily as a local development. In addressing this issue, Fidan asserts that the criteria normally used to detect urbanism in prehistory are not relevant outside the geographical bounds of Southern Mesopotamia, and stresses that criteria specific to urbanism in Western Anatolia are needed (Fidan, this volume). Fidan points out that Western Anatolia experiences a different cultural trajectory from Mesopotamia, and a unique type of sociopolitical organization characterizes its cities. He suggests narrowing Childe's (1950) list of the ten archaeological criteria that

distinguish cities down to just four, which are locally relevant in Western Anatolia: the existence of a ruling class, the emergence of an upper and lower town, the storage of surplus, and the existence of specialized craft industries that are relevant to the specific type of urbanism that develops in third-millennium Western Anatolia.

A. Nejat Bilgen presents a thorough evaluation of the archaeology and chronology of Seyitömer Höyük, and focuses on the character of deposits, architecture, and features, which should form useful comparanda for archaeologists working in this region and time period (Bilgen, this volume). His chapter approaches urbanism at Seyitömer Höyük from a perspective that emphasizes its unique, local expression. This well-preserved settlement is one of the only sites in the inland Western Anatolia region with a well-preserved EBIII occupation. He also discusses changes in settlement organization over time, and their relationship to a proposed Middle Bronze Age migration, which fills a gap in our understanding of the later phases of the Early Bronze Age; a chronological period that is widely recognized as important yet under-studied (Harrison, 2017; Kouka 2013).

Harrison suggests that the architecture, spatial arrangement, and nonverbal cues of a ritual building at Seyitömer Höyük represent a deliberate attempt to organize and control encounters between visitors and residents (Harrison, this volume). This, in turn, reflects a broader development in the Early Bronze Age toward formalizing power relations in increasingly complex, urban societies. Harrison's analysis incorporates quantitative and qualitative methods to reconstruct patterns of movement, interaction, and visibility in a ritual building (also see Harrison 2017). She observes that there are three interior rooms on the main pathway through the building—a courtyard, a front room, and a large main room with a hearth, in which private and exclusive occasions would have taken place. In order to reach the main room, visitors must wait on benches, navigate stepped entrances and changes in direction, and pass through narrow doorways—all of which interrupt movement from the public street space to the private, sacred space. The built environment of this ritual building thus expresses a desire to limit access to the main room through a process of social filtering.

Dedeoğlu posits that domestic worship, centered on the cult of the bull and the oven, was important in the religious system of EBA Beycesultan, rather than formalized public rituals, as is often assumed in the literature. She offers a reassessment of the prevalent assumption that EBA Beycesultan contained a twin shrine with an altar that served as the center of public ritual practice (Dedeoğlu, this volume). In addition, she questions the assumption that the “shrine” at Beycesultan solely served a religious function above a domestic scale, on the basis that the building itself is not built in a unique style but rather conforms to a well-known architectural plan of adjacently built independent buildings that is seen throughout EBA Anatolia. Furthermore, Dedeoğlu asserts that the “altars” within the shrines might well be ovens, based on stylistic parallels with domestic ovens at Seyitömer and Tarsus.

A key contribution of Aykurt and Erkanal's article is its broad temporal scope and focus on the development of fortifications in surrounding regions: the article discusses the Neolithic roots of fortification systems in Western Anatolia, and the possibility

that defense systems spread from Western Anatolia to the Aegean in EBII (Aykurt and Erkanal, this volume). They offer a detailed description of the monumental fortifications and associated interior structures at Liman Tepe, an important port city with links to the Aegean and Western Anatolia. The article contrasts the fortifications at Liman Tepe with the more modest defense systems found at other Anatolian and Aegean sites. The discussion chronicles the increasing monumentality of the fortifications from EBI to EBII, and discusses changes in the formal details of construction technique over time.

Becks identifies regional centers and settlement hierarchies that he argues represent distinct territorial units in Western Anatolia (Becks, this volume). These territorial units, he proposes, are representative of an underlying regional expression of sociopolitical organization. He uses a geo-archaeological approach, based on survey reports and satellite images, to measure settlement size and establish settlement hierarchies, in order to better understand different stages and types of sociopolitical organization in western Anatolia. In doing so, he analyzes data from more than 1,000 Early Bronze Age through Late Bronze Age sites that range in size from 1.5 to 40ha, and argues that EBII Western Anatolia is a distinct and homogeneous cultural region that cultivated an individual identity while absorbing cultural influences from all directions.

Synthetic analyses of funerary contexts in Western Anatolia are scarce, with the exception of several key studies: the excavation of Alacahoyuk's Royal Tombs (Koşay 1937); Stech-Wheeler's volume on EBA burial traditions (Stech-Wheeler 1974); and Massa's synthetic study of the graves at Demircihöyük (Massa 2014). This is unfortunate because, as Parker Pearson notes, one of the main ways in which we interpret past societies is through recovering the material traces of those practices associated with the remains of the dead (Şahoğlu and Massa 2011; Parker Pearson 1999:3). Grave goods in funerary contexts include objects that were used by the deceased during life; objects meant to equip the deceased with tools and provisions for the afterlife; reminders of a person's actions or character; or mourners' gifts to the dead (Parker Pearson 1999:9). A detailed analysis of grave goods in burial contexts therefore offers insight into past social organization (Massa 2014:73). Likewise, cemeteries offer insight into social ranking and organization through spatial clustering according to status, age, gender, and family, to name a few (Parker Pearson 1999:11–17).

In this volume, Yalçıklı's chapter investigates social ranking in EBA Western Anatolia through an analysis of funerary deposits from five graves excavated at the site of Toprak Tol Höyük (Yalçıklı, this volume). Yalçıklı identifies parallels between the shapes and relief bands of Toprak Tol Hoyuk grave pottery and those found in the EBIII Harmanören graveyard. She argues that the deposits date to the late third and early second millennium B.C. because the style of the metal objects, such as needles with animal figurines, are found in a number of Anatolian sites during that period. Although the prehistoric settlement associated with the Toprak Tol Höyük funerary site is presently unknown, Yalçıklı persuasively argues that the high number of ornaments of personal adornment and metal objects found in the graves suggest the presence of a local elite class with connections to Central and Western Anatolia, as well as Cilicia.

Kara argues for the existence of a ranked society with a ruling administrative class, based on findings of stamp seals and metal prestige goods in the graves. His chapter demonstrates how a detailed analysis of the spatial location and material culture of funerary contexts can shed light on social organization in the past (Kara, this volume). The article discusses the graves from the cemetery of Kumyeri in order to gain insight into social organization and the cultural and ethnic identity of its EBA residents. He also points out that the material culture from Kumyeri Cemetery has strong parallels in Northwestern Anatolia, the Aegean coast, and the Menderes Basin, and stresses that the Caria region in which the cemetery is located was not isolated, but rather part of a complex regional network of trade and cultural exchange.

MATERIAL CULTURE

There is an increasing recognition among archaeologists in Anatolia that material culture studies are important not just because of their chronological and typological significance but because they offer insight into the practices and activities of individuals living in the past. This volume makes several contributions to this theme, with articles that address a diverse range of topics. Horejs and Britsch reconstruct local economic production based on archaeological evidence for spinning and fishing activities; Z. Bilgen documents the existence of a heretofore unknown type of communal ritual practice based on the use of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic vessels; Kapuci carries out a typological and regional analysis of EBIII dishes from Seyitömer Höyük, Ekiz, Gençer, and Kaya consider the origins of Early Bronze Age administrative practices, through a discussion of group of Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age stamp seals; and Kamış considers how the formal attributes of pottery assemblages reflect production technique and change over time, while contextualizing it with surrounding regions.

Horejs and Britsch identify shape and weight as key indicators of whether a spindle whorl is used to spin wool or plant fibers, and argue that the spindle whorl assemblage from Çukuriçi Höyük reveals a preference for producing wool fibers over plant fibers. The chapter investigates the activities of spinning and fishing at EBI Çukuriçi Höyük by carrying out an analysis of spindle whorls and perforated disks (Horejs and Britsch, this volume). In addition, the weight of the perforated disks suggests they functioned as net sinkers, rather than spindle whorls.

Z. Bilgen interprets a highly symbolic pottery deposit within an EBA sanctuary building as evidence for a heretofore unknown type of ritual practice in Western Anatolia (Z. Bilgen, this volume). Her chapter presents a detailed stylistic analysis of the beakers and libation vessels found in situ at the Early Bronze Age III sanctuary at Seyitömer Höyük, and argues that their technical features, including their mould-based construction, indicate they were produced locally. Z. Bilgen notes that the unique forms of the libation vessels—many of which are anthropomorphic and zoomorphic—do not clearly relate to the cults of the mother goddess or the bull, which are widespread in Anatolia. Her suggestion that they might relate to another, unknown cult is an enticing area for future research.

Kapuci suggests that the deep dishes and shallow dishes from Seyitömer Höyük are similar to examples from Troy, Küllüoba, and Beycesultan, indicating a shared regional pottery repertoire (Kapuci, this volume). Her chapter focuses on utilitarian pottery from the EBIII period, and takes into account the surface properties, inclusions/additives, colors of paste, construction techniques, and decorations of each vessel. On the basis of these observations, Kapuci presents a typology that chronicles the relative distribution of various styles of dishes across three successive phases of the EBIII period.

How, and whether, to study “orphaned” archaeological materials that lack a sound provenance and information about their findspot is an ethical question that is increasingly at the forefront of discussions about twenty-first-century museum practice (Biehl and Harrison 2014, Leventhal and Daniels 2013). Those who argue in favor of acquisition stress that analyzing the archaeological context of an artifact is just one kind of knowledge production, and that other kinds of knowledge production (such as object-based analysis in museums) recontextualize objects and can generate meaningful studies of unprovenanced artifacts (Osborne 2015:243). In this volume, Ekiz, Gençer, and Kaya demonstrate that orphaned objects can benefit from a museum-based kind of knowledge production, by drawing comparanda with objects from secure archaeological contexts (Ekiz et al., this volume). They carry out a study of a group of stamp seals in the Izmir Archaeology Museum, some of which were bought by the museum and others that were brought by means of confiscation. Their chapter presents a catalog of previously unstudied EBA seals from the Izmir museum, and develops a typology based on the stylistic analysis of seal motifs. They suggest dates for each on the basis of extensive comparanda with other Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age seals from Anatolia. The geometric motifs date to the Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age, and the depictions of animals and plants date to the Late Chalcolithic period.

One key research lacuna in the archaeology of Western Anatolia is the relationship between Early Bronze III (Harrison 2019, Harrison 2017, Sari 2013:310–311), and the later Assyrian Trading Colonies period in the second millennium B.C., in which a prosperous trade route stretched from Western Anatolia to Syro-Cilicia. Efe and Fidan have argued for increasing cultural and political alignment of Western Anatolia with Mesopotamia as early as EBIII (Efe and Fidan 2015:83), and Efe suggests that a “Great Caravan Route” that connected these regions in EBIII may have “paved the way for the new trade network of the Assyrian Colony period” (Efe 2007:60). In addition, Kouka discusses cultural aspects of the transition from the EBA to MBA, and argues against the existence of “gaps” in the eastern Aegean and Western Anatolia at this time (Kouka 2013).

The archaeology of Acemhöyük, near Tuz Gölü in Western Anatolia, figures into this debate because previous research at the site has focused on the monumental buildings and rich finds that date to the Assyrian Trading Colonies period in the MBA, and ignored EBA developments—creating a gap in our understanding of the relationship between the two periods. Kamiş’s chapter in this volume addresses this gap by introducing new data from excavations carried out on the southeastern slope of the mound, aimed at revealing the stratigraphy from the Early Bronze II through the Assyrian Trading Colonies period

(Kamış, this volume). He argues that the increase in wheel-made pottery wares occurs later at Acemhöyük than in Central Anatolia, and that moiré painted ware and Konya Plain Painted Ware differentiate the southwestern part of Central Anatolia from the core area of Central Anatolia. These observations contribute to our understanding of how the local pottery production technique at Acemhöyük changes over time, and contextualizes it with developments in Central Anatolia.

CONCLUSION

The story of the later prehistory of Western Anatolia is a story of great sites, such as Alacahöyük, Beycesultan, and Troia, which captured public imagination and incited archaeological investigations beginning in the nineteenth century. It is also a story of dynamic social transformations. The third millennium B.C. witnesses the emergence of cities and urbanism, the concretization of regular, long-distance trade routes, the rise of an elite social class, the adoption of wheel-made pottery, and the variegation and specialization of economic roles within society. The ascendancy of the citadel in the mid-third millennium B.C. transformed the two primary modes of Early Bronze Age power: administrative and ritual (Bachhuber 2015:180). Later in the Early Bronze III period, sociopolitical centralization reached its apex, fueled by urbanization and population agglomeration at larger centers (Harrison, 2019).

These changes clearly distinguish the EBA from the more agrarian and less hierarchical societies of the Late Chalcolithic. They also establish Western Anatolia as a distinct autochthonous cultural landscape, separate from Southeast Anatolia, in which direct influence from Mesopotamia is apparent. Çevik and others have already observed separate trajectories of development in Western Anatolia versus Southeastern Anatolia (Çevik 2007; Sagona and Zimansky 2009). With the exception of Bachhuber's recent book on Early Bronze Age Anatolia, which focuses squarely on the cultural developments of the period (Bachhuber 2015), and Sari's study of EBA cultural groups (Sari 2012), there have been no comprehensive, English-language studies of third-millennium archaeology in Western Anatolia to date. A central goal of this volume is to address this lacuna, by prioritizing EBA Western Anatolia as a vital field of archaeological research.

Throughout history, Anatolia has often been viewed as a bridge between East and West—a place where ideas are transmitted and a stage for cultural encounters among different groups (Özdoğan 2007). This narrative has foregrounded discussions of outside innovations in the prehistory of Anatolia, while diminishing the role of local, endogenous developments, and individual agency. The chapters in this volume call attention to the importance of Western Anatolia as a compelling, local context in its own right, and many of the authors are explicit in ascribing a local impetus for change rather than relying on metanarratives of cultural diffusion. In doing so, the authors offer fresh observations about the chronology and delineation of regional cultural groups in Western Anatolia; the architecture, settlement, and sociopolitical organization of the Early Bronze Age; and the local characteristics of material culture assemblages.

This wealth of new information also invites future research in several areas. Among these are the synchronization of local chronologies, and their association with regional cultural groups, which Efe (this volume) correctly notes is essential to understanding local sociopolitical developments. In addition, while urbanization and the citadel phenomenon in the EBA are well established (i.e., Bachhuber 2105; Korfmann 1983), we lack a clear understanding of the timing and tempo of these changes—for instance, how much time elapsed between EBII destructions and EBIII construction? This is an area currently under investigation by Harrison, and can be addressed with Bayesian dating frameworks (see Harrison, this volume). Methodological advances are also becoming increasingly critical to future research. In addition, quantitative methods of analysis can greatly improve our understanding of cultural processes at regional and local scales, by highlighting nuances of material culture and settlement that might otherwise be lost. This extends to the realm of another key research question—what was the sociocultural landscape of EBIII/MBI Western Anatolia, and how does this relate to the 4.2kya BP aridification event that is attested throughout the eastern Mediterranean (Staubwasser and Weiss 2006). Answering this question will require a combination of archaeological syntheses, regional surveys, and intensive local excavations, in combination with chronometric data and paleoclimatic data. Developing integrated and interdisciplinary research agendas in the future will help enrich our understanding of the EBA in Western Anatolia.

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