

CHATAL HÖYÜK PHASE M

MARINA PUCCI – UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI FIRENZE

Abstract

The site of Chatal Höyük, located 30km to the east of Tell Atchana, and excavated during the 30s by the Oriental Institute provided a continuous sequence from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age III. This article presents and analyses the levels belonging to the Late Bronze Age with special reference to the pottery assemblage. The Late Bronze age archaeological levels provide many useful data as far as the LBA occupation is concerned: changes in architecture and functional use of spaces in the excavated parts of the town may eventually mirror the progressive economic changes in the region and the growing political uncertainty: towards the end of the Late Bronze Age the archaeological evidence in the excavated parts of the village with domestic structures including large storage installations and open working areas, as well as graveyards inside the open spaces seem to point towards a decrease in population, an economic impoverishment and an unsecure countryside. By contrast pottery and material culture seem to indicate a strong continuity in domestic behavioural changes: pottery inventories as well as small finds show very strong continuity with the local LBI tradition of the region, and to its local production and does not mirror any material changes until the end of the LBA, when it absorbs Mediterranean traits and shapes the new Iron Age material culture.

Introduction

The site of Chatal Höyük is located on the eastern edge of the Amuq plain (Fig. 1), 30km east of the site of Atchana, where the river Afrin exits its valley in the Jebel Seman and starts to flow in the Amuq plain. Its ancient toponym is not known, however its specific location at the entrance of the Afrin valley to the east suggest its relevance at least during the Iron Age as an important node for the contacts to the east (OSBORNE 2013, p. 785). Due to the size of its acropolis (8 ha) and the status of preservation, the site was chosen to be archaeologically investigated by the “Syrian Expedition to the Amuq” of the Oriental Institute: during the first years (1930-31) the American team hoped to find here Iron Age representative architecture and therefore focused extensive excavations on this settlement. In the last year 1934, once the site of Tell Tayinat had revealed the monumental architecture, which was absent at Chatal, archaeologists decided to change strategy and rather focus on the vertical sequence and pottery assemblage in two trenches (II and V), where they reached the Late Bronze Age levels. The identification of Late Bronze Age assemblages was based mainly on an evident material change, which could be immediately observed already during the excavations: the majority of the ceramic inventory was characterized by plain ware, few painted decorated sherds, by the absence of local imitation of Late Hellenic shapes, which were abundant in the Iron Age levels above these and by a very few

Cypriot imports. During the field work Braidwood used for each of the three excavated sites a general settlement periodization with Roman numerals: for Chatal Höyük its periodization divided a Chatal I (Roman), II (Hellenistic), III (first half of the first Millennium BC) and IV (Late Bronze Age 1600-1200). This periodization, together with the results of the survey and mainly those of the sequence at Tell al-Judeidah, was later re-evaluated in his 1960 publication (BRAIDWOOD and BRAIDWOOD 1960), in which a regional periodization with letters grouped together each sites' period (KROGMAN 1949, Table I; HAINES 1971, 1-2; BRAIDWOOD and BRAIDWOOD 1960, Table I). Amuq phase M was dated to the period 1600-1200 BC thus it corresponds to the Late Bronze Age; red lustrous spindle Bottles, milk bowls, white on red painted wares (Nuzi), painted wares similar to Ugarit and other general features (cf. BRAIDWOOD 1948, table I) were considered the main markers for this phase.

The analysis on the pottery materials from this phase at Chatal Höyük together with the general analysis of the stratigraphy, pottery and small finds has been carried out¹ by the author at the Oriental Institute in the period 2007-2012; in this reanalysis all excavations' documents concerning locus files, photos, letters and field journals which could mirror the method and strategies employed during the dig and also the process of interpretation carried out afterwards were analysed so that it was possible to reassign for each phase loci to building levels and consequently reconstruct the Late Bronze and Iron Age sequences at the site.

This paper discusses the archaeological evidence related to Chatal phase M occupation and will only touch upon the end of this phase and the transition to Chatal phase N (PUCCI 2013).² It will then consider the pottery traditions from the point of view of ceramic production and use in order to identify their relationships with neighbouring traditions. Although the morphology of the assemblage presented here is very homogeneous from phase M_Mid to M_Late, it has been possible to point out smaller changes in the quantities of specific shapes or wares in relation to the total. These quantities have been calculated only on diagnostic sherds, however it should be remembered that the pottery analysed was already a selection³ of the whole assemblage and possibly some smaller diagnostic sherds were discarded; therefore, even though representative, its full reliability will need some more adjustment with the analysis of assemblages from other sites located in the Amuq.

¹ Swift (1958) analysed selected pots (from Chatal Höyük only the complete vessels and the assemblage from one square) in his doctoral dissertation, he linked them to Woolley sequence at Atchana and suggested for the first time an earlier date for the end of the Late Bronze Age occupation in the Amuq, leaving a gap of 200 years before the beginning of the Iron Age, a sequence which was then reemployed also by Pruss (2010) in his recent publication for the Amuq figurines.

² The complete report is in print as a single volume. (PUCCI in press)

³ 1755 sherds for phase M were selected on the field and have been processed at the Oriental Institute Museum.

1. *The Chatal phase M: the archaeological contexts*

The exposed surface related to this phase was, in comparison to the extensive occupation known for later Iron Age periods, sensitively smaller and located only in two of the four areas investigated (Fig. 2): in the eastern one (Area II) LB levels were exposed over a surface ranging from 480m² in the uppermost LB levels reducing down to 164m² in the bottom ones; the western trench (V) was much smaller and extended in the bottom level only over 24m². Although the limited extent prevented an accurate and detailed stratigraphy of the archaeological deposits of area V, the assemblages found there could still be linked to the sequence in Area II and will be discussed here in detail.

1.1. *Area II*

The large slope trench in area II, presents a total a sequence of thirteen building phases spanning a period from the Iron Age III back to the Late Bronze Age: four building phases were identified in this area and ascribed to phase M. These were excavated following a locus system which divided what was found on, in or immediately underneath the floors, from deposits related to the collapse, to the filling of rooms and to large installations.

The most ancient level reached in this area consists of a large rectangular building: the structure oriented NE-SW consisted at least of two wings, the eastern one occupied by two narrow rooms, whose eastern edge was eroded by the slope, and apparently a larger squared room. Archaeologists affirm that the floor of the structure was never reached, however they state that at least 10 complete storage vessels were collected as belonging to this level and structure and considering their state of preservation, they were probably located on the floor of the building. The locus of the ten complete vessels was identified according to the excavation reports in the larger room of the structure, some of them bear heavy traces of ash and fire, which together with the general indication of the presence of large quantities of ash may suggest that the structure, or part of it, underwent a destruction by fire. The earth accumulation found inside the rooms was preserved up to an eight of 1.4 meters and consisted of collapsed and burnt material. It is not clear whether this area was immediately reoccupied after the destruction however, six inhumation burials (one mature couple, one adult couple and two infants) were dug into this deposit in part destroying the south western corner of the structure (lev. II_11gr).⁴ Apparently no architecture or installation could be identified as belonging to the burials, but it seems evident that the area changed in this phase functional destination becoming an open area. The following occupational phase II_11 changed the destination and function of the area only in part: the area still was open, but paved with pebbled floors, several mud brick silo were inserted in the floor for approximately 40 cm into the ground and raised above the floor with mud brick superstructure preserved for approximately 60 cm. Only a curved wall on the south eastern corner of the excavated area as well as some fragments of mud brick wall may indicate the presence of built structures adjoining this open area. The burials shown before were then covered by pebbled floors and only the infants' burial were partially damaged by the silos

⁴ This group of graves was ascribed with a specific level II_11gr, but not counted as a single phase, because they may eventually belong to a sub-phase of lev. II_11.

cuts. Pebbled paving was employed for the floor of the open courtyard and in one case as floor of one of the silo. The internal sides of the silo were plastered with simple clay, so that we may suggest that they were employed for dry storage, likely grains.

The building level on top of this, i.e. II_10 was excavated on a larger extent to the north, doubling the exposed surface. The larger exposed surface as well as the better preserved structure allowed archaeologists to better understand the use of the area: the open air extent can, in this level, be interpreted as an open courtyard, a semi-public space related to two structures built on the western edge of the trench: the structures are separated by a street and consist both of them of more than two rooms each; the open area seems to keep the same function as in the period before, i.e. for storage, with large silo and likely also for burial as the four graves identified in this open space suggest. No fire installation was identified, rather two squared basins dug into the ground and plastered with lime may suggest activities connected to water. This is the last phase which delivered a pottery inventory dated to phase M, while the deposits employed to raise the level of the open space and to build the structure of the following period already belong to a transitional phase to phase N. During this passage some of the walls of building phase II_10 were reused and, during the phase of construction and first use of the new phase N building, the older ones were still visible: the open area at disposal shrunk with the addition of new structures, storage installations also decreased and in phase II_09 no burials were found. From the beginning of phase N, this area was more intensively occupied, grains were stored either somewhere else or with perishable containers and much less people were buried in these open spaces.

Thus in this area, the building sequence shows only one discrepancy in the occupation between building level 12 and building level 11, when a large structure was replaced by a burial area first and by a scattered occupancy later. The relatively loose occupation of both phases 11 and 10 may indicate on the one side a decrease in population and on the other hand the need to have at disposal large quantities of stored seeds inside the acropolis. Starting with lev. 11 the occupation of this area became more and more dense leaving no elements for gaps between phase M and phase N.

1.2 Area V

The archaeological evidence in the phase M levels of area V is less clear. All phase M levels identified in this trench (V_6 to V_5) were excavated over an extent of 16 m² so the reliability of this trench is much smaller than the one in area II. Haines and Braidwood identified three building phases characterized by the presence of walls and in phase V_6 also of a stone floor. The bottom level reached by the archaeologists consists of a small chamber, which Haines interpreted as a kiln, and a long wall with stone foundations running W-E. One grave found in this small square was ascribed to this level (b-S-61); however, because it seems to partially cut some of the walls, it may also belong to phase V_5 and its assemblage will be discussed separately. To Level V_5 belongs a single wall with stone foundation (visible in fig. 3 on the left) and what in the original plan seems to be a silo located to the north west of the wall. Phase V_4 presents larger walls with the same orientation as the previous ones with a second very well preserved silo located in the north-eastern part of the trench. The deposit depth of phases 6 and 5 is approximately 1.25m from the bottom of the wall in phase V_4 to the floor in phase V_6. The deposit is said to be ashy and burnt only in phase 5, although the pottery does not reveal any traces of secondary burnt.

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There is no direct stratigraphic connection between the two areas, which are approx. 200m apart, therefore the correlation between both sequence has been based on the pottery assemblages and on their relative sequence. Besides their relative position in the stratigraphy, the presence of grey burnished ware, of extremely fine ware, of a majority of plates with thickened internal rim compared to the simple rim ones and the use of quartz and lime tempered cooking ware together with the shell temper were the features which connected the assemblage of V_6 with II_12. The stratigraphy diagram shows that both areas present a similar sequence of phases, however area II offer the largest amount of loci and consequently of pottery. Moreover in both areas silo appear to be in use starting from levels V_5 and II_11 and continue being in use throughout the whole phase M. Levels II_10 fill and V_4 can be considered transitional phases from Chatal phase M to N: in their assemblage the number of local imitation of Mycenaean ware begin in being consistent and several other classes completely disappear (see below). The distinction between phase M_Mid to phase M_Late is based on the architectural change in area II. Based on the assemblage of phase M_Mid from Area II it has been correlated to the evidence in Area V.

Table 1. Stratigraphy of Areas II and V.

N-13 Loci		AREA/Lev	Phase
Ilc	P		
Ilc_pit	P	<i>II_10_fill</i>	<i>N_beg</i>
Ilc_floor	P	<i>II_10</i>	<i>M_late</i>
Graves	P	<i>II_10</i>	<i>M_late</i>
IId_pit	P		
IId	P	<i>II_11</i>	<i>M_late</i>
IId_floor	P		
Graves	P	<i>II_11gr</i>	<i>?</i>
Ile	P		
III	P		
10	P	<i>II_12</i>	<i>M_middle</i>

P-4 Loci		AREA/Lev	Phase
3-4_Walls	P		
4	P	<i>V_4</i>	<i>N_beg</i>
4_floor	P	<i>V_4</i>	<i>N_Beg</i>
5	P	<i>V_5</i>	<i>M_Late</i>
5_Floor	P	<i>V_5</i>	<i>M_Late</i>
b-S-61	P	<i>V_5gr</i>	<i>?</i>
6	P	<i>V_6</i>	<i>M_Middle</i>

2. Ceramic morphology in Chatal phase M

A pinkish or beige clay with a multicolour grit temper characterizes local production and recurs in approx. 94% of the vessels described here. Organic inclusions (chaff temper) were observed on approx. 33% of all collected sherds in both phases. Specific wares related to a specific function will be discussed in each paragraph, while those connected to specific surface treatment will be analysed in the next paragraph.

2.1. Tableware: plates, bowls and small sized jars

This group includes the majority of fragments found in the assemblages and presents several interesting developments from phase M_Mid to phase M_late.

Plates are the most represented shapes in these contexts: this term defines open containers either conical or rounded with a wide opening; it includes those vessels which in other publications are defined as shallow bowls. M_Mid and M_Late phases present a similar number (around 100 pieces) of plates, with a various range of rim shapes and sizes; considering the bases at disposal and the few complete plates, this shape was mainly associated with ring bases. Rim shapes vary from simple ones (Fig. 5d), to thickened internal (Fig. 8a and c), incurving (Fig. 8f), or, more rarely, hooked (Fig. 5f, 8e); in few examples the thickened internal rim becomes almost t-shaped (Fig. 5e). The overall shape is well known in Tell Atchana from level ⁵ VIII (WOOLLEY 1955, type 3a, 4b pl. 109) and shows few variations in the Chatal M phases. A small variation from phase M_Mid to phase M_late is visible only in terms of quantity: during phase M_Mid the most common plate (49% of all plates) shows a thickened internal rim, a rim shape which decrease in number in the following phase M_Late (24% of the plates). Incurving rims are the second most frequent rim shape (21%) in M_Mid, while inverted, simple and hooked rim are equally distributed (around 10% each). In the following phase M_Late the variety of rim shape decreases: hooked rim are extremely few (2%), while incurving rims (29%) and simple rim (32%) plates become the most common ones. A similar trend could be observed in Area 4 at Tell Atchana: here the relationship between plates with simple rim and plates with incurving thickened rim changes during Atchana period 4 and it is well established in Tell Atchana period 3: while in Area phase 4a (period 4) the plate with incurving rim is the most common plate (55%), in the following level 4a (still period 4) the plate with simple rim becomes dominant (61%) and remains steady in the following phases (64% in period 3, 68% in period 2).⁶ This element does not allow to connect with certainty the Chatal M_Mid assemblages with Tell Atchana period 4, because, as mentioned above, the sherd count at Chatal is probably not completely reliable. However, common trend towards the common use of plates with simple rim, can be definitely supported for the Amuq region already starting during the second half of the 15th century BC.

Multiple serving **platters**, i.e. vessels with a diameter range above 25 cm, present the same variety of rim shapes, i.e. simple (Fig. 12.k) thickened internal (fig. 5h, 9j, 9p) or incurving (Fig. 5j) and the same percentage (around 30% of the plates) in both M phases assemblages. These plates are known at Tell Atchana periods 2 and 1 (HOROWITZ this volume) but also in previous levels especially from level V and later (WOOLLEY 1955, type 2a, 3b and 5 pl. 109).

Single serving drinking **bowls** (around 10 cm diameter and outcurving or thinned rim) are very few (less than 1 % in phase M_Mid and less than 2% in M_Late) compared to the whole inventory. In the assemblages from phase M_mid these few vessels vary in shape and sizes. Well-known MBA shapes as the shoulder goblet (Fig. 13a) or the s-curve bowl

⁵ Woolley (1955) phases with Roman numerals have been recently grouped in site periods with Arabic Numerals (YENER 2013b, 13) in order to integrate them with the general stratigraphy of the site and the results of the ongoing excavations. In this paper I quote Woolley phases when I refer only to his publication and Atchana periods when referring to the results of the ongoing excavations. In general Period 1 = Woolley phase I, Period 2: Woolley phase II; Period III: Woolley phase III; Period 4: Woolley phase IV.

⁶ These percentages have been observed in the analysis of the pottery for Area IV.

(Fig. 5a) are both unique pieces in the inventory and cannot be considered representative. The first one is well known in Tell Atchana from level V to I (WOOLLEY 1955, type 106b, pl. 119 p. 337), although from recent excavations it appears evident that it strongly decrease period 3. The second shape, the s-curve bowl, is known in Atchana only until level VII, MBA (WOOLLEY 1955, type 23, pl 110) and in Tarsus MB and LBI (GOLDMAN 1956, pl. 368 no769 and pl. 377 no 975) and it may be here a remnant from former phases. By contrast the painted cylindrical bowl (Fig. 5c) is a local development of the bowls with outcurving rim well attested at Tell Atchana since level IX (WOOLLEY 1955, type 21a and p. 333), as well as the simple hemispherical bowls (Fig. 9d and 9e), which occur in the assemblage in both phases M. Only in phase M_Late the range of drinking bowls seems to include also local imitation of Mycenaean vessels (Fig. 9b) or local variations of the s-shaped ones with different ranges of rims (Fig. 9f). The tradition of small-sized S-shaped bowls observed in LBI Atchana is in the M phases of Chatal completely absent.

Possibly connected with these small bowls are **kraters**: during phase M_mid the most common krater is a rounded vessel commonly painted with fine geometric design with a mouth opening ranging from 22 to 35 cm (Fig. 6h, k and l; Fig. 13a and b; Fig. 10e). Both decorative patterns and syntax belong to the well-known MBA tradition of the so-called Syro-Cilician painted ware (cf. BULU 2017, 202-204 and ref.) known at Atchana for Amuq phases K and L and at Tarsus in the MBA level (GOLDMAN 1956, pl. 370 no 868, 871, 872). However kraters do not seem to be the most common shape in MBA horizon, while in these later phases M they are not unique finds but recur in all assemblages of both areas until phase M_Late and completely disappear in phase N.⁷ We may assume that this same painted tradition survived the passage to the LBA at least only on these kraters as it seems also to be the case for the only complete Syro-Cilician krater identified by Woolley at Atchana (WOOLLEY 1955, type 26b plate 111 and p. 333) and found in the level III assemblage, i.e. possibly in contexts contemporary to the Chatal ones. Only in phase M_late inventory a second krater shape makes its appearance next to the usual Syro-Cilician ones: it is a biconical (Fig. 10c) or amphoroid (Fig. 10a) shape with everted flat rim and a Mycenaeanizing decoration: decoration is not anymore panelled and narrow but it develops on the shoulder in a free field. The krater on fig.10a seems to be strongly related to the Mycenaean culture: bird and fish motif are known in LHIIIB production (Demakopoulou and Crouwel 1992), although the fish rendering is here unique, a similar arrangement of bird and fish in a row appears at Ugarit in LBII levels (SCHAEFFER 1935, fig. 2) and in Cyprus (only fish) in a LHIIIA-B grave (FISCHER and BÜRGE 2017, fig. 24) inventory. While both the shape and the figurative decoration of this krater seem to well connect to the Mycenaean/Mediterranean culture, the other painted krater (Fig. 10c) with wavy line can be interpreted as a hybrid: the biconical shape is identical to the local kraters of the previous phase as well as the radial decoration on the lip represents a further development of the same decoration on the kraters described above; by contrast the wavy line is a pattern certainly an imitation of the Mycenaean kraters. Both types of kraters belonging to phase M_Late share similar dimensions (approx. 10l on the reconstructed examples) and a painted decoration, which is

⁷ The only other examples of similar kraters were found during the survey in the Qoueiq basin (TUBB 1981, fig. 230 no 5-9) and were dated to the MBA according to their painted patterns.

present only on very few containers for these phases. These two features may suggest their use in collective drinking activities and, at the same time, as social markers, a well-known phenomenon in LBA eastern Mediterranean (STEEL 2013).

A further shape which may be connected with drinking activities is the cylindrical cup (Fig. 11i): a cylindrical container with low carination and most likely a ring base. Very few fragments (three in phase M_mid and four in M_Late) were found in the assemblage, in simple, painted with zigzag line (Fig. 11i) and with imitation of Nuzi patterns. Rim is either outcurving or more frequently flattened, size is usually very conservative (500 ml). The shape is also known in Atchana from lev. VII to lev. II (WOOLLEY 1955, typ. 94b pl. 117 and p. 333) and seems to be common in lev. IV also with painted decoration either local (WOOLLEY 1955, pl. 88d and 89a) or Nuzi (WOOLLEY 1955, pl. 102b and 103g). The few examples found at Chatal surely belong to this same tradition, the presence of a painted decoration on most of them may suggest a specific function only possibly related to communal drinking.

Larger drinking or eating **bowls** (diam. 12-25 cm) are very popular in these phases, as common as the single serving plates described above and may belong to the same functional group. Their shapes in phase M_Mid vary from carinated ones (Fig. 6e), to S-shaped (Fig. 6b and c) to hemispherical ones (Fig. 6g), with a capacity of around 2l for all of them. This shape is a local development of the s-curve cups well known in the Amuq assemblages of MB and LBI tradition, which already appears in LBI assemblages such as Hama (FUGMANN 1958, fig. 153): it is a very conservative shape also present in the phase M_late assemblages, with a slightly wider mouth reaching a capacity of around 5l. This shape will continue in the following phase N_beg, when it will develop by enlarging the outcurving rim and by taking some of the painted patterns which were employed in the kraters, as for example the radial lines. Woolley identified this shape (1955, pl. 99i) as common from Tell Atchana IV and later periods and because it seems absent both in the LBA assemblages of northern Mesopotamia and of internal Syria or Cilicia, it is a specific shape for the Amuq.

Single portion **jars**, well known in the LBI local tradition, are almost completely absent from the local phases M_mid and _Late assemblage as well as pitchers, which also at Atchana were extremely rare (WOOLLEY 1955, p. 332 types 49-55) and bottles. This element may depend on the excavated contexts or on the real absence of these kind of containers for these specific phases. Also miniature or very small containers are rare finds; only one small sized version of the plate with internal rim (fig. 5b) was found in the assemblage.

2.2. Food processing: cooking pots (CW)

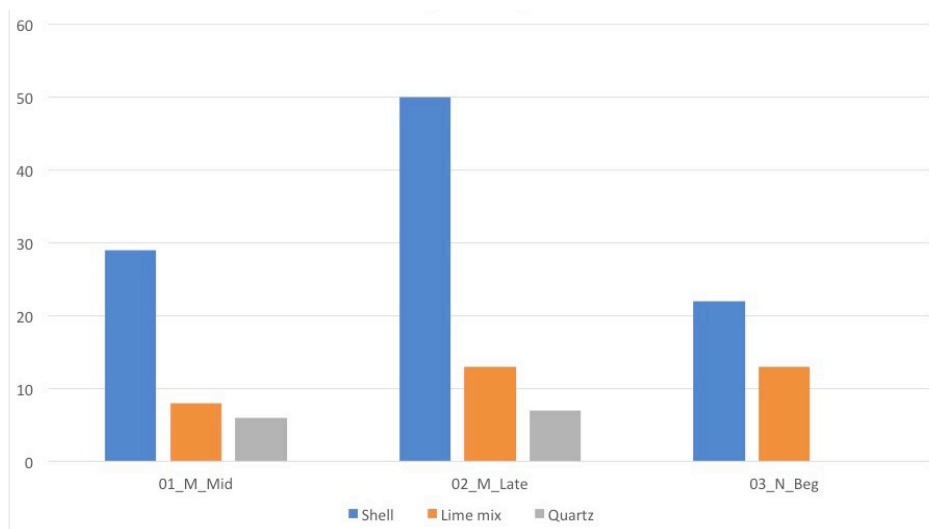
The number of cooking pot fragments from phases M_Mid and Late is extremely high (150 diagnostic pieces) in comparison to the later phases at the site and it provides a good overview on the assemblage.

Cooking ware presents three different tempers: crushed shell, medium cut quartz and a fine mineral temper with visible lime. All three tempers are suitable to resist high temperatures but have been employed exclusively. Shell temper is present on the majority of diagnostic sherds in phases M_mid and M_late and an the individuals' number increases specifically in phase M_late. Medium cut quartz temper is well known in the MBA and LBA Atchana pottery production and there it has been observed that this temper slowly decrease in the LBI period and disappears during LBII, a phenomenon which the Chatal assemblage seems also to mirror, although here some examples were found also in phase

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M_Late. The third fabric, characterized by a fine grit with mixed minerals mainly limestone, but also quartz on a very little quantity, is employed in both M phases and becomes even more popular during phase N_beginning (cf. table 2).

Table2 Cooking pot temper



The almost ubiquitous shape for cooking is a short-collared jar with a rounded body, a short and wide collar and likely a rounded base. The rim may vary, however the most common is a folded external rim triangular in section (Fig. 7b and g, 11b and d, fig. 13d, e and f), while the “pinched” rims (Fig. 7c) are very rare and are usually only connected to the quartz temper. A third rim shape, but very similar to the first one, is a simple outcurving rim (Fig. 11a and c). Sizes may also vary from small pots (18-22 cm in diameter) to larger vessels (25-36 cm diam.) with short or no collar (Fig. 13d, fig. 11e and fig. 7g). A second slightly different shape is found only in phase M_Mid assemblages in both areas: it is a narrower (12-15 cm in diam.) jar with outcurving or flat rim and high shoulder (Fig. 8g and h and Fig. 7a). Handles are absent except on one large (33cm) cooking vessel from phase M_Late. Few examples of plates (Fig. 8e) were made of cooking ware and could be possibly used as lids.

Both shape and fabric are well known in the Atchana assemblage, where broad-cook-pots with shell temper (see HOROWITZ in this volume) are the most common vessel for food preparation and can be compared with the larger examples found at Chatal. The shape in general finds a large range of use not only on the coast (Ugarit, REF), but also in inner Syria as at Tell Afis (VENTURI 2014b, fig. 9.2-3) or Tell Qarqur (JENSEN in this volume, fig. 5 no 3, 4 and 5), but not to the Cilician ones (GOLDMAN 1956, pl. 382 no. 1068, pl. 383 no. 1069) (Gates this volume fig. 11).

The biconical krater in fig. 6f is inserted in this functional category due to the presence of a 1.5 cm large hole in the bottom: it belongs to the group of perforated vessels, which has been connected to brewery (OTTO 2006, Fig. 44 no. 20b, p. 86-93, SOLLEE 2012), which may be considered part of the food processing and are very rare in all phases at the site.

2.3. *Storage*

Very little can be observed about this functional category as the few sherds collected are by far too small to reconstruct the general shape of the storage vessels. It is however worth noting a group of storage containers found in situ in the bottom level reached in Area II (phase II_12, M_Mid): 10 large one-handled storage vessels were recovered in this level and two of them were photographed on the site (Fig. 15): the overall shape of the body (ovoid with a lip to shoulder handle) reproduces on a larger scale a jar shape which was found also at Tell Atchana (WOOLLEY 1955, pl. 113 type 53b, HOROWITZ 2015, fig. 7.4 no 10) in level III (Woolley excavations) and in lev. VI (recent excavations). The body shape and the handle find comparison also with the large pitchers found at Tell Kazel (BADRE, CAPET, and VITALE 2018, pl. 31 no 342-343) and dated to the LBIIb period. However, the closest parallel for the Chatal vessels is in Tell Hadidi in a primary context dated to the 15th century (DORNEMANN 1981, pl. 6 no 5). Considering the elements at our disposal, the liquid-storage tradition seems to be related to a local tradition also present in inner Syria and conservative from the LBI periods. The fragmentary state of preservation of large jars with folded over rim (Fig. 7d, Fig. 10h) or simply outcurving (Fig. 10i and k) does not allow a reconstruction of the whole vessel and consequently prevents any further consideration.

Dry storage complete vessels were not found in these levels, only fragments of large hemispherical (Fig. 7h, 13f), biconical kraters (Fig. 7.i, 11g) and wide mouthed jars (fig. 11h) were possibly employed for this task. In phase M_Mid both hemispherical and biconical containers sometimes show a rilling decoration (Fig. 7f and i) on the lip which clearly reminds the MBA tradition. By contrast the examples found in phase M_Late seem to reproduce on a larger scale the biconical krater (Fig. 11g) observed in the table set. Incised decoration (horizontal lines) is very rare, while applied modelled rope appear more frequently either on kraters or on basins fragments.

2.4. *The grave goods*

A total of eleven graves was found in both areas, ten in area II and one in Area V. Those from area II were identified in two levels: a level intermediate between II_12 and II_11, and a second related to the floor of II_10 (cf. table1). The grave identified in area V has been ascribed to lev. V_5 (see above). Four graves did not have any burial goods, three (b-S-59, -63 and -67) related to infants and one (b-S-66), which was heavily damaged, so that it seems likely that infants were buried without ceramic containers (the fourth infant had a string of beads), adults, instead, were in five cases buried with one or more complete vessels and only in one case (b-S-62) a projectile point was found next to the body. The vessels were located next to the skulls, shape and class of the containers varies from grave to grave. The only grave (b-S-61) ascribed to phase M_Mid is also the only one to contain exclusively imported vessels: two red lustrous spindle bottles and a base ring II jar (Fig 15.e1-3). The graves found in area II presents mainly simple ware vessels: b-S-65 includes wide one handled jar “filled with organic material, said to be honey in the documents (Fig. 15.d1-2). This shape is not very frequent in the assemblage, but extremely conservative from the LB I tradition if we compare it to Tell Hadidi (DORNEMANN 1981, fig. 4 nos 7 and 10) or to the Tell Atchana jars type 100 (WOOLLEY 1955, pl 118). The same shape but without the handle appears at Ugarit (MONCHAMBERT 2004, figs 19 and 20), in LB levels at Mumbaqa (CZICHON

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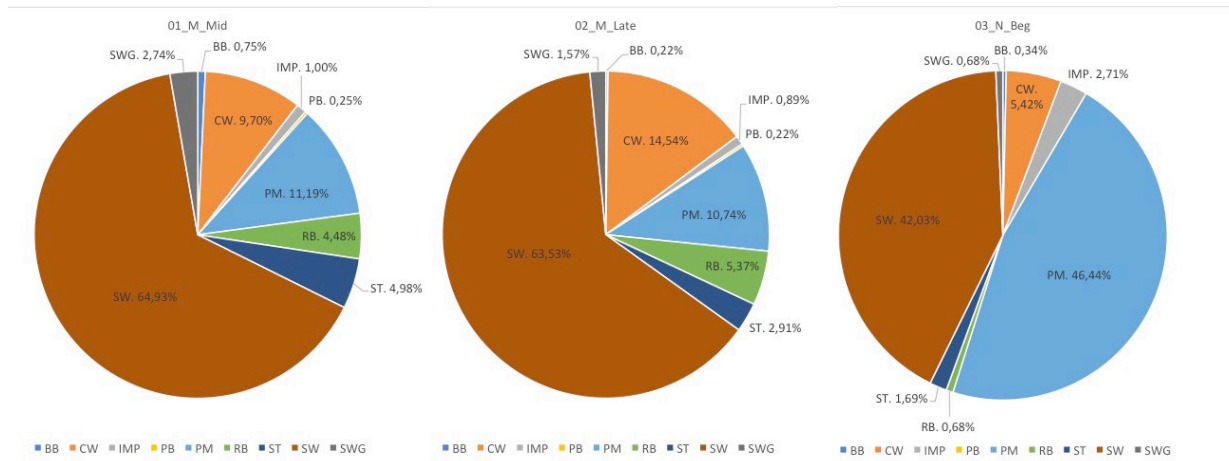
and WERNER 2008, pl. 169 no 7375), LB level at Emar (FINKBEINER 2001) and Afis lev. VIIIb (VENTURI 2014b, 10.10). The jar found above the left shoulder of the second skeleton (fig. 15.c1-2) is a necked jar with an elongated body, differs strongly from the usual piriform body of the local jars, and seems to follow a Middle Assyrian morphology well known at Tell Sabi Abiad level 6 and 5 (DUISTERMAAT 2008, fig. IV.28m, 73 k-v) and Shekh Hamad phase II (PFÄLZNER 1995, taf. 121) both found in contexts dated to the end of the 13th century BC. The other three vessels found in the graves (a pitcher in b-S-49, fig. 15a, a rounded jar with straight neck and a small jar in fig. 15.b, grave b-S-43) are visible only in the context photos and their exact morphology cannot be argued.

In general grave goods are all small containers (bowl or small jars), which were not common in the general assemblage of the occupation levels they belong to. Burials connected to private houses are also well known in Tell Atchana both from Woolley excavations (WOOLLEY 1955, p. 202-210) and from ongoing ones (INGMAN 2014, YENER and YAZICIOĞLU 2010, 27-9) in all excavated levels. The Chatal burials share with the Atchana ones similar depositional features (inhumation, variable orientation, few grave goods mainly ceramics), however the only shape used as a grave good in common at both sites is the red lustrous spindle bottle, while none of the other found at Chatal find comparison with those employed in Atchana.

3. Surface Treatments and Specific Wares

The distribution of classes in the two phases (table 3) shows a very strong homogeneity. Only cooking and storage classes have been discussed among the functional categories, while this paragraph focuses on the remaining classes, which either differ from fabric (as the imports) or from surface treatments (as the painted, burnished, grey wares).

Table 3. diagram of class distribution.



3.1. Imports (IMP)

Imports (17 diagnostic fragments) differ from local produced pottery mainly for their fabric and surface treatment or decoration. In this sense, besides the Red Lustrous, white slip II and monochrome classes, also the three diagnostic Nuzi ware fragments (Fig. 13c), which has a different ware composition, belong to the imports group. Several fragments of local imitation (painted monochrome) of Nuzi/Atchana patterns suggest that during this M period the Nuzi/Atchana ware was still locally imitated, while the one fragment (Fig. 13c) found in M_Late could be only a remnant from former periods.

Although in general very few, the imports remain steady in number from phase M_mid to M_late and seem to be mainly connected to the Cyprus area. The chronological relevance of these imports will be discussed below, while as far as the contexts are concerned it seems evident that most of the better preserved imports were found in the grave in area V, while only milk bowls were probably connected to the domestic contexts.

3.2. Painted Ware (PM and PB)

As mentioned above painted pottery is not very common in this phases (10-11% of the diagnostic sherds) and it is only employed on open containers. The range of patterns is very limited to three main patterns: the radial lines on the lip of open vessels is one of the most common ones, a pattern which was common on both Syro-Cilician ware and Khabour Ware and which becomes so embedded in the local tradition that it will be frequently used also in the following phase N. However this pattern is more frequent in phase M_Mid (45% of the painted diagnostic sherds) than on phase M_Late (15%). The pattern with oblique lines shaping triangles is limited to the decoration of kraters shoulders and seems to follow the same trend: more common in phase M_Mid (35% of the diagnostic sherds) than in phase M_Late (15%), and it will disappear in phase N_beginning. Horizontal bands and lines on the body of the vessels may well belong to the tradition already identified at Tell Atchana (HOROWITZ this volume fig. 4 and 10) and most probably related to the Khabour ware painted tradition. Only during phase M_Late few new patterns make their appearance although on very small numbers: cross hatched triangles both known in Siro-Cilician and on Mycenaean pottery; wavy lines between bands which are probably mainly related to the Mycenaean production as well as the figurative production discussed above.

Painted decoration (PB) in two colours is almost completely absent (only three diagnostic sherd in all phase M assemblages) and was probably employed only in few attempts to imitate Nuzi/Atchana Ware, as the example illustrated here (Fig. 5c) seems to show.

3.3. Red slip and burnished (RB). Black Burnished (BB)

4-5% of the diagnostic sherds presented a red slip and a burnish treatment. All of them except for three fragments belong to open vessels, mainly platters or shallow bowls (Fig. 5j, Fig. 9h and q). The percentage seems only to slightly increase in phase M_Late and the class completely disappears in phase N_beg. This evidence seems to be connected to a very similar production at Tell Atchana: here, the presence of "red banded" plates is attested from lev. IV onwards with a peak in lev. IV and III: these are plates with either simple or incurving rim and a red and burnished paint on the lip, and internal rim. Their general appearance is identical to later red slip ad burnished ware and differ from other painted

vessels with bands, from the presence of the burnishing only on the red part of the vessel, in few examples the red burnish treatment covers the whole vessel. At Chatal 12% of the plates belong to the red burnished tradition and these are distributed in both phases, only slightly more numerous in M_Late. Among these red burnished examples, only 5% of the plates can be surely ascribed to the same banded tradition as in Atchana (Fig. 9q), while other fragments show a red colour and a burnish on the whole vessel (Fig. 9h). The origin of this tradition is debatable: in northern Mesopotamia the red-rimmed production is visible at Tell al-Rimah (POSTGATE, OATES, and OATES 1997, pl. 34 and p. 62) dated to the Mitanni and middle Assyrian periods, at Tell Fekheriye (COPPINI this volume fig.4), at Sabi Abyad lev. 7, LBI, (DUISTERMAAT 2008, fig. IV.2.e, j, k, e and IV.3.1), at Brak (RIF). Although at Tell al-Rimah the majority of these plates are burnished, at the other sites they present the burnish rarely and those few with a burnish considered as belonging to an Anatolian influence (cf. DUISTERMAAT 2008, p. 63). It is quite difficult to ascribe the Chatal Höyük evidence to either the Anatolian (or probably better Cilician) red burnished tradition or to the Mittanian one, however we may consider Tell Atchana again: the appearance of these plates in level IV together with the other painted tradition of the Khabour Ware, may indicate that this specific plates became common already during the Mitannian period and kept in being produced also in the following phases.

Few (only five diagnostic sherds) Black burnished examples (Fig. 8b) were identified: reddish beige clay, and black slipped and burnished surface are typical of this assemblage. Various in shape (but all open) they might be remnants of former phases, as the occurrence of the black burnished class in MBIIb may suggest (Nigro 2002).

3.4. *Burnished Grey Ware (SWG)*

This class identifies a pottery production which differs from the other classes in fabric and surface treatment: a compact fine grey clay with fine mineral inclusions usually very uniformly fired and a horizontal burnish treatment on the sides of the vessels are typical for this class. In phase M_mid, SWG builds 2.7 % of the whole assemblage and drops in phase M_Late to 1.5%, then disappears in phase N_beginning. All rim sherds collected in these assemblages belong to plates or shallow bowls similar in size and general shape to the simple ware plates, all with a flattened internal thickened rim (Fig. 5g). This class may correspond to the “Schwarze Ware” bowls identified at Atchana, very frequent in lev. VIII-VII and still attested in lev. VI and V (Heinz 1992, p. 64, fig. 17 no 4-6): however the shape of the Atchana examples are bowls with a hooked rim typical for MBII and LBI assemblages, different from the ones at Chatal. This class may derive from the MBIIb Black burnished production of bowls identified in inner Syria (Nigro 2002, p. 106, pl. 49 no 44-45), however they differ in surface treatment and fabric: the Black burnished one presents a thick black slip and a porous dark grey fabric with quartz.

4. *Trends towards Phase N*

The final phases of M_Late is visible in both areas, as the assemblages from the filling levels of II_10 and from the floor level of V_4 cannot be ascribed anymore to the Late Bronze Age tradition. Besides the usual shapes known since phase M_Mid, such as large

platters with incurving or thickened rim, s shaped bowls, we face two main events: first the painted decoration is not anymore related to few shapes, but it becomes a common surface treatment and it is applied to table set shapes as the large platters, or the S shaped bowls; second, three new and “foreign” shapes are inserted and embedded in the local assemblages. The first phenomenon is the most striking one in terms of quantity (Table 3); the range of patterns becomes richer, the syntax of the decoration differs from the Syro-Cilician tradition: it abandons the narrow panelling of the Siro-Cilician ware to embrace a free field syntax carried out with a thicker brush, both elements together with the new patterns clearly refer to the Mycenaean Late Helladic IIIc tradition. The table set during this transitional phase gains a very different appearance: the kraters are not anymore the main and more visible element, rather almost all other three shapes employed for food consumption are also painted and undergo a process of hybridization between Late Helladic shapes and painted patterns on the one side, and local shapes and patterns on the other. Also the new shapes belong to this tradition: the so called bell shaped bowl (FURUMARK 1941, FS 284) becomes extremely common and replaces the single eating bowl. Sizes, patterns of decoration and also shape of the body are extremely various and seem to mirror a phase of experiments on decoration and different morphologies. On a much smaller number also shallow angular bowls (FURUMARK 1941, FS 295) were found in N_beg and became part of the local assemblage. Feeding bottles (FURUMARK 1941, FS 155) are the third imported shape: this small spouted jar, although not very common will be continuously produced from phase N_mid and later and recur in assemblage connected to food consumption.

In the local tradition, as mentioned above the production of s-shaped bowls increase as well as those of the simple rim plates, which are in this phase N painted. The biconical craters appear to be the most conservative element, keeping both the same shape but evolving the local decoration from the previous levels and outnumber the few amphoroid craters found in the assemblage, whose shape is slightly different from the original amphoroid kraters (larger and squatter) and the decoration follows the local patterns. The same continuity seems to be evident in the cooking pot production, where the collar tends to be shorter and handles are employed also on small sized cooking pots, facilitating the use but not changing the habit: the pots continue in being closed vessel for wet cooking and continue in using mainly a shell temper in the fabric.

5. Chronology phase M_Mid and Late:

In order to chronologically locate the assemblages and levels analysed here, two elements may come into help: on the first place specific trends in local pottery production and their relationship to Atchana sequence. Second the dating of the imported sherds, which provide a *terminus post quem* for the contexts in which they were found.

The still large presence of shell tempered cooking pots compared to the mineral ones, the absence of fine ware, the low percentage and progressive disappearance of the grey burnished ware are elements which seems to link the phase M_Mid and M_Late to the Atchana periods IV to II, in particular referring to the LBII assemblage of Area 4 in Tell Atchana it seems that there is a strong relationship to period 3 and 2. Moreover, several other elements identified at LBII Tell Kazel (BADRE, CAPET, and VITALE 2018, 52) perfectly

match the Chatal evidence: here the progressive disappearance of burnishing, the increase in the thickness of the walls and the change in colour of the clay (becoming darker and less well fired) were clearly observed from phase K3 (LBIIa) and later. At Chatal, burnishing is very limited to two classes while among the simple ware production only 9% in M_Mid and 6% in M_Late of the simple ware fragments were burnished. Firing technique is quite homogeneous in phases M, on 21 % of the local pottery production in M_Mid and on 17% in M_Late, there is a colour difference between the core and the sides of the sherd indicating a low temperature oven. However, because the earlier assemblages at the site were never excavated it is not possible to state a decrease in the firing technique as it is the case of Tell Kazel.

The imports at Chatal Höyük may provide further information giving a terminus post quem for sealed context: thirty fragments of imported pottery were identified in the phase M assemblages. In phase M_Mid the imports are related to monochrome Cypriot bowls (four fragments), the only complete one (Fig. 6a26966) finds direct comparisons with two examples (KOZAL 2017, no. 41 Kinet lev. 14-13 e no. 64 lev. 13.2) found at Kinet Höyük levels 14 and 13.2, dated to the end-14th and to the 13th century BC (Gates in this volume). Seven minimum individuals of White slip II normal (Lettuce ladder motif) milk bowls fragments were found in levels belonging to phase M_Late both in area II and V and commonly ascribed to the 14-12th century BC (ERIKSSON 2007). No imports of Mycenaean pottery can be ascribed to these levels with certainty: one small fragment of a collared jar (FURUMARK 1941, FS 63) with red horizontal lines found in M_Late contexts might be considered either a local imitation or a provincial production of this specific Mycenaean shape which is attested only in Late Helladic periods IIIb and IIIc (MOUNTJOY 1986, table III); also the painted bowl with red lines and bands (Fig. 9a) finds direct comparison on small bowls with similar decoration attested from LHIIIB2 and later (MOUNTJOY 1986, fig. 164). Both elements may also suggest a date post quem at the end of the 14th or 13th cent. BC for the context of their retrieval. Thus, the end of phase M_Late is marked by the dating of the N_Beginning assemblage: from the evidence recovered it seems that the local imitation of Mycenaean pottery can be referred to the LHIIIC middle/Late assemblage, as it is the case of the neighbouring sites of Tell Atchana (KOEHL 2017) and Tell Tayinat (JANEWAY 2017), i.e. the end of phase M_Late should be ascribed to the second half of the 12th century BC (DEGER-JALKOTZY and BÄCHLE 2009, p. 402). The beginning of phase M_Mid is very complicated: it is not possible to state whether levels belonging to phase M_Mid can be surely ascribed to the first half of the 14th century, and consequently it is not possible to determine when the large building in level II_12 was destroyed (beginning or end of the 14th century BC): the few elements at our disposal such as the imports (mainly Cypriot monochrome bowls) or the in situ storage jars do not provide a narrower time range than the 14th century.

6. Conclusions

By turning now to the social and political context of the phase M_Mid and Late contexts, i.e. a period of approximately 250 years from the end of the 15th cent. to the second half of the 12th century BC, we face a multifaceted political scenario. Chatal and the Amuq were part of Mukiš, a territorial entity known since the late 3rd millennium BC (KLENGEL

1995). During the 15th and the first half of the 14th century BC, the area was a vassal state under the Mittanian rule, with a capital at Alalaḫ (Tell Atchana), ruled by a local dynasty started with Idrimi (VON DASSOW 2008, 31-32). Before the Hittite conquest of the region, Chatal was probably just one of the 168 town names in the Census List and List of agricultural holdings of Alalaḫ IV texts (CASANA 2009) and remained as such until the Hittite campaigns in 1344 BC. The material evidence of the 14th century shows mainly connections to Tell Atchana assemblages of levels IV and III: if the destruction of phase IV palace at Alalaḫ should be placed during the reign of Ilim-Ilimma (von Dassow 2008, 31-32, Kozal and Novák 2017, table 19.1), it would be only speculative to set the destruction of the building in lev. II_12 at Chatal to the same period. Considering the homogeneity of the pottery assemblage in both phases M_Mid and Late, the time range at disposal and the dating of phase M_Late, it seems likely that the M_Late phase corresponds to the period between mid-13th-mid-12th century BC and phase M_Mid, very tentatively, to the second half of the 14th century beginning of the 13th BC. According to this reconstruction, the destruction of the large building in II_12 may correspond to the second Hittite campaigns to the region (end of the 14th century). During this period before the Hittite conquest, the village at Chatal remained fully embedded in the local tradition strongly related to the Tell Atchana IV production including the north-Mesopotamian influence, visible only on very specific and very small classes of materials such as the red rimmed plates or the Nuzi/Atchana production and already embedded in the local production already during the 15th century BC.

The region was then conquered by Suppiliuma I together with Karkemiš and Ḫalpa (Aleppo) in the mid-14th century BC, but Mukiš was definitely submitted to the Hittite Empire in the 1330s BC directly after its “revolt” against Ugarit together with Niḫa and Nuḫḫašše (BRYCE 2005, 167). It is unclear whether a new ruler was installed in Alalaḫ (Tell Atchana) immediately after its conquest, but archaeological artefacts (a carved reused orthostat and a bulla) found at Tell Atchana witness the existence of a prince Tudḫaliya (NIEDORF 2002, YENER, PEKER, and DINÇOL 2014, YENER and AKAR 2014), who was contemporary with Mursili II and could eventually be identified with a Hittite ruler sent directly from Ḫattuša.⁸ The land of Mukiš was under the control of Karkemiš, seat of a Hittite viceroy, and its south-western territory was probably reduced in favour of Ugarit after the Hittite annexation (VON DASSOW 2008, 31-32); however, Hittite letters found at Tell Afis indicate that Alalaḫ (or another city in the Amuq, cf. VENTURI in this book) continued to administer the region directly.⁹ Although Aleppo, as Singer (2017) suggests, remained a single state and fulfilled mainly a religious role, the dedicatory inscription of Talmi Šarruma, grandson of Šuppiliuma I, who is quoted in the well-known Aleppo treaty (CTH 75) and contemporary to Mursili II and Muwatalli,¹⁰ indicates a Hittite presence also in this centre.

The archaeological evidence at Chatal Höyük for this period provides a complex picture. While the exposed surface in Area V is too little to determine the nature of the LBA occupation, the architectural structures brought to light in Area II clearly indicates that in

⁸ SINGER 2017. Niedorf (2002) suggests that prince Tudḫaliya was related to the Hittite royal family.

⁹ ARCHI and VENTURI 2012, ARCHI 2016. For the landscape of LBA Mukiš cf. CASANA 2009.

¹⁰ De Vecchi (2010) and references for CTH 75; Meriggi (1975, n.306 p. 330) and Hawkins (2000, p. 18) for Aleppo 1

phase M_mid a larger “urban” structure with storerooms was replaced by more “rural” buildings with large open areas and mudbrick silos to store the grain near the houses. During the 13th until the first half of the 12th century BC, this area seems to have been used continuously, as suggested by the repeated renewal of the pebble floors, building of further silos and continuity of the architecture also during phase N_beg. Thus the site shows a disruption not at the end of Phase M, but rather between Phase M_Mid and M_Late, which was followed by a period of ruralization of the urban area during Phase M_Late. This disruption in the sequence and apparent change in use of the mound may reflect on the one hand a decrease in the population and on the other a political instability which obliged the population to keep the grains on the mound.¹¹

At Atchana, the archaeological evidence is even more complicated: the presence of North Central Anatolian shapes (HOROWITZ in this volume) could be either linked to the Hittite conquest or to a more general influence from Anatolia, i.e. it could be related to the Hittite conquest or, more in general, to contacts to areas, such as Cilicia, in which the NCA ceramic culture was already present in the 14th century. As a matter of fact, it is archaeologically extremely difficult to identify specifically 13th century BC pottery markers because as the material culture, at least at Chatal, is conservative from the 14th century BC. However, recent studies (AKAR 2013, YENER 2013a, VON DASSOW 2005) clearly showed that at Atchana levels II and I on the acropolis (Area 1) were not architecturally very visible and monumental as the previous ones, i.e. suggesting a reduction of occupation density and of size of the settlement. On the other side, it seems certain that at least the area around the temple was continuously in use also in the 13th century (YENER and AKAR 2014), not only for the presence of Hittite miniature vessels, but also for the presence of an oracular Hittite text (AT454) dated to the second half of the 13th century BC, which implies that religious activity was still carried out at the site.¹² Thus, if the capital of Mukiš shrunk and possibly was left only with sacral and, only hypothetically, official/military buildings,¹³ and the village of Chatal also underwent a sort of ruralisation, it seems possible that the Amuq started a process of de-urbanization already during the latest stages of the LBA. The same phenomenon could be identified also in the LBA evidence at Oylum Höyük, located in the northern Qoueiq: few stone walls and silos dated to the end of the LBA occupation were succeeded by an early 12th century BC level characterized by scattered occupation (ÖZGEN

¹¹ Modest architectural remains, which show a quick reoccupation of the site with a few small rooms, hearths and silos were found in most settlements of northern Levant during the LB-IA passage: at Ras ibn Hani (DU PIÉD 2008) as well as at Tell Afis (VENTURI 2007, figs 32-33), Tell Kazel (BADRE 2006), and Tarsus, period LB IIb (GOLDMAN 1956, plan 22). At Kinet Höyük (GATES 2013) large pits and scattered domestic units replaced an area of densely built space at the end of the Late Bronze Age period (14-13.1). At Tell Kazel Area II shows a squatter phase (6 final) at the end of the LBA, while the temple area (IV) shows a continuity in function and use (the temple was rebuilt) until the end of the IA I.

¹² Cf. SINGER 2017, n. 6 with references. Cf. Casana (2017) with references for an overview on the different hypothesis concerning the 13th century BC at Tell Atchana.

¹³ The bulla of prince Tudkhalija, contemporary to Mursili II (1320-1295 BC), was found in a structure located just to the south of the temple and the date of its abandonment cannot be fixed with certainty (YENER and AKAR 2014). The archaeological evidence showed that the occupational phase directly above it was dated to the second half of the 12th century BC (MONTESANTO and PUCCI in press).

and HELWING 2001, 96-7, ÜNAL 2015). The reason for this slow economic decay might be related to the Hittite exploitation of the fertile plain or to external reason which will require further investigation.

However, besides the Hittite texts found at Alalah, is the Hittite presence visible in the ceramic evidence of the Amuq? The ceramic assemblages described above for the phases M_Mid and M_Late at Chatal show again very strong connection to the Alalah evidence and strong bonds to the northern Mesopotamian tradition. The trends emphasized above mirror the same development as it has been observed at Atchana: a progressive reduction of classes, the absence of fine ware, the relatively low quantity of imports and their dependence mainly to Cyprus, the progressive increased used in simple rim plates, the disappearance of the large variety of fine small drinking bowls well known in lev. VI and V at Tell Atchana. Also the use of painted kraters, although conservative from the LBI tradition, seems to well fit in the northern Levantine tradition of emphasizing the role of the krater in the general table set. Thus, a progressive evolution in pottery morphology is evident in M phases, and no abrupt changes in the use of the vessels seem to stand out in the assemblage until the end of phase M_late. Table sets, cooking traditions seem to perfectly fit the pottery horizon well known for the Late Bronze Age in northern Levant, and to maintain these traditions until the end of the Late Bronze Age, lacking apparently an evident “Anatolian” influence. None of the three Anatolian shapes identified at Tell Atchana, i.e. the pointed fusiform large one handled jar (HOROWITZ in this volume fig. 15.3-5), the cylindrical pithos (HOROWITZ in this volume Fig. 15.6) and the miniature plates (HOROWITZ in this volume Fig. 2.6-7) were found at Chatal: while the absence of vessels strictly related to religious activities such as the miniature vessels might be related to specific cult contexts not found in Chatal excavations, the absence of the other two shapes, may be related to their limited diffusion, which also at Tell Atchana is very low.¹⁴ The round-bottom bowls (HOROWITZ in this volume Fig. 3.4) or the plates with stepped rim may require further consideration: the use of this specific shape as a marker for standardization and Hittite economic influence is obviously strongly related to their percentage in the general assemblage; only when same shape and size recur in large quantities (as the example at Kinet Höyük shows, cf. Gates in this volume) it would be possible to support the idea of a general trend towards standardization. This phenomenon does not take place at Chatal: most of the plates’ bases belonging to phase M_Late are ring shaped and only very few (around 7 fragments) are narrow and rounded (Fig. 12h), this is valid also for the stepped rim bowls, which are limited to two single fragments in the whole inventory. Although it is evident that the trend towards the use of conical plates with simple rim increases from M_Mid to M_Late, it is difficult to link this phenomenon to an Hittite impact on the pottery production. The change and the introduction of large quantities of plates/shallow bowls and the abandonment of the fine ware production of small drinking bowls had begun already in Tell Atchana lev. IV, well before the Hittite arrival, as it is evident from the ongoing pottery analysis from Area 4: however, being this an ongoing research, only when the analysis will be completed it will be possible to pinpoint this specific change. Thus, if we consider that also the lord of the country was not of Hittite origin (ARCHI 2012), that the small vassal state of Mukiš had a

¹⁴ I thank Mara Howoritz and the Alalakh team for this information.

previous local tradition independent from the Hittite one, it seems probable that the impact of the new political power on the material culture of a village in the plain remained somehow limited to specific shapes or specific administrative and religious contexts.

By contrast the changes in the material culture at the end of the phase M_Late and especially at the beginning of phase N are very visible: they mirror the need of defining a new group identity in a completely different political situation mixing local features with external Mediterranean element, which were possibly now in the region and got mixed and hybridized with the local culture.

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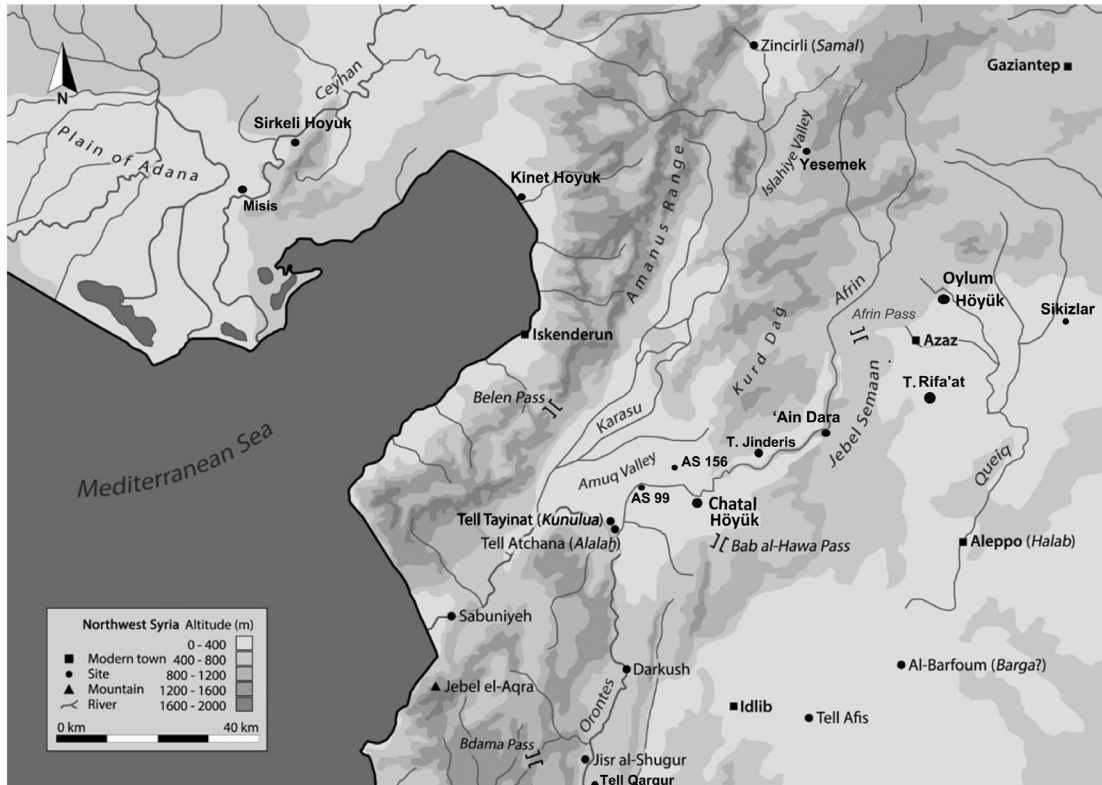


Fig. 1: map of Northern Levant with location of main settlements

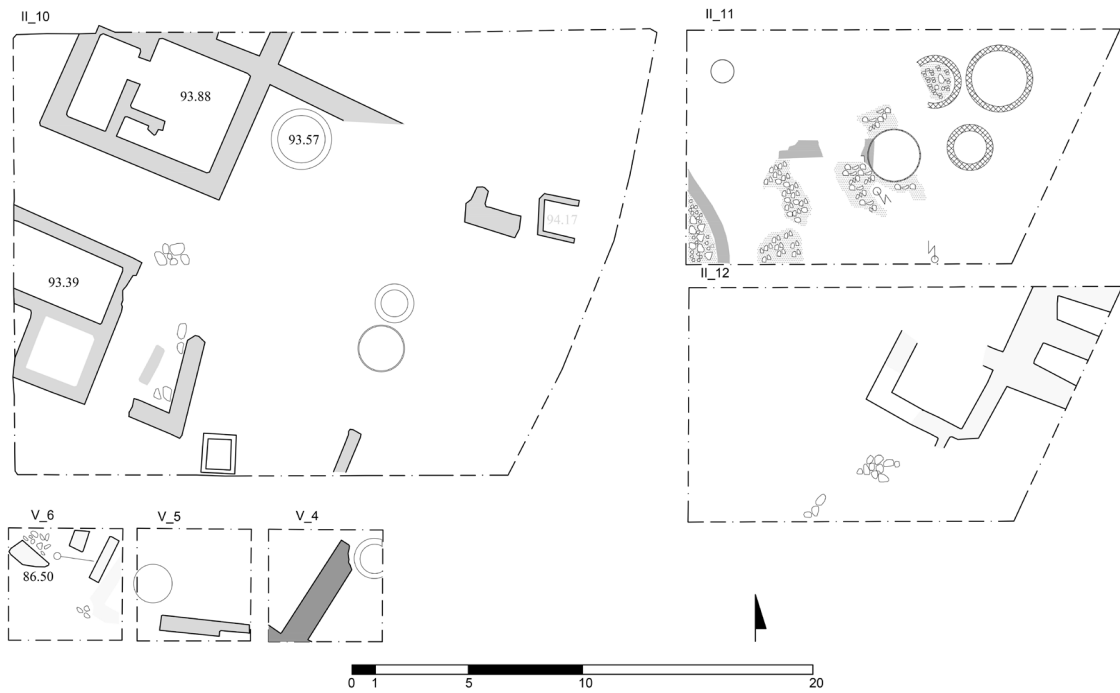


Fig. 2: Phase M architectural levels at Chatal Höyük

Chatal Höyük Phase M

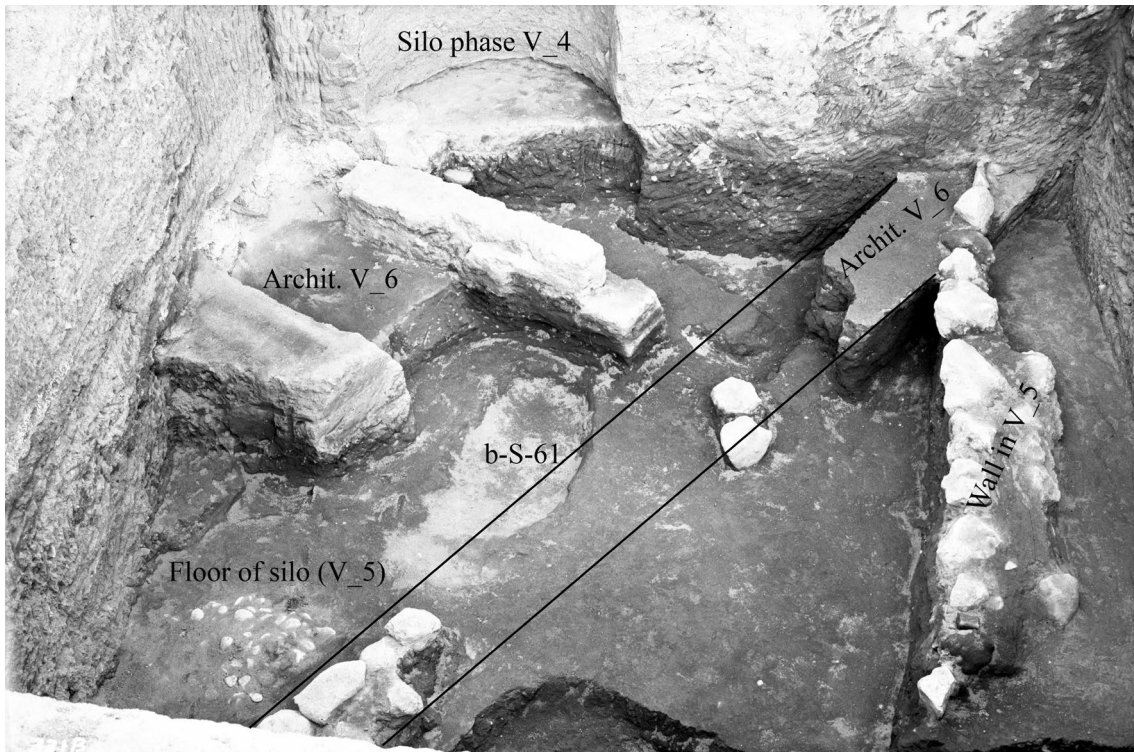


Fig. 3: Area V. Photo



Fig. 4: Area II. Photo

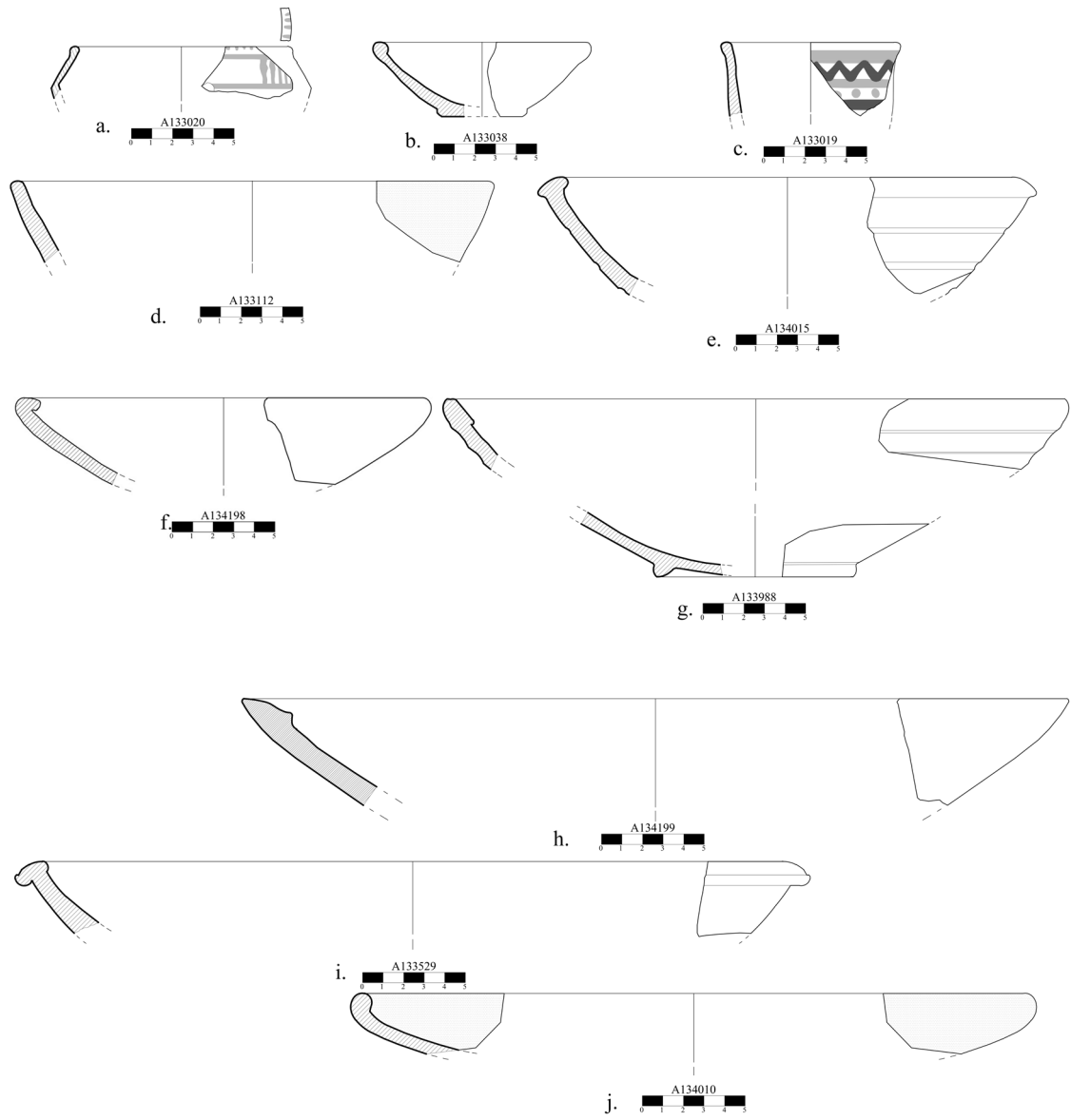


Fig. 5: Area II, plates and bowls phase M_Mid

Chatal Höyük Phase M

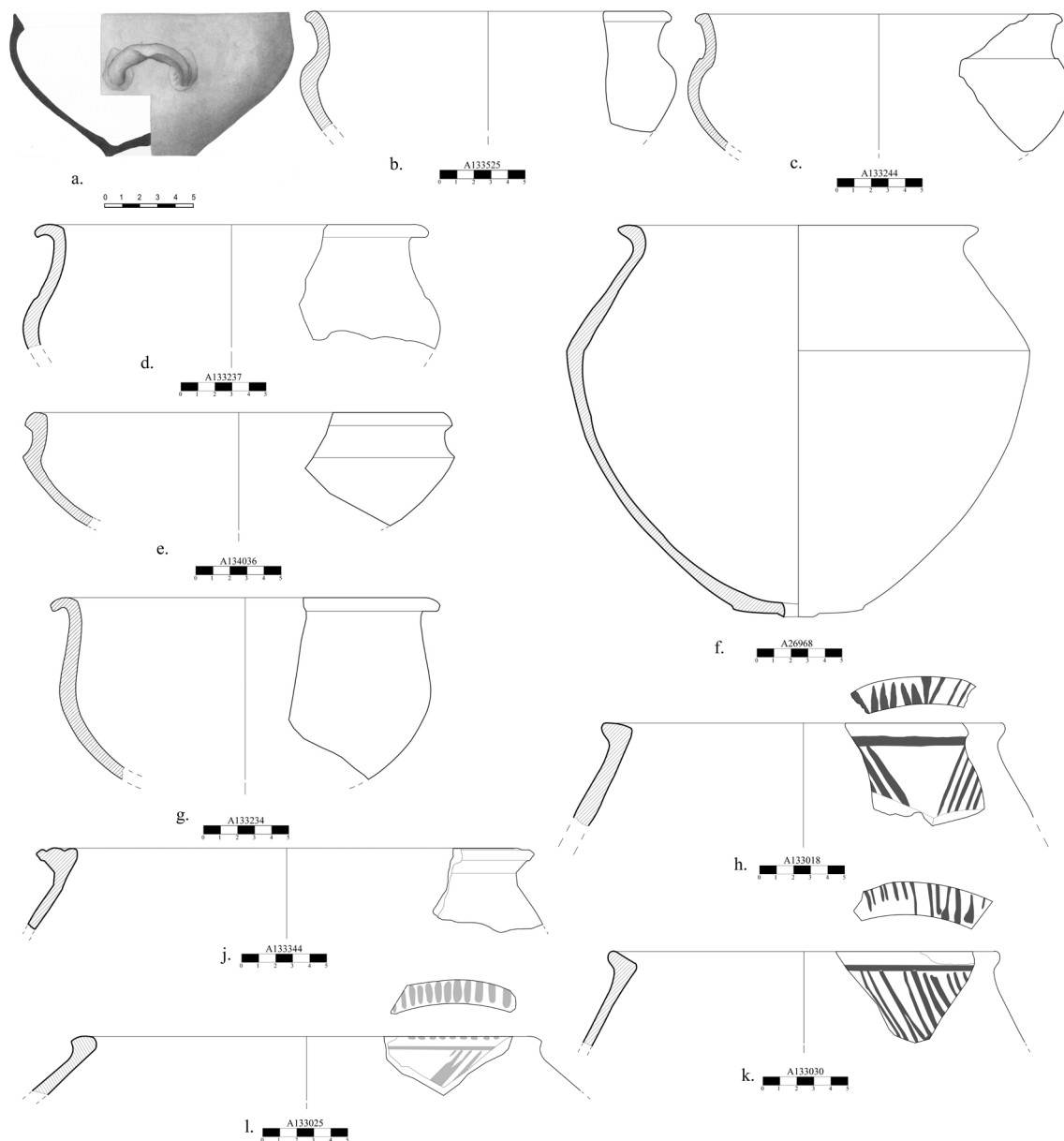


Fig. 6: Area II, multiple serving bowls ad kraters, phase M_Mid

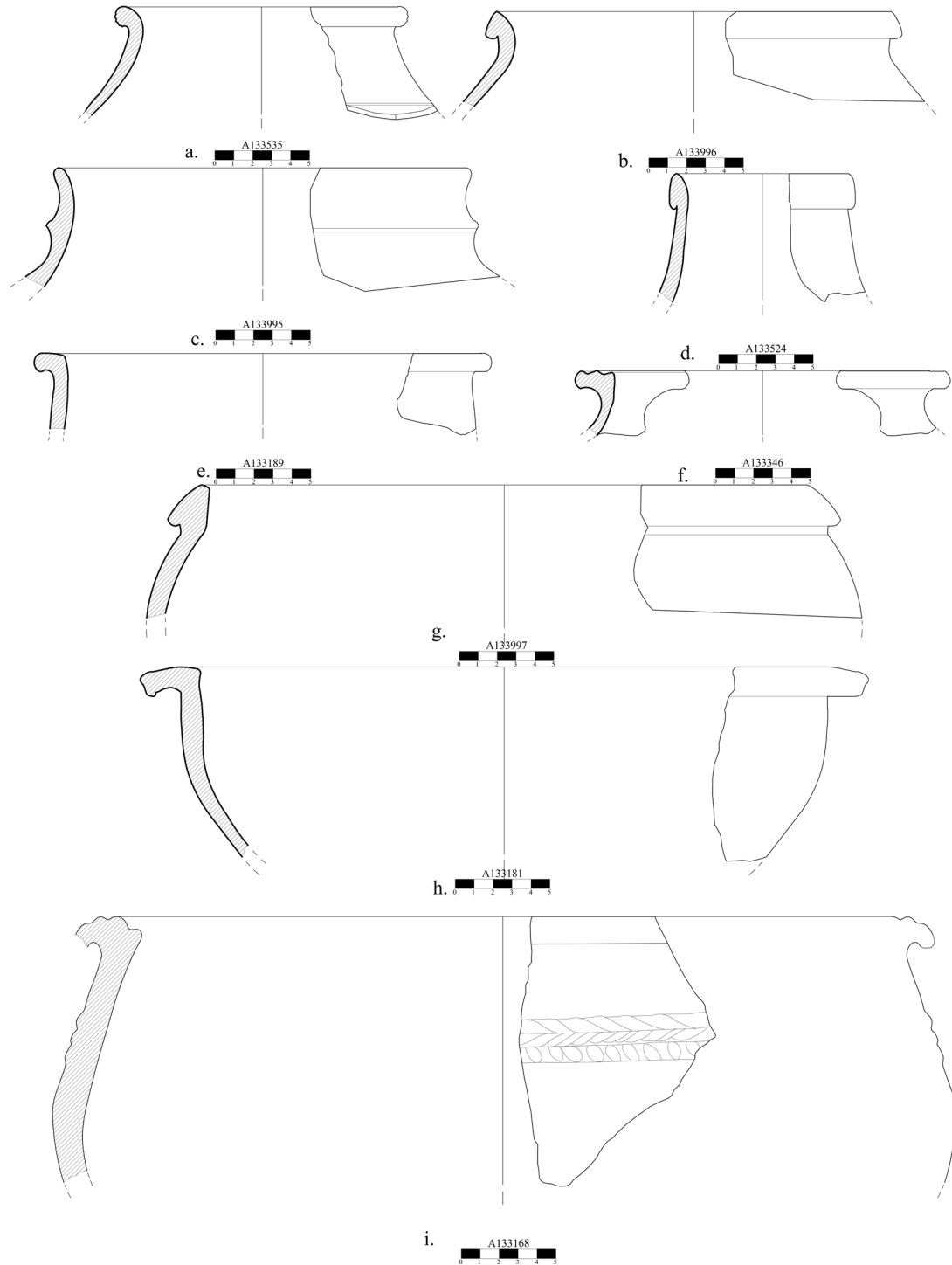


Fig. 7: Area II, cooking pots and storage containers M_Mid

Chatal Höyük Phase M

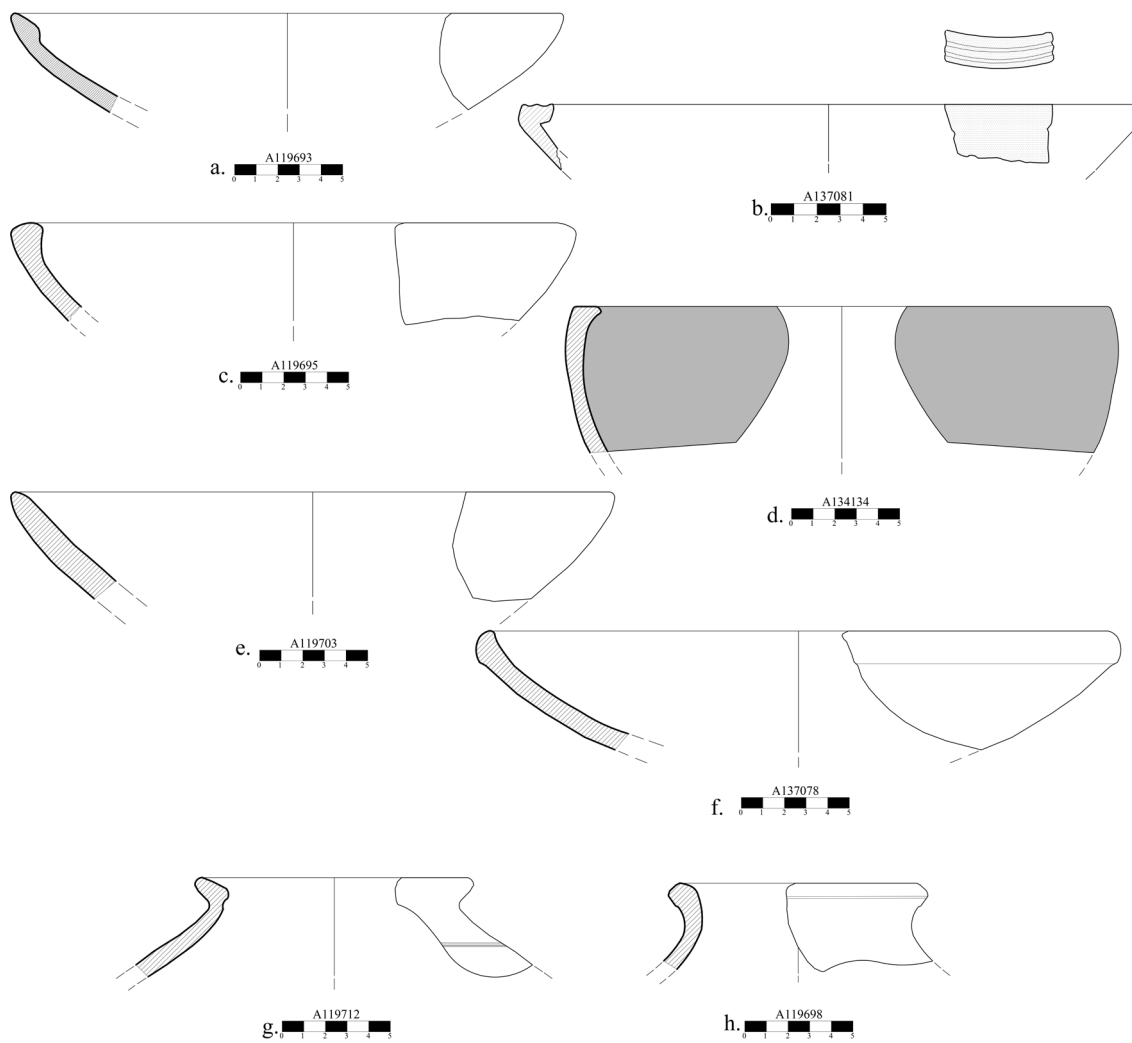
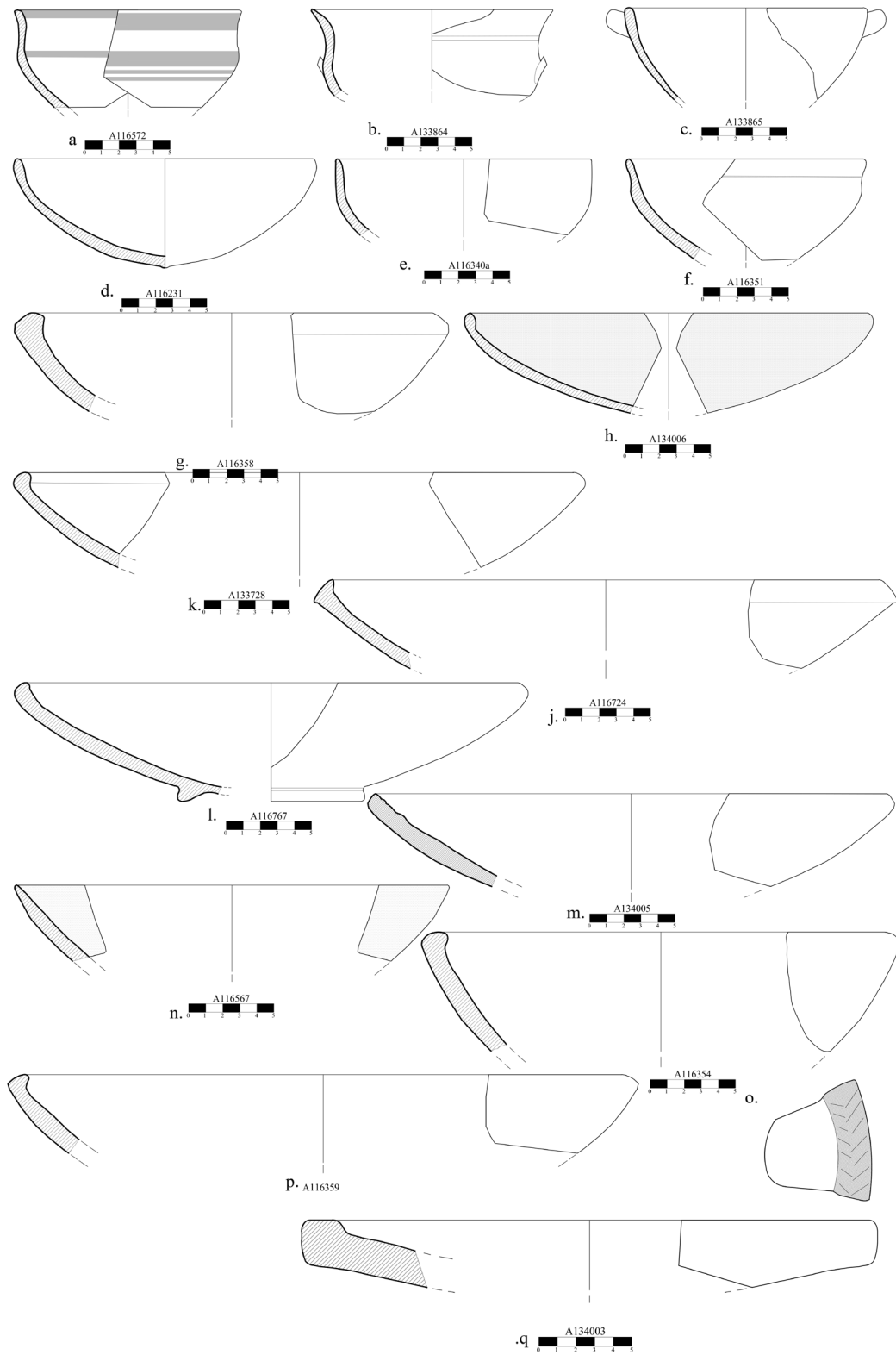


Fig. 8: Area V, plates and cooking pots, M_Mid.

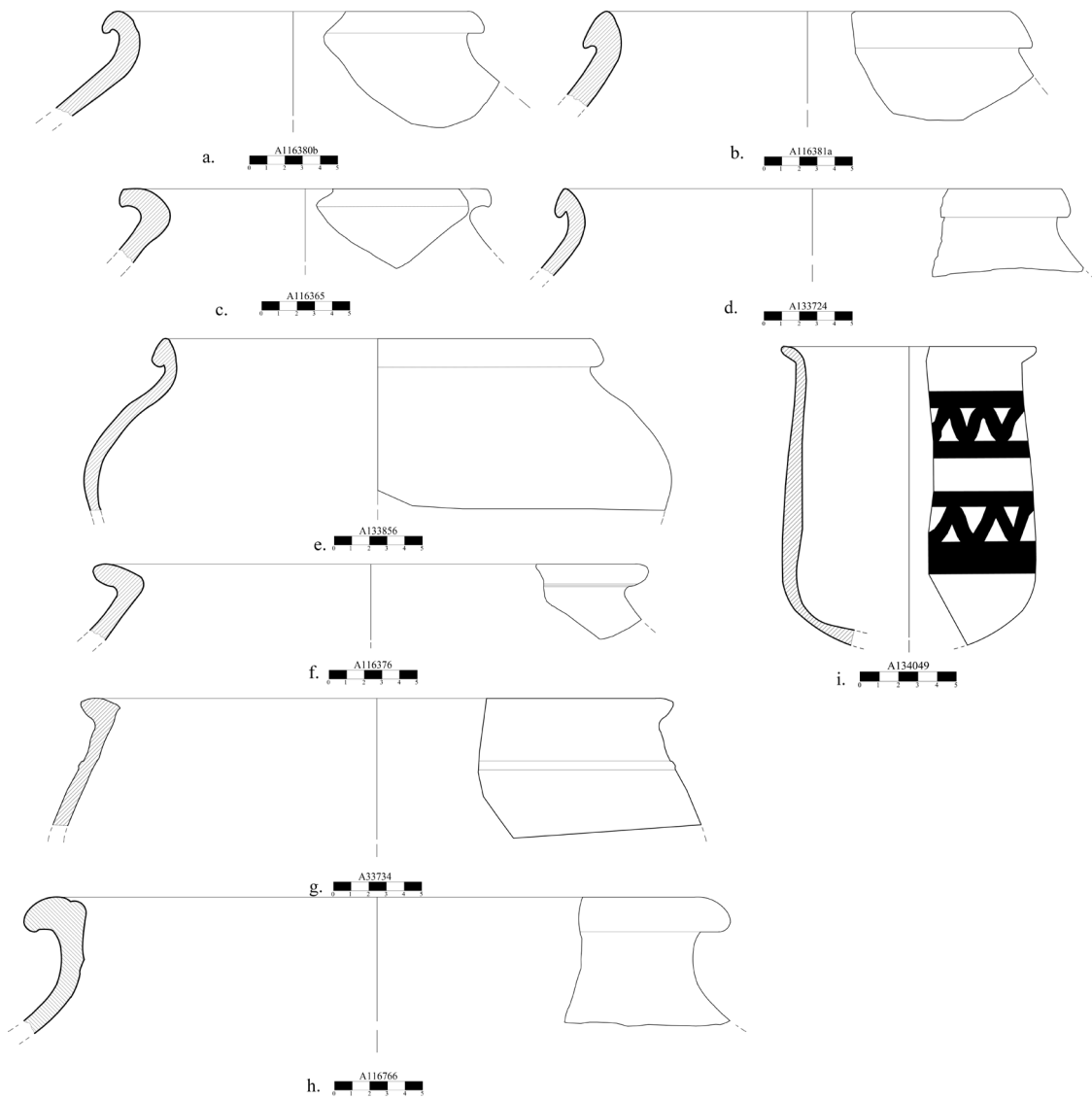
Marina Pucci



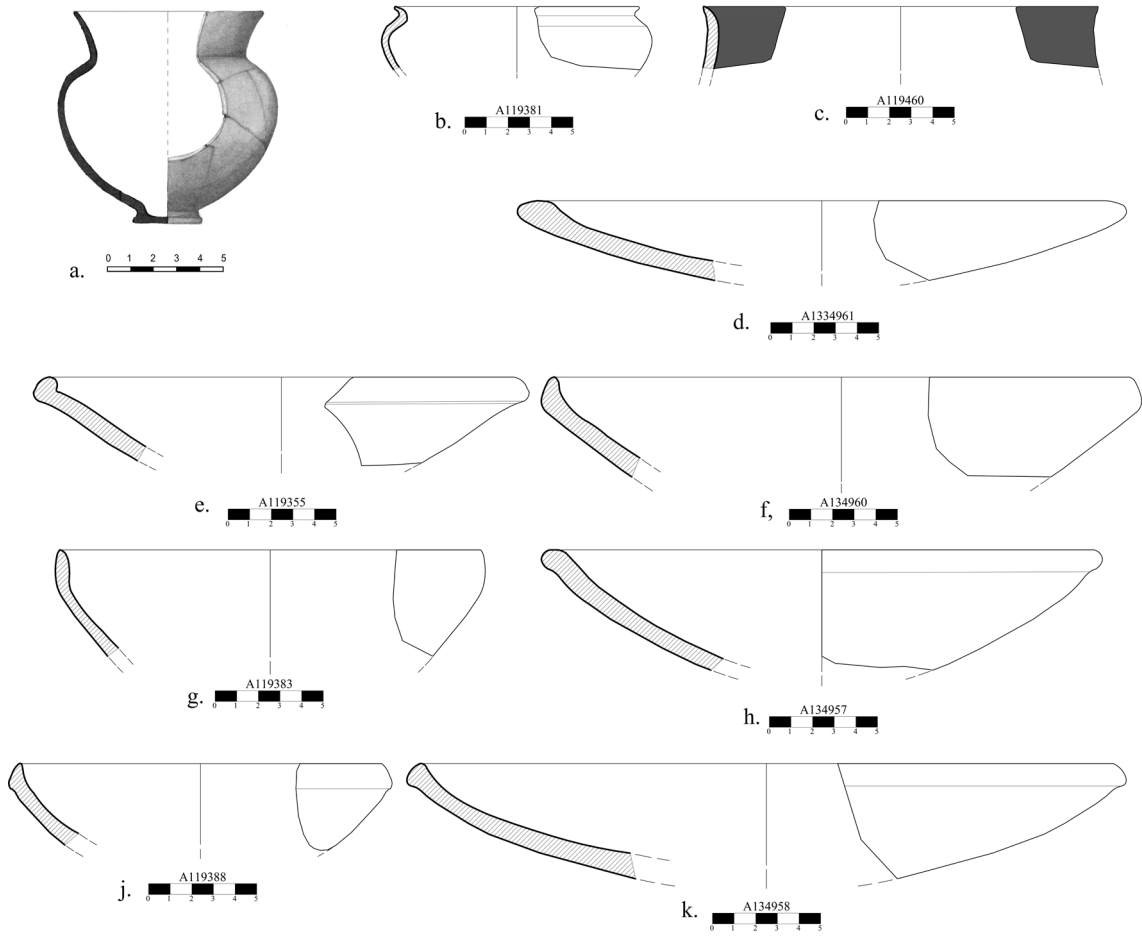
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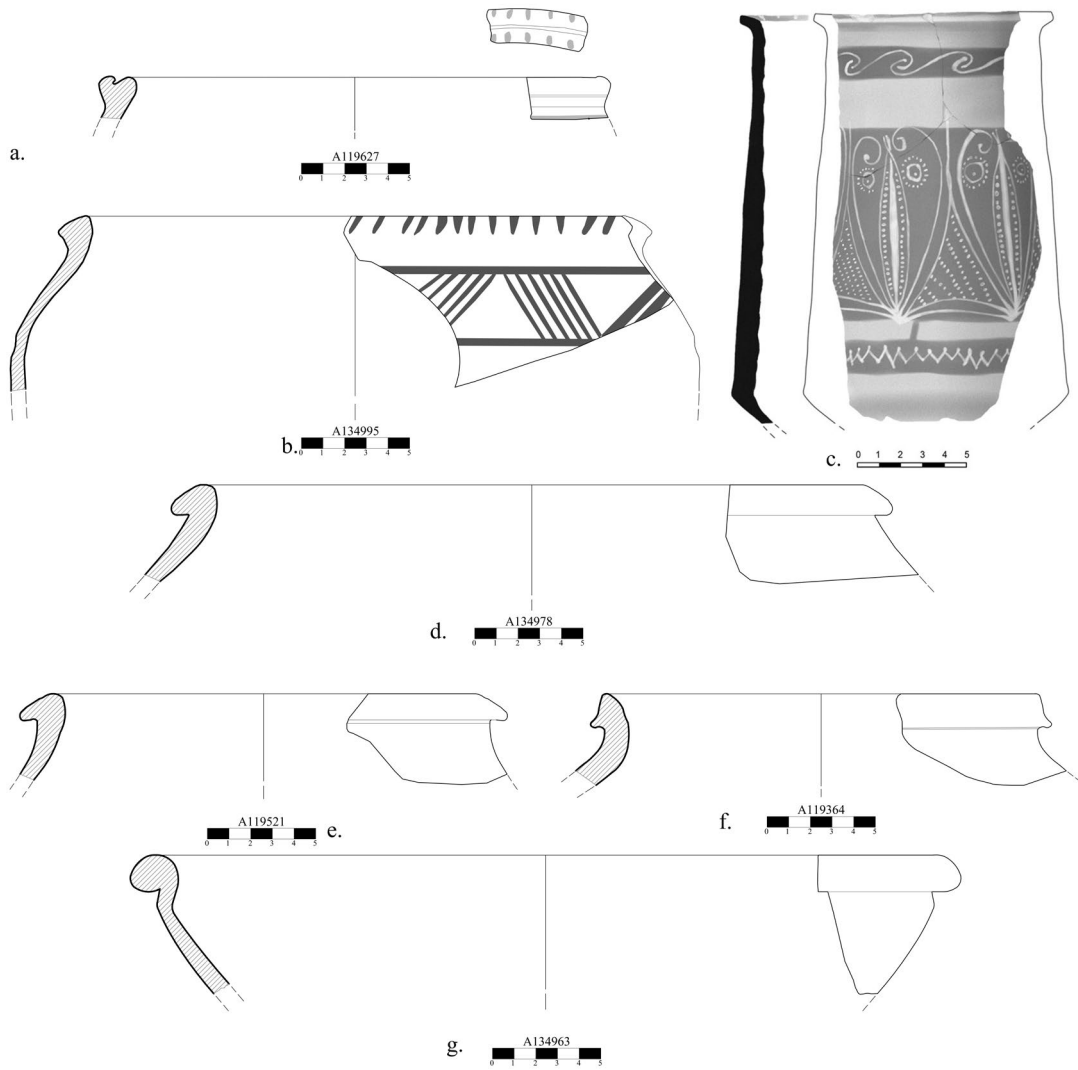
Chatal Höyük Phase M





Chatal Höyük Phase M





Chatal Höyük Phase M



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a.



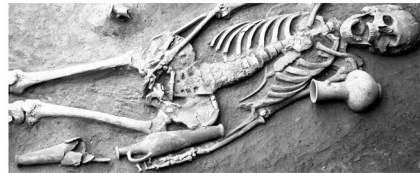
b.



c.1



d.1



e.1



c.2



d.2



e.2



e.3

Pucci_15 Fig_graves.jpg

