

## Introductory Remarks

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This volume presents the scientific results of the international symposium *Western Anatolia before Troy – Proto-Urbanisation in the 4<sup>th</sup> Millennium BC?*, which took place in Vienna from November 21 to 24, 2012.

The initial idea for this conference emerged whilst discussing the role of metals in the Copper Age in western Turkey during our excavations at Çukuriçi Höyük. On the one hand, due to the sparse archaeological data published for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> millennia, further conclusions seemed premature. On the other hand, the archaeological picture of western Anatolia has changed fundamentally in the last decades, as there are long-term excavations in place that have been contributing new and important information to this old debate. The time seemed right to bring together specialists of western Turkey and the neighbouring regions to discuss new data in the light of socio-cultural processes in the period before Troy. Furthermore, following the results of the ERC research group (ERC project *Prehistoric Anatolia*), it appeared high time to focus on this period as it had been frequently neglected in the recent dynamic prehistoric research in western Turkey. The intermediate millennia between the archaeological focus on the Neolithic (and early Chalcolithic) of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> millennia BC with ground-breaking results and publications on the one hand and traditional research on the Early Bronze Age in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC with new input from important key sites on the other, remained more or less neglected.

The symposium in Vienna was organised with a narrow chronological focus on the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC in mind to initiate a first step in refreshing the scientific debate on this period. A circle of international experts in the field of archaeology, archaeozoology, archaeobotany, archaeometallurgy and climatology were invited and discussed various cultural phenomena, some of which stretch from across the Balkans to Mesopotamia. Moreover the contributions included a vast amount of new archaeological data and inspiring ideas about how to deal with this yet so nebulous period in the future.

Important key sites at the central Anatolian Aegean coast are presented and discussed in this volume, offering insights into the results of new excavations and ground-breaking new data for the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. The western Anatolian sites discussed in detail include Çukuriçi Höyük (B. Horejs), Miletus I and Heraion/Samos (O. Kouka), Bakla Tepe (V. Şahoğlu – R. Tuncel) and Çine-Tepecik (S. Günel). In addition, the site survey at Alacalıgöl is presented and embedded in the middle and late Chalcolithic Troad (S. Blum), meanwhile B. Weninger and D. Easton discuss the Early Bronze Age chronology of Troy on the basis of pottery seriation and radiocarbon results. The Carian region is discussed by a re-evaluation of data previously recorded from Iasos (C. Gerber). This new collection of western Anatolian sites demonstrates convincingly that the region was permanently settled and indicates that the main developments of the following Early Bronze Age period were rooted in local, regional and intra-regional processes taking place in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC in western Anatolia (Fig. 1).

The symposium aimed to shed light on these developments and focus in particular on the formation of centres of regional and supra-regional importance that emerged in western Anatolia and its neighbouring regions. It was therefore more than enlightening to discuss our region in relation to the broader geographical context of the Balkans, the Marmara Sea, the Greek mainland and Crete. The gap of knowledge about the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC (and the second half of 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC) in eastern Thrace is reviewed by M. Özdoğan in the context of a complex research problem on a macro-regional scale. Integrated in a crucial critical discussion of data, he suggests that maritime contacts between central Anatolia and the northern Balkans might have taken place through the



Fig. 1 Archaeological sites in Turkey whose excavations results are presented in detail in this volume. Adjacent areas also discussed are shaded green (design: M. Börner).

Black Sea, being quite aware of the chronological discrepancies. The western Pontic area in 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC is characterised by well-organised rural societies, although a ranking of sites with one dominating centre cannot yet be established, as A. Reingruber argues. She identifies the high impact of craft specialisation on social transformations, the application of innovative technologies and intensified communication in the lower Danube region. This specific cultural package might be comparable to western Anatolia in the succeeding millennium. The general dynamics of this period are discussed in broad terms by S. Hansen, who characterises the “second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC as one of the most significant chapters in the history of mankind by an expansion of power unknown until then”. A cluster of key technical and social innovations can be observed in the Near East and western Eurasia. Future research in western Turkey could pick up Hansen’s results and discuss the various elements of this bundle of innovations that were perhaps adapted and partially combined to a socio-cultural structure that finally lead to the Early Bronze Age homogeneity. The Balkan-Carpathian region in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC is discussed by R. Krauß in the context of the Baden and Corded Ware cultures with new data from the site Foeni-Gaz.

The role of the Aegean in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC and the current state of knowledge are analysed and debated in several contributions which include a range of new data from northern Greece to Crete. Recent chronological studies by Z. Tsirtsoni offer a re-evaluated and clear order of the transformation that took place in the Aegean. It includes problematising visibility in archaeology – an important aspect that should also be included in future discussions of western Anatolia. E. Alram-Stern adds an important focus on the distribution of pottery technologies and styles as well as on metallurgy to describe an already established Aegean network in that particular period. She furthermore points out the probable expansion of social organisation visible through fortifications and wells in Late Chalcolithic times. The role of Crete in the emergence of long-distance trade networks is pointed out by Y. Papadatos and P. Tomkins. Their interpretation of Kephala Petras as early gateway community offers ground-breaking new insights for understanding the role of coastal sites and their strategies of raw material procurement. P. Tomkins furthermore offers a broad overview of essential cultural developments and their chronological order in Crete from the Neolithic to the Early Bronze Age II.

The third main aspect of the symposium was the integration of archaeological data from the different regions with environmental and climate data as well as the reconstruction of subsistence strategies and high impact technologies. A broad geographical synopsis of climatic and environmental changes in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC is provided by S. Riehl, K. Pustovoytov and H. Othmanli. Their diachronic analyses of archaeobotanical data of various sites lead to agricultural models for the period with a long-term shift from a protein- to a carbohydrate-dominated plant diet, probably related to an increase in aridity. Additional information about subsistence on regional levels in this volume is offered by A. Galik. His comparison of new faunal data revealed regional disparities in livestock management on the Late Chalcolithic sites of Barcın Höyük and Çukuriçi Höyük that are interpreted as being caused by the differing natural environments at the Marmara Sea on the one hand and the Mediterranean coast on the other. The important large cemetery of İkiştepe is discussed in the light of mobility, social organisation and integration by examining isotopes. L. Welton not only provides new radiocarbon data for this already intensively discussed necropolis, but also new evidence for transhumant pastoralism and its role in the social economy. I. Gatsov and P. Nedelcheva summarise lithic technology and raw material procurement strategies by presenting their lithic studies of various sites in the Balkans, the Marmara region and the east Aegean. U. Schoop draws our attention to the potential role of textile production in Late Chalcolithic Anatolia and its presumed socio-cultural impact in terms of economy and personal prestige. The development and role of metallurgy is discussed in both a broad and a narrow chronological and geographical context. E. Pernicka presents a broad geographical overview of the current state of early metallurgy between Mesopotamia, Asia and continental Europe including recent evidence dating to the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> millennia BC. M. Mehofer provides new data from Çukuriçi Höyük, revealing intensive metallurgical activities in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC that are probably rooted in the Late Chalcolithic period.

The symposium was organised by the ERC project *Prehistoric Anatolia* and the Vienna Institute for Archaeological Science (VIAS) of the University of Vienna. For the financial and organisational support we want to express our gratitude to the ERC starting grant *Prehistoric Anatolia*, the Institute for Oriental and European Archaeology (OREA) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the Austrian Archaeological Institute (ÖAI), the Vienna Institute for Archaeological Science (VIAS) and the IDEE – Forum for Interdisciplinary Dialogue, University of Vienna. We would like to thank Sabine Haag and Georg Plattner for the friendly hosting of the symposium in the Art History Museum of Vienna (KHM) as well as Anton Kern for the interesting tour through the Natural History Museum of Vienna (NHM). The professional assistance by Christoph Schwall, Felix Ostmann, Johanna Traumüller and Maria Röcklinger ensured a perfectly organised symposium. Further editorial and linguistic work for the publication of the conference proceedings were carried out by Silvia Hack, Maria Martinez, Katharina Rebay-Salisbury, Estella Weiss-Krejci and Doris Würtenberger. We also would like to express our thanks to all anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments and suggestions.

Finally we warmly thank all authors and discussants for their inspiring contributions, which greatly enhanced our knowledge about the complex cultural processes and interactions that took place in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. We hope that this volume will both offer a rich variety of new data and models of interpretations for a broad audience and will inspire further investigations into the Late Chalcolithic period in western Anatolia and beyond.

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Vienna, 12 May, 2014