

ECONOMIC DECAY AND URBAN REBIRTH IN THE AMUQ
THE HITTITE CONQUEST OF HATAY AND THE END
OF THE LATE BRONZE AGE
(MID-14th TO THE 12th CENTURY BC)

Marina Pucci

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past 100 years, archaeologists have emphasized different factors as possible causes for the fall of the Hittite empire (13th-12th cent. BC) according to the role that archaeology fulfilled at a given time.

When archaeology was an auxiliary discipline to history, at the beginning of the 20th century AD, material analysis was considered only a way of proving true what was hypothesized in the historical research; if the Medinet Habu inscriptions suggested a “Sea People” invasion, then the numerous finds of so called Mycenaean pottery in the Levant were considered the material appearance of an invasion/migration coming from the Mediterranean, settling down in the Levantine coast and in part responsible for the fall of the Hittites.¹ This assumption led archaeologists working in southern Levant (Dothan 1982) to name an entire class of pottery “Philistine Ware” in order to provide with an ethnic label a specific material culture. Starting from the 1960s, in the era of processualism and post-processualism, archaeology became a discipline mainly based on context analysis taking into consideration multiple factors and rejecting simple equations such as “pots and people” and a single event as explanation for material change; migration theory was then completely discarded (retreat from migrationism) and in the 70’s and 80’s mobility or migration were considered “a lazy person’s explanation for culture change used by archaeologists who could not or chose not to deploy more demanding

¹ Ramses III inscription suggested to scholars that the “Sea Peoples” had an active role in the fall of the Empire (see Bryce 2005, 333-4 and references). However, recent archaeological discoveries allowed this statement to be in part reconsidered, cf. Hawkins 2002, 151; Beckman 2007, 111.

models and theories” (Anthony 2000, 554); therefore archaeologists emphasised more on continuity with previous phases, and explained changes in the material culture as the result of foreign influences, contacts and trade. Only in the 90’s, Anthony (Anthony 1990) emphasized again the need to rethink about migrationism as a possible cause for material change.² From the late 90s onwards archaeologists have been debating on how to prove population movement related to change in the material culture, applying several models of migration (van Dommelen 2012, 404), and analyzing the Sea People movements as a purely archaeological question related to the Levantine coast and independent from the collapse of the Hittite empire.

Parallel to these studies, in the last thirty years, the increase in archaeological investigations in Anatolia, the better knowledge of the Hittite material culture, pottery and iconography, and the use of new methods of material analysis have opened a new topic directly related to the last century of existence of the Hittite empire, i.e. the impact of the Hittite conquest on the local material production in the northern Levant and Cilicia. During the past decade, several scholars such as Gates (2001), Postgate (2007) and Glatz (2011) hypothesized a connection between the Hittite political presence and, at the very least in Cilicia, the presence of a specific pottery industry, establishing a link between “imperial” centralized production and the consequent standardization and exportation of this model in newly conquered territories. In the same years Glatz (2009) proposed seven ceramic shapes as markers for the Hittite expansion, assuming that the Hittite conquest of territories would have been visible from the archaeological material. On the other side, archaeologists working on the peripheries of the empire, eager to find something which could provide dating materials for the deposits they were found in, started to employ the term North Central Anatolian to define a class of pottery or specific shapes, which unequivocally should “represent” the Hittite arrival in these territories; however, they did not consider that this production lacks specific features and presents even in the “core-lands” large problems in dating and secure attribution (Schoop 2011).³

² For a general overview on migration theory in archaeology cf. Burmeister 2000.

³ Matessi (2016, 120) as well as Ünal (2014, 472) already raised some criticism towards this approach.

This article faces both themes from the regional perspective of the Amuq⁴ plain and presents mainly those archaeological contexts in the Amuq which can be dated to the period between the Hittite conquest of the area (end of the 14th century BC) and the emergence of Wa/Palistin in the 11th century BC. It focus on the archaeological evidence related to these 250 years, the Hittite impact on the material culture during the 13th century, its legacy and the Mediterranean influence on the same region a century later. Aim of this contribution is to contextualize the archaeological evidence in its political and historical background.

2. THE AMUQ PLAIN AND THE DATASETS

The Amuq plain (Amik Ovası, 80-85 m asl) is located in modern Hatay region and extends over an area of approximately 900 km² between the Amanus mountain to the west (1900-2250 m asl) and a series of low limestone hills (750-800 m asl) to the south and to the east; the plain is part of the so-called Amik-Gölbasi *graben* (Yener *et al.* 2000, 168) (Fig.1). It is a large fertile land, through which the Orontes river, the Afrin river and the Kara-Su (now channelled) flow; its crucial position between Anatolia, Cilicia, the Qoueiq plain and northern Mesopotamia made this region an important crossroad. The earliest occupation in the area dates to the pre-pottery Neolithic (Casana – Wilkinson 2005, 35), while first settlements are dated to the pottery Neolithic (Yener 2005, 195).

In the period in analysis, the region was under the Hittite rule for approximately 130 years, between the last third of the 14th century and the whole 13th century BC. It likely became, in the 11th century BC, the seat of a new political entity called Wa/Palistin with Aegean/Mycenaean influence and Hittite legacy in the writing system and in the iconographic style of the carved reliefs.⁵

Archaeological investigations in this area flourished in the 1930s and 40s, and over the last twenty years. During the first period, a survey (Braidwood 1937) and several archaeological excavations (Oriental Institute at Tell Tayinat, Tell Judeideh and Chatal Höyük, the British Museum at Alalah) emphasized the importance of this region (Woolley 1955, Braidwood – Braidwood 1960, Haines 1971). The second period of

⁴ Following recent writing uses, the toponims 'Amuq and Tell Ta'yinat are written Amuq and Tell Tayinat.

⁵ Cf. Weeden 2013; Welton, *et al.* 2019; Mazzoni 2013; Janeway 2017.

investigations began in 1995, when the survey project was reinitiated (under the directorship of Aslihan Yener, and since 2017 of Murat Akar);⁶ then archaeological activities gradually intensified, with the reopening of the excavations at Alalah (2005, dir. by Aslihan Yener),⁷ at Tell Tayinat (1999, University of Toronto, dir. Tim Harrison),⁸ Sabuniye (2008-9, dir. Hatice Pamir), Toprak Hissar (2015, Hatay archaeological Museum),⁹ and with the survey in the lower Orontes valley (ODAP, 1999-2005, dir. by Hatice Pamir).¹⁰ All recent activities have greatly improved the topographic knowledge of the region, its road network and archaeological sequence.

The datasets used for this research are based on two projects that are at two different stages: the first project, started in 2008, and completed in 2015 deals with the stratigraphy and material culture from the Oriental Institute excavations carried out during the 30s at the site of Chatal Höyük in the Amuq;¹¹ archaeologists investigated mainly the Iron Age period on the whole extent of the site and reached the Late Bronze Age levels only in two areas at opposite sides of the mound. The second project, started in 2018, focused on the pottery assemblages of the Late Bronze Age sequence identified at the southern fortress (area 4), located to the south of the mound of Alalah.¹² Therefore while the Chatal Höyük results can be considered solidly based on the analysis of the whole excavations documents and on the study of around 13000 diagnostic sherds and 3000 small finds, future work on the Atchana material from the southern fortress may better define the Late Bronze Age sequence, which is here only sketched mainly according to the published evidence and to the observations carried out in the past season.¹³

The two sites show a very different development during the period in analysis: the first, Alalah, was the former capital of Mukiš and seat of

⁶ Avşar, *et al.* 2019; Akar – Bulu 2018; Yener (ed.) 2005.

⁷ Yener *et al.* (eds.) in press; Yener (ed.) 2010.

⁸ Welton *et al.* 2019; Harrison 2016; Harrison 2014; Harrison 2013b; Harrison 2013a; Yener 2013.

⁹ Akar – Kara 2018.

¹⁰ Pamir 2005; Pamir – Nishiyama 2002. Recently H. Pamir extended the survey to neighbouring areas (Pamir 2018).

¹¹ For preliminary publications on selected materials cf. Pucci 2010; Pucci 2013; Pucci 2016; Pucci 2017; Pucci 2019c; for the final publication cf. Pucci 2019b.

¹² This project originates from a previous one carried out on the Iron Age pottery assemblage at Alalah. Cf. Montesanto – Pucci in press; Pucci in press.

¹³ General studies on the LBA pottery from Atchana/Alalah have been carried out by Mara Horowitz (cf. Horowitz 2019; Horowitz 2017; Horowitz 2015).

administrative and religious buildings in the 14th century; even after the Hittite conquest, it played an administrative role over a larger region possibly including Nuhhašše, under the political control of the Hittite viceroy in Karkemiš (Archi 2012). The second, Chatal Höyük, was during the same period a large village strategically located at the entrance to the Afrin valley, most probably during the 15th century one of the sites mentioned in the Alalah census list,¹⁴ it kept its role as a village until the 9th century BC, when it became a secondary tier of settlement system (Osborne 2013, 785) until probably the 6th century BC.

Both differences (stage of the project and importance of the settlements in the LB-IA period) should be kept in mind while considering the contexts presented here.

3. ECONOMIC DECAY AND RURALISATION IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 13th CENTURY BC, THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

At Chatal Höyük LBII levels were exposed in two areas over an expanse of 200 square meters and were correlated according to their pottery assemblages.¹⁵ The archaeological contexts, which delivered a Late Bronze Age assemblage, show a common pattern well represented in Area II: a large building with storerooms was replaced by smaller domestic structures with large open pebbled areas and a storage silo. In area V, which is much smaller, few scattered walls, again with storage silos were recorded. The dating of these phases to the 13th century is based on relative stratigraphy, on the fact that the in situ assemblage found in the building in area II can be dated to end of the 14th beginning of the 13th century (Pucci 2019b, 64-66), on the fact that the pottery collected from the reoccupation of the area is still completely related to the Late Bronze Age II assemblage, and shows continuity with the former occupation. It includes usual LB II Cypriot imports such as Red lustrous, Base ring, but most importantly White Slip II together with few complete examples of Middle Assyrian standard ware (Pucci 2019b, 74 and cat. no. 78). The sequence in area two, i.e. three building phases with pebbled areas and domestic buildings over a deposit of approximately 1.5 m, the presence of 13th century features, the absence of an

¹⁴ Cf. Casana (2009, 28) for the possible identification with Tuhul during the Mittani period.

¹⁵ For a detailed description of these areas with related materials see Pucci 2019b, 63-75, 139-145, 286-288, pl. 192.

abandonment phase, indicate that this reoccupation occurred immediately after the destruction of the former buildings, perhaps in the second half of the 13th century. The presence of large mud brick silos in open areas may indicate the need to store the grains inside the settlement close to the houses rather than in the fields, a phenomenon which could be related to an unstable political situation.

At Atchana the situation is far more complicated by the role of the settlement as a chief town: on the acropolis we can trace the 13th century in very few areas. First the area around the temple: here the sealed bulla of prince Tudhaliya (Niedorf 2002; Yener – Akar 2014; Yener *et al.* 2014; Yener 2017, fig. 3) was found on the floor of a building located approximately 15 m from the temple: the owner of the seal is dated to the time of Muršili II (1321-1295 BC)¹⁶ and consequently the bulla sets a terminus post quem for the use of the structure. When the building collapsed, it was levelled and some parts, as for example the threshold, were reemployed as grinding stones, while the pottery connected to this horizon (local phase 3b) still holds strong relationships to the former Late Bronze Age assemblage (Montesanto – Pucci in press). It seems likely that during this same period, the temple (I) was rebuilt reemploying in the steps, among other sculpted elements (such as the lions), the carved orthostat of the same Tudhaliya (Woolley 1955, pl. 48, p. 241). Both in the temple and in square 42.10 the reoccupation of the area and the reconstruction of the building took place without gaps, reusing building elements which were at disposal. For this reason it seems possible to tentatively suggest a date to the mid-13th century BC as the beginning of a decadent phase for the site, during which the new constructions heavily reemployed what was available.¹⁷ In square 42.10 a series of open air floors with pyrotechnical installations and ovens dated to the Iron Age show that the area surrounding the temple continued to be used until the end of the 10th century BC, a period during which temple O was probably built and in use.¹⁸

¹⁶ The chronological setting of the prince and great priest Tudhaliya contemporary with Muršili II was based on two Hittite letters (one found in Alalah, ATT35, the other in Boğazköy, KBo 9.83) and on the CTH 63 (Muršili II's dictate to Tuppi-Tešob's Syrian antagonists); cf. Yener, *et al.* 2014, 137 and references; cf. also Singer 2017.

¹⁷ The Hittite oracular texts found in the vicinity of the temple (Singer 2017) are dated to the second half of the 13th century.

¹⁸ For the publication of this specific square cf. Yener 2017, fig. 4, Montesanto – Pucci in press; for temple O cf. Woolley 1955, 89-90, pl. 13a. The function of the structure, its layout and the exact location of temple O (although close to the temple sequence) is not clear.

In area 4, far from the public buildings, the local phase 2 occupation, i.e. a large complex identified as a fortress (Akar 2013, fig. 2 and fig. 7; Akar in press), definitely presents Late Bronze Age II features; it is however difficult to set its destruction in a more precise time due to the absence of clear chronological markers, except for the fact that it is followed by a scattered occupation with several pits, whose ceramic assemblage also belongs to the LBII. Since it is quite difficult to more precisely date according to the ceramic assemblage, which does not change consistently from the end of the 14th to the end of the 13th century BC, it is important here to point out the presence in the fortress assemblage of one complete vessel, which is definitely related to the Hittite tradition (Horowitz in press, fig. 19.3). Moreover, carinated bowls with straight rim, which represent a local late development in the simple ware assemblage, are abundant in this level and points to a late phase of the LBII period. Thus, the fortress was probably still in use in the first half of the 13th century, while the later occupation (local phase 1) with pits and a smaller building might date to the second half of the 13th century – beginning of the 12th century.¹⁹ Archaeologists could not identify with certainty a thirteenth century occupation anywhere else on the site, both because in some areas like the acropolis, no floors could be identified, or as it happens in area 4, clear markers for this century are lacking, the sequence of building phases is extremely shallow and inhomogeneous. Therefore, current archaeological evidence for Atchana can only state that the area around the temple was certainly occupied during the 13th century and it continued in the 12th and 11th century, and that the area of the southern fortress underwent abandonment and destruction followed by a period of scattered occupation and pits in the second half of the 13th century and beginning of the 12th. All these elements seem to suggest that in the final stages of the Late Bronze Age, i.e. the second half of the 13th century, the site underwent a strong reduction in size possibly with a jeopardized occupation.

Thus, the archaeological evidence seems to suggest that both sites underwent a process of decline and ruralisation, a process which lasted until the mid-12th century BC. The reason of this ruralisation process could be directly or indirectly traced to the well-known climate changes occurred in the final stages of the Late Bronze Age. Numerous paleoclimate studies

¹⁹ These data are still being processed, therefore these dates should be considered as the author's personal working hypothesis. I thank Murat Akar and Ekin Kozal for the frequent chronological meetings we had on the field.

proved that whole eastern Mediterranean underwent a long (up to 300 years) phase of drought started in the last centuries of the second millennium BC (Knapp – Manning 2016, 70 and references, Kaniewski *et al.* 2019). This drought phase could have touched the Amuq region (direct cause) causing crop failures, increased famine and a decrease in production²⁰ or could have pushed (indirect cause) the Hittites to conquest this area in order to exploit it and overcome the famine in the highlands.²¹

Several texts found in the Urtenu archives in Ugarit dated to the rulers Niqmaddu (III) and Ammurapi, (i.e. to the last quarter of the 13th century, first decades of the 12th century) seem to confirm that the Amuq was undergoing a difficult situation:²² according to the letters regarding Alalah or Mukiš, the sender²³ intended to revitalize the agriculture in Alalah through new plantations and orchards.²⁴ Moreover the king of Ugarit was the authority in charge to make sure that also other duties,²⁵ which required 200 Ugaritians,²⁶ were carried out at Alalah, as if Alalah were in need of help or did not have enough people to keep its land productive. The fact that these letters were sent to Ugarit, and not to Alalah itself,²⁷ suggests that either there was not a reference person in Alalah during this period,²⁸ or, more

²⁰ This evidence seems to be confirmed also by the analysis carried during the ongoing coring project in the Amuq; Avşar, *et al.* 2019, 801.

²¹ Other scholars suggest that a dry phase affected mainly the highlands of Anatolia during the 14th and 13th century BC (Müller-Karpe 2008; Klengel 1974; Singer 1999) and the consequent Hittite conquest of the Amuq and northern Levant was driven by the need of grain (Halayqa 2011; Cohen 2017, 300).

²² Lackenbacher – Malbran-Labat 2005, 227; Lackenbacher 2002; Lackenbacher – Malbran-Labat 2016. I thank Elena Devecchi and Lorenzo d’Alfonso who pointed to my attention these texts.

²³ The *uriyanni* or the king of Karkemiš.

²⁴ Letters I-7.2 (for the orchards) and I-7.6 (for plantations) in Lackenbacher – Malbran-Labat 2016.

²⁵ According to Lackenbacher – Malbran-Labat 2016, 61 the military forces were sent either to defend the town or to ensure its functioning. According to the letter I-7.6 water needed to be ensured for the plantation through the use of thirty people, these duties may also refer to the building or maintaining of canals.

²⁶ Letter I-7.4 in Lackenbacher – Malbran-Labat 2016.

²⁷ Moreover, considering that Alalah is closer to Karkemiš than Ugarit, the fact that Ugarit should take care of that territory may indicate that it was the only power west of the Euphrates that had the means to fulfil it.

²⁸ The REGIO DOMINUS Palluwa (von Dassow 2008, 31-2; Fink 2010, 55; Archi – Venturi 2013; Bilgin 2018, 121) and the great priest Pilukatuha should be dated after prince Tudhaliya, i.e. in the 13th century (Dinçol and Peker communication in Laroche conference). However it is unclear exactly when during that period (for the possible identification of Palluwa with the Palluwa of Emar, cf. Singer 2000) they ruled. In any case, Alalah was not completely abandoned during this period as it is proven by the archaeological evidence, by the

probably, that whoever was in the town was not able to administer the land, that the agricultural exploitation of the region was probably encountering difficulties and needed to be “helped” with manpower from elsewhere. However, Karkemiš’ requests to Ugarit were never fulfilled, so the land exploitation was never reorganized,²⁹ probably because it would have required a large economic effort from the side of Ugarit: a trip of probably four days (120 Km from Ugarit to Alalah following the road leading to Jirs al Sughur, Qarqur, Salqin, cf. Fig. 1)³⁰ to reach the region and a stay over a long period to carry out the “duties”, install plantations and orchards. This economic and political situation may imply that the urban growth in the Amuq, which was evident until the end of the 14th century, stopped in the mid-13th century (almost contemporary to the first mentions of a drought and famine in the texts)³¹ and the region underwent a period of economic decay.

4. THE HITTITE IMPACT

The Hittite conquest, especially if focussed on economic exploitation (see above) would have had an impact on the local agricultural administration and land exploitation. Even though texts from Ugarit and from Boğazköy requesting grains for Hatti from Egypt via Ugarit and Ura, or from Ugarit/Mukiš via Ura seems to support this reconstruction, recent research (Schachner 2012, 81) clearly proved that the economic system of grain supplies in Anatolia was based on regional centres and on small-scale distance trade. Thus, exploitation of the Levantine region’s resources could not counterbalance the famine in the empire’s core. On the one hand, the Ugarit texts, mentioned above, and referring to the type of plantations to be carried out in the Amuq, may refer to the need of controlling the regional agricultural exploitation, on the other, understanding the impact of the Hittite administration on the local one, is extremely complicated (Pucci 2019a).

Hittite omen text found in the acropolis and dated to the end of the 13th century BC, and by the fact that in a letter belonging to the same Urtenu archive (cf. RS 94.2389, Lackenbacher – Malbran-Labat 2016, 70) the arrival of the prince Tasi in Alalah is announced.

²⁹ Cf. texts I-7 6, 7, and 8 in Lackenbacher – Malbran-Labat 2016, 70-75.

³⁰ Other connections through the sea or through the Orontes valley seem not possible due to unfavorable sea currents (Broodbank 2013, map p. 8-9) the first, and very narrow and steep valley the second. Currently there is a mountainous passage from Harbiye-Şenköy leading from Antakya to Latakiye: it is unclear whether it was in use also during ancient times.

³¹ The drought phase probably started with the final years of Šuppiluliuma II, however the texts seem to begin with the reign of Hattušili III (Halayqa 2011, 301).

From the archaeological point of view, the available Hittite material evidence is extremely little in the Amuq. Although the ceramic evidences from both Chatal and Atchana are very similar to each other, at Chatal Höyük not a single fragment of a typical Hittite vessel was found. In Atchana five fragments in the whole excavation were found of the so called “funnel containers” (Woolley 1955, shape 150; Horowitz 2015, fig. 7.5 no 5; Horowitz 2019, fig. 15 no 6), which have been considered similar to the Hittite Trichter-jar (Müller-Karpe 1988, T1h). Beside the fact that this shape at Alalah represents less than 0.1%, the examples from Alalah are much smaller than those from Boğazköy and from Tell Afis (Venturi in press, fig. 11), i.e. they do not belong to storage vessels (as in the Hittite world), rather to short term containers (Fig. 2).³² Fusiform jars, instead, are only a little more numerous, i.e. approximately 10 specimens in the whole assemblage (Woolley 1955, type 39; Horowitz 2019, fig. 15 no 3-5; Montesanto – Pucci in press, fig. 3) and only in late contexts (Fig. 3). These are considered as transport vessels and could indeed show trade contacts with the empire, especially because the base fragments found at Alalah show the same manufacture features which were recorded in the Anatolian ones (Mielke 2017, fig. 10).

Moreover, if we consider mainly domestic activities, which may best mirror changes in material culture, a broad comparison between the Amuq region and Anatolia seems to point towards several differences. It is not the single appearance of one specific morphology which indicates a specific behaviour, but the occurrence (in percentage) of a specific set in the whole assemblage.³³ In the case of Hittite pottery, percentages of LBII shapes are provided mainly by Müller-Karpe and Schoop (Müller-Karpe 1988, pl. 50; Schoop 2006) and these are taken into consideration here. Comparing the Hittite morphological and functional repertoires (Fig. 4) with the ones from the Amuq, reveals some overlapping but also several differences: in the LBII Amuq (Fig. 5) a small cup (8-12 cm in diameter) and a krater (sometimes painted) build the preferred drinking set (Pucci 2019b, 216-7; Pucci in press), while in Anatolia the absence of movable kraters³⁴ and the presence

³² According to Woolley two complete ones were found in level IV palace (Woolley 1955, shape 150 table p.332).

³³ For this reason it is very important specifically in ceramic publications to provide occurrence frequency of specific shapes in a given assemblage. On this topic cf. Schoop 2006, 236-237.

³⁴ The so-called deep bowls (Schoop 2011, fig. 10 no. 5; Schoop 2006, Fig. 4b) which may provide a comparable function are very large and especially tall, therefore, once filled,

of large quantities of small jugs and jars (Müller-Karpe 1988, Type K4a), seem to suggest that they did not dip the bowl inside a common container, rather they used a large set of vessels as pitchers to pour and small jars, from which was also possible to drink directly (Fig. 4).³⁵

Moreover, both in Anatolia as well as in northern Levant wet cooking (stew) is the common practice,³⁶ a tradition which is well known since the Early Bronze Age; however, cooking pot shapes (Fig. 6) differ slightly: the temper employed in the Amuq is crushed shells as it seems common in the whole northern Levant, in contrast to the serpentinite quartz temper used in Anatolia. Both northern Levantine cookpots and the Anatolian ones, at least the ones from Arslantepe, were directly located above or next to open flames using andirons and supports (Manuelli 2013). By contrast, the so called handmade “deep plates” (sometimes called baking trays), especially in the most recent shapes identified by Mielke (Mielke 2017, fig. 9), independently from the kind of food transformation performance they were used for, are well known in Anatolia but absent in the LBII Amuq assemblages (Fig. 5).

Storage containers for liquids (Fig. 7), are also completely different in shape and in the way they were stored, being the Hittite great jugs (Müller-Karpe 1988, Pl. 3, type K2c, Mielke 2017, fig. 6), elongated and tall and the ones from the Amuq larger and squat. Directly connected to this is the high frequency of potstands (fenestrated or hour glass shaped, Fig. 8) in northern Levant in contrast to their absence in Anatolia, a tradition which is probably completely related to the northern Mesopotamian tradition. As far as the plates or shallow bowls are concerned, the high number of simple conical plates in the assemblages from Chatal and from Atchana is a phenomenon well known in the Amuq which, as Mara Horowitz³⁷ has already pointed out for the LBII material from Atchana, was already evident in the first half of the 14th century; it can be considered a natural development of the plates with incurving rim, that are the majority of the plates during the MBA II/LBA I periods (Pucci 2019b, fig. 69, pl. 45l, n, o, pl. 53k, pl. 56a).

not easily to move. Moreover the ratio between the quantity of small hemispherical bowls and that of these deep bowls is according to the percentages in Boğazköy (Müller-Karpe 1988, pl. 50) inverted.

³⁵ These observations are part of an ongoing research project concerning difference in everyday behaviors in different regions.

³⁶ For the Hittite cooking traditions, cf. Mühlenbruch 2012 and references, for the one from the Amuq, cf. Pucci 2019b, 202-206; Welton, *et al.* 2019, 311; Horowitz 2019, fig.9; Morrison – Horowitz 2016.

³⁷ Horowitz in press.

Specific features, such as the absence of potters' mark and mainly the presence of ring bases instead of the cut off ones, make this specific production different from what has been considered the marker for standardisation in the Hittite empire (Pucci 2019a, Fig. 2-4). In other words, if there was a centralized and standardized production in the Hittite empire, this economic model was not exported to the Amuq.

Even if the domestic practices do not seem to be influenced by the political change, other features definitely may suggest some impact. First, there is no doubt that representation of power, especially as it is seen in the prince Tudhaliya orthostat, is strongly related to the Hittite relief production of central Anatolia; that is visible not only in the style, but mainly in the iconography and the syntax of the orthostat. Second and most important, it seems that there is a Hittite influence in the religious practices: as it has been already pointed out by Aslihan Yener (Yener 2017) and others (Horowitz 2015) the presence of miniature juglets and handmade plates found in the area near the temple at Alalah clearly suggest a Hittite influence in the performance of the rite. These elements, together with the fragment of a Hittite oracle text, suggest that the rituals were probably performed in the Hittite manner in the local temple on the acropolis. In this sense their absence at Chatal Höyük, where no ritual/religious contexts dating to the LBA II were brought to light, is not surprising. So according to these data, it seems possible to confirm what Beckman suggested (Beckman 1992, 49; Beckman 2007, 110-1), i.e. the Hittite conquest left a very light footprint in the material culture of the Amuq, apparently exclusively related to representation of local power and specific ritual performances.

5. SHAPING A NEW COMMUNITY

According to the evidence at Chatal in the period between the mid-13th century and the mid-12th century the village slowly restarted a process of re-urbanization moving the graves outside the settlement, reducing the open spaces, and abandoning the use of silos inside the settlement. During this process the material culture slightly changes especially in the ceramic production. The pottery assemblages from Iron Age I building levels show an increasing percentage per locus of monochrome (with one colour) painted pottery with a very wide range of patterns, both local (oblique lines, cross-hatched triangles, horizontal lines) and foreign: swirls, concentric circles, chequers, wavy lines, and concentric foliated semicircles are the most

common and find their direct counterparts in Furumark's patterns typology of Late Helladic IIIc pottery (Furumark 1941). The vast majority (97%) of painted vessels have a fabric identical to that of the local simple ware production — semi-porous brownish orange/beige paste with mineral temper, and multi-coloured grit with iron inclusions — and is therefore considered locally made (Pucci 2019b, 179-184). Moreover the retrieval of a pottery kiln in area IV with wasters belonging to Mycenaean shapes, such as the bell shaped bowls or feeding bottles, leave no doubt that this specific production was locally made using patterns and syntax that are typical of the LHIIIc middle style. This element sets the beginning of this transformation in the material culture in the second half of the 12th century. Bell shaped and shallow angular bowls are the most locally produced shapes, two vessels, which were employed besides the usual hemispherical plates and hemispherical bowls and are related to food and drink consumption.

Because this phenomenon happens in the Amuq at the same time at three sites, not only at Chatal (Pucci 2019b, 179-183), but also at Atchana (Montesanto 2018, Montesanto – Pucci in press) and at Tell Tayinat (Janeway 2017, Welton *et al.* 2019), theories ranging from the idea that local communities started to imitate Mycenaean vessels because they were not able anymore to import them to migration paradigms have been employed to provide this change in material culture with a social meaning. During the LBA use and value of Mycenaean pottery in the Amuq, and more generally in the northern Levant, were strictly related to commerce and to specific vessels, which were appreciated either for the vessel itself or for its content (Wijngaarden 2002): kraters (Steel 2013), stirrup jars (Ben-Shlomo – Nodarou – Rutter 2011; Pratt 2016), and kylikes were the most common types of imported Mycenaean vessels, along with others from Cyprus such as milk bowls. The Mycenaean imports provided means of social distinction, physically representing the wealth of the family that could “afford” prestigious vessels; for this reason, kraters in particular belonged to social performances such as group eating or feasting and retained their role of status symbols even in their secondary use as grave goods (Wijngaarden 2002; French – Stockhammer 2009; Steel 2013; Stockhammer 2014).

The diffusion of these imports depended on the trade routes and on the proximity of a settlement to the hubs of this trade during the 14th and 13th century. This phenomenon is elusive at Chatal Höyük as only a few Mycenaean imports (five fragments in all LBA assemblages) were found and the number of imported vessels strongly decreases during the 12th century.

At Atchana Mycenaean vessels were commonly imported during the 14th century, but, according to Koehl (Koehl 2010; Koehl 2017), 13th century Mycenaean imports are almost absent, while Cypriot imports are very common (Kozal 2010). So not only the imports in the 13th century Amuq were very few but they were also not the same shapes as locally produced ones. It suggests that local potters learned how to produce Aegean-style pottery not from imported pieces, but rather directly from “foreign” potters, who knew the patterns, shapes, and syntax of the decoration on the vessel: a transfer of knowledge that took place most likely in the Amuq itself.

Moreover, even in the same functional category, i.e. drinking vessels, local potters at Chatal chose to produce single serving bowls but only those whose shape required a handling similar to the local one. For example, kylikes, which were a common drinking vessel in the Mycenaean world but implied a completely different handling of the container (Yasur-Landau 2010), are completely absent from the local production. Thus, the local population accepted shapes, which had a different visual impact but that did not imply a difference in how the related activity was performed.

Furthermore, local production of Mycenaeanising pottery in the IA at Chatal ranges from very good imitations to extremely sloppy ones, possibly indicating that the value of this specific pottery changed from symbolizing a social status in the Late Bronze Age to becoming the new visual identity of the table set. In other words they did not have one or two “good” pieces per household, but instead painted eating and drinking sets for everyday use. Thus, the value of the Mycenaean pottery at Chatal Höyük was no longer related to wealth and prestige (luxury goods) during the IA I, it did not mirror the practice of new habits (real migration on the site); neither its quality (fine fabric, surface treatment or a careful decoration) nor its selected distribution were as relevant as in the LBA. Nevertheless a specific imagery, connected with the Mycenaean pottery style (external appearance of the vessels), permeated all contexts related to practices of food and liquid consumption. This element strongly changed the appearance of the table set and became a feature of the pottery assemblage for the whole Iron Age.

According to this analysis, it seems possible to hypothesize that at the end of the Late Bronze Age (1250-1150 BC), the region underwent a strong economic decay, causing depopulation and urban demise. During the final years of this period, small groups of migrants arrived in a context that had experienced a strong economic decay and/or disruption well before their arrival; these migrants were skilled (Tsuda *et al.* 2015, 21), but were too few

to build enclaves and probably encountered no resistance upon their arrival. Their impact on local communities followed the model of direct interaction (Rouse 1986, 10-11): neither of the two communities (local and migrant) was economically and culturally dominant, yet nor were they socially passive; the newcomers, therefore, were not completely assimilated into local traditions but rather both groups merged to build a new identity. If a specific material change can be connected to the process of shaping a new identity, a specific style of table ware sets used for communal activities became one of the new medium used to promote a new identity. After a period of three generations, the process of selection and transformation of everyday paraphernalia was so advanced that by the end of the 11th century a painted bell-shaped bowl was no longer a “foreign” element, but rather one of the marker in the material identity of the new community.

This same new community built the core of a new political entity, i.e. the kingdom of Wa/Palistin; this kingdom included in its material culture Mediterranean elements and used a name which could still be related to this world.³⁸ However, the monumental program, started in the 11th century BC, both at Tell Tayinat and Aleppo, used inscriptions and iconography elements, which were related to the Hittite empire, suggesting that the Hittite influence was not forgotten. Although, a carving tradition and consequently the know-how in terms of technique remained active from the 13th to the 12th century in the Afrin and Qoueiq areas (Mazzoni 2016, 284) during the construction of the temple at ‘Ain Dara, the legacy of the Hittite monumental art was probably preserved in the northern Euphrates area, in particular at Malatya and Karkemiš, the only two sites where 12th century carved orthostats have been found.³⁹ During the 11th century, Karkemiš was probably the only model of power representation available in the area and most probably recognised by the local population. In this sense, the “iconographic” language and possibly the Luwian hieroglyph tradition was not a regional legacy from previous periods, but rather a current language in use by the only dynasty which was still active in the passage from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron age Karkemiš kept the knowledge of stone carving and the atelier alive during the transition from LBA to IA. However even this legacy was transformed and assimilated: when king Taita, in the Aleppo temple, presents himself looking in the eye the Storm God, wearing a short

³⁸ On this matter cf. Hawkins 2011; Harrison 2009; but also Giusfredi 2010, 134-5.

³⁹ On iconography and style and most recent publication on these two sites, cf. Mazzoni 2000; Manuelli 2017; Marchetti 2014; Manuelli 2013.

dress and being located inside the cella of the temple, he does not represent himself as a pious Hittite would have done, but rather as a new king leading a new community, showing again a process of appropriation and transformation.

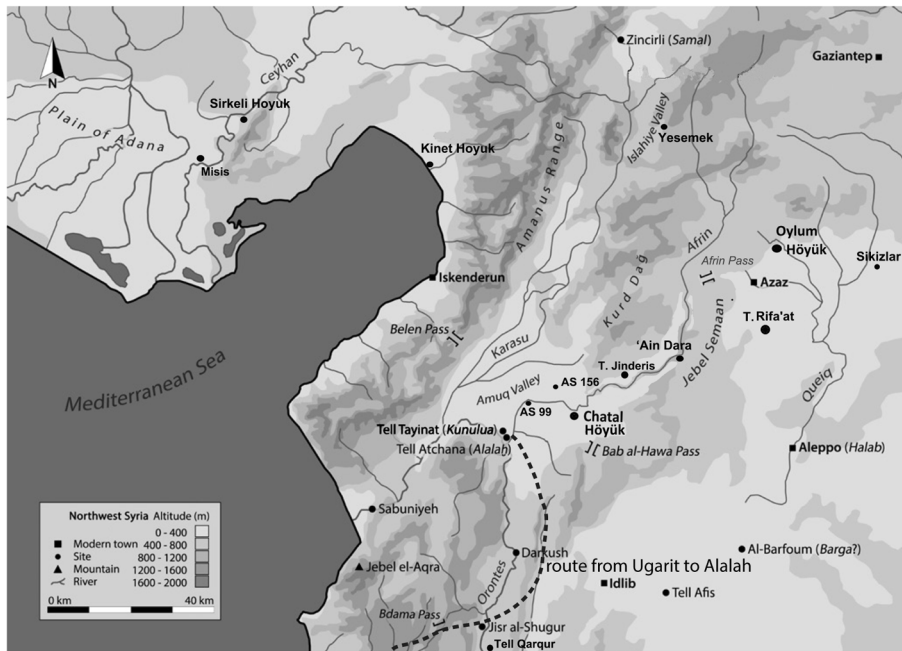


Fig. 1. Map of northern Syria rearranged from Cohen 2017, fig. 22.2. Dashed line for the possible route from Ugarit to Alalah

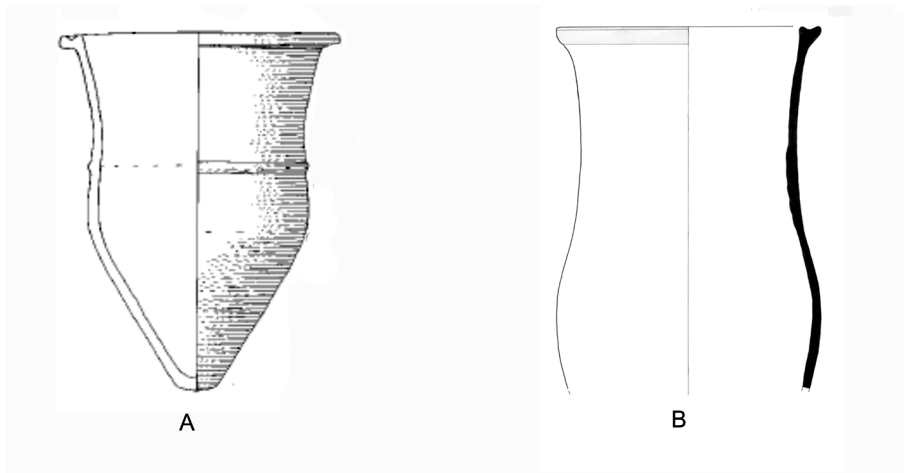


Fig. 2. The so called Hittite “Trichterjar” from Boğazköy (A), Müller-Karpe 1988, pl. 25 type T15a and B from Alalah (Horowitz in press, fig. 7.19)

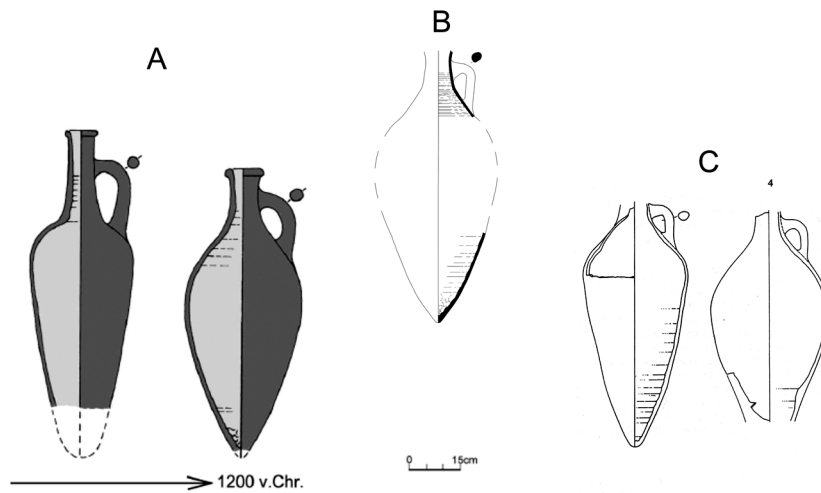


Fig. 3. Fusiform jars from Boğazköy (Mielke 2016, fig. 2), fusiform jar from Atchana (Montesanto and Pucci in press, fig. 3a)

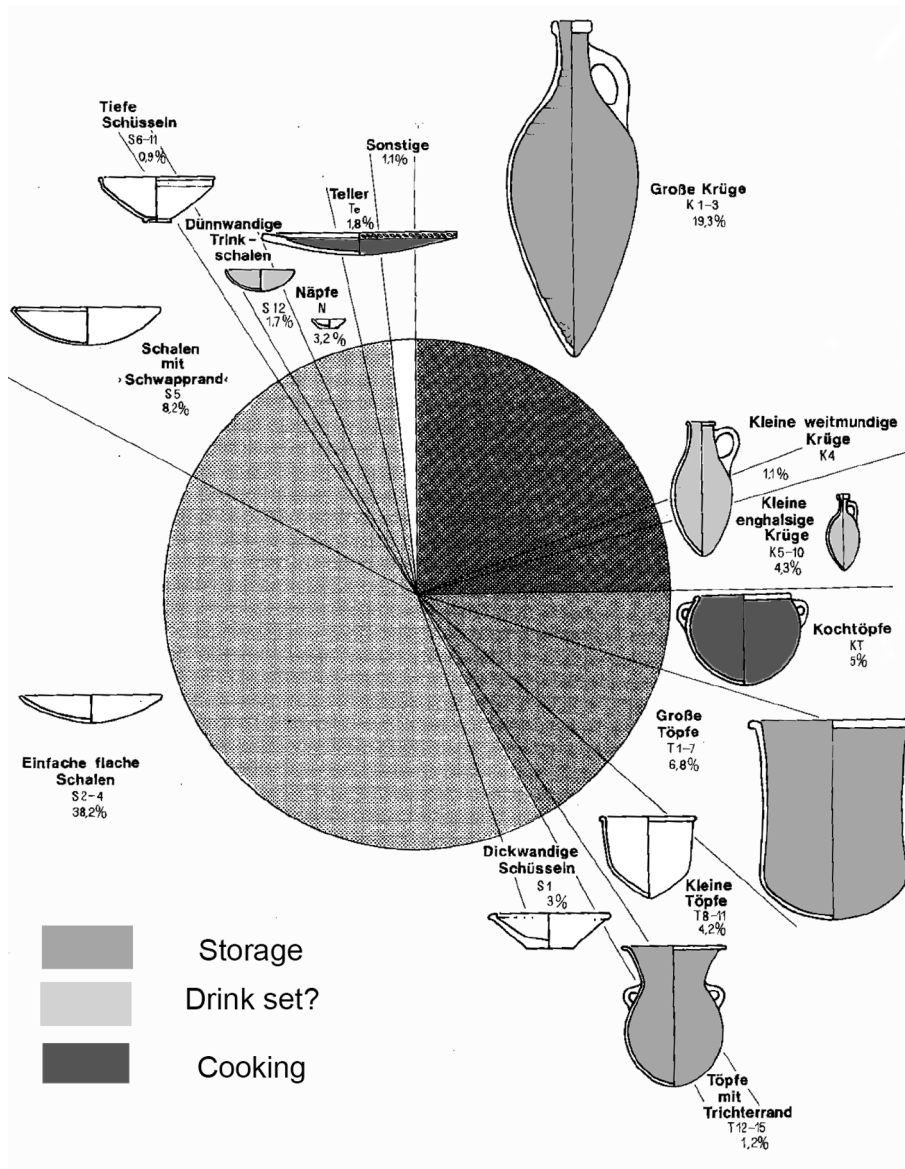


Fig. 4. Distribution of shapes in the assemblage from the kiln neighborhood in Bogaz Köy from Müller-Karpe 1988, pl. 50. The functions considered in the text are graphically marked by the author based on Müller-Karpe functional description

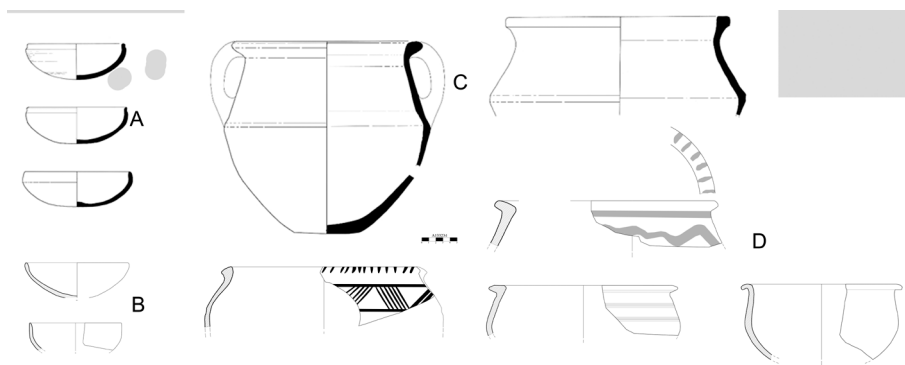


Fig. 5. Late Bronze Age II drinking set from the Amuq. A) Hemispherical bowls from Alalah (Horowitz in press, fig. 7.8); B) Phase M_Late (LBII) Hemispherical bowls from Chatal Höyük; C) Kraters from Alalah (Horowitz in press, fig. 7-10); D) Phase M_Late (LBII) kraters from Chatal Höyük

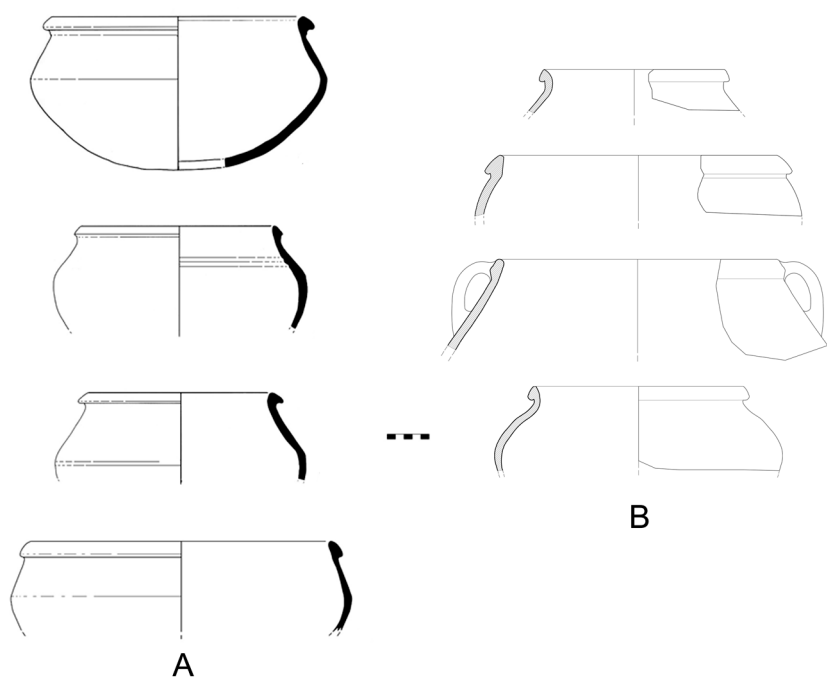


Fig. 6. Cooking set from the Amuq: A. Alalah (Horowitz in press, 7.11); and B. Chatal Höyük

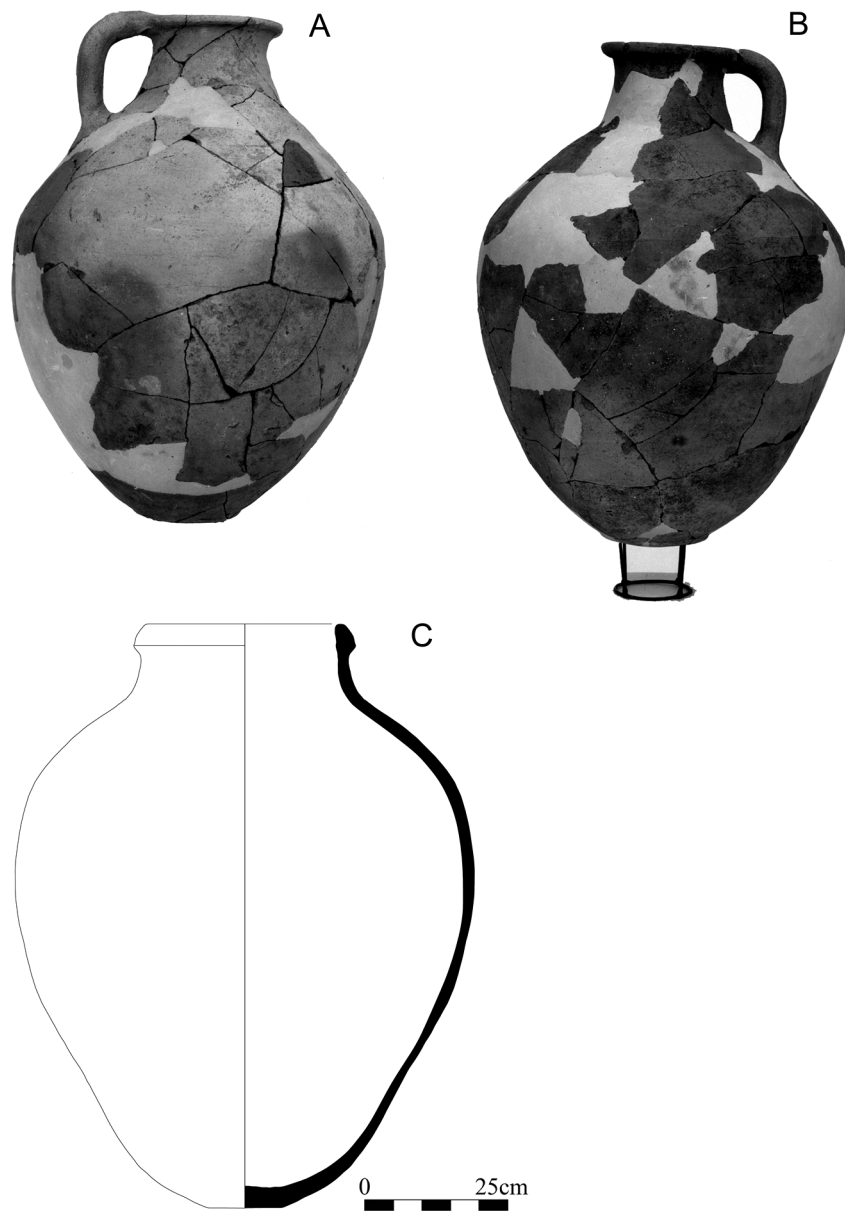


Fig. 7. Storage pithos from Late Bronze Age Chatal Höyük (A-B);
and Alalah (C) Horowitz in press, fig. 7-19

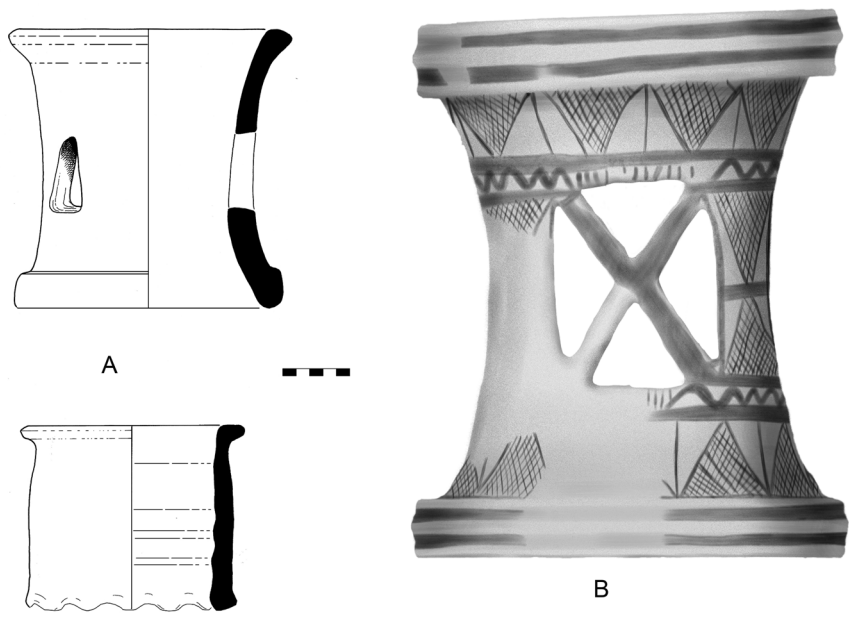


Fig. 8. Late Bronze Age potstands from Alalah (A), (Horowitz in press, fig. 7.13); and Chatal Höyük (B)

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