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Studies

ARCHAEOLOGY

LOCAL PEOPLES OF THE SOUTH-EASTERN BLACK SEA IN THE 1ST MILLENNIUM BC: NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS

Abstract: The Trabzon Archaeological Survey Project was initiated in 2018 with the aim of researching the pre-Classical Period in the south-eastern Black Sea region. This is a period which had not received much attention previously from researchers. In the first two years of the field researches, some archaeological sites (Kalecik/Mile Castle, Konakdüzü area, ruins in the Horhor and Sumaha hills) within the boundaries of the Maçka district have been discovered, and they were attributed to an early period. These archaeological sites and some of the material remains obtained here are thought to belong to the local peoples of the region mentioned in ancient Greek and Roman texts. The survey project reveals some significant results in compare of descriptions about the local peoples in ancient texts and archaeological evidence of the contemporary neighboring cultures. Thus, it can be said that for the first time, archaeological evidence about the ancient peoples in the region has been obtained.

Keywords: *Trabzon, Black Sea, Archaeological Survey, 1st Millennium BC, Iron Age, Local Peoples, Ancient Sources.*

INTRODUCTION

The region to the south-east of the Black Sea basin was perhaps the least known part of the Anatolian peninsula with regard to the pre-Classical Period.¹ The reasons for this situation are the scarcity of archaeological studies in the region and the fact that previous studies have been mostly related to the Classical Period and after. The Trabzon Archaeological Survey Project, which was initiated in 2018, set out to rectify this gap in information about the region before the Classical Period and the first results were published a year later.² Some of the finds show features which can be associated with local peoples who existed in the region during (or before) the period defined as the “Colonial Age”. We know that, during that time,³ there were local peoples who settled on the south-eastern shores of the Black Sea, as this is mentioned in Greek and Roman texts.⁴

When comparing the ceramic finds of the first half of the 1st millennium BC from various parts of the western and northern regions of Turkey with examples from the Aegean and Greece, the effect of cultural acceptance can be

¹ ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL 2016, 9-26.

² ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL/KILIÇ/DEMİREL 2019, 253-276; ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL *et alii* 2019-2020, 67-73.

³ CARPENTER 1948, 1-10; GRAHAM 1958, 25-42; DREWS 1976, 18-31.

⁴ TSETSKHLADZE 1998, 9-68; TSETSKHLADZE 2007, 160-195.

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seen. This is generally believed to have taken effect from the West to the East. However many experts (or commentators) now simply regard it as fundamentally wrong, because like the art products that became evident in the Aegean in this age, also writing, language and philosophy as tools of social communication developed and flourished in the same regions and the same time period are the reflections of a cultural influence spreading from the East.⁵ The basis of this fictional synthesis, which is said to have spread and become integrated into the identities of different peoples in Western Anatolia and the Aegean, can be traced back to the written sources of the 7th century BC.⁶ Instead of a narrow perspective restricted to ancient texts, reconsidering archaeological data with an East-West synthesis, will contribute to the solution of questions including the context of the relations of Aegean merchants with local peoples in market places on the Black Sea coast.⁷

This article presents, for the first time, archaeological findings about the economic conditions and settlement patterns of local peoples known to exist in the south-eastern region of the Black Sea basin in the 1st millennium BC. For this purpose, the results of the archaeological survey in progress in Trabzon since 2018 will be used in conjunction with the ancient Greek and Roman texts to provide new information about these local peoples. It was stated that no traces were found during a survey conducted in 1993 in Araklı district to detect archaeological remains before the Classical Age in the region.⁸ In another survey initiated in Giresun in 2009, some ruins dating from the Iron Age were recorded.⁹

TOPOGRAPHY AND LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE REGION

This region, located in the south-east of the Black Sea basin, is a mountainous land covered with dense forests stretching between the Black Sea shore in the north and the Çoruh and Kelkit rivers in the south, in generally the mountain range of the eastern Pontides. The northern slopes of the mountainous land, which rise from the seashore, have mild, rainy winters and a humid climate in summer. The southern part, formed by the upper Kelkit and Çoruh valleys, has a relatively continental and semi-arid climate. The zone lying in the middle of these parts, defined by the surrounding mountain peaks, has a transitional climate that is cold and rainy in winter and hot and dry in summer.¹⁰

The coastal part of the region, which is covered with dense forests up to a certain height, is not suitable for agricultural activity except from animal husbandry and gardening. Today, modern settlements unrelated to

agriculture have developed in suitable places on the narrow coastline. Due to the steep rise of the land from the coastal line, environmental conditions vary considerably within a height of a few hundred meters.

This situation has led to a mandatory adaptation to semi-nomadic living conditions. Generally, villages are to be found where the winter months are spent on the slopes near the shore and on the relatively flat areas on or around the ridges. These areas, which can reach a height of up to a thousand meters, have almost subtropical climatic conditions. Traditionally, from the month of April, migration takes place to the alpine-type meadows further inland which start from an average altitude of around two thousand meters. In some parts of the region, there are temporary accommodation places called *mezre* between both settlement types, allowing for maximum use of pastures and for facilitating migration mobility between villages and alpine settlements. This annual movement, common in the region until now, highlights the traditional livelihoods in the region of animal husbandry and horticulture.

SETTLEMENT STRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF LOCAL PEOPLES IN THE REGION ACCORDING TO ANCIENT GREEK AND ROMAN TEXTS

Some information about the local peoples from the south-eastern Black Sea region is available from ancient Greek and Roman texts, which tell the tribe names, their physical appearance, the regions and settlements they live in, their architecture and some aspects of their culture.

Herodotus was the first to mention these peoples. According to his account, the region, located in the north-east of Anatolia, was among those taxed during the period of Persian Emperor Darius I (552-485 BC). The Moschoi, Tibarenians, Macronians, Mossynoicoi and Mares lived in this region, where it is stated a payment of 300 talents was required.¹¹ The names of the same peoples are mentioned later when details are given about the soldiers in the Persian army at the time of Xerxes I (484-465 BC). In this account, the helmets of the Moschoi soldiers are said to be made of wood, their shields are small, their spears are short and their tips are pointed and long. The weapons of the Macronians and the Mossynoicoi are similar to those of the Moschoi. What is striking here is that all the "foreign" troops in the Persian army were led by commanders appointed from the center, not from among themselves. The son of Darius commanded the Moschoi and the Tibarenians, while the son of the governor of the city of Sestos, who was in the Hellespontos, led the Macronians and the Mossynoicoi, indicating that the Persians did not count them among themselves.¹²

There is more detailed information about the peoples of the region in Xenophon's Anabasis. It can be said that this account is more significant than the others, as it is the first among the early sources to provide information about the region. Unlike many other subsequent sources, Xenophon observed the region in person and gave detailed information

⁵ AKURGAL 1968; BERNAL 1987; BURKERT 1984; İŞİK 2012.

⁶ BERNAL 1987; MANSEL 1988.

⁷ CARPENTER 1948; GRAHAM 1958; DREWS 1976; HIND 1992-1993, 82-112; PETROPOULOS 2003, 17-92; TSETSKHLADZE 1992, 223-258; TSETSKHLADZE 2007; TSETSKHLADZE 2019, 1-53; SUMMERER 2007, 27-36; MANOLEDAKIS 2015a, 81-89; MANOLEDAKIS 2015b, 59-71; DEMIREL 2019, 129-141; Also see SAGONA/SAGONA 2003, 23-32.

⁸ ÇILINGIROĞLU/DERİN 1995, 343-352.

⁹ DOKSANALTI/ASLAN/MIMIROĞLU 2012, 117-145; DOKSANALTI/MIMIROĞLU/KARAOĞLAN/ERDOĞAN 2013, 197-212.

¹⁰ YAKAR 2000.

¹¹ Hdt. III.94.

¹² Hdt. VII.78.

not only about the coastline but also about the mountainous areas behind it. Xenophon and his army encountered local peoples during their military journey from the inland to the Black Sea coast and then to the west along the coast. His account in 400 BC gave valuable economic, military, cultural and architectural information about the country with its cities and peoples. This was repeated by authors who came after him, some of whom acknowledged Xenophon as the source of their information.¹³ For this reason, it is the detail provided by Xenophon about the peoples of the region which will mostly be discussed here.

When the ancient Greek and Roman texts are analysed, the impression given is that the settlements of the local peoples in the region were in mountainous lands, on plateaus and slopes. Key administrative and economic sites generally take the form of settlements established on the highest or most fortified ridges, and are referred to as fortresses or main settlements. It is believed that some of these citadel-types settlements belonging to Taokhians and Chalybes who lived in the mountainous inland were not dwellings but were used for the storage of food supplies.¹⁴ For instance, the “metropolis” (μητρόπολις) of Drilae is mentioned, which is located in the mountainous interior, more than a day’s walking distance from the city of Trapezous, surrounded by deep river valleys.¹⁵ The site (χωρίον) has a rampart surrounded by a wide moat, and along the rampart palisades were set wooden towers at frequent intervals.¹⁶ The fortified area comprised an outer wall and an inner citadel.¹⁷ It is understood that the outer wall was built of stone, while the towers were made from wood. Between the inner and outer walls, there was a settlement with wooden houses along the way to the citadel.¹⁸ Xenophon states that it was very difficult to conquer this citadel.¹⁹

Similar settlements are known to have existed for local peoples living quite close to the Black Sea coast.²⁰ For example, the Mossynoicoi, who were located to the west of Trapezous, had a “metropolis” built on a hill and a settlement in front of it.²¹ The residence of the king was in a wooden tower within the citadel on the hill.²² Also, here wooden constructions are emphasized.

The cities (πόλις = city, πόλεις = cities) on the slopes extending along the valley had no defense systems, except for the fortified areas on the ridges inland from the shore. Such settlements, including those outside the citadels of Drilae, were highly vulnerable to attack.²³ There were also villages where the Mossynoicoi lived outside their citadel. According to Xenophon, the distance between villages was approximately 80 stadias (ca. 6.2 km), and since these settlements were located on the slopes of the valleys, they were able to communicate with each other visually and

audibly.²⁴ Colchian villages consisting of wooden structures²⁵ were established in the plains (πεδίο) around the city of Trapezous.²⁶

Although there were some differences due to variations in climate and the layout of the land, it is understood that living conditions were generally similar for all the local peoples of the region. It is evident that they were engaged in small-scale farming and cattle breeding,²⁷ fishing,²⁸ beekeeping,²⁹ wine production³⁰ and wheat farming³¹ although the conditions are not exactly clear. Xenophon also informs us that they mainly produced coarse cloth textile (τήρινο), which is in accordance with a subsistence economy based on animal husbandry.³²

Regarding to the economic conditions, it can be assumed that the settlement types in the region were adopted before the “Colonial Age”, though the villages, citadels and metropolises naturally existed in the region before this. The fact that fortified areas at high altitude were used for the storage of supplies indicates the extent of security concerns in this period. Accordingly, it is reasonable to assume that small village life is predominant in the region. However, the existence of livestock shows that there was seasonal activity interestingly just as there is today. Therefore, it can be concluded that the semi-nomadic/transhumance lifestyle that is still seen in the region has been prevalent throughout the ages. For example, at the Büyüktepe Höyük excavations, located about 35 km southwest of Bayburt city center, structures such as huts or tents with simple stone foundations were unearthed, which were found to be made of material suitable for seasonal settlement from the Early Bronze Age.³³ A few small mounds in the south of the Çarşamba Plain are thought to be small rural settlement clusters commonly associated with cultures in the north of Central Anatolia since the Early Bronze Age.³⁴

USING THE INFORMATION IN ANCIENT GREEK AND ROMAN TEXTS TO IDENTIFY ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

The local peoples of the south-east region of the Black Sea, who are understood according to the ancient sources to have existed in the 1st millennium BC, have not been adequately studied archaeologically. One of the main reasons for this situation is the natural conditions in the region, which makes continual field studies difficult. The same conditions must make the local peoples to have found it so difficult to sustain themselves in the region as far as the sources from late antiquity shed light on.³⁵ For example, the sources mention that the public buildings are constructed

¹³ Arr. *M. Eux.* 1.

¹⁴ Xen. *An.* IV.7.1 etc., 7.14, 7.17; V.2.28.

¹⁵ Xen. *An.* V.2.3.

¹⁶ Xen. *An.* V.2.5,15.

¹⁷ Xen. *An.* V.2.16-17.

¹⁸ Xen. *An.* V.2.17, 20-25.

¹⁹ Xen. *An.* V.2.17-20.

²⁰ Xen. *An.* V.4.11, 28.

²¹ Xen. *An.* V.4.15, 26.

²² Xen. *An.* V.4.26.

²³ Xen. *An.* V.2.3.

²⁴ Xen. *An.* V.4.30-32.

²⁵ Xen. *An.* V.4.15, 25; Ap. *Rhod. Arg.* II.379-387; Dion. *Hal. Ant. Rom.* 1.26.2; Ps.-Scyl. 914.

²⁶ Xen. *An.* IV.8.19-24.

²⁷ Xen. *An.* IV.7.14, 22, 26; IV.8.24; V.2.3; V.7.12.

²⁸ Xen. *An.* V.4.28.

²⁹ Xen. *An.* IV. 8. 19-24; Strab. XII.3.18.

³⁰ Xen. *An.* V.4.29.

³¹ Xen. *An.* V.4.27.

³² Xen. *An.* IV.8.3.

³³ SAGONA/PEMBERTON/MCPHEE 1993, 69-83.

³⁴ YAKAR 2000, 250.

³⁵ DOONAN 2019, 91-110.

with stone and wood while people generally use wooden houses. Therefore, it is understood that burning was a very effective method of attack against such settlements.³⁶ For this reason, the remains of past societies in the region have either disappeared completely or become undetectable in the field. However, even if it is possible to identify remains, one of the fundamental problems in archeology is how to define a distinct local culture without any comparable material. While accepting this difficulty, the data on the subject obtained during the Trabzon Archaeological Survey Project revealed quite interesting results when compared with the information in the ancient sources.

It is difficult to imagine that the local peoples in the region may have consisted of culturally closed peoples. In fact, their relationships with the so called “colonies” (emporions) on the shore are not well understood. There is no doubt that the local peoples differed in culture and language from foreign traders, whose customs contrasted greatly, and they clearly had to engage ambassadors and translators for communication with locals.³⁷ Xenophon refers to the existence of friendly relations between the city of *Trapezous* and some of the peoples living around it.³⁸ Nevertheless, it is not clear what kind of economic and cultural connections existed between coastal trade centers and local peoples living in the interior. However, it is recognized that the *Drilae* people living in mountainous inner parts had hostile relations with those in the city.³⁹ Also, when Xenophon passed through the region, similarly hostile relations were evident among other communities in the inner areas. The Greeks either fought with the locals they encountered while passing through the region or they asked for mutual guarantees. They did not have the same relationship of trust they were able to foster with the *Macrons*.⁴⁰ Also, local peoples in the mountainous interior may have had cultural differences with other peoples in the inland areas. Hostility between these peoples was well known. For example, the ruler of *Gymnias*, thought to be near present-day Bayburt, commissioned a guide to lead the Greeks through the lands of his enemies to harm them, but this attempt did more harm to the Greeks.⁴¹ This information shows that the relations between the peoples of the Black Sea coast and those of the mountainous interiors were problematic in 400 BC, but also indicates that a communication route of some kind existed. In summary, it is useful to describe and compare the material culture associated with local peoples in this region with similar finds in eastern Turkey, the Caucasus and Iran, for providing a valuable insight into the lives of pre-Classical Period local peoples in the region.

It is understood that the main purpose of the establishment of “colonies” on the Black Sea coast was the trade of goods and labor force with the Mediterranean world. However, especially in the early periods, it is thought that the commercial centers on the coast were closed to the

local peoples of the region.⁴² Some of the peoples in the mountainous interior were known to have hostile relations with coastal settlements even in the Roman imperial era. Arrianus, who came to the region about five hundred years later, states that the tribe called “the *Drilae*” by Xenophon is in fact the *Sannoi*. He asserts that this warrior tribe were enemies of the people of *Trapezous*, and they engaged in looting and refused to pay taxes to Rome.⁴³ Strabo⁴⁴ and Pliny⁴⁵ write that the *Sannoi* people are *Macrons*. However, since the local peoples of the region are not mentioned in later written sources, it is possible that the merchants from the Mediterranean might have found a way to establish trade relations with local communities.

The guiding features presented by the ancient written sources are valuable for archaeological studies and cannot be ignored. In this regard, as O. Doonan’s assessment for Sinop region, we are able to predict what kind of archaeological findings we may encounter in relation to the local peoples of the region (Table 1).

FINDINGS REGARDING LOCAL PEOPLES IDENTIFIED DURING THE TRABZON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY IN THE YEARS OF 2018 AND 2019

The Trabzon Archaeological Survey, which began in 2018 and has now been running for two seasons, aims to reveal evidence of Pre-Classical Age conditions in the Trabzon region, a period which has been largely neglected until today. In the first two years of the research, the survey was conducted in the districts of Ortahisar (central district), Maçka and Düzköy of Trabzon. A total of four archaeological sites, within the borders of Maçka district, dated to the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st millennium BC, can be associated with the local peoples that are the subject of this article. The finding places described below in detail offer significant results in terms of understanding the lifestyles of the peoples who lived at high altitudes in the inner parts of the region.

Kalecik (Mile) Castle

The castle is located in the Kalecik highlands, 4.5 km southwest of the Üçgedik district, in the upper part of the Mulaga Valley, south-west of Maçka (Fig. 1). It was first documented during the field survey in 2019.⁴⁶ The castle area measures approximately 130 x 30 m, and is situated on a rocky outcrop north-west of the highland settlement, approximately 300 m above the valley floor (Fig. 2). It is surrounded by a cliff, except for the north-western part. The mortared wall, 4.5 m wide and 6 m high, located in the western rocky part, where the only architectural remains are seen, indicates that this is a medieval construction. On the northern slope leading up to the castle, among many Medieval ceramic sherds, there are some vestiges of the Early Iron Age that have poured down from the top of the rocky outcrop. The surface colour of the mineral tempered ceramic

³⁶ Xen. An. V.2.27, 4.26.

³⁷ Xen. An. IV.4.5, V.4.5, 34.

³⁸ Xen. An. IV.8.24, V.2.1-2.

³⁹ Xen. An. V.2.1-2.

⁴⁰ Xen. An. IV.8.4 etc.

⁴¹ Xen. An. IV.7.19.

⁴² TSETSKHLADZE 1998, 9-68.

⁴³ Arr. M. Eux. 11.1-2.

⁴⁴ Str. XII.3.18.

⁴⁵ Plin. HN I.11, VI.4.1.

⁴⁶ ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL 2020, 95-97.

Tab. 1. Findings to be expected from field studies according to the characteristics of settlement structure and economic conditions in the region described in the ancient texts.

Settlement Features and Economic Structure	Expected Archaeological Findings
1. Administrative and economic centers are citadels built in fortified areas in high altitude regions. These locations are areas protected by defensive walls and trenches. Wood and stone materials were used together in the settlements.	1a. Stone defensive walls can be expected at high altitudes in the mountainous interior. Defensive areas in highland areas and mountain ridges are possible in these areas. 1b. The mountainous high altitudes of the region, and defensive sites used in the Classical Period and later, may also have been used in earlier periods. The use of strategic areas in the valleys should not be attributed to a single period.
2. Village settlements are around administrative centers and on valley slopes. The settlements are as close to each other as hearing distance. In these settlements, mainly wooden materials were used.	2a. For village settlements, areas suitable for horticulture and animal husbandry may be preferred rather than for large-scale agriculture. The villages in the region are still located in the terrace areas on the slopes of the mountains rather than flat areas close to the valley floor. 2b. Detection of domestic architecture may not be possible, because the wood use is difficult to detect, but traces of fires, which are often emphasized in texts of ancient and are clearly a tactic of war, can be found in the soil layers. 2c. Simple examples of ceramics for everyday use can be found as evidence of the existence of village settlements.
3. There is little cultural relationship between the peoples of the coast and the mountainous inland.	3a. Findings in coastal and inland areas may differ with regard to both architecture and ceramics. 3b. It is possible that finds in the mountainous interior parts will be more similar to the inland regions than to the coastal areas.

pieces attributed to the Early Iron Age is light brown in tone. Their outer surfaces are slightly burnished. One of the two handmade examples belong to a short-necked pot with an everted rim, and the other is a decorated bodysherd. On the upper part of this body sherd there was incised decoration, which took the form of oblique lines parallel to each other between two grooves, and underneath slanting lines in the form of shallow grooves (Fig. 3: 2-3). The most distinctive item in this group is the dark coloured sherd of a bowl with thickened rim on the inside. Its outer surface is pure black, brightly burnished (Fig. 3: 1), and the inner surface is mottled black. In addition, irregularly *tournette* marks are evident on both surfaces of the sherd.⁴⁷

Ceramic findings demonstrate similar features with the Early Iron Age ceramic repertoire found in the north of the Van Lake Basin (Patnos, Çaldıran, Ernis/Evditepe) and in the north-eastern Anatolia (Bozkurt Kurgan-Cemetery 1, Büyükkardıç) regarding the paste, surface treatment, production technique, typology, and decoration.⁴⁸

Konakdüzü Area

The Konakdüzü site is located on the western slope of a rocky ridge in forestland, approximately 5 km north-east of Maçka (Fig. 1). The ruins were documented in 2018⁴⁹. Here, a round stone structure was encountered on a small natural hill (Fig. 4). Among the remains, there was a mortarless wall extending in the north-south direction. Also, ceramic pieces were found among the damaged stone construction. The

⁴⁷ ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL 2020, 96ff.; ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL *et alii* 2019-2020, 69.

⁴⁸ SAGONA 1999, 157; IŞIKLI/ERDEM 2009, 255, 260; MARRO/ÖZFIRAT 2005, 328; ŞENYURT 2005; AYAZ 2017.

⁴⁹ ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL/KILIÇ/DEMİREL 2019, 265.

sherds, consisting of a large number of undefinable pieces, have a redish-brown color. Due to the heavy moisture, there is no evidence of surface treatments such as slip, burnishing or any traces of the pottery wheel marks. They are heavily mineral tempered. One of them belongs to a jar with an everted rim and a short neck. The other belongs to a deep bowl with a spherical body and a thick, rectangular rim section. Just below the rim on the outer surface, there is a two-row horizontal insert-point decoration (Fig. 5: 1-3).

It is difficult to date such undefinable ceramics sherds. However, in terms of ware, they can be compared with the brown-red coloured Early Iron Age ceramic repertoire identified in Eastern Anatolia. Besides, the decoration of the bowl is very similar with the Early Iron Age decorated examples found in Ernis-Evditepe Necropolis and Patnos/Çaldıran area.⁵⁰ In addition, the decoration feature is reminiscent of the ceramic repertoire of the Colchis culture.⁵¹

The Wall on the Pilav Mountain: Horhor (Hurhur) Castle

At the summit of the Pilav Mountain, Horhor (Hurhur) Hill, approximately 4 km south-east of Maçka, at an altitude of 1578 m, there is a mortarless wall, which is 98 m long and 2 m wide, and extends along a rocky ridge in the north-south direction (Fig.1, 6, 7). This wall, which originally formed probably part of a castle, was discovered in 2018.⁵² The ridge is lying between the valleys of Altındere/Meryemana and Atasu/Galyan and its slopes on both sides are quite steep. The highest parts of the wall facing to the eastern slope of the ridge

⁵⁰ SEVIN 1996, 430-467; KONYAR 2004.

⁵¹ VICKERS/KAKHİDZE 2008, 137.

⁵² ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL/KILIÇ/DEMİREL 2019, 263, 264; ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL *et alii* 2019-2020, 70, 71.

exceed 3.5 m. The western edge of the wall has deteriorated, and the rubble has mostly rolled towards the western slope. It is understood that the wall was built on the bedrock, leaning on the north-west on basaltic rock hill. While no ceramic fragments were discovered around it, one reddish-brown coloured ceramic fragment was found during the climb to the top. Although the actual function of the wall is controversial, some traces on the western slope give a strong indication that the site may have been a hilltop settlement with a surrounding wall constructed partly in wood.⁵³

The Ruin of Sumaha (Zumaha/Cumaha)

Within the boundaries of Kuşcu District, approximately 6 km south-east of Maçka, on top of the 1818 m high Sumaha Hill, there is a broad wall, which runs for 50 m in the east-west direction. It was recorded first in 2018 as Sumaha (Zumaha/Cumaha) Castle (Figs. 1, 8, 9) and examined again in the following year.⁵⁴ The area is situated on the ridge between the valleys of Altındere/Meryemana and Atasu/Galyan, about 3 km south of the Horhor Castle. No mortar has been identified in the walls, which is very similar with the wall of the Horhor Castle in terms of construction technique. However, due to the dense vegetation, the edges of the walls could barely be discerned. There are rectangular rooms adjacent to the long and broad wall, and the walls of the rooms are approximately 1.2 m wide, as far as can be measured. One of the rooms contains a well with a diameter of 1.3 m.

DISCUSSION

The pottery recorded in Kalecik (Mile) Castle and Konakdüzü area could be dated earlier than the examples dating from the 4th century BC found in the central district of Trabzon. They closely resemble the Early Iron Age pottery found in the north of Lake Van in Eastern Anatolia. This comparison indicates the existence of a certain degree of communication with the coastal area through the centers in the mountainous inner parts of north-eastern Anatolia at the end of the 2nd millennium BC. However, so far, no finds that can be dated to this period have been discovered in the coastal area.

The remains recorded during the field survey can be divided into three groups in terms of settlement characteristics and economic structures (Table 1). The first of these are citadels, which are administrative and economic centers in the mountainous region (Table 1-1). These places are surrounded by trenches or stone walls, and inside of the citadels, as far as the ancient sources mentioned, timber and stone should be used together as construction materials for the buildings. The second type of settlement is the villages that appear as slope settlements in the mountainous area (Table 1-2). It is understood that mostly timber must be used in such settlements. The third group of settlement are those located in the coastal zone, where relations with inland are not considerable (Table 1-3).

⁵³ ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL/KILIÇ/DEMIREL 2019, 263, 264; ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL et alii 2019-2020, 70.

⁵⁴ ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL/KILIÇ/DEMIREL 2019, 265; ÇALIŞKAN AKGÜL et alii 2019-2020, 71.

Although the ruin of Kalecik (Mile) Castle, one of the first types of settlement, is Medieval, this rocky area seems to have been used in Early Iron Age, according to the ceramic finds. The castle is in a plateau that is used as a residential area for contemporary traditional semi-nomads. It was built on a rocky protrusion above the valley floor, thereby making it highly defensible (Table 1-1a).

The similar ruins of Horhor and Sumaha were built on high hills on the same ridge (Table 1-1a). In both cases, there are mortarless walls built with unworked stones. At a fairly high altitude, the construction of the walls requires a great deal of time and labor. It is clear that these foundations could belong to the defensive walls of slope settlements.

As observed at the wall of Horhor, it is difficult to distinguish the physical characteristics of the residential areas as they are covered by vegetation (it is hidden in forest?) on a steep-sloping ridge. Paleo-climatic and paleo-geographic data are also needed to establish when did today's steep slopes or forested areas were formed. However, there are some traces on the western slope of the ridge of Horhor that can be described as terrace wall or building remains (Table 1-1b). On the same ridge, further northwards, the remains of a stone-built structure were found in Konakdüzü area. The pottery sherds found here show similarities with the Early Iron Age examples discovered in the north of Lake Van. These are also associated with Colchis culture, as the examples from Kalecik (Mile) Castle (Table 1-2c).

It should be said that village-type settlements, which are the type mostly mentioned in the text of Anabasis, are better suited for horticulture and animal husbandry as is the case today (Table 1-2a). However, no trace of this life style was found in the course of the survey. The dense forest on the slopes of the valley, bush-type vegetation and recent residential developments make it difficult to detect archaeological remains.

CONCLUSION

There is a difference between the architectural remains and potsherds discovered in the coastal region and the inland (Table 1-3a). The ceramic finds from inland are generally related to other cultures in the east and northeast of Anatolia (Table 1-3b).

In previous survey projects conducted in the south-eastern shore region of the Black Sea, some findings from the 1st millennium BC have been well documented. However, information on these findspots have been published as reports and no detailed accounts of the archaeological material were obtained so far. In the survey we carried out in Trabzon, finds dated to the end of the 2nd millennium BC and the 1st millennium BC were recorded. In this respect, Trabzon survey project changes the status of local peoples whose existence was known in ancient Greek and Roman texts to the peoples which can be materialized based on the architectural remains and ceramic pieces in the region for the first time.

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