A Red Cross Bowl belonging to Assyrian Colony Period

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Özet


Zusammenfassung
Ein ‘Red Cross Bowl’ von altassyrischen Kolonialen Zeit

Schlüsselwörter: östlicher Mittelmeer, Acemhöyük, Red Cross Bowl, Luwischen, altassyrischen Kolonien Zeit.

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Acemhöyük is situated in the south of Salt Lake, in the southern part of the Central Anatolia. The levels III-I of Acemhöyük are assigned to the Late Assyrian Colonial age, and this period represents the most productive phase of the Acemhöyük settlement. Especially in the level III of Acemhöyük, it is found colossal buildings\(^1\) such as two courts, named Sarkaya and Hatipler, and an Employment Building. In the level II following this splendid period, it seems unusual that there was no colossal building, and that the production decreased relatively, but there was no important alteration for the earthenware. In the lower city of Acemhöyük, four levels of the settlement are discovered, and those levels follow a parallel process with the last four levels of the mound\(^2\). A Red Cross Bowl forming the main theme of this paper came from the ruins of a residence in the level II of the Lower City of Acemhöyük\(^3\).

This bowl has a flaring rim thickened out and a ring pedestal bottom. Its color remained the same as buff-colored clay; the interior and outer parts of the rim were decorated with wine-red bands, and the interior of the bowl was ornamented a red thick cross, which has bars reaching to the rim of the vessel.

In the Near Eastern Archeology, the earliest example of the vessels with Red Cross decoration which embellished mostly the different variants of this bowl, belonged to the Hacilar I,\(^4\) a culture which is dated to the Early Chalcolithic period. However, except its form, this decoration could be followed back to the VI level of Hacilar mound, i.e. to the Late Neolithic period\(^5\). In the archaeological studies, most of the vessels with the red-cross are dated to a period from the end of the Early Bronze age to the beginning of the Middle Bronze age. The vessels with the red-cross appear in Pekmeztepe/Aphrodisias\(^6\), the levels VII-VIa-b of Beycesultan\(^7\), level Ve-f of Kilise Tepe\(^8\), the levels XI-XVI of Polath\(^9\), Kusura\(^10\), Demircihöyük\(^11\), Alaca

\(^1\) For the period, called as “The Monumental Building Phase”, see Türker 2008, pp. 18.
\(^2\) Owing to the intensive settlement in modern Yeşilova town, the archeological studies carried out in the Lower City; the excavations were limited with the try-pits in narrow areas there. For lower city excavations of Acemhöyük see. Türker, 2008, pp. 29.
\(^3\) Thanks to Prof. Aliye Öztan of permission to study on Acemhöyük ceramics.
\(^4\) Mellaart 1970, Pl. 92/94, Fig. 125-139
\(^5\) Korfmann 1983, 295.
\(^6\) Joukowsky 1986, Fig. 321/16.
\(^8\) Symington 2007, Fig. 351-354, 356, 358. Another piece was also found by Mellaart from this settlement; Mellaart 1958a, Pl. 1/3.
\(^9\) Lloyd - Gökçe 1951, 46, 57, Fig. 13, No. 12.
\(^10\) Lamb 1937, Fig. 6/1a-c.
\(^11\) Seeher 1987, Pl. 43/23.
Höyük\textsuperscript{12}, level 11 of Kültepe\textsuperscript{13} and the level Ib of Alişar\textsuperscript{14}, all those are dated to the end of Early Bronze age. A few of vessels decorated with Red Cross motif were also discovered in Troia IV, but the number of vessel with this kind of motif became to increase from Troia IV to Troia V\textsuperscript{15}, and finally it was out of fashion at the beginning of the Troia VI\textsuperscript{16}. Two “red-cross bowls” from Mersin-Yumuktepe betoken continuing relations or influence in the days of Troy V\textsuperscript{17}. For the example of Tarsus-Gözlükule, it seems that the Red Cross decoration applied to the outer surface of a one handled bowl, and that there is a common mind with regard to decorations in both sites\textsuperscript{18}.

The surveys point out that the Red Cross bowls diffused to a great number of settlements in Anatolia. The diffusion in question intensified especially in the inner part of the West Anatolia and also the southern part of the Central Anatolia\textsuperscript{19}. The same artifacts from Bademağacı must probably be dated to the Middle Bronze age. Moreover, since there were trefoil-mugs and dishes from Alacahöyük\textsuperscript{20}, Bademağacı settlement must probably correspond to the level II of Acemhöyük, not to Acemhöyük III.

The vessels decorated with Red Cross which were unearthed in great quantities in Anatolia\textsuperscript{21}, also appeared in the sites of Cyprus, Aëgean islands and Greece which are dated to the end of Early Helladic period and the Middle Bronze age of Cyprus\textsuperscript{22} and beginning of Middle Bronze Age in Levant\textsuperscript{23}.

\textsuperscript{12} Lloyd - Mellaart 1962, Table in p. 264.
\textsuperscript{14} Schmidt 1932a, Pl. VII; von der Osten 1937a, 158, Pl. IV/7, Pl. VIII.
\textsuperscript{15} Blegen et al. 1951, Fig. 240/32.69 and 33/527, Fig. 246/1-5, Fig. 254/9 and 14, Fig. 256/13.
\textsuperscript{16} Blegen et al. 1951, 138, 193, 250; Blum 2002: 77.
\textsuperscript{17} Garstang 1953, p. 189.
\textsuperscript{18} Goldman 1956, Fig. 811–813.
\textsuperscript{19} This kind of vessels are discovered during the surveys at the following sites: Birgi in İzmir, Tavşanlı in Kütahya, Maltepe-Eğret (Mellaart 1958a, note 21), Cumhuriyet Höyük Mevki, Yazırın Çayır (Koçak 2004, 43 vd., 48 vd., Fig. 46/3, 46/7, Pic. 16/3), Akviran, Dinar, Punarbaş-Göl Höyük in Afyon, Göndürle-Harmanören in Isparta (Mellaart 1958a, note 32), Medet Höyük and Yassı Höyük in Denizli (Mellaart 1958a, note 24), Bitik and Karaoğlan in Ankara (Mellaart 1958a, note 26), in Konya plain Karahöyük (Mellaart 1958a, Pl. I/4), Ortakaraviran (Mellaart 1958a, Pl. I/1), Seyet Han (Mellaart 1958a, Lev. I/2), Kızılviran (Mellaart 1958a, 322, note 17, like Pl. I/1), Höyükli and Kuruçay-Akşehir (Mellaart 1958a, 322).
\textsuperscript{20} For the comparison between Acemhöyük and Bademağacı, see Türker 2008, 225, Lev. XIV/1 (for the similar trefoil mud from Bademağacı), for the comparison between Acemhöyük and Bademağacı, see Pl. XV (for the similar plate from Bademağacı, see Umurtak 2003, 1/12, 5/1-2), Pl. XVIII/1 (for the similar Red-cross bowl from Bademağacı, see Umurtak 2003, Fig. 1/6, 8/1).
\textsuperscript{21} Korfmann 1983, 295.
\textsuperscript{22} Karakou, Asine, Tiryns, Eutresis, Orchomenos, Kirha, Malthi, Lerna, Zygouries and Thera
It is difficult to bring a concrete explanation to the Red Cross decoration on the vessels which appeared during a long period in Anatolia and the exterior regions. Various theories concerning the usage aim of those bowls was developed in the recent times. Blegen suggested the decoration in question could be used a hallmark as "par excellence of Troia fifth settlement". Gerstenblith pointed to the cross design on knobs of cups from Konya-Karahöyük and suggested to resemble with painted cross. But both the various designs show on knobs at the same site and this design don’t appear on bowls, we think that Gerstenblith’s comparison seems a chance. According a speculative proposal which was suggested by Mellaart and Korfmann, the vessels decorated with Red Cross "must be related with the Indo-European groups in Anatolia and Eastern Mediterranean region, who brought about a new language."

Various kinds of vessels from Acemhöyük give evidence that this settlement had commercial and cultural relations with the Mediterranean world, with regard to the earthenware. In this respect, the Red Cross bowl decorated with red bands from Acemhöyük has a typical form of the Middle Bronze age. Since it was found in the level II of Acemhöyük, this bowl must be dated to the Old Assyrian Colonial age. In other words, the vessel culture in question gives an important fixed point for the chronological order. This bowl is probably contemporary with the same artifacts from Troia and Cilicia, or dates a few later than those wares, but not earlier. Acemhöyük’s find represent one of the late examples. In this respect, it probably gives an idea about the probable population movement of Luwians in the pre-Hittites period, and their integration to this region and local cultures.

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23 This kind of vessels are discovered during the excavations at the following sites: Tell Beit Mirsim, Wadi et-Tin, Tell Poleg, Aphek, Dhahrat el-Humra, Beth-Shemesh, Qatna, Gezer, Tel el-Far‘ah, Hazor (Gerstenblith 1983, 68, Fig. 24), Aşšana XIlb (Woolley 1955, Pl. XCl:ATP 47/119, 152, Typ 34) and Tell el-Dab’a (Müller 2002, Fig. 11/5, 12/5 and 13/2-3).
24 Blegen et al. 1951, 250.
25 Gerstenblith 1983, 68.
26 Alp 1972, Fig. 760-62.
27 For examples Alp 1972, 763-776.
29 For the vessels which indicated those relations, see Türk 2008, pp. 231, 243.
30 McQueen 1986, 24.
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Catalogue of Acemhöyük find (fig. 2)

Acemhöyük Lower City Trench K-L/20-21, Level II; Height 7.3 cm., width 11.5 cm.; flaring rim thickened out, rounded simple body shapes, ring base, ring-pedestal bottom; non-porous buff colored paste (7.5 YR 6/4) inclusions sparse grit-temper, medium sand, limestone; wet smoothed in paste color; hardly fired; thick-wall; WM; Extending over rim and partway interior in red wine color (7.5 R 4/6), wide cross inside in same color; 1/3 rim pie deficient.

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Fig. 1: Sherds from Ortakaraviran 2, Seyeti Han, Maltepe, Konya Karahöyük (from Mellaart 1958a).

Fig. 2: Red Cross Wares from Acemhöyük, Yazının Çayır and Cumhuriyet höyüks.
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Resim 3: Hacilar, Tel el-Farah, Demircihöyük

Resim 4: Gezer, Bağdemağacı, Beycesultan

Resim 5: Beycesultan, Kusura, Kilisetepe