

Altan Çilingiroğlu'na Armağan
**YUKARI DENİZİN KİYİSİNDA
URARTU KRALLIĞI'NA
ADANMIŞ BİR HAYAT**

Studies in Honour of Altan Çilingiroğlu
**A LIFE DEDICATED TO URARTU
ON THE SHORES OF THE UPPER SEA**

EDİTÖRLER

Haluk Sağlamtimur

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ARKEOLOJİ VE SANAT YAYINLARI

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE CHANGE AND VARIATIONS OBSERVED IN THE BURIAL CUSTOMS AT THE EARLY BRONZE AGE IN WESTERN ANATOLIA

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Hocam Altan Bey'e sağlıklı uzun bir yaşam dileğimle...

The Early Bronze Age in Western Anatolia is characterized as a time when striking technological and economic changes took place which had a dramatic impact on socio-economic and political systems. The population movements at the Early Bronze Age which affected the cultural development of many regions in the western Anatolia were in fact exposed to human interferences immigrations from the eastern and western.

Burial customs in a given culture are generally transmitted from one generation to another almost without changing. In this paper the Early Bronze Age burial customs in Western Anatolia will be assessed in relation to population movements. In the other words, by looking at the burial practices during the EBA in Western Anatolia, I will try to trace if any population movement from outside (such as Indo-Europeans) or from other parts of Anatolia took place in any phase of EBA. Before the presentation of the burial types of the EBA, it would be useful to give some prominent archaeological discussions on population movements claiming to have take place in Western Anatolia.

Archaeological Discussions for Migration

The certain architectural features as megaroid house plans, apsidal houses and a few examples of herringbone-like wall construction which characterize the west Anatolia Early Bronze Age I-II cultures. Developed building techniques that larger houses and monumental building complexes, stronger fortifications, specialized metal industries and slipped wheel made wares can be seen in the western Anatolia during at the Early Bronze Age II-III.

-This variation is showed not only in pottery, metalwork, buildings and other remains of material, but is equally notable in burial customs.¹

Much has been written on this change, and no doubt much more will in the course of the years to

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1 MELLAART 1971: 370.

come, especially when more relevant archeological evidence from Anatolia will be made available to scholars. It is useful to refer to some of the important theories advanced by prominent scholars. Most of the scholars agree with the idea that migration took place in the Western Anatolia although there is no consensus on its time span. Therefore, archaeological discussions on migration related to Western Anatolia can be divided into 5 groups:

According to Yakar, during the late fifth or early fourth millennium BC, these changes, were directly or indirectly related to the movements of the Kurgan tribes in southeastern Europe and in Transcaucasia. The definition of these northern characteristics, however, in terms of precise geo-cultural zones in southeastern Europe and Thrace is rather impossible at this stage.² Early population movements originated from the general area of the lower Danube and the Balkans as early as the fifth millennium BC.³ The migrations from southeastern Europe and even from areas further north into the Aegean basin and Anatolia should be conceived as a slow and continuous process. The population movements from the north were continuous, starting probably in the late fifth millennium and continuing throughout the fourth, third and even the early part of the second millennium BC.

According to Gimbutas, pressures exerted by the second large Kurgan wave, definitely shaped ethnic configurations of Europe at 3400-3200 BC.⁴ The Cernavoda I groups were pushed to the west and south. Cernavoda I people and their advance to the north of the Aegean, east Balkans and western Anatolia. These are three regions which were already populated by Old European farmers started to develop and share a cultural entity, Balkano-Danubian in character, which included some Kurgan characteristics.

Gimbutas believes that many southeast European, Aegean and west Anatolian settlements were converted into citadels by the mid third millennium BC.⁵ The towns were surrounded by heavy fortifications. She thinks it quite remarkable that almost every fortified town and hill-fort in western Anatolia and other areas affectly or indirectly by the Kurgan 2 invasion produced bronze daggers, halberd blades, flat sharp axes, shaft hole axes, awls, chisels, battle-axes. Gimbutas assertion that Kurgan cultural contact with the Aegean basin and northwest Anatolia had taken place 3200/3000 BC. This suggestion generally accepted as guideline by most scholars like Winn and Crossland.

According to Mellaart, Early Bronze Age in Western Anatolia was not marked by a sudden break from the previous cultures, thus it seems to have developed from the Late Chalcolithic cultures. Indeed, besides Beycesultan, recent excavations at Küllüoba (in Northeast Anatolia) and Baklatepe (in the west coast) show the cultural continuity from Late Chalcolithic to EBA. However, taking into metal and other finds into consideration, Duru suggest that EBA culture in Kuruçay represents a rather different cultural sphere while the Late Chalcolithic has possibly Anatolian origin.⁶

It should be emphasized at once that the beginning of the Early Bronze Age was not marked by a

2 YAKAR 1985: 120.

3 YAKAR 1981: 96.

4 GIMBUTAS 1977: 292.

5 GIMBUTAS 1973: 189.

6 DURU 1996: 99.

sudden break from the previous cultures.⁷ According to Mellaart, it could be shown to have developed from the Late Chalcolithic.

J. Mellaart focused on the archaeological results of the cultural change. He related the successive destructions of Troia I and II and the desertion of large numbers of Troia I sites to the sudden appearance of many north-west Anatolian features in the culture of Beycesultan XVI. According to Mellaart the situation in Beycesultan these seem readily attributable to the presence of refugees, probably on large scale.⁸ However Mellaart goes on to explain this as the result of an invasion from south-eastern Europe (Thrace), though the evidence is admittedly negative. It has been prompted by a desire to provide a convenient point of entry for Indo-European speakers into Anatolia rather than by anything in the archaeological evidence itself.

As has been observed in other parts of Anatolia, EBA II in western Anatolia represents the most prosperous period in Early Bronze Age. Fortresses surrounding by monumental fortification walls (Limantepe, Troia), public buildings behind of these fortresses, specialized metal and pottery production are among the characteristics of EBA II period. The collapse of this system by the destruction of the Troia II settlement and the abandonment of most of the EBA II settlements in the Western Anatolia are also related to population movements from the North; more precisely by the Indo-Europeans.

The Burials of the Early Bronze Age

A preference for the arrangement of intramural burial-grounds is noticeable like as Kumtepe, Baklatepe, Kuruçay, Hacilar, Fikirtepe, Pendik, Ilıpınar and Beycesultan in the Western Anatolia except for Ilıpınar in Chalcolithic period. The simple pit graves (Kumtepe, Baklatepe, Kuruçay, Hacilar, Fikirtepe, Pendik, Ilıpınar and Beycesultan), pithos (Baklatepe) and the jar burials (Ilıpınar, Baklatepe, Beycesultan) under the floor were very common (Fig. 1).

These are the simple pit graves was common in the western Anatolia at Chalcolithic Age. The burial culture practised intra-mural under the floor in the west Anatolia. On the other hand pot burials and cist graves is more common in the East Anatolia than west Anatolia.

Three different types of burials were encountered at Early Bronze I, II, III. These are cist graves, pithos burials and simple pit graves. Cemetery culture practised extra-mural burial all West Anatolian cultures. Cemetery areas groved from EBA I to EBA II in the West Anatolia. We found many cemetery area at Early Bronze Age. These were established in 37 centers (Fig. 1).⁹

7 MELLAART 1971: 369.

8 MELLAART 1962: 23-26.

9 Troia, Kumtepe, Ilıpınar, Hanaytepe, Kaklık, Karaağaç Tepe, Demircihöyük, Sarıket, Küçükhöyük, Yortan, Babaköy, İvrindi, Mandıra, Ovabayındır, Yatağan, Ahlatlı-Tepecik, Eski Balıkhane, Kula, Burhaniye, Sarıyar, Kusura, Beycesultan, Pekmeztepe, Iasos, Karahisar, Kuruçay, Kuşluca, Midas (Yazılıkaya), Harmanören, Karataş-Sema-yük, Kocakaya, Alaçehir, Baklatepe, Polatlı Höyük, Gürpınar (Çivril), Çeşme, Ulucak, İpeklikuyu (Bornova Anadolu Lisesi) and Yeşilova.

Pithos Burial

Both old and recent excavations confirm that pithos burial traditions in extramural cemeteries are making up the most common burial type in Western Anatolia. Pithos burials extend in an east-west direction, with their mouths facing the east. The mouths of some of the pithoi were covered using large stone slabs and pieces of pots, while others were filled with smaller stones. Small stones are present on both sides of some pithoi mouths. These might have been constructed as grave markers. In one case 6 individuals were discovered in a single pithos. When a new burial was placed in pithos, the older remains were either pushed aside or towards the base of the pithos and room made for the new interment. All skeletal remains were discovered in a contracted – hocker position.

In order to keep this hocker position, the arms and legs of the body may have been tied or wrapped in cloth. It is not possible to place the body either into the hocker position or into the pithos after the body has gone cold. For this reason, this process should be carried out within a short period of time right after death. The body in the pithos was extends in an east-west direction.¹⁰ The skull points generally east and faces north.

The slight differences of direction in the burials of the Early Bronze Age, the apparent unity of east-west direction may be related with the religious beliefs and the understanding of the other world. Turning the mouths of the jars in the east direction is associated with the belief in "rebirth in the other world and a second life". People in Early Bronze Age most probably believed that the dead, which they placed in the burials in the hocker position, would one day be reborn in the other world. The deviation in directions may be related with the change in the direction of sunrise in the summer and winter. While the sun rises in the southeast direction during the summer, and it rises in the northeast direction during the winter. Therefore, it is possible to determine whether the dead are buried in the winter or in the summer. In accordance with this, the burials in the burials among the Early Bronze Age burials, which are turned in the east-west direction, must have taken place in the summer.

Some pithoi are contain only a few skeletal remains. This type of burials may be symbolic burials belonging to people who had died during an attack. Or, animals may, later have eaten the bodies that have been buried in these burials. Similar types of finds at cemeteries at Harmanören and Baklatepe,¹¹ indicate the existence of such burials in the Early Bronze Age in Western Anatolia.

Another finding, which we think may be related with the burial tradition, was uncovered in burials. The interior of the burial was filled with stones. Carbonized cereals were discovered in some burials, following a tradition practiced at cemetery areas.¹²

The Early Bronze Age pithoi burials, both in their burial tradition and pithoi forms, have similar properties with the burials that have been excavated at Demircihöyük-Sanket,¹³ Harmanören (Göndür-

10 While the Jars of the Early Bronze Age in Western Anatolia are in south east and northwest direction as the ones in Demircihöyük-Sanket and Kusura burials, they were buried generally in the east-west direction in the burials uncovered in Yortan, Babaköy, Ahlatlı-Tepecik, Afyon, Burhaniye, Pekmeztepe, Harmanören, Baklatepe, Kaklık and Karataş. See, WHEELER 1974: 416-417; TOPBAŞ et al. 1998: 21-94.

11 ÖZSAIT 1998: 611. Empty jars were established during the 1998 excavations in Baklatepe.

12 ÖZKAN-ERKANAL 1999: 18.

13 SEEHER 2000, 3 ff., 1992, 164, Pic. 3-4; 1993, 336, Pic. 4; 1991, 97 ff., Taf. 17.1, 2, 4.

le),¹⁴ Yortan,¹⁵ Babaköy,¹⁶ Ovabayındır,¹⁷ Küçükhöyük,¹⁸ Ahlatlı-Tepecik,¹⁹ Beycesultan,²⁰ Pekmez-tepe,²¹ Baklatepe,²² Ilıpınar,²³ Kaklık,²⁴ Karataş-Semayük²⁵ and Yeşilova²⁶ (Fig. 2) which give generally remains from the second layer of the Early Bronze Age. Pithoi in western Anatolia may be taller, over 2.00 m at Karataş and about 2.00 m at Yortan, Pekmeztepe and Babaköy. The largest pithos at Baklatepe²⁷ 1.90 m in height and the rest around 1.29 m. The pithoi at Kusura could not make such larger jars. The largest jar at Kusura is 1.40 m in height.

Cist Graves

Another different type of burials were cist graves in Western Anatolia. The graves are stone cists, built either of stone slabs or field stones. A rectangular box formed of four slabs placed on edge is standard, while ovoid, trapezoidal, semicircular, polygonal, and round cists also occur. The cists are oriented along a roughly east-west axis. The body likewise had the same orientation and was laid in contracted position, usually on its right side, while the head points east.

The cist graves is not as common as pithos burials in the Western Anatolia. They were found in Iasos, Babaköy(?), Demircihöyük-Sanket, Küçükhöyük, Ahlatlı-Tepecik, Kusura and Baklatepe (Fig. 3). West Anatolian cist graves are similar to those found in Early Cycladic cemetery areas. However Cycladic tombs have no standard orientation. Beside some cists in the west Anatolia have different burial customs in the Cyclades. For example, large pithoi, filled with stones, were discovered in front of some of the burials.²⁸ These preserved only their lower portions, and were mainly found in the vicinity of the cist graves. The upper portion of these vessels must have certainly been visible. Like in pithoi burials, cereal grains were found scattered inside the grave.

The **grave-goods**, mostly consisting of ceramics, were generally placed inside the pithos and cist graves. In some cases, some goods were deposited in front of the pithos. Indeed, both the quality and quantity of the grave goods vary according to settlements located next to the cemetery areas. One may find more items and/or more sophisticated objects such as metals in the burials located near the larger and more important settlements. Depas, takartds and pyxides also prominent in the-

14 ÜNLÜSOY 1992; KAYA 1993; ÖZSAIT 1995.

15 KAMİL 1982.

16 BITTEL 1939: 1 ff.; KÖKTEN 1949: 811 ff.

17 AKURGAL 1958: 159.

18 SEEHER 1993: 368; GÜRKAN-SEEHER 1991: 78, 39 ff., Abb. 2: 7, 4, Taf. 6, 7, 8.

19 MITTEN-YÜMRÜM 1974: 22 ff.; MITTEN-YÜMRÜM 1968:126 ff.

20 LLOYD-MELLAART 1962: 26, 33.

21 JOUKOWSKY 1986: 53 ff.

22 ÖZKAN-ERKANAL 1999: 17-19.

23 GERARD 2001: 192; ROODENBERG 2001: 234, 239, Fig. 16a, 18; 2008, 335 ff.

24 TOPBAŞ et al. 1998: 45.

25 MELLINK 1965: 241 ff.

26 DERİN 2007: fig.4.

27 ÖZKAN-ERKANAL 1999: 30.

28 ÖZKAN-ERKANAL 1999: 126.

se cemetery. The wares are mainly grey, but red washed and black burnish wares are also present. Fast wheel arks are clearly visible on many examples.

The burials may have been a special class of ware produced for the dead. The miniature vessels like jugs and juglets were probably toys for children. They may have been, on the other hand, symbolic household utensils deposited with the young burials. Some of the composite triple jars and stone-lay idols placed in the grave may have been objects of cultic significance.

Metal finds from the second largest group of grave-goods. Among weapons, daggers and knives; among jewellery, pins, rings and bracelets are abundant. The weapons and jewellery, all rather simple-looking, were made of bronze. Besides metal finds, baked-clay spindle-whorls, stone beads were also among the grave-goods.

In contrast to the richness of the metal industry and pottery; which had reached its highest level in this period in most settlement centers and many cemeteries such as Karataş-Semayük, Baklatepe, Demircihöyük-Sanket, Yeşilova and Yortan; it may be thought that the people on Ulucak Höyük either lived a poor life, or could neither work the metal nor have enough wealth to buy metal objects. In that metal gifts couldn't leave some graves in the west Anatolia.

Conclusions

In consequence we must allow for successive migrations from the Balkans into Anatolian regions. This is the most likely view. But neither archaeology, nor history, nor linguistic considered in isolation will give us a satisfactory answer to our question. Thus, from an archaeological point of view it is almost impossible to establish the order of the movements of peoples into the Anatolia, Paleo-Balkan and Carpatho-Danubian zones. The same holds good for the migration of the Indo-Europeans.

Hundreds of settlements were established in the Early Bronze Age, when pithoi and cist burial was being used in Western Anatolia which was the scene for large tribe migrations. These centers provided a mobility and action with the settled life on the islands and interior regions and in the whole Western Anatolia. Political and cultural dynamism continued during the Middle Bronze Age as well. The number of burials increased in parallel with the communities settled in Western Anatolia in the Early Bronze Age. In this period, in contrast to the Chalcolithic period, the burials were moved outside the settlements and big cemeteries were established on areas close to centers of population. Although many settlement centers were detected during the researches and excavations carried out till today, such cemeteries are uncovered either by chance or through unlicensed excavations.

It is observed through the way the burials are made, Western Anatolian people who lived in the Early Bronze Age have not perceived the dead human body as wastes, and thinking death as a part daily life, they have never considered it the end of the individual. Many burial traditions and customs originated from this belief. Therefore, the pithos burials,²⁹ which are the most widespread type in Western Anatolia, have arisen from the need to preserve the body of the dead under the soil without deforming it. The jars were used as coffins and the dead were placed in them.

As mentioned above, the change observed in burial types and customs starting from EBA I to until

29 WHEELER 1974: 418 ff.

the end of the EBA III proves that there was population movements in Western Anatolia during the 3rd millennium BC. However, the question needs to be asked here is that who were these people, and from which direction they came? Were they Indo-Europeans as many scholars have suggested? I have tried to answer these questions in terms of burial practices.

The change in the burial practices from Late Chalcolithic to EBA indicates the presence of new groups in Western Anatolia. Both pithoi and cist graves represent the most common burial practices in Western Anatolia during the EBA, at least in EBA I and EBA II. Although we have scarce evidence for the burial types of EBA III in Western Anatolia, both pithos and cist graves seem to have continued in EBA III as well. It must be stressed that intramural cist and pithos burials have also widespread in Anatolia before the Early Bronze Age. For example, both burial types are found in Southeastern Anatolia during the Chalcolithic period. It had been suggested that cist graves in Western Anatolia such as those in Iasos represent the influences from the Aegean sphere. However, recent excavations proved that cist graves are common both in the coast and in the inland areas of Western Anatolia in EBA.³⁰ Therefore, one should seek for the origin of these burial types in Anatolia (Bilecik, Titriş and Hayaz Cemetery etc.).³¹

As is well known, the Kurgan tradition is generally related to Indo-Europeans. However, we have not seen this burial tradition in any period of EBA in our region. The question is, if the Kurgan invasions changed the ethno-cultural and social fabric in Western Anatolia, why does the burial practice in these areas not have a wider distribution pattern?

Indeed, the fertile areas and trading facilities of Western Anatolia may have attracted the populations located in further east of Anatolia and this may led to the population shifts within the Anatolia. Until this assumptions have been confirmed, however, we suggest in the light of our present knowledge that it is more realistic to search for the source of the vast changes that occurred during the EBA within the local dynamics of Anatolia.

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³⁰ WHEELER 1974: 419.

³¹ SERTOK-ERGEÇ 1999: 87 ff.

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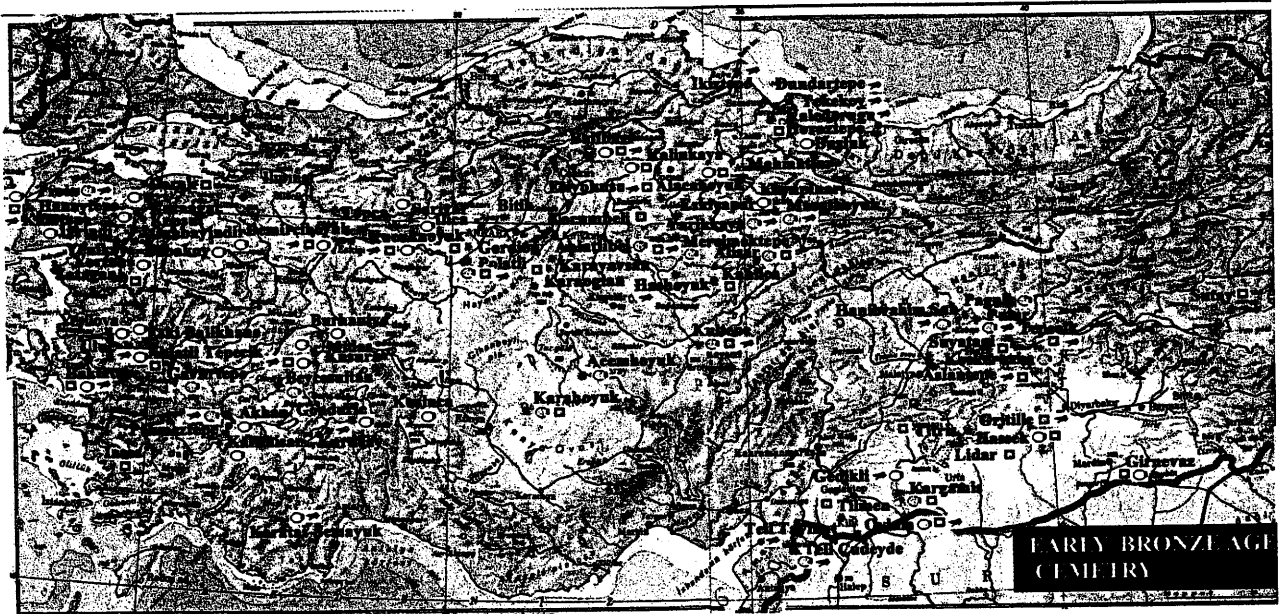


Fig. 1

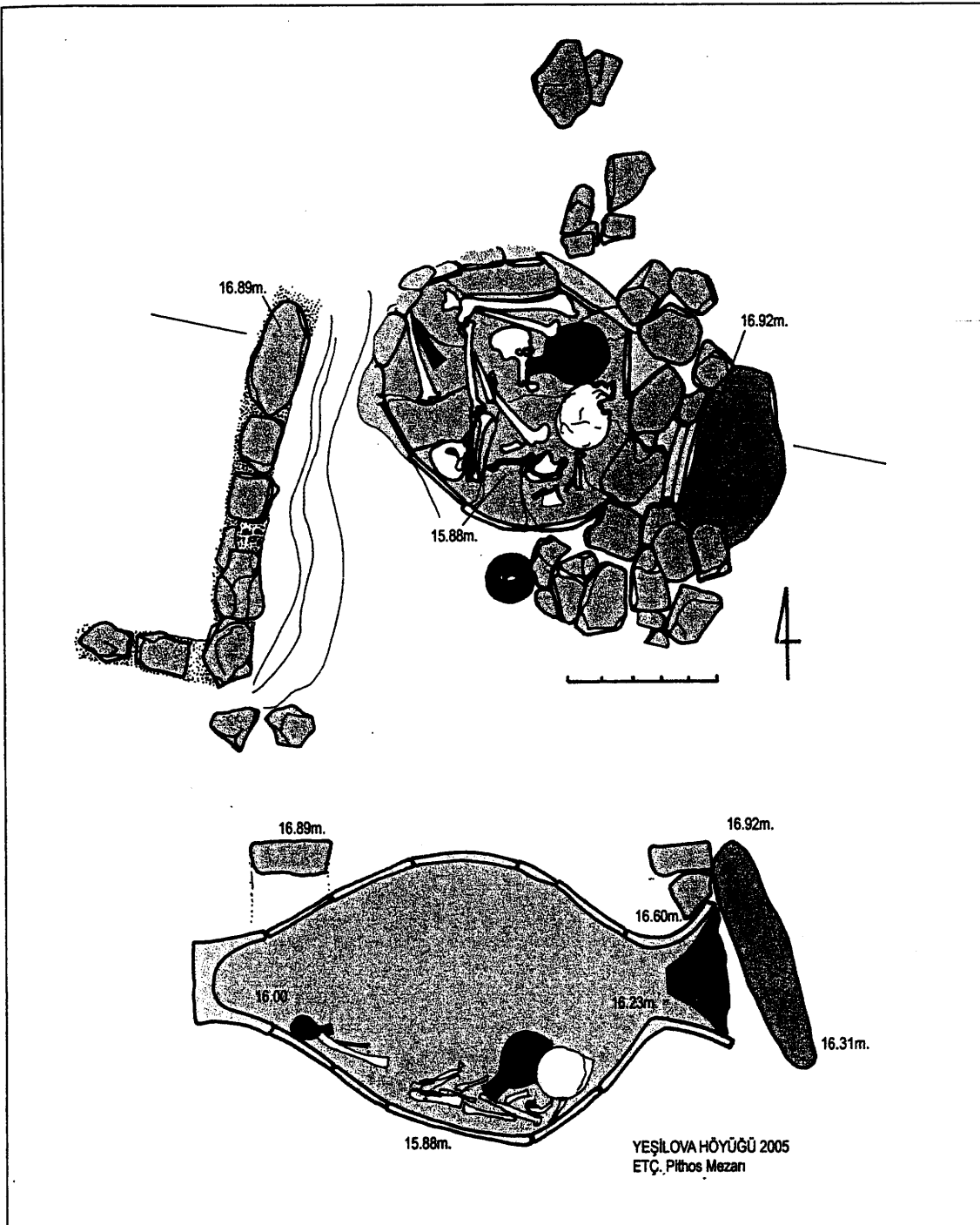


Fig. 2: Yeşilova Höyükü - EBA II Burial

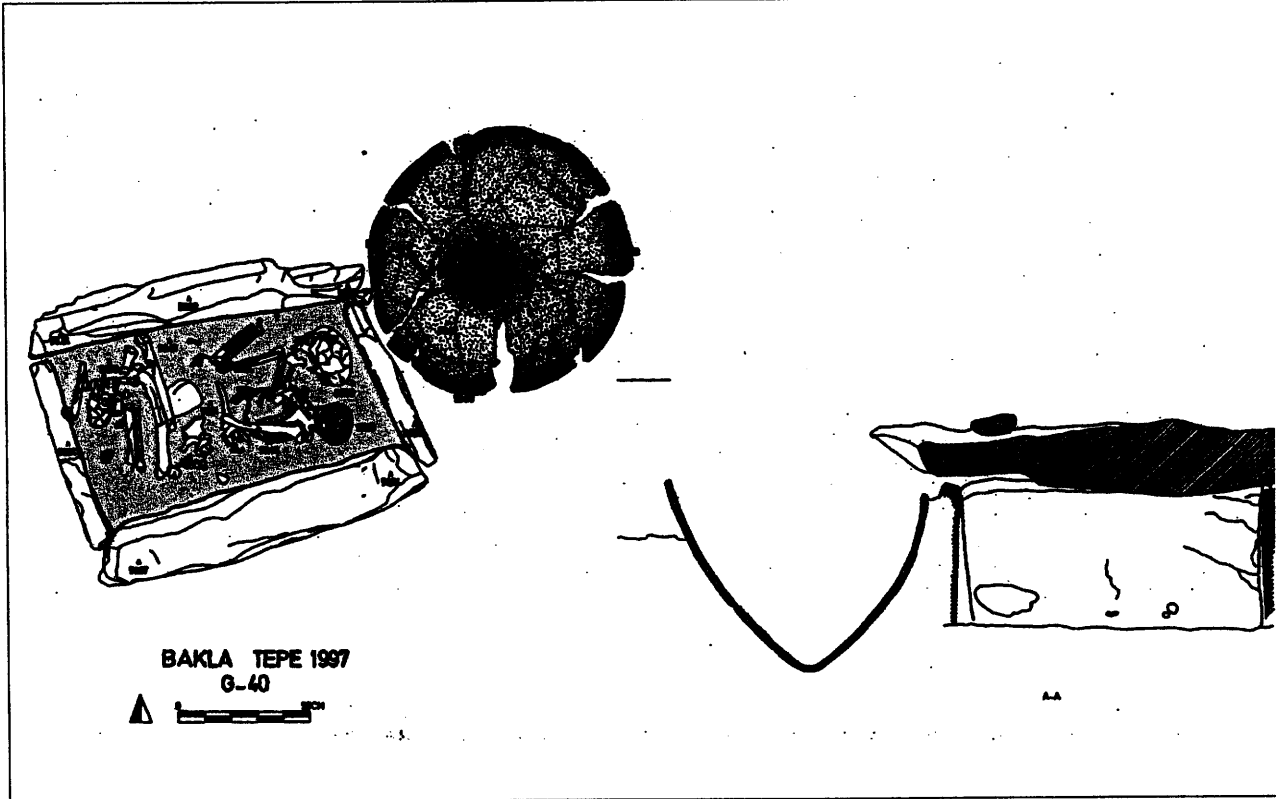


Fig. 3: Baklatepe (M. Akay, Baklatepe ETÇ I Dönemi Mezarlığı, Lisans Tezi, İzmir 2003).