

# Neolithic cultures of the Marmara region

Ađaçlı

Ařađı Pınar

Fikirtepe

Hoca eřme

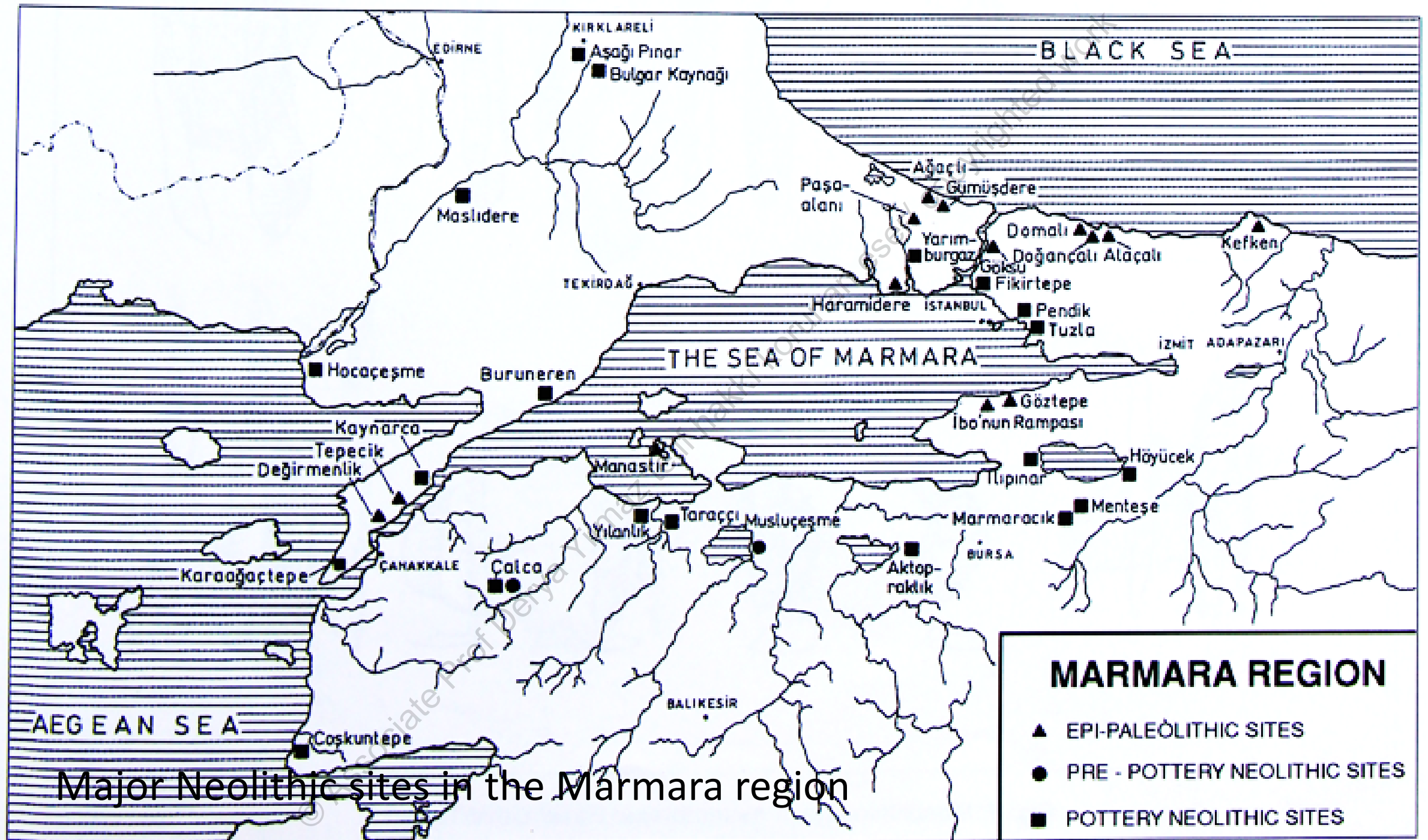
Pendik

Yarımburgaz Mađarası



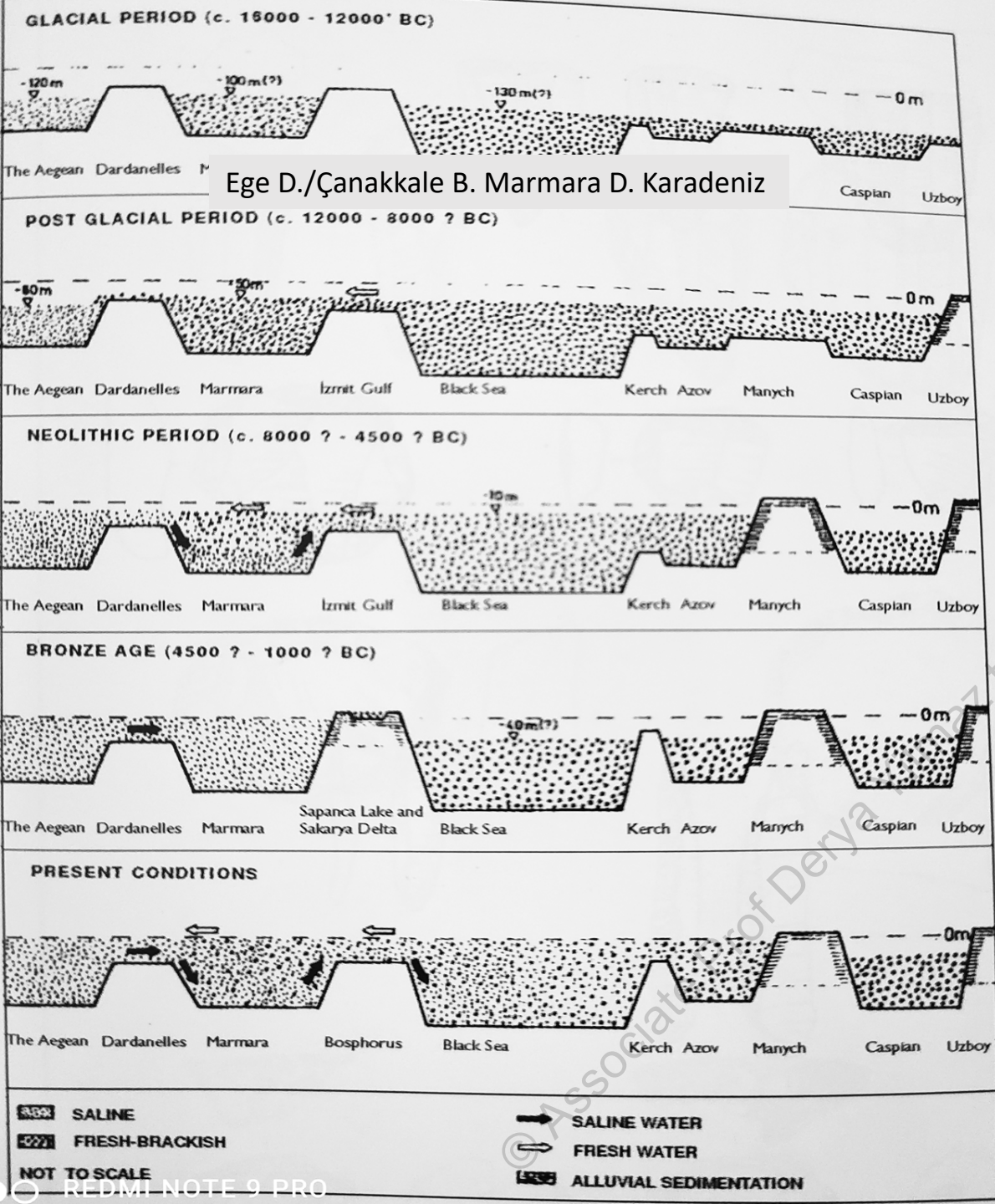
The Northwestern part of Turkey, lying between the Balkans, Anatolia, the Aegean and the Black Sea, has been a melting pot of different cultures. It is also evident, however, that the region around the Sea of Marmara occasionally act a barrier, preventing cultural interaction among these regions. Following the Early Aurignacian period, no sites are known in this region that can be dated to the later parts of the Pleistocene. The Mesolithic dune sites of Ağaçlı type, displaying traits similar to those of the northern Pontic Epi-Gravette industries, are on typological grounds- dateable to the 7th millennium BC. The lithic industry used by the initial wave of Neolithic people, apparently in the Aceramic Neolithic Period as known from sites such as Çalca, displays a different type of assemblage, which later appears with the pottery Neolithic cultures of the region.





Major Neolithic sites in the Marmara region





## Changes in the water Exchange between the Aegean and Black Sea

- During the last stages of the Pleistocene, when the mean global sea level was 100-120 m below that of present level.
- The first influx of water into the Black Sea of Marmara came from the Black Sea in the final Pleistocene.
- By around 6000 BC, with a global rise in sea level, the warm salty waters of the Aegean began penetrating through the Dardanelles into the Sea of Marmara, putting an end to the lacustrine situation.
- Still under debate are probable interruptions of the Marmara –Black Sea connection during the Third Millennium BC.
- The present conditions were not established until the beginning of the 1st Millennium BC.

# Ağaçlı

- Ağaçlı is located approximately 30 km northwest of the city of Istanbul and 14 km northwest of the town of Kemerburgaz.
- Ağaçlı with microlite industries is the earliest occupation and workshop during Epi-Paleolithic Period.
- Ağaçlı assemblages show typological resemblance to certain North Balkan industries especially to that of Dikilitaş.









Agaçlı finds mainly small blades during the Epi Paleolithic Period (/Mesolithic Age)

The significance of the Ağaçlı assemblages in the Neolithization process of northwestern Turkey is evident, for it represents the indigenous population of the region prior to the arrival of the earliest Neolithic communities.



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# The problem of Aceramic Period in Marmara and its beyond

- There are few Aceramic sites in the Northwestern Anatolia and also inland region. These are Çalça is in Çanakkale Çan district, and Keçiçayırı and Kalkanlı near Eskişehir.
- It is possible to surmise that that the initial westward movement of « Neolithic communities» took place towards the very end of the Aceramic period, a sparse and random migration following to the mountains ranges rather than the alluvial plains.

Ařađı Pınar

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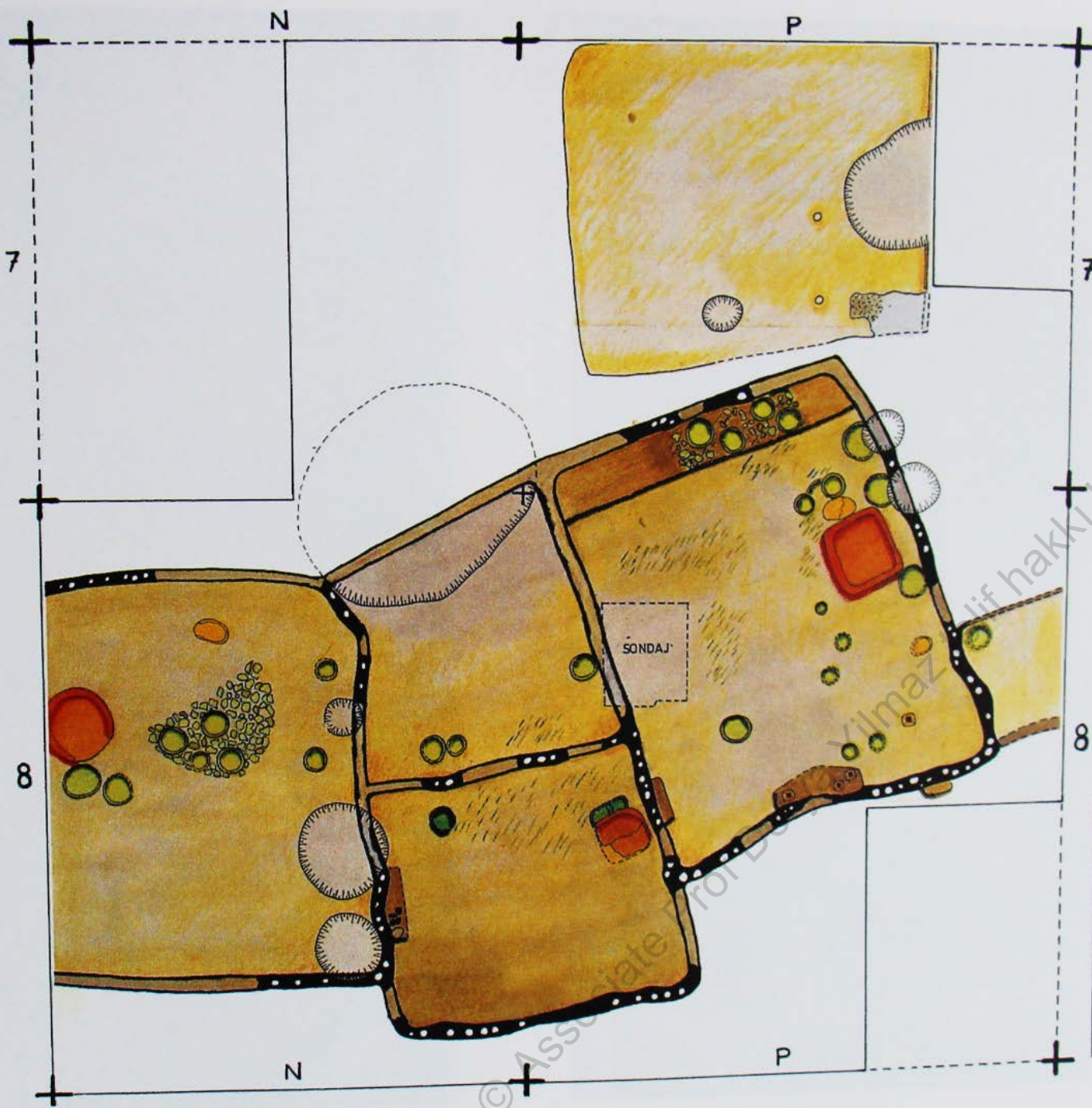


Asagi Pinar Mound is 3 km from the city center of Kirklareli.

- Excavations were initiated in 1993 under the direction of Mehmet Özdoğan German Archaeological Institute and Hermann Parzinger.
- Today it is the largest excavation site in Southeastern Europe, dating from 6,200 to 7,200 years ago. On the other hand, Aşağı Pınar is the largest prehistoric settlement in Eastern Thrace.
- Seven layers were identified during the excavations in the mound.
- 7-6 of these layers Neolithic Period (6,400 – 5,700 BC)
- and 5-1. layers are also shown as the Chalcolithic Age (5,500 – 4,800 BC).







Aşağı Pınar plan of the Vith layer



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Aşağı Pınar general plan of the layer VI



© ASSU Aşağı Pınar layer VI, mudbrick grain storage





Aşağı Pınar layer VI wicker traced mudbricks pieces



Aşağı Pınar pot bottoms with wicker marks from various phases



Aşağı Pınar White on red painted pottery





Aşağı Pınar layer VI, white on red painted pottery



Aşağı Pınar layer VI, white on red painted pottery



Aşağı Pınar layer VI, white on red painted tulip-shaped vessel



Aşağı Pınar layer VI, tulip-shaped vessel





Aşağı Pınar layer VI, cylindrical-necked cult vessel



Aşağı Pınar layer VI,  
collectively found some of  
the 11 cult vessels





Aşağı Pınar layer VI, clay pot closures.

Bone spoons of Aşağı Pınar



Aşağı Pınar: Bone smoothers

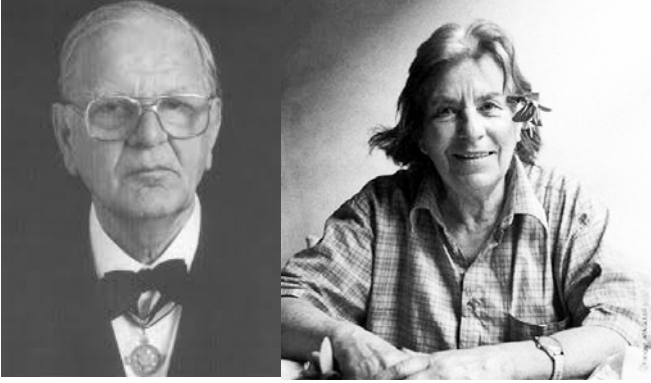


- The archaeological value of Asagi Pinar Mound lies in its geographical location, on a natural cultural bridge between Europe and Anatolia and further east.
- In short, the mound seems to have been an important step in the spread of the Neolithic Revolution, more generally the "Neolithic Package" (using animals as a secondary product, pottery making, and the villageization of the settled order) through Central Anatolia to the Aegean and Europe.

# Fikirtepe

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## History of Research: Fikirtepe and Marmara Region



Kurt Bittel and Halet Çambel



Nezir Fıratlı



David French



James Mellaart



Şevket Aziz Kansu and Mehmet Özdoğan

- Fikirtepe and Pendik, the dating of which has remained controversial, were among the first Neolithic sites discovered in Turkey. Both were found in 1908 during the construction of the İstanbul Baghdad railway, and the finds extensively published.
- K. Bittel and H. Çambel were excavation at Fikirtepe between 1952-54.
- These were followed by Ş.A. Kansu 's soundings at Fikirtepe, Pendik, Yarımburgaz and Tuzla in 1965 and N. Fıratlı's work in Yalova.
- Another major accomplishment was the surveys of J. Mellaart (1955) and D. French mainly in the southern part of Marmara Region.
- In 1979 Mehmet Özdoğan started a survey in İstanbul and its around and Turkish Thrace.





- The Fikirtepe culture represents the Early Pottery Neolithic of Northwestern Turkey, in inland Anatolia, at Ilıpınar for example, the similarities between the Anatolian Neolithic and Fikirtepe cultures are more evident. However, the coastal sites of the culture, though using the same type of pottery as the inland sites, displays a number of elements derived from the preceding Ağaçalı culture, thus indicating that the latter went through a period of acculturation. Here on the coast distinct stages of evolution are apparent in the Fikirtepe culture. The latest stage of the Neolithic period in Northwestern Turkey is characterized by the spread of red slipped wares, soon to be White-on-red pottery. This sequence can best be followed at Hoça Çeşme.

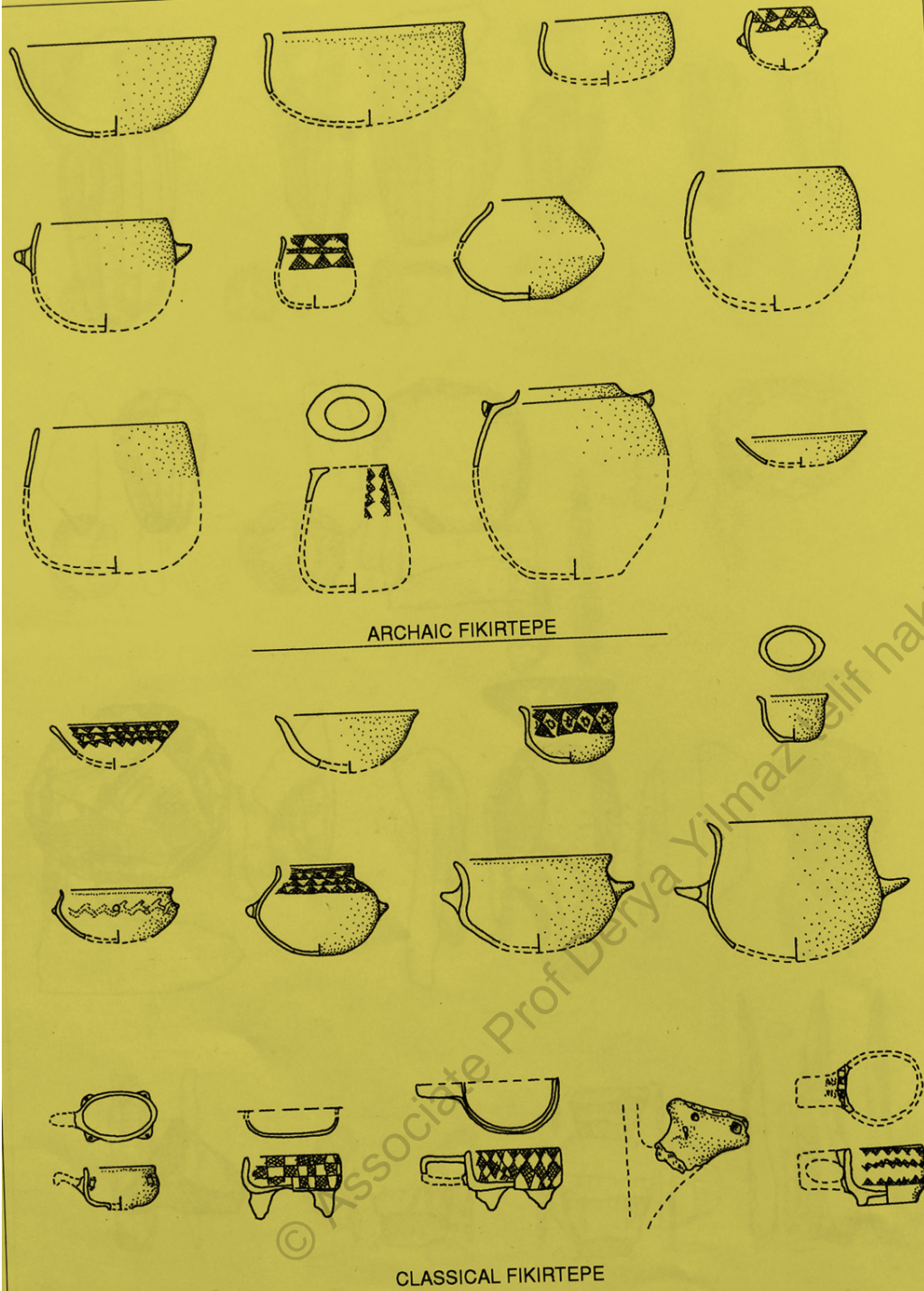
Fikirtepe: Round hut with semi-subterranean floor



# Stratigraphic position of the Fikirtepe culture

- The first definitely Neolithic culture of Northwestern Turkey is fikirtepe culture.
- The fikirtepe culture has been recorded in the excavations of Fikirtepe (İstanbul), Pendik (İstanbul), Ilıpınar (Bursa) , Menteşe (Bursa) and Demircihöyük (Eskişehir).
- It is possible to estimate the time range for the Fikirtepe culture as 6200-5500 BC.

# Main vessel shapes of the Archaic and classical Fikirtepe assemblages



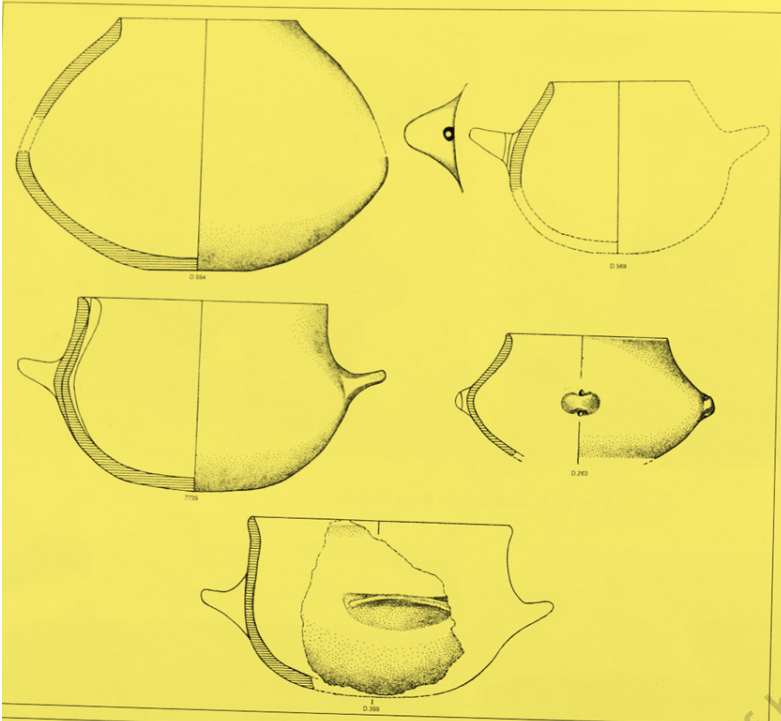


Fig. 32. Fikirtepe  
Pottery: Early Phase

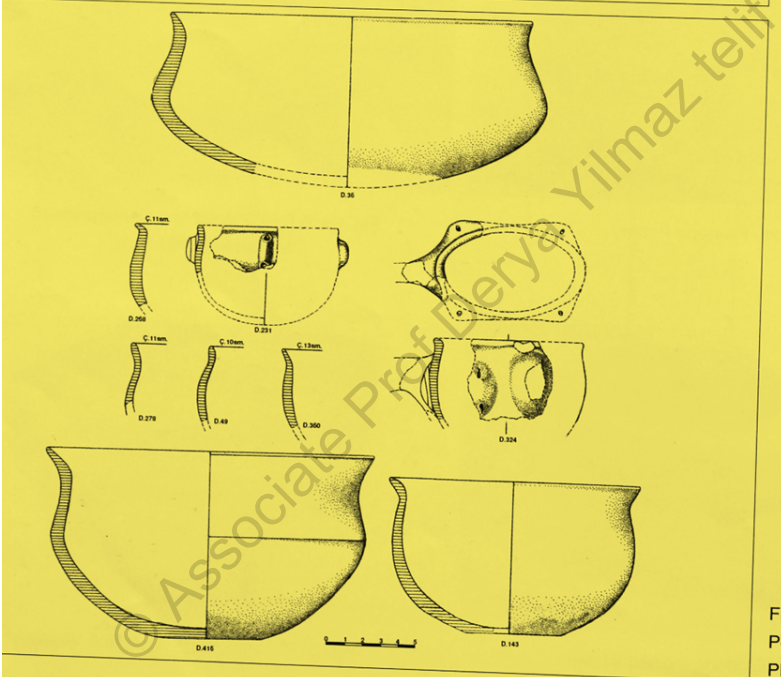


Fig. 33. Fikirtepe  
Pottery: Classical  
Phase

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Fikirtepe pottery



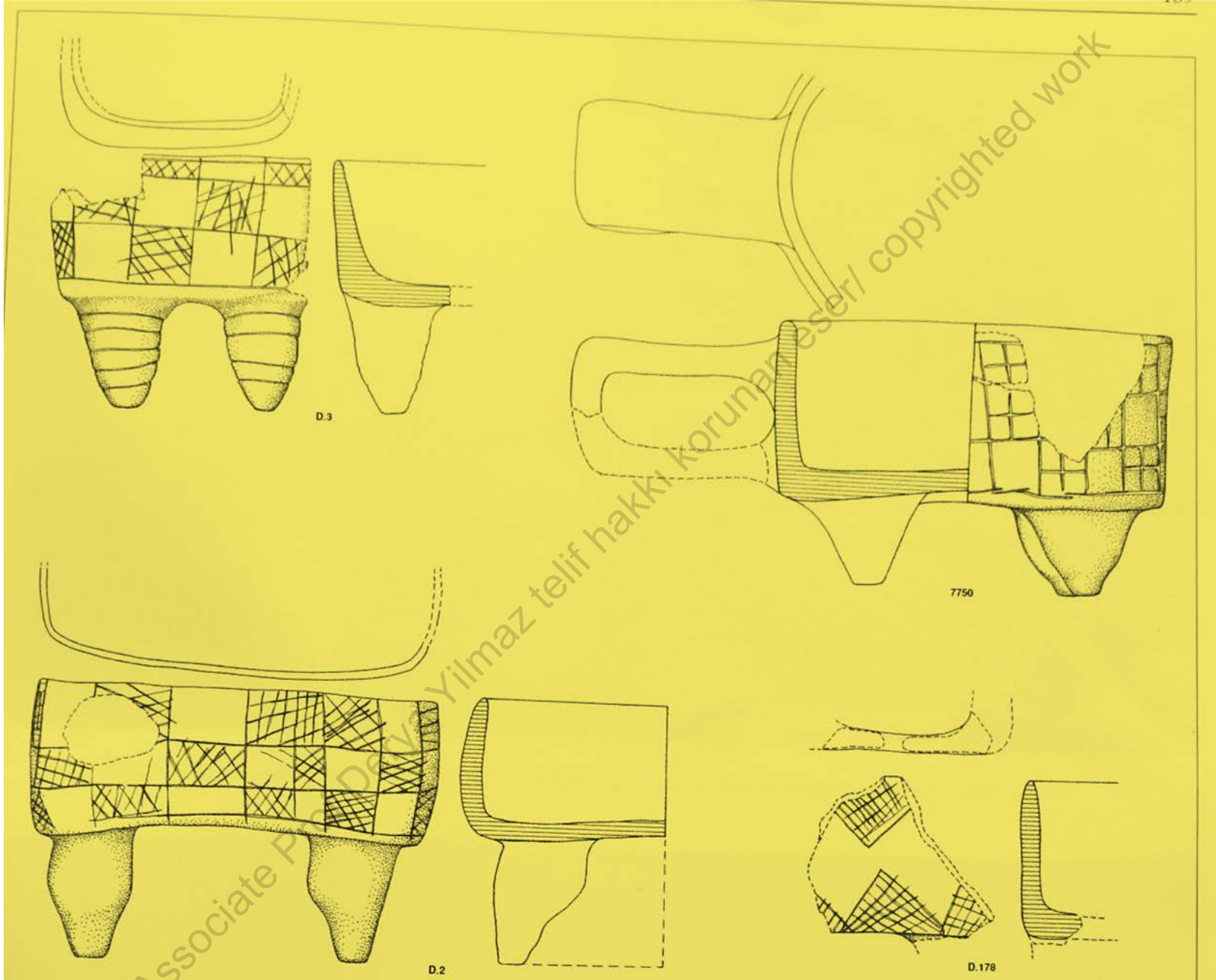
A red slipped and dot-impressed vessel from Fikirtepe



Fikirtepe incised vessel



Fikirtepe: A rectangular vessel



Fikirtepe pottery: Classical phase



Fikirtepe pottery from Thrace:  
a-e Bulgar Kaynağı, f-g/ m-n  
Kaynarca, h-ı Aşağı Pınar



Fig. 43. Fikirtepe pottery from Thrace; a-e: Bulgar Kaynağı; f-g, m-n: Kaynarca; h-i: Aşağı Pınar



Bone tools of Fikirtepe:

a. Harpoon

d-f bone smoothers



fishing with a harpoon

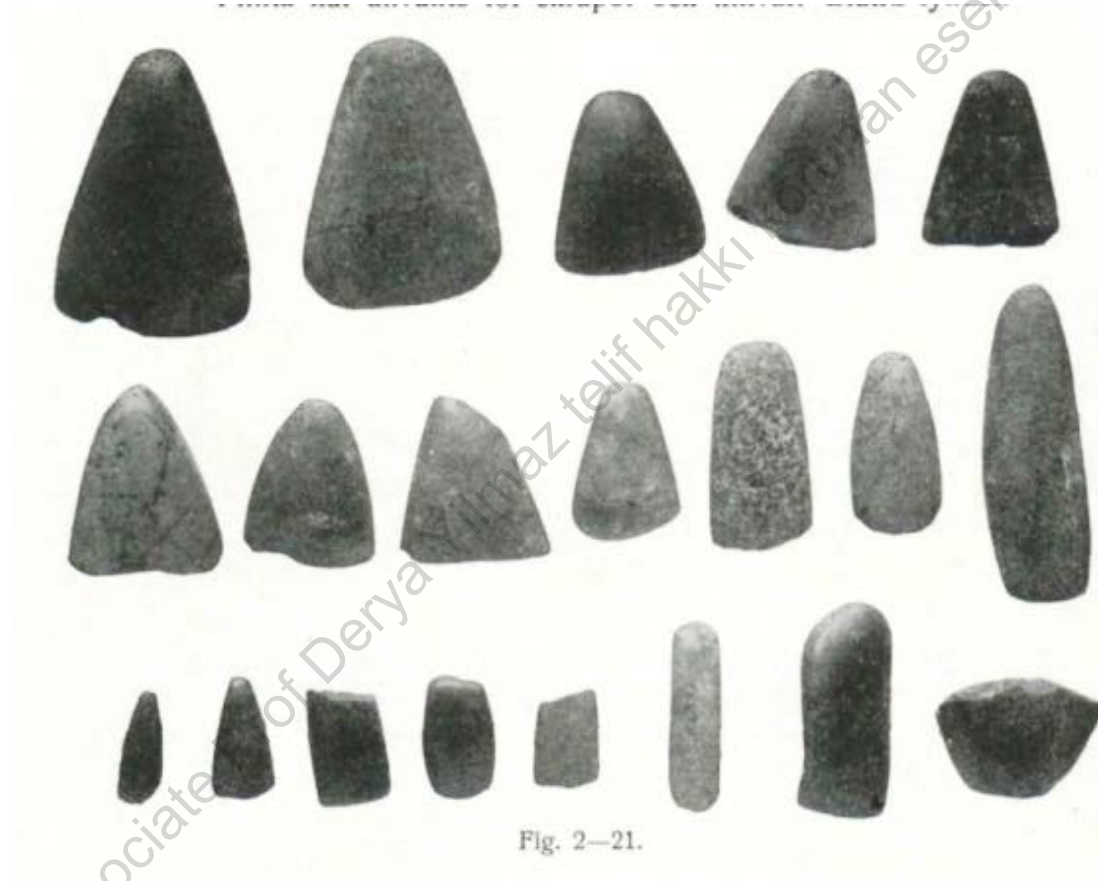




Bone spoons of Fikirtepe and Pendik.



Several sizes Fikirtepe hand-axes





# Pendik

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- The mound was discovered together with the Fikirtepe settlement in 1908, during the construction of the Baghdad Railway at Pendik, in İstanbul.
- In these first settlements, which belong to the prehistoric period of the İstanbul region, as a result of the excavations carried out from 1952 onward, three cultural layers were determined. On the top level, a layer that belongs to the Classical Age was discovered; on the bottom level was a Neolithic layer that included a few different phases.

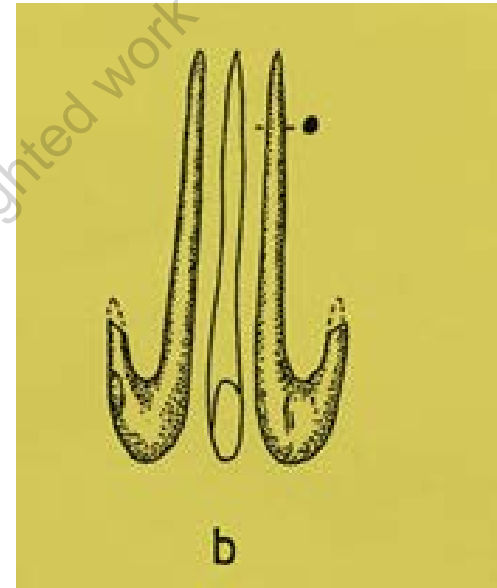




The rectangular mud-slab building at Pendik excavated in 2013 (courtesy of the Istanbul Archaeological Museums).



A figurin from Pendik, baked clay



b. Fish-hook, Pendik

# The Later Neolithic Cultures of Northwestern Turkey

- The final stage of the Neolithic period is best documented at three sites: Hoca Çeşme (Enez-Edirne) , Yarımburgaz (İstanbul) and Ilıpınar (Bursa iznik Lake).



# Hoca eşme

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- Hoca Çeşme is situated near Enez in Edirne. The site was excavated by Sait Başaran in 1989 and continued between 1990-93 by Mehmet Özdoğan.
- Pottery and figurines are strongly reminiscent of the Late Neolithic culture of the Lake district (İznik Lake). The lithic industry as well as the bone tools display Anatolian feature.
- The architecture of the site, on the other hand, is completely alien to that known among the Anatolian Neolithic cultures, circular structures with wooden posts sunk into the bedrock. These constitute substantial architecture, they are by no means comparable to the flimsy «huts» of the Fikirtepe culture.



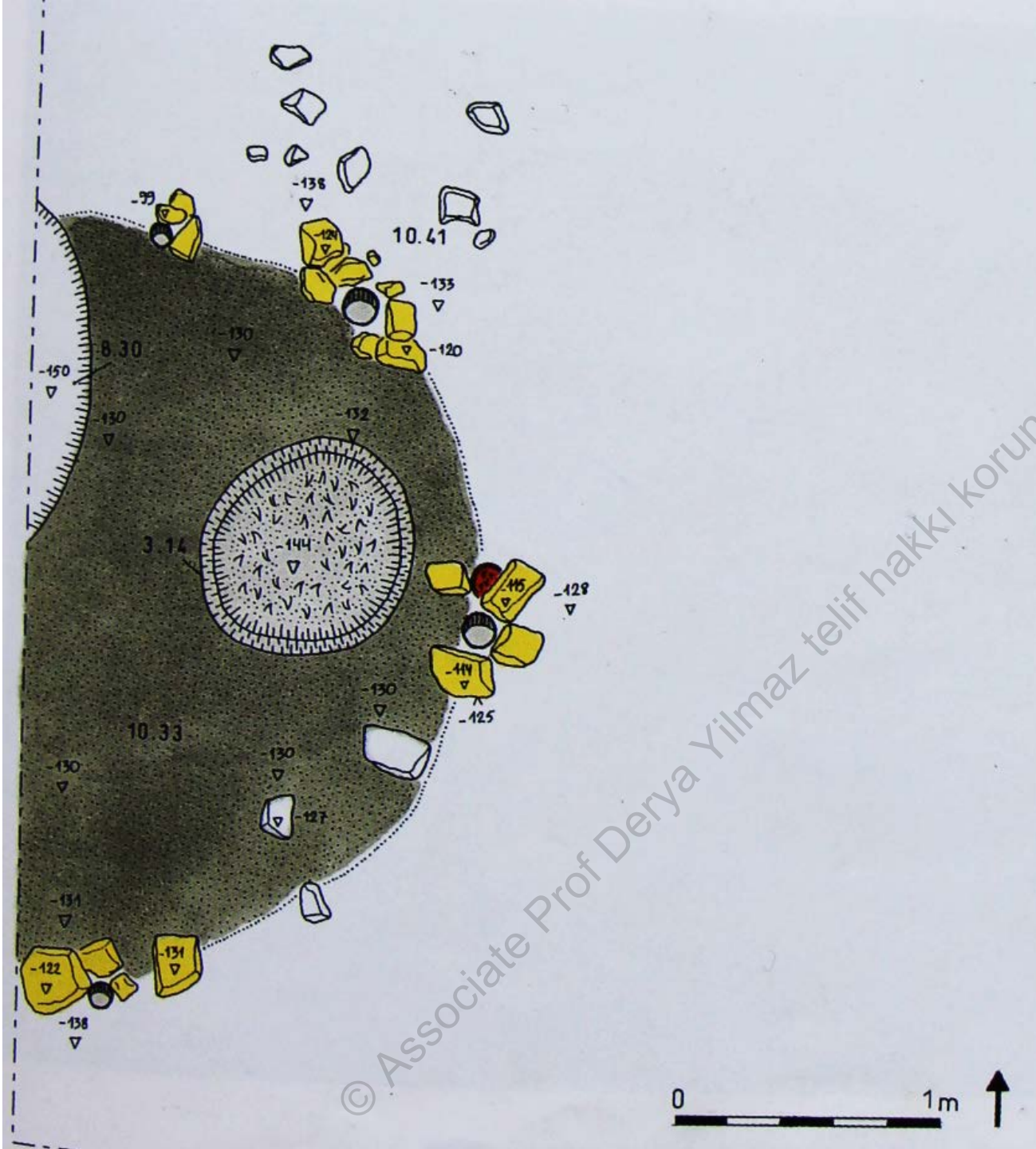


Hoca Çeşme Phase IV: Round buildings cut into the bed-rock.

Another significant feature of encountered at Hoca Çeşme was an enclosure Wall, evidently constructed for a defence purposes.

Hoca Çeşme Phase IV: Round buildings cut into the bedrock





Hoca Çeşme Phase III: Round building with post-holes.



Hoca eşme Phase III: Round building with paved and painted floors.





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Hoca Çeşme phase IV-III: The enclosure Wall





Hoca Çeşme, a general view of the excavations with the enclosure Wall on the left.





Hoca Çeşme phases IV-III: a detail from the enclosure wall



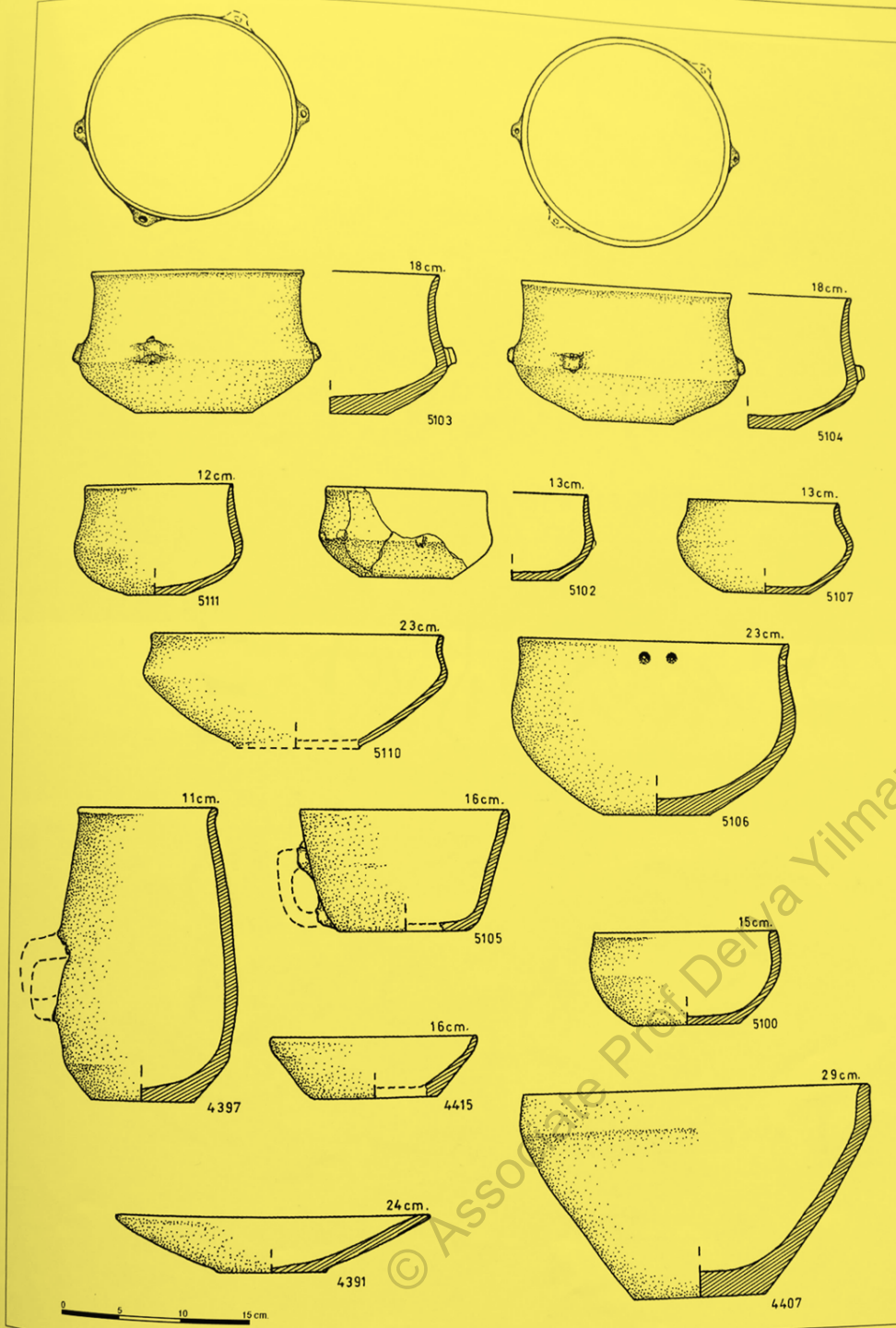
Hoca Çeşme phase II: the first rectangular mud-slab building

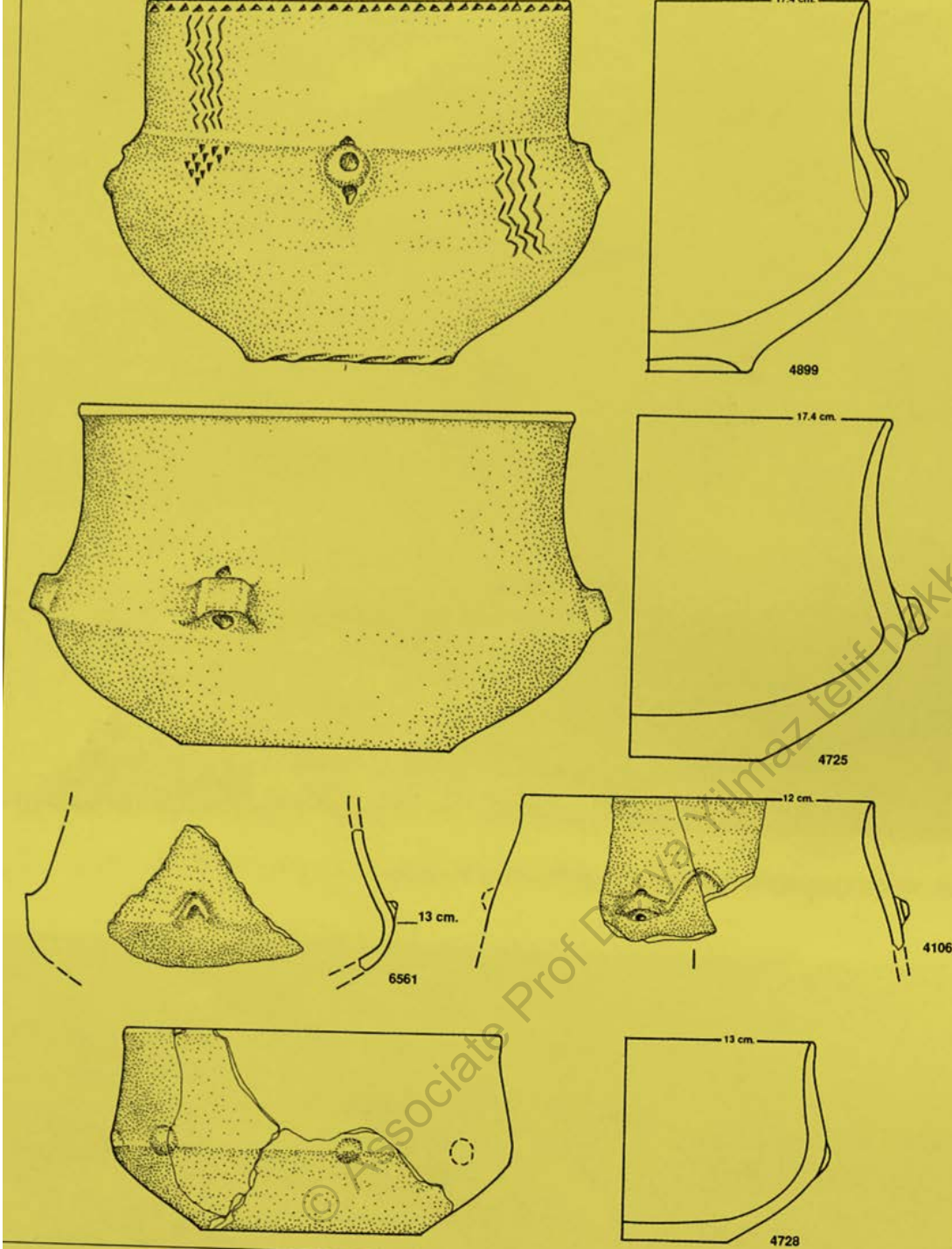
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Aşağı Pınar Level VI: The burnt Neolithic building



# Main vessel shapes of Hoca Çeşme IV-II.





Hoca Çeşme pottery phase III





Hoca Çeşme vessels from phase III



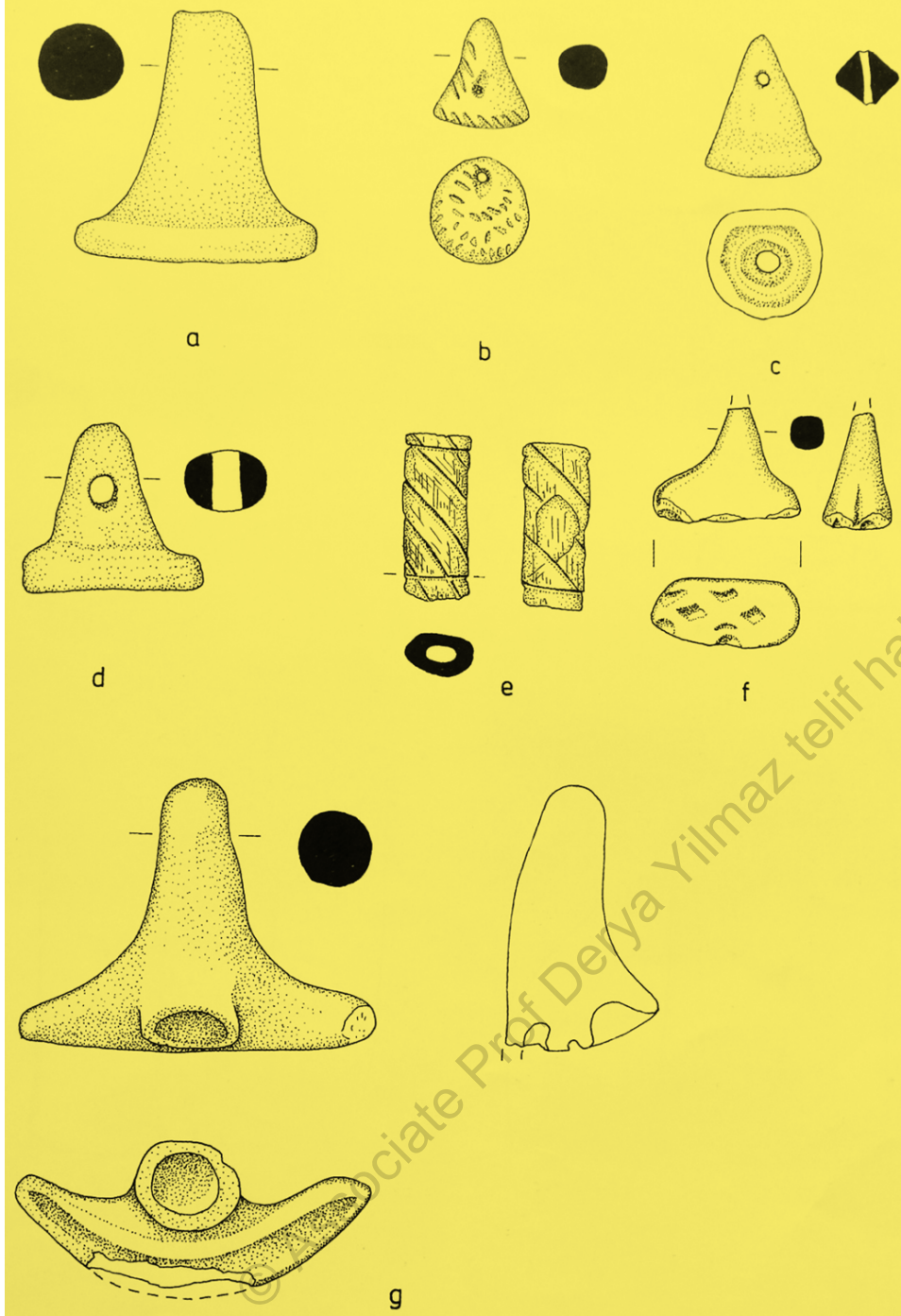
Hoca Çeşme phases III and II: Fragments of antropomorphic and zoomorphic vessels

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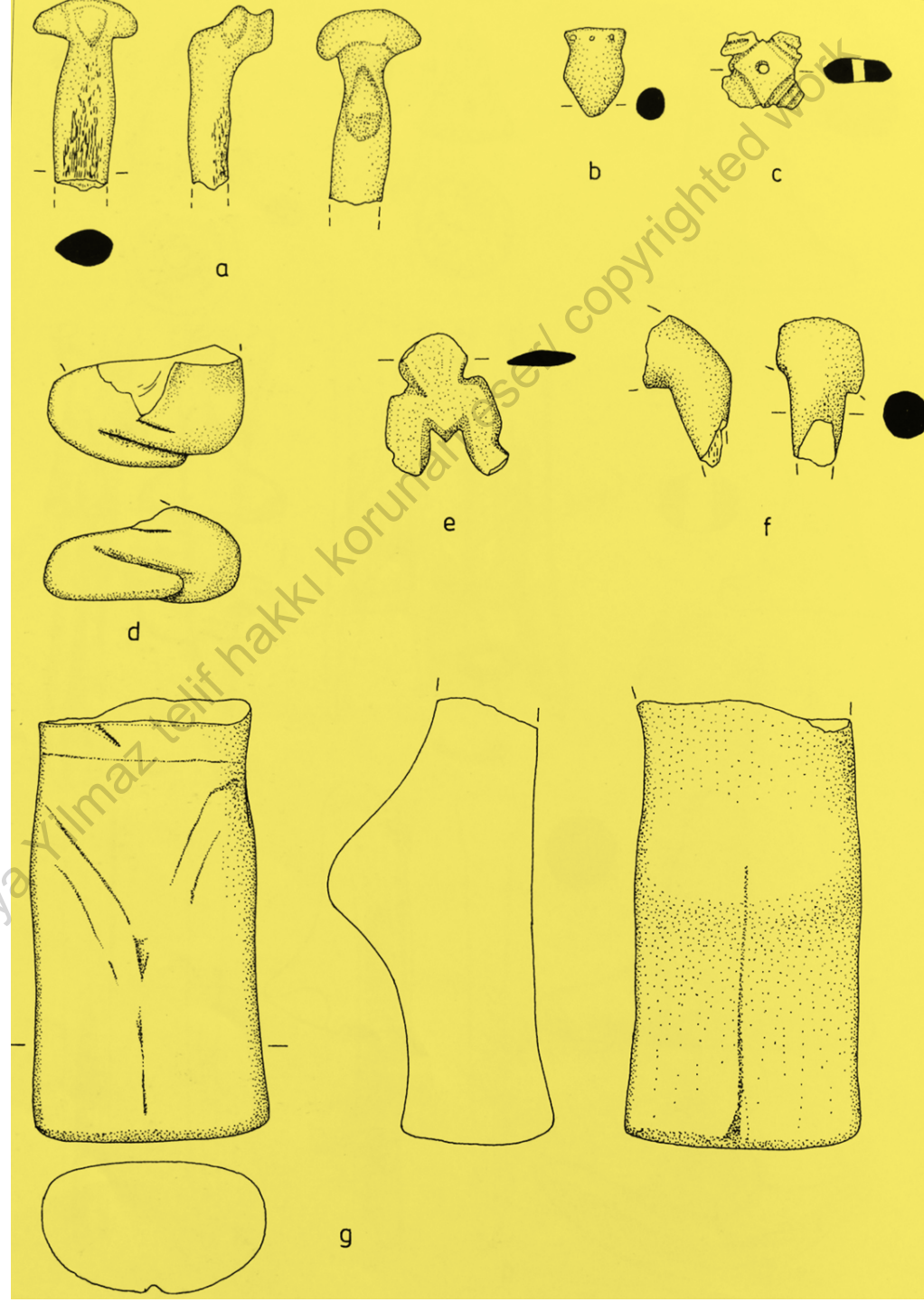
Hoca eşme II White on red painted pottery.



Hoca Çeşme pintaderas

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Hoca Çeşme: figurines and small finds; d-f phase IV-III, g: phase I



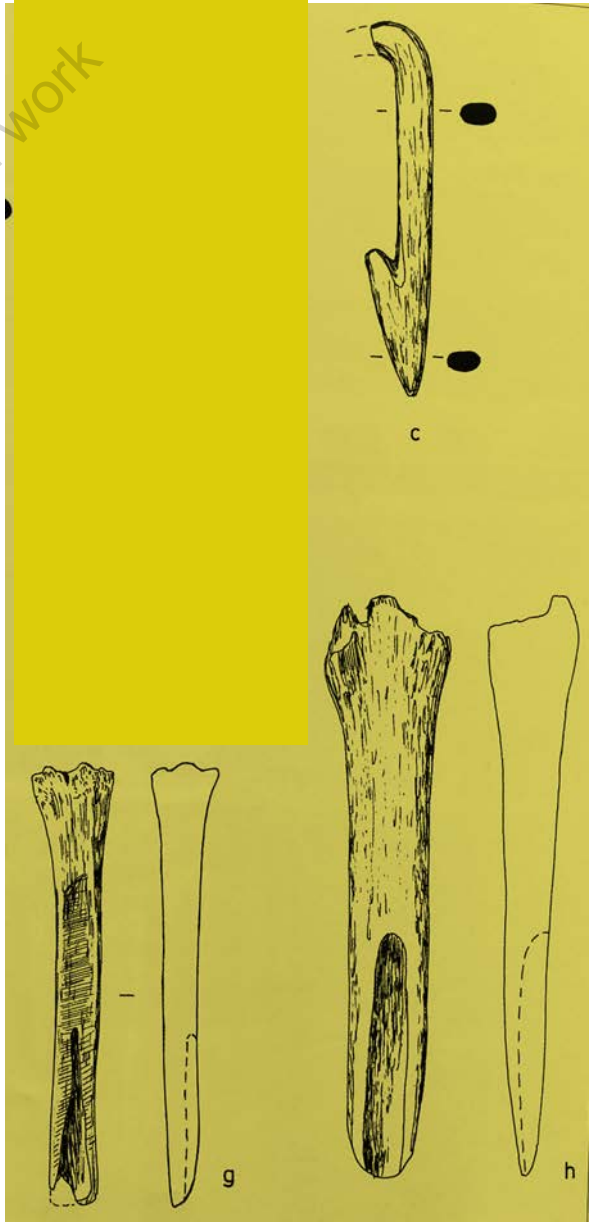




Fish-hook from Hoca Çeşme



Hoca Çeşme: Bone smoothers



Bone tools of the Marmara Region: a. Harpoon, Fikirtepe/ b. Fish-hook, Pendik/ c. Fish-hook Hoca Çeşme/ d-e bone smoothers Fikirtepe/ g-h Hoca Çeşme

# Yarımburgaz Mağarası

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- Yarımburgaz Cave is approximately 20 km west of the city of Istanbul, and about 1.5 km north of Lake Küçükçekmece.





Yarimburgaz is a double cave with slightly offset upper and lower entrance chambers, connected laterally inside the cave. Below Byzantine and modern debris, the upper cave encloses Chalcolithic to Upper Paleolithic occupations above a beach sand attributed to the Last Interglacial. Below the beach sand, strongly modified sediments contain sparse Lower Paleolithic artifacts.

# Yarımburgaz



Scientific exploration in Yarımburgaz Cave dates to the mid-19th century, and some attempts at excavation were made in the 1920s.

Systematic excavation was begun by Mehmet Özdoğan in 1986.

Yarımburgaz: Section with the Neolithic Layers



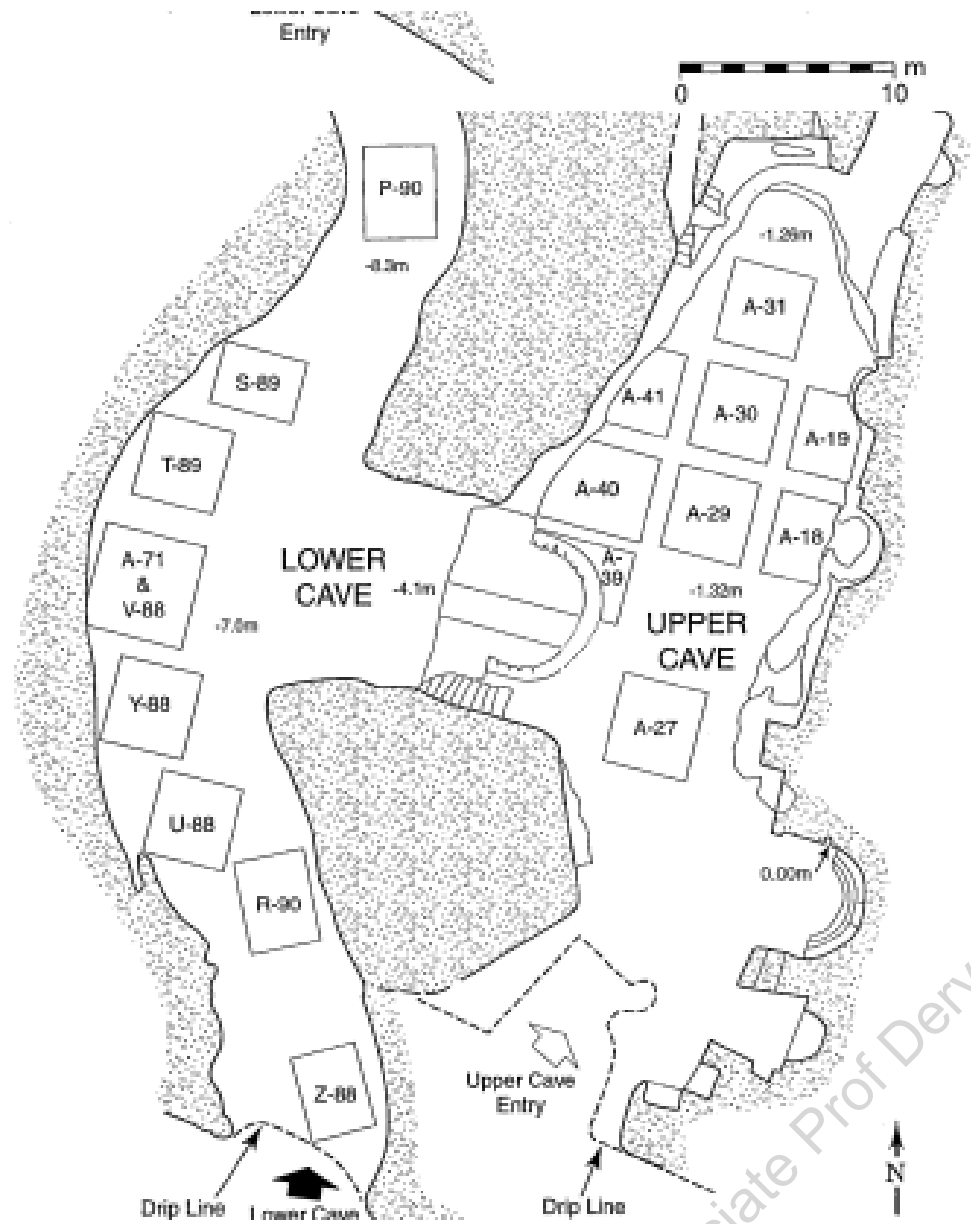


Figure 2. Plan of the outer part of Yarimbuzgaz cave, showing the upper and lower entrance chambers and the excavated trenches.

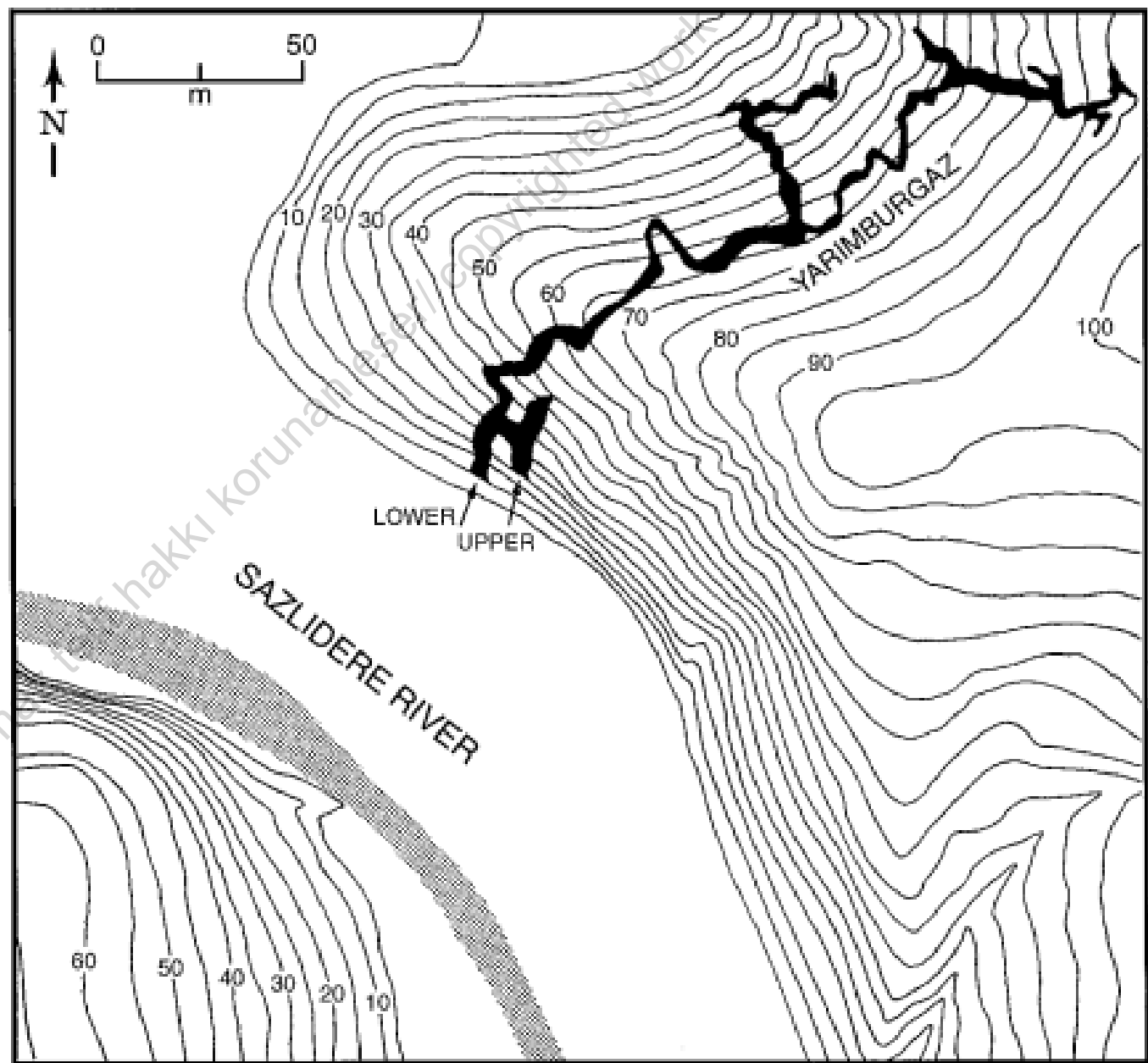
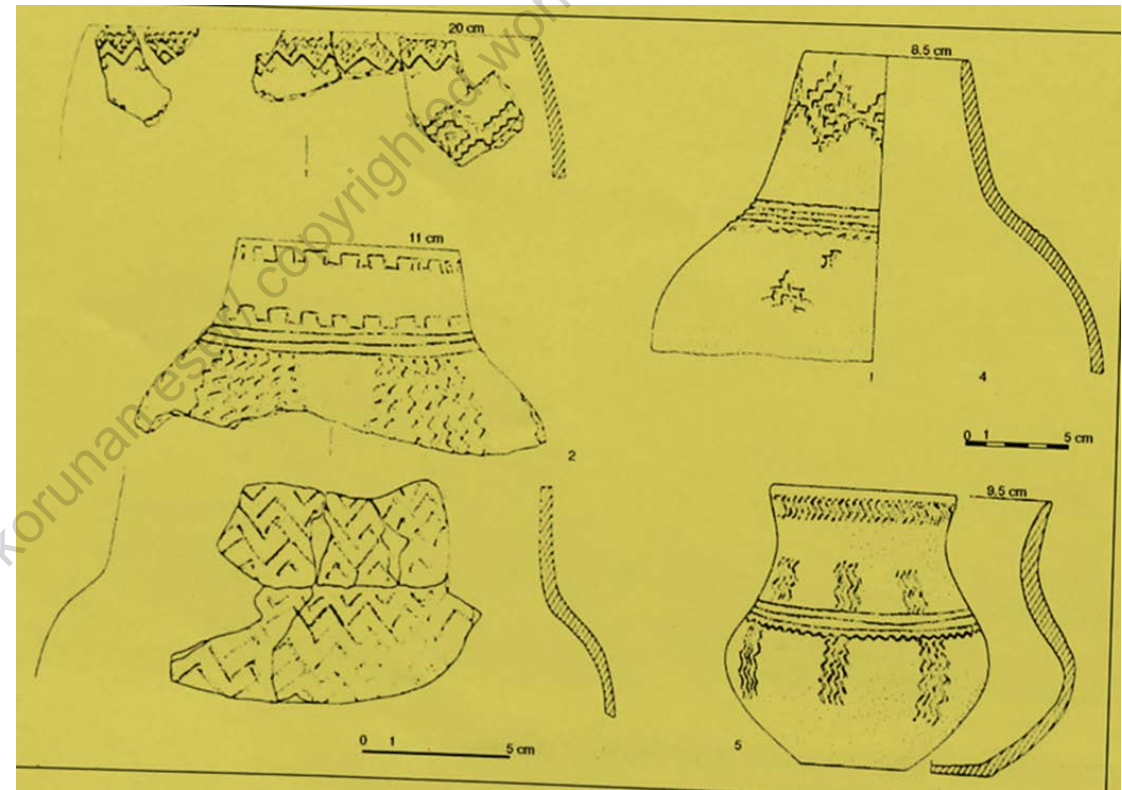
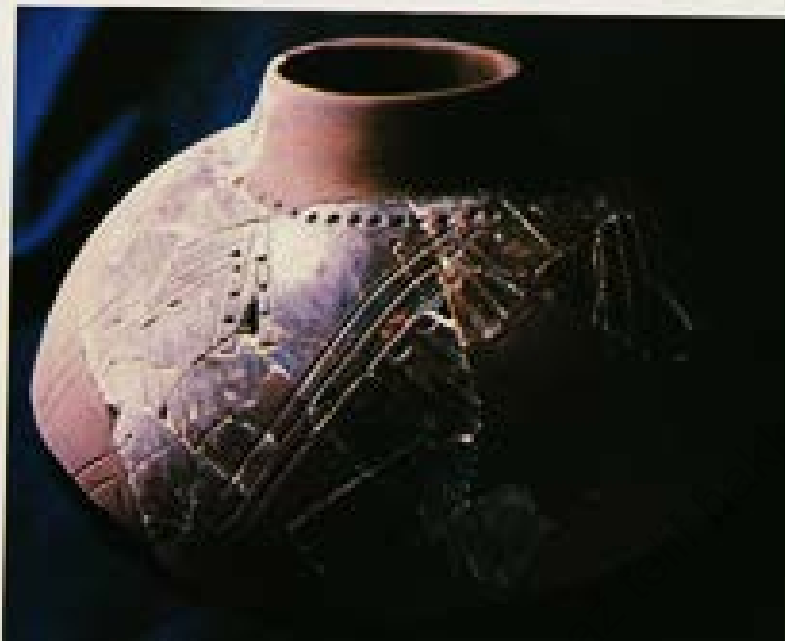
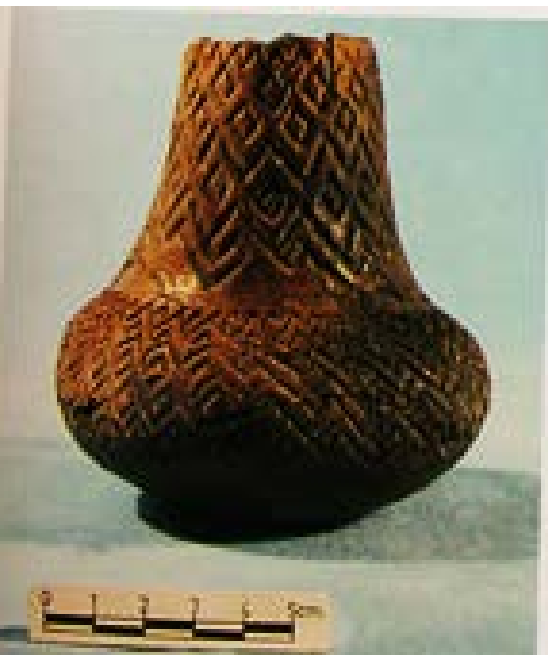


Figure 1(a). Topographic map of the vicinity of Yarimbuzgaz Cave, showing the location of the cave (in black) within the hill adjacent to the Sazlidere valley. Five-meter contour interval.



# Typological sequence of Yarımburgaz





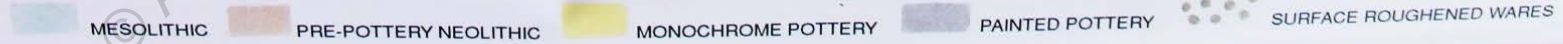
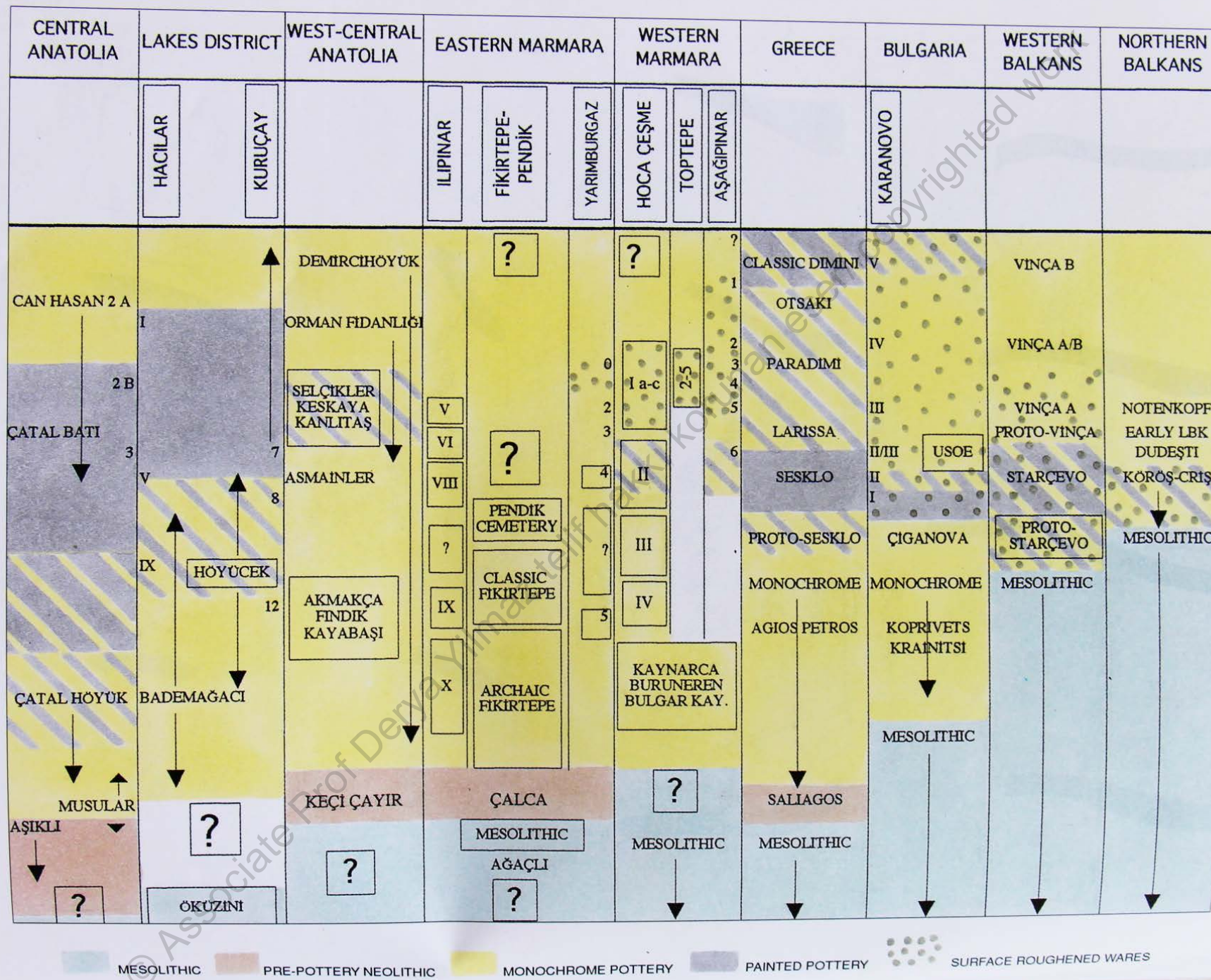
A vessel from Yarımburgaz 4

A vessel from Yarımburgaz 3

Decorated pottery of Yarımburgaz IV

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	WESTERN MARMARA	EASTERN MARMARA
cult table		
lugs	 tubular	 ledge
surface	 red slip	 dark
surface finish	 roughening common	 all burnished
incise decoration		
mat- impressed base		none
base	 raised	 flat
pintadera		none
clay figurin	 common	rare
feestooned bone object		none
bone spoon		
bone polisher		
blade		
bullet core	none	
obsidian	none	
polished celt		rare
burial	none	
ditch		

Comparative table of east and West Marmara Neolithic assemblages.

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