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<p><b>Main Factors Affecting the Settlement of Eastern Anatolia from the Beginning to the End of the Bronze Age</b></p> <p>Başlangıcından Tunç Çağları Sonuna Kadar Doğu Anadolu'nun İskanında Rol Oynayan Başlıca Faktörler</p> <p>Video Link: <a href="https://youtu.be/654hfOyLfVc">https://youtu.be/654hfOyLfVc</a></p>	
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## Main Factors Affecting the Settlement of Eastern Anatolia from the Beginning to the End of the Bronze Age

### Abstract

Archaeological remains from the Paleolithic Age discovered during the studies conducted in Tunceli, Erzurum, and Malatya in Eastern Anatolia reveal that the region has been a hub of attention for communities since ancient times. The primary justification for such a deep-rooted history in the region can be attributed to the plenitude of caves and shelters under rocks, rich forests, flora, and the availability of animals for hunting. Especially, the Upper Euphrates-Malatya section of the region hosted permanent settlers during the Aceramic Period. However, very few of the architectural structures of these early settlers, including the Neolithic Period, have been reached. The main reason for this is the dense alluvial soil that covers the settlements. Because the existence of movable cultural assets detected in the region, which lapsed into silence regarding architecture in the Neolithic period, contradicts this situation. The archaeological records brought together as a whole with this study, support the existence of countless artifacts in the region in the Neolithic and prehistoric periods. In some of the settlements, which we reevaluated for another purpose, the existence of Neolithic architecture was confirmed, albeit weakly, when we reached the bedrock. Archaeological traces of the strong dynamics of Halaf, Obeyd, and Uruk cultures have been encountered in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya and Upper Murat-Van sections of the region, which have not been widely covered for the Neolithic Period in the literature. As a result, both the stratigraphic accessibility and the periodic progression of the great cultural transformations in Eastern Anatolia facilitated access to the settlement data of these cultures. Additionally, the questions concerning these transformations in the dwelling policies of the settlements along with the turmoil experienced throughout the region as of the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium BC were discussed. Through this process, the Kura-Araxes culture, which radically changed the settlement order, dominated the region. The loss of the authority of the Uruk culture under the influence of Mesopotamia was much more effective in maintaining this dominance. It has been determined that even during the transition period to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium BC when the settlers of Kura-Araxes lost their political hegemony, the traces of the powerful settled peoples in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya section continued, though they receded gradually. It was determined that almost all the established settlements in Erzurum-Kars and Upper Murat-Van section were abandoned and people migrated to high plateaus. The sizes of a few inhabited settlements diminished, and the architectural entities declined. This cycle which was experienced in Eastern Anatolia indicates that a colossal disaster occurred. All these records document that the settlers opted for an active life to adapt to the environment. To this end, the reasons for the transformation in the settlement policies of the peoples from the beginning to the end of the Bronze Ages were discussed along with the issues regarding the settlement models.

**Keywords:** Eastern Anatolia, Upper Euphrates-Malatya, Erzurum-Kars, Upper Murat-Van, Settlement.

## Başlangıcından Tunç Çağları Sonuna Kadar Doğu Anadolu'nun İskanında Rol Oynayan Başlıca Faktörler

### Öz

Tunceli, Erzurum ve Malatya'da yürütülen araştırmalarda ele geçen Paleolitik Çağ'a ait arkeolojik kalıntılar bölgenin en erken çağlardan itibaren insanların dikkatini çektiğini göstermektedir. Bu ölçüde dip tarihin yaşanmış olmasının temel sebebini mağaraların, kaya altı sığınakların fazlaca oluşuna, paralelinde zengin orman ve bitki örtüsü, avlanacak hayvanın bolluğuna bağlamak mümkündür. Bölgenin özellikle Yukarı Fırat-Malatya bölümü Akeramik Dönemle birlikte kalıcı yerleşiklere ev sahipliği yapmıştır. Ancak Neolitik Dönemi de kapsayan söz konusu erken iskâncıların mimari birimlerin çok azına ulaşılmıştır. Bunun temel nedeni yerleşimlerin üzerlerini örten yoğun alüvyon topraklardır. Çünkü bu çalışmayla bütün halinde bir araya getirilen arkeolojik kayıtlar Neolitik ve öncesine ait süreçte mimari adına sessizliğe bürünen coğrafyada sayısız eserin varlığını doğrulamaktadır. Bir başka amaç doğrultusunda tekrar değerlendirmeye aldığımız yerleşimlerin bazılarında, ana kayaya kadar inildiğinde, Neolitik mimarinin varlığını cılız da olsa doğrulamıştır. Bilim dünyası Neolitik süreç ve öncesine dair çok güçlü bulgulara ulaşamamış olsa da sonraki süreç silsilesindeki kültürlerin (Halaf-Obeyd-Uruk) güçlü dinamiklerle varlığını hissettirmesindeki nedenler aralanmıştır. Sonuçta hem stratigrafik olarak ulaşılma kolaylıkları hem de Doğu Anadolu genelinde yaşanan büyük kültürel dönüşümlerin süreçsel ivmesi bu kültürlerin iskân verilerine daha kolay ulaşılmasını sağlamıştır. MÖ 3. Binyıl başları itibariyle bölge genelinde yaşanan karmaşayla yerleşimlerin iskân politikalarında yaşanan büyük değişimin soruları da bütün halinde ele alınmıştır. Bu süreçle birlikte yerleşim düzenini kökten değiştiren Kura-Aras kültürünün bölgeye hâkim olmuştur. Söz konusu hakimiyette, Mezopotamya etkili Uruk kültürünün otoritesini kaybetmesi bilinenden çok daha fazla etkili olmuştur. MÖ 2. Binyıla geçiş sürecinde Kura-Aras iskâncılarının siyasi hegemonyalarını kaybettikleri süreçte dahi Yukarı Fırat-Malatya bölümündeki güçlü yerleşik halkların varlıkları azalarak, zayıflayarak sürdürdükleri belirlenmiştir. Ancak Erzurum-Kars ve Yukarı Murat-Van coğrafyasındaki yerleşik iskanın neredeyse tamamının son bularak halkların yüksek yaylalara göç ettikleri belirlenmiştir. İskân devam eden birkaç yerleşimin boyutları küçülmüş ve mimari birimler cılızlaşmıştır. Doğu Anadolu'da yaşanan bu döngü devasa bir felaket yaşanıldığını göstermektedir. Bütün bu kayıtlar yerleşimcilerin çevreye adapte olmak için hareketli yaşama yöneldiklerini doğrulamaktadır. Böylece başlangıcından Tunç Çağları sonuna kadarki süreçte halkların iskân politikalarındaki dönüşümün nedenleri sorgulanarak, iskân modellerine dönük sorunsalların kapısı aralanmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Doğu Anadolu, Yukarı Fırat-Malatya, Erzurum-Kars, Yukarı Murat-Van, İskân.

## Introduction

In this study, the reasons for the changes in the settlement models, covering the entire Eastern Anatolia, were addressed. With this method, it was aimed to clarify the differences in cultural dynamics, environmental conditions, economic, political, social and religious factors as well as the technological development in the settlements. Moreover, this study presents a different perspective on the settlement policies of the communities in the Eastern Anatolia Region for the researchers who study the process from the beginning to the end of the Bronze Ages.

In addition, this study will contribute to the literature by presenting the causes of differentiations, transformations and changes in settlements. Since the settlements in the Eastern Anatolia Region have always been evaluated according to their periods in earlier studies, the factors affecting the antecedents and successors of these transformations could not be estimated. However, we try to present an entire region to the reader in a single study without any disunity. Only the Eastern Anatolia Region is covered holistically within the scope of this study. Moreover, the reasons for the differences between the contemporary settlements in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya, Erzurum-Kars and Upper Murat-Van sections are debated.

## A Deep-Rooted History of the Eastern Anatolia Region: Paleolithic Ages

Researches carried out in the Eastern Anatolia Region illustrate that humans existed throughout the Paleolithic Ages in this region. As a result of excavations in the submerged valleys and coastlines fed by the Munzur and Murat waters whose archaeological research has not been completed, coarse flake tools and chipped pebbles among the flints which were found in Madler Mevkii of the Öğrendik village point to the people of the Paleolithic period as well as the (Eolith) period before this era (Kökten, 1972: 2). Chipped stone tools dated to the Lower (Dinçer, et al., 2021: 3) and Middle Paleolithic (Esin, 1974: 109) were found in the Pınarlar Pulur mound of the Pertek district, and the Middle Palaeolithic in Dere Nahiyesi. Besides, stone tools dated to the Lower and Middle Paleolithic were found in Çakmaklı Mevkii of Çemişgezek District. Stone tools that can be dated to the Upper and Middle Paleolithic were found in Taht Sırtları of the Ovacik District, which is noteworthy (Dinçer, et al., 2021: 5-8). Stone tools found on the first terraces of the Euphrates River above Pağnik village of Elazığ were evaluated as the Levallois type (Middle Paleolithic). Similar examples were also found around Liz village in Muş (Kökten, 1947: 462, 471, Lev. CV).

Stone tools (Acheulean) were found on the plains facing the Keysun Plain between Hıznik and Fal Villages in Malatya (Kökten, 1947: 467, Lev. XCVI). Flintstone cores, lines, flakes, irregular cores, and retouched flakes belonging to the Middle Paleolithic Period were found on the plateau of Çakmak Village, Arguvan district. Chipped stones made of andesite raw materials were found on the western slopes of the plateau. Of these, irregular cores, flakes, para-Levallois cores, lines, and coarse retouched tools are dated to the Lower Paleolithic period. Flakes, retouched flakes, Levallois cores, and edge scrapers dated to the Middle Paleolithic were found in another center, Yazıhan District, Fethiye village. Lines dated to the Lower Paleolithic were found on the river terraces at the entrance of Yarımcahan Village, which is located in the Karakaya Dam area, where the

Battalgazi district of Malatya lies. In the north of Malatya, on the Arguvan-Arapgir road, west of Bahçeli Village, on the high plains, Levallois flakes, shell flakes, scrapers from flint raw materials, and Levallois flakes and chopper tools made of basalt were discovered. Cores, chipped cores, crusted flakes, and scrapers dated to the Upper Paleolithic and Epi-Paleolithic periods were found in Girmana Canyon, located near the Alican village of Hekimhan district (Şahin, 2020: 9-12, Fig. 2, 6 and 12-15, Figs. 10, 12).

Kemal Alot found a basalt tool which is dated to the Paleolithic Age in a dry watercourse in an area 20-25 kilometers away from Erzurum and Hasankale, (Şenyürek, 1944: 251-252). Additionally, Kökten found an Acheulean hand axe dated to the Paleolithic in the plains of the Cılavuz Stream in the Susuz district during his trips in Kars. Moreover, Mousterian (Middle Paleolithic) stone tools were found in front of the rock shelters in the Borluk Valley (Kökten, 1943: 608, 611). Stone tools made of basalt dated to the Paleolithic were found on the western slopes of the Gez Valley, 13 kilometers southeast of Bayburt in Northeast Anatolia (Gündüzalp, 1986: 49). Paleolithic basalt microlith tools were found at the mouth of a small cave in Duduzar/ Killiğin Sırtı, 2.5 kilometers northeast of Bayburt (Gündüzalp, 1986: 53-54). Obsidian stone tools, hand ax tools, cores, and flakes dated to the Lower Paleolithic were found on the Gürgürbaba Hill, within the borders of Ulupamir village, Erciş district of Van. Levallois cores and flakes belonging to the middle Paleolithic were discovered as well (Baykara, et al., 2017: 297- 302, Fig. 3-5).

### **Location of the Key Settlements in the Eastern Anatolia Region**

*Norşuntepe* is the first key center in the Elazığ area and among the most significant mounds identified in Altınova, but at first glance, it exhibits large central settlement characteristics. It is in a high and steep position, and the largest mound in the region, measuring 500x300 m in width and 35 m in height. Due to its location, Norşuntepe was a bridge that united cultures at the intersection of old communication routes. Therefore, it contains many cultural aspects. It can be associated with the Northern Black Sea Kura-Araxes I culture and the Early Bronze Age culture of Transcaucasia because of its house type and especially its upturned horn furnace. The discovery of fine Mesopotamian-Syrian wares made of wheels confirms that Norşuntepe was also in cultural contact with its south, north, and east (Hauptmann, 1979: 53-60).

*Tülintepe* settlement, located in the Elazığ area, is on the Altınova plain of the Eastern Anatolia Region, approximately 21 km away from the east of Elazığ. The mound is quite large with its dimensions reaching 200X250 m and a height of 16.60 m. Archaeological studies carried out in Tülintepe mound, which is under the Keban dam lake, indicate that the region was in contact with the south (Mesopotamia-Syria) from the Late Neolithic Period to the Chalcolithic Age (Halaf-Obeyd). The settlement is built of multi-chamber structures consisting of open spaces and passages (Fidan, 2013: 114). It is also possible to assert that since the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, communication turned towards the east (Transcaucasia-Northwest Iran). However, the last floors of the mound could not be uncovered due to the volume of the water flow (Esin & Arsebük, 1974: 137, 142).

*Tepecik/ Makaraz Höyük*, submerged under the waters of Keban Dam Lake in the Elazığ area, is located in Altınova, 31 kilometers east of Elazığ city center, in the Tepecik village

to the west of the Euphrates River. This large, high, flat-topped mound with a wide terraced bottom was 300x200 m in dimension and 16-17 m in height. Although it had been inhabited since the Neolithic period (Esin, 1972: 147), the strongest data are from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC levels. Tepecik where Kura-Araxes wares and local paint-decorated pottery were recovered had mutual communication with Transcaucasia, Northern Syria, Mesopotamia, Southern Anatolia, Amik, and Cilicia Plains. A structure consisting of small rectangular chambers found in the western area of the mound is noteworthy as it unfolds the communication network. Objects similar to this structure and its artifacts include the temple and finds unearthed in Level VII of Malatya Arslantepe. The reason why it was dated to the Late Chalcolithic Age is that the Late Uruk phase and Central Anatolian Late Chalcolithic type wares were recovered together with the Kura-Araxes wares. This finding reinforces the substantial role Altnova played between the Caucasus, Mesopotamia-Northern Syria, and Central Anatolia (Esin, 1979: 94).

*Korucutepe* is another mound under the Keban Dam Lake, located 30 km from the provincial borders of Elazığ in the east, southeast of Altnova, close to the village of Aşağı İçme. The large, wide, high, flat-topped mound was probably in the form of an urban settlement. The mound is 500x300 m in dimension and 16 m in height. Although the mound was inhabited between the first and fourth millennium BC, the discovery of Halaf and Obeyd-like ceramics indicates that it dates back to the Late Neolithic Period –mid-6<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and early fifth millennium BC. The ceramics of the cultural layer representing the Halaf process are especially composed of Amik Dark Faced Burnished Wares (Van Loon 1978: 7, Pl. 6). These ceramics spread as far as Upper Murat-Van (Russell, 1980: 20). In the following period, the ceramics recovered from the building levels representing the Obeyd period mostly consisted of Chaff-Faced Simple Wares, while black burnished jars were among the found artifacts. Later, EBA was also inhabited uninterruptedly in MBA and LBA processes (Van Loon 1978: 9, 10, 40).

*Habusu Körtepe* is located 44 km east of Elazığ province, 1 km east of Habusu/Ikizdemir Village. The mound, which has a very central location, is 1 km from Korucutepe and 4 km from Norşuntepe. The mound originally measured 240x130 m and was 4.5 m in height. The mound includes all periods from the Late Neolithic/Early Chalcolithic Age to the end of the Bronze Age. As in Tülintepe, a village settlement from the Halaf period was unearthed (Hauptmann, 1976: 25).

*Şemsiyetepe*, another mound located within the borders of Elazığ province, is 500 m above the Bilaluşağı village of Baskil district. It is located in the Kumlu locality on the banks of the Euphrates River in the south. The settlements that make up the mound are located on the natural pebbly/conglomerate coastal elevation on the Euphrates coast. The small-scale mound measures 65x70 m in size and 6 m in height. The earliest date of the mound was documented by the discovery of Paleolithic flakes (Özdoğan, 1977: 63). Afterward, archaeological materials to be evaluated in the Late Neolithic (?), Chalcolithic, Early Bronze I-III, Middle Bronze I-II, Late Bronze Ages were found (Darga, 1989: 184). The excavation finds of Şemsiyetepe coincide with the Early Bronze Age cultures of Altnova with its architectural remains and small finds. It was determined that the complex of chambers with stone masonry walls was heavily occupied during the EBA I-III phases.



Black, shiny Kura-Araxes sherds were found in the layers dated to the EBA II phase at the settlement. Paint decorated wares and Kura-Araxes type wares of EBA II-III are also among the other examples (Darga, 1984: 92-94).

*Pulur Sakyol*, which is within the provincial borders of Tunceli, is 45 km from the center and 20 km from the town of Çemişgezek. The mound, which is not very large with a high crest, has 120x75 m dimensions and a height of 20 m. During the excavations, it was determined that 11 meters of the mound was the cultural level and the other part was a high natural terrace. Although it is stated that there was a Late Chalcolithic-Early Bronze Age settlement in the location, it is understood that the first settlement was inhabited in the Late Neolithic/Early Chalcolithic period (Koşay, 1972: 127-128).

*Arslantepe*, the first crucial center in the Malatya area, is 7 km from Malatya. It is located on the Euphrates River in the northeast, west of the Karakaya Dam Lake. The settlement has dimensions of 200x120 m and a height of about 30 m. It is understood from the Halaf-Obeyd type ceramics in Tepe Gawra and Hammam et-Turkman mounds that south-directed communication had been established since the Late Neolithic Period (Frangipane, 1994: 217). Apart from this, a process from the Late Chalcolithic period to the beginning of the Late Bronze Age was revealed. The settlement shows Syro-Mesopotamian influence in the Late Uruk period. Because in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, Jemdet Nasr-influenced public structures were found as a major Uruk site. These shreds of evidence show that Arslantepe was a politically and economically central settlement as of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. Arslantepe prospered and became a dominant power because it was at the intersection of regional roads from the Chalcolithic to Early Bronze Age I. During the transition period from the Late Chalcolithic to the Early Bronze Age, some of the mass-produced wheel-made and handmade ceramics exhibit a Central Anatolian influence in terms of form and decoration characteristics, along with the Late Uruk effect among the archaeological materials of Arslantepe. Seals, anthropomorphic wares, handmade red-black burnished pottery associated with the early Kura-Araxes culture, and light-colored wheel-made pottery associated with Mesopotamia-Syria were discovered together in the settlement. The diversity of metal objects and their derivatives (handcuffs, spears) reflect that nomadic communities associated with the Transcaucasian world may have a critical role in reaching the source of raw materials and in the spread of metal technology (Frangipane et al., 2014: 457-459, Picture 3-4). Arslantepe, which had a road connection with many cultures in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, was mostly under the influence of the Hittite world as of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. Red band-decorated ceramic fragments and vase types found in Arslantepe during the Late Bronze Age I reflect the Central Anatolian tradition. It is possible to see similar ones in Kültepe and Acemhöyük (Palmieri, 1984: 101, Fig. 5-6).

*Değirmentepe Höyük*, another center located in Malatya, is 24 km northeast of the city, 1.5 km east of the village of Imamlı/Imamoğlu, in the town of Battalgazi, between Imamlı and Adagören, about 50 m south of the Euphrates River. When the first settlements began at the northeastern end of Altınova, Değirmentepe was located on the south bank of the Euphrates, on the western shore of the old bed of the Murat River. Late Neolithic (Halaf), Chalcolithic (Obeyd), EBA I, Middle Bronze Age phases were experienced in the

mound (Özdoğan, 1977: 39). Obeyd, Coba and dark-faced burnished pots were found on the floors of the mound where fire struck, dated to the Chalcolithic Period. In addition to the ceramics recovered from the Chalcolithic period, similarities with the XI A layer of Tepe Gawra can be sought from the seal sample. Uruk, Mersin XV-XII B, Amik F phase finds and similar finds were unearthed in the building levels of Değirmen-tepe. It shows that it was in close contact with Mesopotamia, Syria, Cilicia and Amik plains at the beginning of the millennium BC. Likewise, the building levels representing the transition from the Late Chalcolithic to the Early Bronze Age reflect the early process of Kura-Araxes cultural interaction extending to Transcaucasia (Esin, et al., 1987: 81).

*Cafer Höyük*, another mound in this area, is approximately 40 km from Malatya. It is located in the northeast, at the confluence of the Euphrates River and Değirmendere, which dries up in summer. The mound measures 220x100 m and is 10 m high, extending east-west to the Değirmendere bed. Archaeological data belonging to the Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Bronze Ages were found in the mound. The Pre-pottery Neolithic Period village of Cafer Höyük consisted of multi-built and one-room rectangular houses at the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. It is stated that in terms of architectural structure, it offers great similarities with the houses in Çayönü. It is also stated that it sustained a tradition that existed since the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium BC at Mureybet el-Cheikh Hassan Mound in the central valley of Syria (Cauvin & Aurenche, 1981: 120).

*Pirot/Kıyıcak Höyük* is located in the area of Pirot/Kıyıcı, Malatya, approximately 42 km east of Malatya province within the village of Kıyıcak/Pirot, in the central Kale Subdistrict. It is located on the south bank of the Euphrates River, on a small elevation belonging to the coastal barrier. Having a double-conical structure, the mound measures 400x150 m in size and is 25-30 m in height, flat and wide. During the excavation and surface studies, it was determined that it was inhabited from the Chalcolithic (Obeyd) to the end of the Bronze Age. During the soundings of the mound, two parallel mudbrick walls and paint-decorated Obeyd type wares were found. The pottery decorated with the hidden slip technique, which was found during the excavations, can be seen in Tepecik, in the EBA I and Arslantepe Late Chalcolithic building levels in Norşuntepe. In addition, Kura-Araxes type and straw-faced pieces are very dense in this building level. On the northern slope of the mound assessed as the EBA III building level, in which compacted soil and large mudbricks were utilized, was found. Dark paint-decorated pottery on a greenish-beige and pinkish-beige slip represents this level (Karaca, 1984: 103, 107).

*Köşkerbaba/Göçkerbaba*, located within the borders of Malatya, is 31-32 km northeast of Malatya, 100 m from the west bank of the Euphrates's bed. On a rough terrain consisting of low hills, it is 15.40 m from the ground and 37.20 m high from the Euphrates River level. The first settlement in Köşkerbaba was built on sand heaps, called the pebbles, accumulated at the meander points of the Euphrates River. The mound measures 135x75 m at its longest. Archaeological data indicate that the EBA III and all other Bronze Ages were experienced in the mound (Bilgi, 1981: 86). Many decorated and undecorated wares were found together with the structures belonging to EBA III. Although the decorations are geometric, they are painted in black on a beige slip. Some of the finds group closely resembles those known from Diyarbakır Çayönü and Elazığ Boytepe (Özdoğan, 1977: 43). In addition, there are Early Bronze Age ceramics similar to the inside and outside color



slipped ceramic type of Ahlatlıbel, Etiyokuşu, Karaođlan in Central Anatolia and Dündartepe and İkoztepe in the North Black Sea Region (Bilgi, 1980: 119).

*İmamođlu* is located in the southwest of İmamođlu village, about 15 km northeast of Malatya surrounded by a stream bed. This medium-sized mound is 140x150 m in diameter, 16 m in height, on an area sloping towards the stream, a few meters above the plain where the Dedekargın and Tohma Streams flow. As a result of the excavations, archaeological findings belonging to Late Chalcolithic Age, Early Bronze Age III and Middle Bronze Age cultures were found. An EBA kiln, flint tools and handmade kitchenware as well as Kura-Araxes type ceramics show the communication maintained between Eastern Anatolia and Transcaucasia during the EBA period. The walls of the MBA building level are made of mud brick on a drystone foundation. The relief decorated pottery with vertical roller handles split in the middle and the pottery with roller handles and three horizontal parallel painted band decorations represent this building level. Similar to the last example, Habur type pottery samples were also found. This ceramic group is noteworthy in terms of demonstrating the communication of İmikuşadı with Mesopotamia in the south (Uzunođlu, 1987: 217, 219).

*İmikuşadı* is located on the Euphrates' coast just north of İmikuşadı village of Baskil district in Elazıđ on a natural conglomerate rock formed during the Pliocene period, which overlooks a wide area. The mound, which is located 26 km north of Malatya, has a floor dimension of 110x10 m and a height of 14 m. Its lower terrace was 200 m long in the east-west and 150 m in the north-south direction. Data from the Late Chalcolithic and Bronze Ages were found in the mound. Influences originating from Central Anatolia and Northern Mesopotamia, especially in İmikuşadı had been visible since the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC. The two cellar rooms dated to the EBA were built from the mud-brick beginning from the foundation. The inner surfaces of the walls were plastered and whitewashed. Painted pottery in the cellar dates to EBA III. Horizontal and vertical bands and dots created with matte purple-brown paint on a yellowish-white background dated to Middle Bronze Age I are a continuation of the samples dated to the end of the EBA (Sevin, 1985: 96).

The existence of three building clusters consisting of 13 spaces was revealed during the excavations. The first two of these building clusters, which were constructed with the mudbrick method on a stone foundation, have the same layout. They consist of two long, thin rooms at the back, side by side, and a courtyard with a hearth in front of them. Such structures are replicas of the two-room front-courtyard dwellings of Central Anatolia. This type of dwellings, which were first encountered in Alacahöyük in the Early Bronze Age, were also frequently encountered in the Kaniş-Karum II, Ib and Ia levels. This type of building structure, which spread to Mersin in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century BC, was also preferred during the periods of the Old Hittite Kingdom and the New Hittite Empire. It is of great importance to reveal that this type of housing spread to the east bank of the Euphrates in the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. Because the two-room, front-courtyard house type was built in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC. With this emerging tendency, it became an official form of residence structure for the Urartian civilization in Eastern Anatolia. A ceramic piece with a "signe royal" motif found in the mound is

present in the typical ceramic repertoire of the Kültepe Ib level. As we know, this layer coincides with the Assyrian Trade Colonies Era (1750-1200 BC) (Sevin & Derin, 1987: 182-183, 188). In addition, large vases with deep grooves on the shoulders, dark red slipped bowls and a hammer-headed seal represent the Middle Bronze Age II period. The fact that the rhytons unearthed in Imikuşağı were found inside the buildings reminds us of the Hittite rituals. Both jug samples and fruit-shaped paint-decorated altars were also found in Inandık and Kazankaya. Considering the similarity of ceramics, items similar to the Kaniş-Karum Ia-b, Acemhöyük III-II, Alışar 10T, Alacahöyük 4.3 a-b, Boğazköy Büyükkale IV d-c, Aşağı Kent 4-3 and Maşathöyük V levels were uncovered (Sevin, 1985: 96, Fig. 11).

In this case, it is possible to say that the Central Anatolian influence was intense. Triangular motif pieces decorated with wavy horizontal lines and dated to this period were found in Northwest Iran and Transcaucasia in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. They are the same as the painted wares of the first half of the millennium BC. It was determined that the Haftavantepe Early VIIb type dyes were used between 1900 and 1600/1500 BC in northwestern Iran. Although there is a slight difference in decoration, the “black on red ware” type of Trialeti painted can be dated a little later than 1600 BC. The Middle Bronze Age layers containing similar painted works of Elar are dated to between 1700-1500 BC. When we look at this piece, it is possible to say that there was an eastward communication, provided that it cannot be much later than 1500 BC (Sevin & Derin, 1987: 183-184). The remains of 0.50-0.60 m thick stone foundations belonging to the Late Bronze Age II underwent severe destruction. The pottery consists of those made on a fast-rotating wheel. Bottomless and very small flat-bottomed platy dishes were also found (Sevin, 1985: 94, Fig. 4).

*Sos Höyük*, the primary center of the “Erzurum-Kars Section” –another part of Eastern Anatolia– is located in Pasinler District of Erzurum province. Although the mound is 20 m high, it measures 270x150 m. Radiocarbon results date the beginning of the Kura-Araxes culture of Sos Höyük (Period VA) to the second half or last quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC (3500/3300-3000 BC) (Marro, 2000: 478). The settlement in the mound continued from this period until the end of the Bronze Age. The settlement of layer VB-D (3000-2200 BC), which corresponds to the Early Bronze Age I-III, was completely under the hegemony of the Kura-Araxes culture. Both its architecture and ceramics display diversity. During this period, the houses were single-roomed with a vestibule entrance. The center of the building was made of mudbrick on a stone foundation, and the inner parts of the walls were completed with mud-brick. A central pillar carried the roof (Sagona, 2010: 43). The closest examples of the round hearth and ceramic groups in the structure with an anteroom attached in the early period architecture are known from Transcaucasia. The rectangular mudbrick building of the next floor is also dated to the Kura-Araxes culture. Similar structures have been associated with the Martkopi Period in Georgia. The incised striped jar uncovered during the excavations carried out here was compared to the wares in the Martkopi kurgans. Apart from this, the unearthed broken jar piece is known as the “Syrian Bottle” with its handmade gray core and black outer surface (Sagona, et al., 1997: 140). A large number of Kura-Araxes pottery were also

found during the excavations. However, the earliest Kura-Araxes pottery samples are dated to the Late Chalcolithic.

*Güzelova Höyük* is a plain settlement in the northeast of Dumlu subdistrict, 15 km from Erzurum. It is 75x50 m in size and 3 m in height located in the south of Güzelova on the edge of Karasu. It presents a relatively flat settlement characteristic. It is stated that the mound, which was buried under the Güzelova village, had 12.5 m in height, but in fact, it was higher and larger and was extensively destroyed due to landslides. As a result of the excavations carried out by Koşay and Vary, it is stated that the layers belonging to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC were reached. The first settlement of the flat mound was carried out in the middle of the marshy and reedy region. Besides, Kura-Araxes ceramics and animal mangers called "Kurun" were found in the sounding excavations carried out in the mound in the middle of the swampy region (Koşay, 1984: 31). It is stated that since the settlement was in a boggy area, it was abandoned in the early periods due to malaria and other adverse conditions and moved to its present location in Güzelova village (Koşay & Vary, 1967: 5-6, Lev. I).

*Pulur* is 15 km from Erzurum city center, in the south-west of Ilıca district. It is 3 km southeast of the village of Ömerterpe on the right bank of the Pulur stream. It is 17 m high from the plain. It is stated that the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC layers were reached. In the excavations carried out by Koşay and Vary, 4 floors were found. In the first of these, a four-walled mudbrick structure was found on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. It is stated that the floor of the room was built with stone masonry. A jar filled with ash and 2 portable altars were found in the room. It is reported that the other rooms identified were similarly constructed with stones. It is stated that the typical Kura-Araxes ceramics recovered in the 1<sup>st</sup> architectural level and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors were simple, flat with an edge profile and plastered by hand. Some examples of these are represented by lattice-like, eccentric/curvilinear ornaments with relief or groove decorations. These wares are black and red slipped. 3 metal artifacts –sickle, flat axe, and chisel– were identified. These finds date back to 2600 BC. The similarities of the terracotta pots and portable hearths found on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and the next two floors (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>) are highlighted. So, it is possible that the life period of these three floors is close to 2,600 BC. A rectangular stone-walled structure with 6 m width and 6.60 m in height was unearthed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The walls were made with mud mortar. Pottery sherds, a terracotta god idol and a terracotta goddess idol were found in this four-cornered structure (Koşay & Vary, 1964: 6, 13-14, P. 76,77, 78, 84-85). It should be dated at least after 2600 BC and before 3000 BC. Stone foundation series and hearths were found on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. A terracotta god idol and a terracotta bird figurine were found in the lower part of the hearth found in this level. The 4<sup>th</sup> architectural level represents the earliest level identified so far. On this floor, hearth number 4 and some wall foundations were uncovered reaching the main soil covered with gravel and sand with 10 m 40 cm in depth (at a depth of 17 m from the top of the hill). Polished stone axes, hammers and mallets were found in the depths of 6-8 meters (Koşay & Vary, 1964: 14, P.82-83). In the drilling work carried out by Işıklı, important data about the development of Kura-Araxes culture as well as carbonized coal samples were obtained that will take

Erzurum and its surroundings back at least 500 years (4.242-4.075 BC) (Işıklı, 2008: 272-273).

*Bulamaç Höyük* is located in 30 km of Erzurum-Hasankale highway, 500 m south of the road. Its dimensions are approximately 150x50x15 m. Kura-Araxes culture constitutes the early stages of Bulamaç. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium BC, early Kura-Araxes culture wares and portable hearths were found. It is reported that the chaff additive demarcated in the Kura-Araxes ceramics of the early phase almost disappeared in the Kura-Araxes ceramics of the late phase. The horseshoe and round portable hearths of Early Kura-Araxes also changed in form in the Late Phase. In Late Bronze Age, similar types of wares with a hole in the base were discovered in Bulamaç II, Sos III, Karmir Blur IV in the Caucasus and early Samtavro burials in the Kolhid region and Bestaseni Safar-Harab burials (Güneri, et al., 2004: 210, 249-251).

*Büyüktepe/İlkiztepe* is located 1.8 km north of Çiftetaş village within the borders of Demirözü district of Bayburt province. This mound on the Bayburt Plain is 20 m high on the floor of the Beşpinar valley and has 450x250 m dimensions. Handmade ceramics in Büyüktepe are associated with the Kura-Araxes culture. When we look at the diversity of ceramics, we can easily say that there was a communication route extending from the Upper Euphrates and Transcaucasia to Northeast Anatolia in the Kura-Araxes cultural process. The inner and outer surfaces of the simple bowls with black burnt faces have a flattened form. The wares are red or grayish-brown. Very few pottery samples dated to the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC were found in the Büyüktepe excavations. Some of them are intact and their outer surfaces turned gray because of firing. In addition, their surfaces are flattened and frequently overlain by distinctive vertical and wavy inscribed decorations. Other factory examples consist of pots made by hand turning. These dark-faced semi-rough structured wares have a brownish texture resulting from firing (Sagona, et al., 1995: 162).

*Van Dilkaya*, the first key center of the Upper Murat-Van Section, is located in the Edremit District of Van, on the edge of Lake Van, to the west of the Dilkaya village, from which it takes its name. The mound measures 150x110 m. The width of the mound in the northwest direction is not known since it was destroyed by the lake waters. Just below the Iron Age fire layer of the mound, a round room, floor, horseshoe hearth and black burnished, coarse kitchen wares belonging to the Kura-Araxes period were unearthed. A large number of Kura-Araxes pottery was found on the floor. This intensely detected fire layer probably separates the Kura-Araxes III and Kura-Araxes II phases from each other. This type of pottery finds is dated before the Kura-Araxes period, probably to the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC (Çilingiroğlu, 1991: 271). When we look at the evidence, both round and rectangular planned houses were identified under the destruction called the fire layer. Ceramic finds and architectural remains reveal that both house groups were divided into two different phases. In this two-phase building group, rectangular houses represent the late phase and roundhouses represent the early phase. The most beautiful examples of similar round-type architecture were found in Kültepe I, which is within the borders of Nakhchivan (Çilingiroğlu, 1988: 230)

*Van Castle* is within the borders of the central district of Van province, located in the west 5 km away from the city center. This center extends in the east-west direction, parallel to the citadel. The mound is approximately 70-80 m wide in the north-south direction and 750 m long. The mound was inhabited during the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Ages. Just below the Middle Iron Age comes the Kura-Araxes layer. It is very important to understand the Early Bronze Age settlements with civil character in these levels. Particularly, relief decorations and some decorated high-necked potsherds of Kura-Araxes are remarkable (Tarhan & Sevin, 1991: 434-435). Typical orange-colored and glossy dark-faced Kura-Araxes ceramics of the Early Bronze Age were recovered on the floor. Similar to the ceremonial portable hearth with a horseshoe-shaped finger-print decorated during the excavations can be found in centers such as Tepecik, Sakyol, and Pular (Konyar, et al., 2013: 133-134).

*Karagündüz* is 35 km northeast of the central district in the northwest end of the Memedik Stream, which springs from the Özalp region and flows in an east-west direction. It is located at the western end of the fertile Erçek Plain, most of which is under the waters of Lake Erçek. Karagündüz has dimensions of 75x50 m and a height of 5 m on a plain descending with a gentle slope from north to south. Early, Middle, and Late Bronze Age periods were experienced in the mound. Apart from a small round structure, rectangular planned houses were unearthed in settlements belonging to the Early Bronze Age. Typical Kura-Araxes pottery samples were found among the structures built of mudbrick. These are consistent with the well-known frontal, corrugated, spiral decorated, and graffiti samples in Transcaucasia and Lake Urmia (Sevin & Kavaklı, 1996: 342).

*Melecami*, located on the high hills in the east, is in a rather large residential area stretching along a low and wide slope on the western skirts of Mount Ararat, uniting with Doğubeyazıt Plain. On the high ridge where the mound is located, since it is on the last extension of the mountain towards the plain, it is at a point that overlooks the whole Doğubayazıt Plain, the Iğdır and Caucasus pass extending to the north of the mountain, the Iranian road and all the passes leading down to the Lake Van Basin. The mound is located on a low lava rock at the point where the cemetery, from which it takes its name, meets the plain. It was determined that it was inhabited during the Late Chalcolithic (3750-3400 BC) and Early Bronze Age (3400-2300/2200 BC) (Özfirat, 2014: 210).

*Tilkitepe* is 7 km from the province of Van. It is located southwest of Van Airport, 4 km from Van Castle. It is located on the Şamramaltı Plain, close to the city center of Van and the eastern shore of Lake Van. This mound is noteworthy as it is the only easternmost Halaf center with stratification in an area of 400X500 square meters and 8 m in height. Although it is stated that there was a local cultural phenomenon of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC in Tilkitepe, it is possible to talk about a partial cultural phenomenon associated with Uruk. The mound was preceded by the Mesopotamian-influenced Obeyd culture in the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and the Halaf culture in the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium BC (Korfman, 1982: 147-154, 166-167, 175-176).



## The Internal Dynamics of the Mounds in the Eastern Anatolia Region

Recent studies make it clear that Eastern Anatolia was one of the leading regions where the Paleolithic Age people inhabited. Archaeological evidence reveals that these people lived near the water's edge or around the water source in areas dominating the region where they could hunt animals (Tiryaki, 2020a: 252-253). Unfortunately, the evidence for the existence of these people who lived in groups becomes vague when it comes to the Neolithic peoples. While the Paleolithic people chose to live on the slopes, ridges, and hills, they began to opt for plains when they reached the Neolithic period. Especially the success of production and storage, which points to technological development, brought settled life. The best example of this is Cafer Höyük, an Aceramic Neolithic settlement. Unfortunately, there are no sufficient pieces of evidence to understand the first established model of humans. Except for Cafer Höyük, the earliest date available for the centers such as Norşun, Tülintepe, Tepecik, Korucutepe, Habusu, Şemsiyetepe, Pulur, Arslantepe, Değirmentepe in Eastern Anatolia extends to the Late Neolithic Age. Actually, this is misleading. Because we can easily say that these mounds were inhabited before the Late Neolithic Period, but they remained below the plain level. This time period also points to the earliest regional relationship network of the region (Özdoğan, 1977: 43). With the next process, from the Late Neolithic to the Middle Chalcolithic Age (5800-4000 BC), contact was started with the cultural atmosphere of Syria-Mesopotamia, which deeply affected the dynamics of the region in the coming years. Our knowledge of the Neolithic Period comes only from the Upper Euphrates-Malatya region probably due to incomplete research and excavations. We can contend that if the excavations carried out in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya Section did not exist, our knowledge of the Neolithic process of this region would not be different from other sections. Moreover, the Halaf culture, which was reached in Tilkitepe from the early excavations carried out in the geography of Van, plays a key role in this respect (Kocaispir & Parliti, 2020: 432).

In the "Chalcolithic Age", the effect of new cultural elements that would lead to changes in the Eastern Anatolia Region began to show itself. These innovations spread to the Upper Euphrates-Malatya part, which started to interact with the regions as of the last quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. Because the region had been under the influence of interregional migrations since the Chalcolithic Age when people began to use metal extensively. It started to become an area of commercial, cultural and social interaction. In this age, the relations developed by the communities in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya section with Transcaucasia, Syria and Mesopotamia and even Central Anatolia continued in every period, which is confirmed by archaeological data such as architectural remains, pottery artifacts, stone, bone and metal items (Tiryaki, 2017: 180-181). It is not possible to talk about a similar situation for the Erzurum-Kars section. Because, from a handful of excavations, satisfactory findings to illuminate this process could not be obtained. The biggest reason for this is the lack of scientific excavations. Because until recently, due to the climatic conditions, the thought that settled life and agricultural production in Erzurum and its surroundings may have been started in the Late Chalcolithic Age was refuted with the findings from Pulur Höyük (4242 BC) (Işıklı, 2008: 269-288) and Alaybeyi Höyük (4721 BC) (Işıklı, 2019: 145).

When we look at the region in general, it is possible to say that the dimensions of the communication network broadened and became more evident through this period, even if we have little information. We understand from the settlements in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya regions, the Muş Plain settlements and the Van Tilkitepe settlement that the settlers throughout Eastern Anatolia were in contact with the Syrian-Mesopotamian cultures during these times. Archaeological materials obtained from the mounds, especially in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya section, confirm that the interaction expanded (Esin & Arsebük, 1974: 142; Hauptmann, 1976: 25).

With the Late Chalcolithic Age, colonization movements increased and community movements became more organized. According to the results taken from the mounds in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya region, along with the Mesopotamian-Syrian cultural influence, a significant cultural communication was shared with the Caucasus and Central Anatolia (Esin, 1979: 94). When the archaeological findings in Erzurum-Kars and Upper Murat-Van geography were added, the dimensions of the communication range expanded to Northwest Iran, South Caucasus, including Nakhchivan (Palmieri, 1984: 100). In this process, the fact that the earliest examples of Kura-Araxes type ceramics were found especially in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya centers made it necessary to pinpoint that their origin should be sought in this geography.

When it came to the transition stage from the Late Chalcolithic to the Early Bronze Age throughout Eastern Anatolia, the existence of a culture with a monumental and powerful architecture emerged. These structures in Eastern Anatolia, which bear the traces of the mentioned culture, were compared with the architecture of the Martkopi Period in Georgia. The incised striped jars recovered during the excavations were compared to the wares found in Martkopi kurgans (Sagona, et al., 1997: 140). The earliest Transcaucasian examples of this type of ware are dated to the Late Chalcolithic, but it should be kept in mind that earlier ones were found in Eastern Anatolia. Apart from these, dark-faced pottery sherds from Eastern Anatolia are defined as Sioni pottery in Georgia (Sagona & Sagona, 2000: 143). Similar types of wares with a hole in the base found in Bulamaç II and Sos III, which are also located in Erzurum, were found in Karmir Blur IV and Early Samtavro burials in the Kolhid region and Bestaseni Safar-Harab earthen tombs in the Caucasus (Güneri, et al., 2004: 210). When all these data are brought together, it is essential to achieve earlier date results, although there are very few excavations and studies in Eastern Anatolia compared to the Caucasus.

The Early Bronze Age is a period in which many novelties began to be seen in Near Eastern archeology. During this period, there was a significant increase in the number of settlements and population. At the same time, it is suggested that animal husbandry overtook agriculture in the region. Furthermore, there were crucial migrations especially through the Caucasus in this age. It is stated that with these migrations, a different house type and especially with its upturned horn stove, the Northern Black Sea Kura-Araxes I culture and the Transcaucasian Early Bronze Age culture were brought to Anatolia (Hauptmann, 1979: 53-54). Those in Kültepe I, which is located within the borders of Nakhchivan, are given as an example of round-type architecture (Bahsaliyev, 1997: 17). However, the architecture of Pulus Sakyol, which is located in the Upper Euphrates

section, draws a different picture. We see that this settlement formed a model of the Kura-Araxes peoples with a large central courtyard adjacent to each other with a radial system. Architectural designs that partially fit this model were implemented along the Euphrates in Titriş, Kurban, and Lidar mounds (Fidan, 2013: 115).

It is emphasized that the oriental influence was evident in the internal dynamics of the centers where Nakhchivan type handles (Esin, 1979: 87, 91-93) and Kura-Araxes potteries with Transcaucasian influence were found (Sagona, 1994: 230). However, the fact that some samples of these data were determined in the earlier phase settlements from a handful of excavated centers in Eastern Anatolia is still a big question. These evidences show that the Kura-Araxes findings, which we know to have existed in the fourth mid-millennium BC settlements in Eastern Anatolia, began to appear in the Transcaucasian settlements in the following period.

Sherds represented by monochrome and polychrome painted pottery were found in Van-Karagündüz Höyük, along with sherds that could be included in the Van-Urmiye cluster. Similar pottery was found in an area extending from Erzurum to Nakhchivan to the western shores of Lake Urmia. These are consistent with the well-known frontal groove spiral decorated and graffiti samples in Transcaucasia and Lake Urmia (Sevin & Kavaklı, 1996: 342). Apart from this, it is stated that the diversity of metal objects and their derivatives (clamps, spears) in Malatya-Arslantepe have a key role in reaching the raw material source of the nomadic communities associated with the Transcaucasian world and in the spread of metal technology. In this case, it is quite logical that the Caucasian peoples who came to Anatolia for their mineral raw material and other goods brought this culture to their own lands. We can say that these groups from the Caucasus became a part of the Kura-Araxes cultural cycle and spread by establishing complex and inconsistent relationships with the rural population in the region when the Late Uruk-related central system collapsed (Frangipane, et al., 2014: 178, 457-459, Picture. 3-4).

It is understood that there were regional differences at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC and the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC. The painted ceramic culture identified in the centers in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya section again reflects the communication with the southern regions. In addition, the fortification system we see in centers such as Köşkerbaba and Imamoğlu provides valuable insight into the political structure of the region. Although a dominant local culture survived, it maintained its cultural ties with the close vicinities of Urmia and Transcaucasia (Palmieri & Frangipane, 1990: 191-192). For now, it is not possible to talk about centers with defense systems and central architectural structures in the centers in Erzurum-Kars and Upper Murat-Van sections, as in Upper Euphrates-Malatya.

By the turn of the millennium BC II, it is understood that there were sharp divisions between the cultures of the peoples living in the parts of Eastern Anatolia. In the MBA layers of Şemsiyetepe, Pirot, Imamoğlu, and Arslantepe in the Upper Euphrates-Malatya section, locally painted wares were found apart from the Central Anatolian influenced local Hittite wares. However, a few Monochrome Middle Bronze Age fragments found in Sos and Büyüktepe in Erzurum-Kars sections and the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC layers of Van-

Karagündüz are similar to those in the Haftavantepe Early VIB layer near Urmiye (Sevin, et al., 1998: 78).

### **Conclusion: The Archaeological Order of the Mounds in the Eastern Anatolia Region**

The provinces of Malatya and Elazığ, located in the westernmost part of Eastern Anatolia, are well-researched parts of the dam rescue excavations that have been continuing since the early 1970s. This region has been one of the dwelling places due to its availability of water resources, rich vegetation, and abundant animals for hunting. The region also has a special position that provides a link between Mesopotamia and Anatolia. Thus, we see the traces of the earliest settled life in Eastern Anatolia in this location with the Aceramic Neolithic Age. In the following periods, a wide-ranging market in the south was discovered through trade colonies in which certain materials such as lead, silver, arsenic copper, and various processed and unprocessed metal artifacts from copper were exchanged. Then, some silver and copper resources of this region must have been known and used by the local miners. Another main commercial material of this region is obsidian. Especially the Bingöl region, where Murat mound is located, is significant in this respect. It was determined that the obsidian resources of this area were distributed especially in Mesopotamia (Tiryaki, 2020b: 5).

The results obtained in this study provide significant clues in terms of settlement archeology of the mounds in Altınova. When we look at the distribution of the settlements on the plain in Altınova, it is clear that there were satellite settlements connected to a large center such as Norşuntepe. Along with the water source, there are small village settlements with 250x200x15/20 meters of medium size around Kövenk, Könk, Korucutepe, Tülintepe, Tepecik Makaraz Tepe, which are arranged approximately at 5-meter-intervals. These mounds, in the form of smaller-scale village settlements, generally do not exceed 2 meters in height (Parlıtı & Caner, 2021: 33-41). The main reason why the mounds here are overly populated on the valley slopes or hilly places in the plain is due to geographical reasons, but the motive of controlling the region should also be considered. The plain area was mostly used for agriculture and animal husbandry. Although agriculture was the main source of sustenance, animal husbandry (Koday, 2018: 300-301) and trade must have been an essential source of livelihood as it is today.

Upper Murat-Van region to the east of the Upper Euphrates-Malatya area roughly covers today's Van, Muş, Ağrı, Iğdır, Bingöl and Bitlis provinces. The Van-Muş Region, which is scattered among the mountainous elevations with convenient living spaces, has unfortunately not been researched archaeologically as well as the Upper-Euphrates Malatya Region. The section reflects the traces of many cultures since the Early Chalcolithic period, as it is located at the intersection of the Eastern Anatolia, Caucasus, Northwest Iran, and Mesopotamian roads. Despite the increased archaeological research in recent years, the number of mounds discovered and publications about them so far are quite few.

Erzurum-Kars Region, which has the highest settlements in Eastern Anatolia, has rich grassland potential and is also known as "Erzurum-Kars Plateau" by geographers. Due to the geographical and climatic conditions, it is stated that settled life and agricultural

production in Erzurum and its vicinities started in the Middle Chalcolithic Age. However, the region, like many parts of Eastern Anatolia, has not been adequately researched. Considering the locations of the settlements in the Erzurum-Kars section, it is seen that they are concentrated on sheltered mountain slopes in an area of fertile soil. Undoubtedly, the main reason for this is not only the struggle with nature but also the need for protection. It can be said that people of this geography known for animal husbandry today, must have adopted an economy based on animal husbandry in the past too. Considering the location selection of the mounds in the Erzurum region, it can be said that land transportation connections were established with the Caucasus generally along the river valleys, so trade was another chief factor in the selection of location.

As a result, when we look at the positioning of the mounds in the Eastern Anatolia Region, they are generally located in a position dominating the fertile lands, close to the water sources, or by lakes. When considered in terms of protection, those in the Keban, Karakaya area and Van Basin are in the open areas while those in Erzurum-Kars Section lean towards the mountain slopes. While deciding on the selection of location, we see that many factors such as the dominance over the environment, wind direction, and exposure were effective besides sheltering. Consequently, the settlers preferred watersides, slopes, high places, or plains for settlement based on the socio-political structure of their region. In this way, the settlers favored the same settlement repeatedly, even though they belonged to different periods and different cultures.

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