

Trajectories towards the neolithisation of NW Turkey

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ABSTRACT – This paper considers diverse trajectories concerning the origin of some early farming villages in Northwestern Turkey during the beginnings of food producing economies in this part of the country. The roots for the process are sought in the Konya area on the Central Anatolian Plateau. The ceramic assemblages of the first farming sites of the Northwest are believed to be a reproduction of the pottery tradition best known from Çatalhöyük East, both technologically, morphologically and as regards manipulation and use. In individual sites, the present state of research allows contemplation both of migration and mesolithic adaptation to explain for the transition to neolithic subsistence modes.

IZVLEČEK – V članku pretresemo različne poti, ki so vodile k nastanku nekaterih zgodnjih kmetovalskih vasi na severozahodu Turčije v času začetkov pridelovalnega gospodarstva v tem delu države. Korenine tega procesa iščemo na območju Konya na osrednji Anatolski planoti. Menimo, da je keramika s prvih kmetovalskih najdišč na severozahodu posnetek keramične tradicije, ki jo najbolj poznamo iz najdišča Çatalhöyük East, tako v tehnološkem kot oblikovnem smislu in načinu uporabe. Na posameznih najdiščih omogoča stanje raziskanosti razmišljanje tako o migraciji kot mezolitski prilagoditvi, s katerima lahko razložimo prehod v neolitski gospodarski sistem.

KEY WORDS – Anatolia; neolithisation; migration; autochthonous transition to farming; pottery production

INTRODUCTION

Northwest Turkey is here conceived as the region defined by the drainage basin of the Sea of Marmara combined with the northwestern part of the Anatolian Plateau drained by the Sakarya River (Fig. 1). The geographical crossroads position of NW Turkey – both intermediate of Central Anatolia and Southeast Europe, and of the Aegean and the Black Sea –, as well as its archaeological potential were soon recognised by prehistorians (Bittel and Otto 1939:1-8). Bittel, and later Mellaart (1955:55), pointed out that the area straddles one of the main thoroughfares connecting the Anatolian Plateau to the Aegean. It was David French who, surveying the region in the early sixties, tried to find archaeological corroboration of this crucial position by observing that the region “must be considered as a possible source or intermediary for ideas or developments that may have passed between [Anatolia and the Aegean]”

(French 1967:49). French was the first who attempted to find traces of evidence for the route along which Near Eastern methods and techniques might have spread into Southeastern Europe (*l.c.*). Initiating a long-term survey program (1979-1990), Mehmet Özdoğan enlarged French's aims, simultaneously extending the survey area through full coverage of what was thought a critical contact zone area in Balkan-Anatolian relations, *viz.* Turkish Thrace, the European part of Turkey (*cf.* Özdoğan 1982:38; 1985:517ff.). However, for the neolithic period, Özdoğan soon had to admit that the Marmara area proved more a barrier than a bridge between east and west, being unable to find sites of that stage in Thrace. In addition, he recognised that the neolithic, “Fikirtepe,” sites on the coast were soon abandoned after an initial phase of settlement involving some form of farming (Özdoğan 1983:411; 1985:523).¹ As

¹ Here, consideration of the possible “Fikirtepe” site of Bulgar Kaynağı, deep in Turkish Thrace, is postponed until final presentation of the survey data (*cf.* Özdoğan 1991:367 map; Özdoğan, Miyake and Özbaşaran Dede 1991:62; Özdoğan 1997).

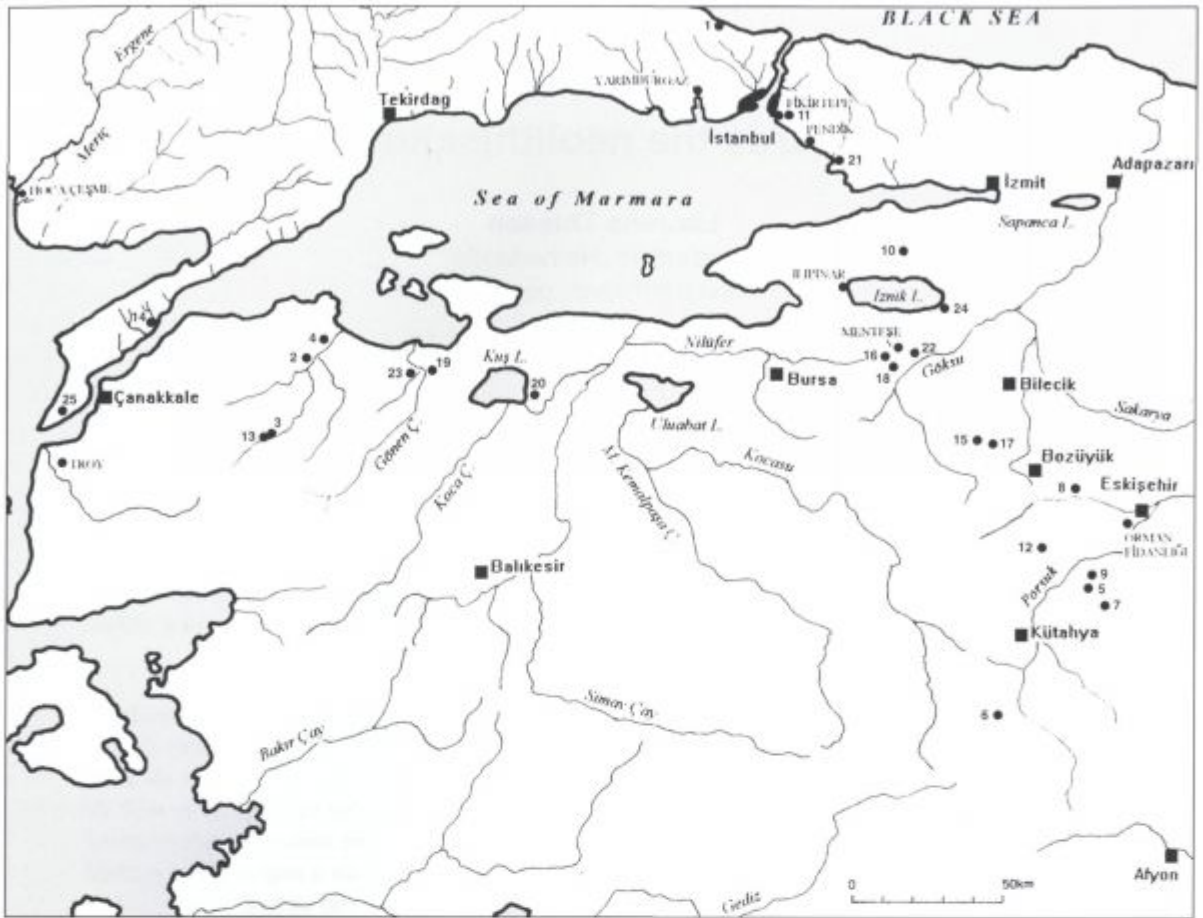


Fig. 1. Late neolithic-early chalcolithic sites in Northwest Turkey (including some aceramic sites, nos. 1-4). Squares: modern cities. Excavated settlements on map; unexcavated sites numbered as follows: 1. Ağaçlı. 2. Anzavurtepe. 3. Çalca Mevkii. 4. Gavurtarla. 5. Asarkaya. 6. Aslanapa. 7. Asmainler. 8. Demircihüyük. 9. Fındık Kayabaşı. 10. Hanımköprü. 11. İçerenköy. 12. Kanlıtaş. 13. Karlıdere-Çalca Mevkii. 14. Kaynarca Mevkii. 15. Kınık. 16. Marmaracık. 17. Pazaryeri II. 18. Sırt Yol. 19. Taraççı Mevkii. 20. Tepetarla Manyas. 21. Tuzla. 22. Yenişehir II. 23. Yılanlık Mevkii. 24. Yüğücek. 25. Karaağaçtepe.

argued elsewhere, the cultural and chronological discrepancy of the Thracian sites with the southern Marmara locations – the former ones culturally dependent on the Bulgarian early neolithic –, confirmed that NW Turkey did not play a direct role in the neolithisation of SE Europe (Thissen 1999).

I.

The excavations at the site of Ilıpınar, due west of the İzmit Lake in the Asiatic part of Turkey settled the absolute date of “Fikirtepe.” Additionally, they showed that the occupation of the first neolithic villages in this part of the country continued beyond the trial events on the East Marmara coast (Roodenberg [ed.] 1995) (see Tab. 1).

If I recapitulate Ilıpınar’s 500 year sequence, several points may be highlighted. There is no evidence

of an occupation of the site prior to phase X. Life was already fully agricultural, sheep and goat dominating. An intense fire, possibly obliterating the whole settlement, destroyed the last building level of phase X. The subsequent phases IX-VII constitute a continuous cycle of building and rebuilding, with a strong adherence to previously used building plots. Existing patterns in ceramic production and use, in the bone and antler tools and in the chipped stone industry are being maintained, suggesting a stable and coherent society. Pigs become gradually more numerous. In phase VI the first structural use of mud brick is attested, although previous earth wall construction is not unknown in the form of *pisé*, cobs and daub. The pattern of single house units is discarded and replaced by linked single-room units forming specific architectural layouts. In the phase VI pottery, basically, the old canon is adhered to, but several elements point forward to the subsequent phase VA. An extremely

strong fire destroys level VI, vitrifying walls, mud bricks and pottery. Phase VA deviates from the earlier sequence in choice of building plot, in house plan, in pottery and in the first occurrence of steatopygous female figurines of baked clay showing clear parallels with Southeastern Europe of the mid-sixth millennium cal BC (cf. *Roodenberg 1993.266 Fig. 5*). Lasting perhaps a century, Ilipinar VA ultimately falls victim to a severe fire, after which phase VB marks the beginning of a stage which represents an 'internationalisation' of contacts spreading over the Balkans and Asia Minor linking the Aegean and the Black Sea, and which may be attributed to the Middle Chalcolithic period. After the burning of phase VB, the site is abandoned for over two millennia.

The foundation of Ilipinar can, with a fair degree of certainty, be set at about 6000 cal BC (cf. *Roodenberg, Thissen and Buitenhuis 1989/1990.75; Roodenberg 1995.171ff.*). This date would make Ilipinar X roughly contemporaneous with the second major occupation phase at Hacilar (the cluster of levels V-III), with the beginning of the Thessalian Middle Neolithic (or "Sesklo") period, and with the establishment of the first farming sites in Eastern Makedonija, viz. Anza and Vršnik. By 6000 cal BC, Thessaly had already at least two centuries of peaceful and successful village life behind it, the Giannitsa

Plain in Greek Macedonia had known farming sites for several generations and seen their subsequent abandonment, while the fertile plains of Western Turkey most probably had been occupied by aceramic farming communities by the later part of the seventh millennium cal BC.² The neolithisation of NW Turkey, therefore, was comparatively late.

Prior to the Ilipinar excavations, suggestions as to the existence of an early pottery horizon in the Northwest were first ventured by James Mellaart, underlining conceptual parallels in the Fikirtepe pottery and early Hacilar (levels IX-VI), simultaneously stressing the differences (*Mellaart 1967*). The Ilipinar excavations proved his dual thesis concerning the date and the southern origin as roughly correct. Earlier, Mellaart had rightly perceived the similarities of pottery surveyed from the site of Menteşe in the Yenişehir Plain with the Fikirtepe assemblage (*Mellaart 1955.56, 73*)³. Later, French could add two more sites in the Yenişehir Basin to this emerging early pottery culture. He also connected Ilipinar with the Marmara settlements (*French 1967.56f.*). French further noticed the Fikirtepe connections in some of the pottery excavated by Bittel in 1937 at Demircihüyük in the Eskişehir Plain (*Bittel and Otto 1939, Pl. 10:1-6*). All these relations were corroborated by the surveys carried out later by Özdoğan in these areas and found full confirmation by the excavations at Demircihüyük and Ilipinar. The term "Fikirtepe culture" was coined both for the sites in the Eastern Marmara area and for those located more to the south on the Anatolian mainland - first tentatively by Bittel (*1969/70.18*), but since then explicitly by Özdoğan (*1983, cf. also Seeher 1987.44; Efe 1990.92*). Here, I wish to restrict the label for the coastal Marmara settlements only.

The work done on Ilipinar, in particular, allows to elaborate some hypotheses about the origin of its culture and about its relation to the Fikirtepe sites to the north and to the alleged Fikirtepe sites due south. More generally, certain differences with, notably, the Eastern Marmara coast settlements give rise to contemplate different trajectories toward sedentary village life to have been at play, confirming the superficiality in the coherence of the "Fikirtepe culture" (likewise, *Özdoğan 1997*).

phase	number of building levels	building method	cal BC range
burnt VB	1	mud brick	5500-5450
burnt VA	3	mud brick	5600-5525
burnt VI	2	mud brick/pisé	5675-5625
VII	2	cob-on-post/ wattle-and-daub	5725-5675
VIII	4	cob-on-post/pisé	5800-5725
IX	3	cob-on-post/pisé	5875-5800
burnt X	3	cob-on-post/pisé	6000-5875
virgin soil			

Tab. 1. The Ilipinar sequence.

² A full treatment of these areas may be found in my PhD dissertation, recently submitted to the Faculty of Archaeology of Leiden State University, titled "Early village communities in Anatolia and the Balkans, 6500-5500 cal. BC. Studies in chronology and culture contact" (1999).

³ "These sherds [from Menteşe] show the probable presence of sites of the Fikirtepe type and period also in the region south of the gulf of Izmit (...)" (*Mellaart 1955.56*).

II.

Solid material culture parallels exist between Ilipinar X and the presently known cluster of sites on the East Marmara coast, collectively labelled as "Fikirtepe," after the most thoroughly investigated type site (Bittel 1969/1970; Özdoğan 1979; 1983). In the pottery, for instance, the two quantitatively dominant vessel categories in Ilipinar, *viz.* restricted pots with four vertically-pierced knob handles and pots with two horizontal lugs (Fig. 2.2-3 and 1, 4 resp.) occur widely at Fikirtepe as well. After Özdoğan's analysis of the Fikirtepe pottery, however, open forms make up a far larger proportion in the assemblage than is the case at Ilipinar (27.7% *vs.* <5% resp.). This difference in the proportion of the main vessel categories may be related to differences in the subsistence base of both sites, rather than indicating chronological variety. Simultaneously, however, the occurrence at Fikirtepe of both pot categories, which at Ilipinar have been linked to mutually

exclusive, but related functions in cooking, implies a similar discrete use at the Marmara site. Elsewhere⁴ I have argued that the pots with vertically-pierced knob handles were used in the cooking of pulses such as lentils and bitter vetch, which both appear to have been major food stuffs at early Ilipinar (cf. *Van Zeist and Waterbolk-Van Rooijen 1995.161*). Pulses, after an initial cooking-stage, require only a limited supply of heat during cooking, just enough to keep things boiling. Particularly in the case of bitter vetch there is a need to boil it for minimally one hour in order to remove the poisonous substance (*Van Zeist and Waterbolk-van Rooijen 1995. l.c.*). The possibility of regulating the distance between fire and pot by means of the strings, so as to control the degree of heat intensity, makes pots with pierced knob handles well adjusted in this respect. The two-handled pots, by contrast, were possibly placed directly *over* the fire, the large handles providing easy grip when lifting them from it. The wider orifices noted for the two-lug pots during Il-

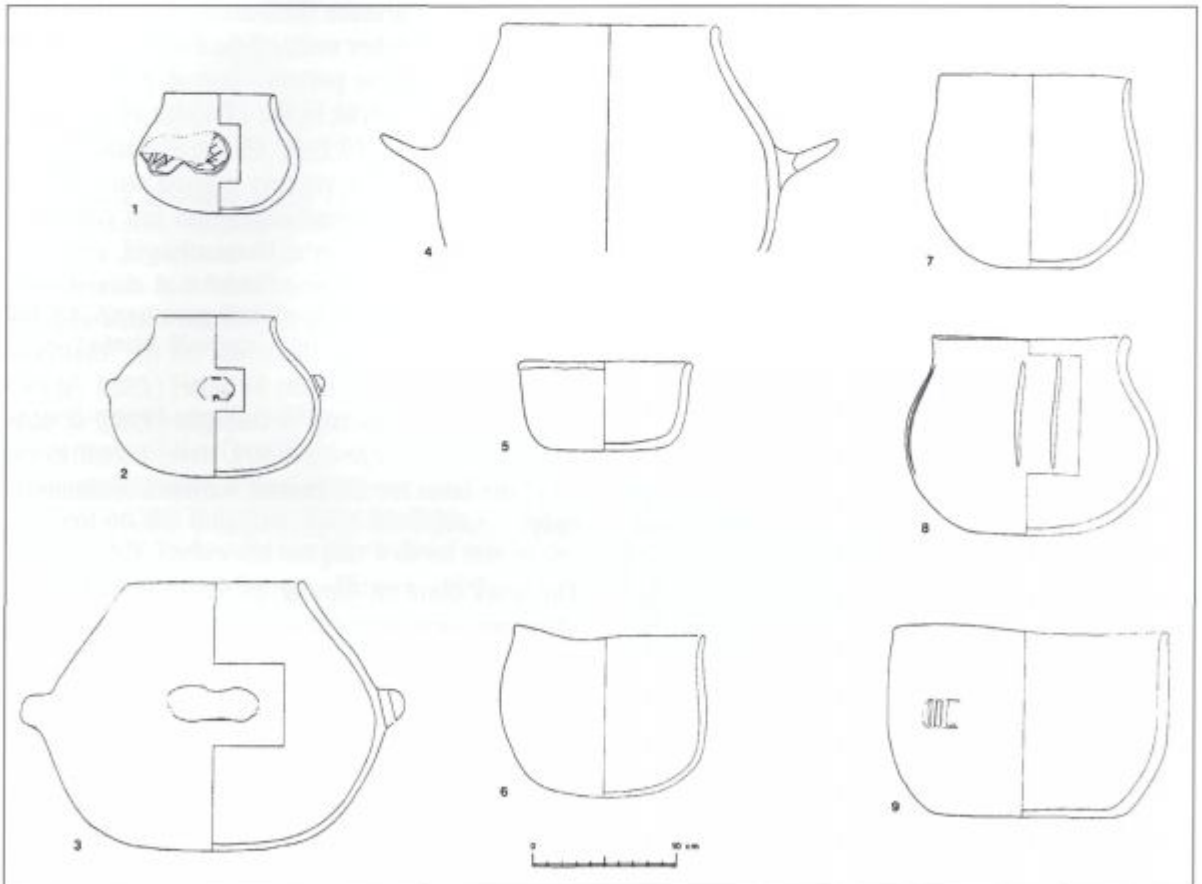


Fig. 2. *Ilipinar phase X. Major vessel categories. Provenance: 1. S9/112 (showing scored attachment place for lug, two horizontal lugs originally). 2. S9/042. 3. S9/119. 4. Section/050. 5. Section/050. 6. S9/112 (oval). 7. S9/085. 8. S9/112 (oval, grooved decoration repeated on the four cardinal points). 9. S9/113 (oval; four vertically-pierced knob handles originally).*

⁴ Cf. note 2 *supra*.

pinar phases IX–VI would allow recurrent stirring of the contents (in order to avoid burning the food) and/or adding of ingredients. Therefore, if one assumes that *different* subordinate categories of cooking pot have been used for the preparation of *different* foodstuffs, then the two-lugged pots may have been used for the preparation of food involving miscellaneous ingredients (e.g., specific soups, meat or vegetable dishes). The preparation of such 'composite' dishes, involving the adding of different ingredients and needing frequent stirring, may be thought to profit from a vessel that is easily manipulable and the orifice of which is easily accessible.

This inferred structural relationship in a dominant domestic utensil between the İznik area and the Eastern Marmara coast is present also in at least two sites situated south and southeast of the İznik Basin, *viz.* Menteşe and Demircihüyük. At the recently excavated site of Menteşe in the Yenişehir Basin, the basal deposit yields a similar pottery assemblage as known from Ilıpınar X (cf. Roodenberg 1999, Fig. 13). Three ¹⁴C dates from the top level of this deposit confirm contemporaneity with the north, where it must be stressed that some 3 meters of accumulation still remain untouched⁵. In the Yenişehir Basin, two other sites (Marmaracık and Yenişehir II – cf. French 1967.53, 55 *resp.*), unexcavated thus far, yield similar pottery on the surface, indicating that they might have formed a tight cultural unit together with Menteşe as late as 6000 cal BC. Given the 3 m of remaining deposit at Menteşe, it is not inconceivable that the Yenişehir site cluster was established a few centuries earlier than basal Ilıpınar. All three Yenişehir sites are located on the northern edge of the plain, where a shallow lake existed in its lower part until recently (Roodenberg 1999). Both material culture and environmental position connect the Yenişehir site cluster with the İznik Lake, where next to Ilıpınar, a possibly contemporaneous settlement is attested on its eastern shore (Yüğücek, cf. French 1967.55).

Apparently, the small alluvial fans on Lake İznik's western and eastern shores suggested attractive locations for establishing permanent villages to a large degree dependent on farming. A separate pass connects each shore over the Kurban Mountains with the Yenişehir Plain. Given the possible ancestry of

Menteşe over Ilıpınar, simultaneously acknowledging the close material culture correspondences between both areas, it is not inconceivable that the İznik area was settled from the Yenişehir Plain. Two points speak against a scenario where basal Ilıpınar would represent a mesolithic/epi-palaeolithic adaptation by local hunter-gatherers turning to agriculture. There is, first, the heavy reliance on *ovicapridae* in Ilıpınar X, with hunting evidently having played a minor role (Tab. 2).

phase	domestic (n)	wild (n)	wild (%)
VB	151	9	5.6%
VII–VA	1190	47	3.8%
VIII	4080	70	1.7%
IX	1117	176	13.6%
X	781	79	9.2%

Tab. 2. Preliminary data on the proportion of wild and domestic in the major food animals in Ilıpınar phases X–VB (after Buitenhuis 1989/1990.112, Tab. 4).

Had the first settlers at Ilıpınar been hunter-gatherers, then one would suspect a higher proportion of hunted species. The fact that, as Buitenhuis perceived, the reliance on sheep and goat is in contrast to what would be expected, as both species did not occur naturally in the region (Buitenhuis 1995.153), does not, however, automatically lead to a southeastern origin of the settlers (*l.c.*). Even local hunter-gatherers could be misinformed concerning the maladjustment to the local circumstances of species unknown to them before. A second factor against mesolithic adaptation is the rather limited use of marine resources during Ilıpınar X (cf. Buitenhuis 1995.154, Tab. 2).

The thorough knowledge of the local surroundings to be assumed for hunter-gatherers in general would have reflected both in a more diversified marine fauna⁶ and in a quantitatively higher representation in basal Ilıpınar, were we to consider the site's establishment as a local decision. The fact that not a single fish bone has been collected from phase X (Buitenhuis 1989/1990.114), neither from the lake nor from the sea (only 15 km away), is again hard to reconcile with a hunter-gatherer background for the first villagers at Ilıpınar. Indeed, only the faunal re-

⁵ The three Menteşe dates are as follows: GrN-24463, 7200±60 BP, GrN-24461, 7170±60 BP and GrN-24462, 7050±35 BP (*J. Roodenberg, pers. comm.*).

⁶ For Ilıpınar X, Buitenhuis did count only three marine species, all of the *Mollusca* phylum, to note *Ostrea edulis*, *Mytilus galloprovincialis* and *Cerastoderma edule* (Buitenhuis 1995.156).

mains from the subsequent levels at the site testify to a strongly increased exploitation of the environment, both in terms of use of the sea, increased hunting (phase IX) and an increased dependency on pig breeding at the cost of sheep and goat breeding (Buitenhuis 1989/1990.115). We tend to interpret this evidence as exemplifying a progressive knowledge of the surrounding land (from phase IX onwards) after an initial exploration stage (phase X).

Recapitulating, the evaluated evidence strongly suggests that the earliest farming village at Ilpınar was settled by non-local people and not by local hunter-gatherers. Given the very close material culture ties with the site cluster in the Yenışehir Basin to the south, it is most likely that the origin of these settlers must be sought in that area. Because of the presence of a small lake there, it is tempting to consider that the settlers of Ilpınar sought and found a similar environment to the one they knew from their root country. In fact, it is extremely likely that they had information beforehand on an analogous situation existing beyond the mountains (cf. Anthony 1990.900)⁷.

III.

Short-distance migration is more difficult to apply in hypotheses concerning the origin of the villages at the East coast of the Marmara, *i.e.* the Fikirtepe sites, notwithstanding the fact that several material culture variables, such as pottery (see above), bone and antler tools and, possibly, lithics, conform both to Ilpınar X and Menteşe. All the Fikirtepe sites, four of which are presently known, were very close to the sea, while fresh water was provided by small streams and perennial springs. Bittel well describes the excellent choice of location of the type site itself, which was protected from the north winds by low hills behind the site, also pointing out that the small bay of Kalamış (now some 1.3 km away from the site) may originally have reached further inland (Bittel 1969/1970.3f). Evidently, the choice of location was made on the basis of detailed knowledge of local circumstances, more bent on the full exploitation of marine and freshwater food sources than on maximised yields from tilled fields. The location of Pendik is almost exactly similar and is clearly chosen on the basis of similar considerations (cf. Özdoğan 1983.401)⁸. Again, as was done above, one might

surmise that such comprehensive knowledge of the local surroundings is more readily found with hunter-gatherers indigenous to the area than with a migrating farming population. The local background of the inhabitants of the Fikirtepe sites was claimed nearly two decades ago by Özdoğan, observing that the chipped stone industries of both Fikirtepe and Pendik represent "a direct offspring of the Epi-Palaeolithic industries of the region" (Özdoğan 1983.409). In addition, from the scarcity of grinding stones, mortars and sickle blades retrieved at Pendik and Fikirtepe he concluded that agriculture was not of primary importance (*l.c.*). The marine orientation of Fikirtepe, already perceived by Bittel (1969/1970.4 and note 7) is confirmed for Pendik by more recent soundings at the site, as attested by stone weights and bone hooks possibly used in fishing (cf. Harmanakaya 1983.29; Pasinli et al. 1994.151, Figs. 9-11, 16).

The strong contrast in settlement location and subsistence with Ilpınar phase X pertains to house building as well. The Ilpınar and Menteşe dwellings were relatively solid features with deeply set posts, lattices and daub, and otherwise built of *pisé* with wooden reinforcements (cf. Roodenberg 1993.253f., 264 Fig. 3; Roodenberg 1999). Fikirtepe and Pendik houses, however, were of much lighter construction, involving wattle-and-daub walls without deeply set posts to fix them to the ground (cf. Bittel 1969/1970.6ff., Pl. 1; Özdoğan 1983.405). It is tempting to associate these light habitations with a population not tightly bound to a fixed spot; they certainly suggest an ability to cope with local circumstances in diverse ways not centred primarily on the need to formalise the domestic by constructing long-lasting dwelling places.

In view of what has been said above, the local mesolithic background of the Fikirtepe fishing villages on the Marmara east coast is certain, as has recently been restated by Özdoğan in an important paper (1997). Simultaneously, the ceramic assemblages of these sites correlating fully with Ilpınar, Menteşe and Demircihüyük, combined with the experiments at farming relying fully on the five major domestic species (sheep, goat, cattle, pig and dog) as exemplified by the animal remains (cf. Buitenhuis 1995.152, 155, Table 1), suggest that a southern impulse for both must be acknowledged (Özdoğan 1989.203; Gatsov and Özdoğan 1994.98). Given the simulta-

⁷ "Migrants are not likely to move to areas about which they have no information."

⁸ The same seems to apply to the remaining two Fikirtepe sites, viz. İcerenköy and Tuzla, although data on these are rather sparse.

neous occurrence of both the farming techniques and the pottery on the northern sites, it is not improbable that these innovations were also introduced together, possibly from a single source and by a single means. The direct source area might well have been the İznik Lake region, where Ilıpınar on its west- and Yüğücek on its eastern shore might have provided the immediate interface for the mesolithic-neolithic culture contact.

IV.

The two sites presently known through survey in the small Pazaryeri Plain attest that strong cultural traditions existed between the Yenişehir Basin and similar basins further south. Here, Kınık and possibly Pazaryeri II yield material strongly reminiscent of the top deposits of Menteşe and of phase VA at Ilıpınar (cf. *Efe 1992.565f., 1993.21f.*). Earlier material has not yet been detected. Southeast of the Pazaryeri area, the Eskişehir Basin is the first area, when coming from the western lowlands by way of the Bursa-Bozüyük road, that is located on the Anatolian Plateau (*Bittel and Otto 1939.1f.*). Here, the site of Demircihüyük yields definite connections in ceramics with the top deposit of Menteşe and with Ilıpınar VA, as is evident from pots with strap handles at the rim (*Seeher 1987. Pl. 12:6-18*), some *impresso* ware (*ibid., Pl. 21:1-8*) and painted sherds (*ibid., Pl. 8*) (cf. *Roodenberg 1999. Figs. 12:1-6, 13:2*). However, the presence at Demircihüyük of discrete, but chronologically valuable variables such as 'slanted' handles (*Seeher 1987. Pls. 4:6-7, 20:23-25*), pottery lids and horizontal, pierced lugs (*ibid., Pls. 7:6, 19:39, 20:3, 5, 8*), definitely link the pottery of this site to the basal deposits of Ilıpınar and Menteşe. As is well-known, all the early material from Demircihüyük was found in tertiary contexts, the neolithic site most likely hidden close to the later mound underneath thick alluvial deposits (*Korfmann 1983.25*)⁹. No ¹⁴C dates being available for the early pottery, Seeher's claims that some of the material is contemporary to Çatalhöyük East levels XII-IX, or else to Çatal VIII and later (*Seeher 1987.46ff.*), while attractive, is not verifiable. However, the neolithic Demircihüyük pottery does suggest the presence of similar subordinate categories as known from Ilıpınar, Menteşe and the Fikirtepe sites, *viz.* pots with four vertically pierced knob

handles and pots with two horizontal lugs, and it does imply the presence of similar discrete concepts regarding cooking and food manipulation. While the strong "Fikirtepe" affinities of some Demircihüyük pottery have been recognised as early, the basal deposit of the neolithic site may well antedate both Fikirtepe and Ilıpınar, similar to what has been proposed for Menteşe (*vide supra*). Unfortunately, the crucial question tackled for Menteşe *vs.* Ilıpınar concerning the pathway towards neolithisation cannot be taken up here. While for Menteşe the faunal data are in the process of analysis, no such data exist for neolithic Demircihüyük.

V.

Now that we have contemplated the diverse trajectories leading towards the establishment of several neolithic sites in the Anatolian northwest, it is tempting to stretch the evidence a little further. A decade ago, Özdoğan perceived the roots of the Fikirtepe pottery to be in the Hacilar and Çatalhöyük assemblages, stating that it "came fully developed from the south as an intrusive new element" (*Özdoğan 1989.203*). By extension, this observation would apply equally to the ceramics of Ilıpınar, Menteşe and Demircihüyük. While I believe the hint at Hacilar to be less valid, the ceramic assemblage of Çatalhöyük East does provide a remote blueprint for pottery categorization and manipulation in the Northwest.

In the Çatalhöyük ceramics, a technological development involves the shift from straw- or chaff-tempered, cream-burnished and low-fired wares as used during levels XII-IX/VIII to dark-burnished, grit-tempered pottery, occurring from level VIII/VII onwards (*Mellaart 1966.170; Last 1996.120*). The recent publication on the new Çatal-project, including a helpful reanalysis of the old excavation's pottery (*Last 1996.115-120*), strengthens the basic division of the Çatal pottery sequence in at least two stages. The shift in the use of temper is accompanied by a drastic decrease in wall thickness separating levels XII-IX, via VIII-VII, from VIB-II (no material being preserved from levels I-0) (*Last 1996.117, Table 9.1a*). The repertoire of shapes, roughly composed of bowls and holemouth pots (Fig. 3)¹⁰, varies in relative proportion over the sequence. Holemouths in-

9 The actual mound of Demircihüyük has a thick Early Bronze Age deposit. The 5 m of settlement debris lying untouched below the groundwater table (*Korfmann 1983.25*) most probably dates to the Late Chalcolithic period.

10 The latter of which, according to Mellaart, were used for cooking, as evidenced by "thick layers of soot in which they are covered" (*Mellaart 1962.54*).

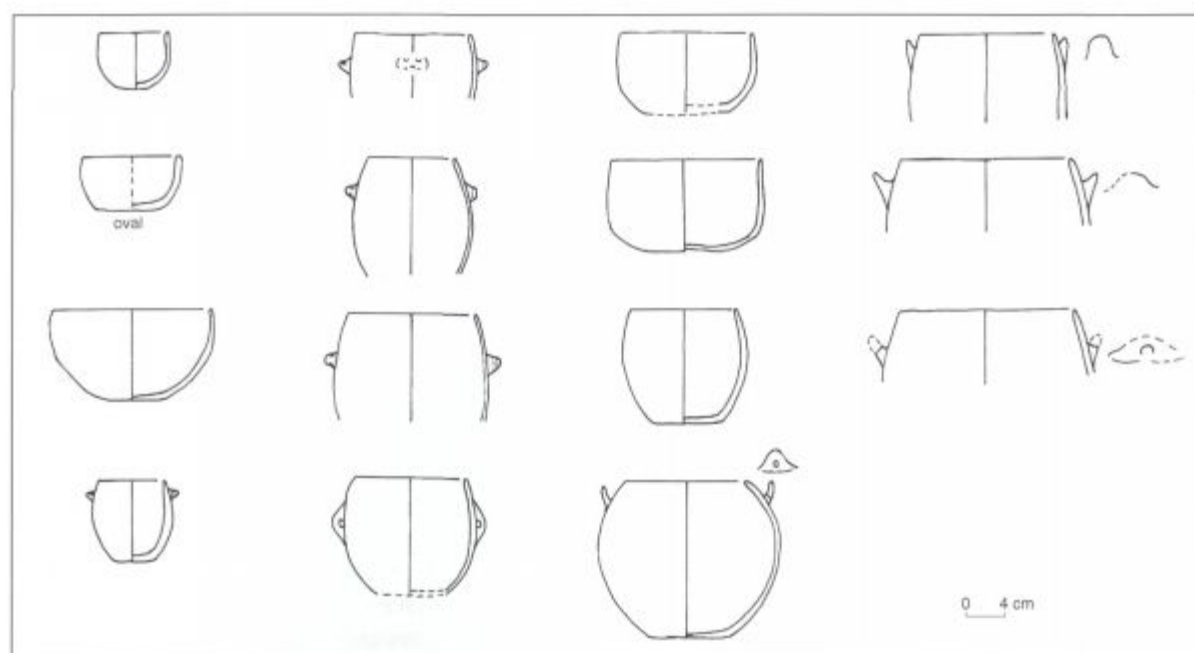


Fig. 3. *Çatalhöyük East, levels VIA-II. Plain-burnished bowls and cooking pots (after Mellaart 1961.162 Fig. 2:14-15, 20-21; 1962.53 Fig. 9:11, 14-18, 20, 22-25).*

crease in quantity from level VIB onward, to decrease dramatically again during levels III-II (*Last 1996.117, Table 9.1a*). The trend toward the final Çatal levels seems to be that both necked pots and open (bowl) forms begin to dominate the assemblage in favour of holemouth pots. Concomitantly, there is a larger amount of small vessels including miniatures in the later levels (*Last 1996.116*). The bowls in the later levels preserve the deep aspect of the earlier ones, but profiles become S-shaped or carinated (*Last 1996.125, Fig. 9.4:3-5*). Handles, not generally attested before level VIB, occur mostly on holemouths. Here, three main types may be distinguished, *viz.* the "rare," vertically-set strap handles (*Last 1996.118, 121, Fig. 9.2:4-5*), horizontal lugs (*Last 1996.127, Fig. 9.5:5*, labelled 'flaring lugs') and vertically-pierced knob handles (*Last 1996.127, Fig. 9.5:2-3*, termed 'straight lugs'). The horizontal lugs abruptly increase in quantity from level VIA over V, in favour of the vertically-pierced knob handles which are not attested later than level IV (*Last 1996.118, Table 9.3; cf. Mellaart 1962.54*). The latter type was replaced by a variant (what Last calls 'pointed lugs'), which in level III shares the distribution with the 'flaring lugs.'

If one may trust these figures, based as they are on the random preservation state of the pottery excavated by Mellaart, some facts can be established: a) holemouth pots dominate the sequence during levels VIB-IV; b) handles occur from level VIB on-

wards and are associated with holemouth vessels; c) horizontal lugs and vertically-pierced knob handles co-occur only during levels VIB-IV; d) vertically-pierced knob handles do not occur after level IV, but have been replaced by 'pointed lugs'.

My conclusion is that the horizontal (or 'flaring') lugs were very characteristic of the later levels at Çatal - from level V-III (no counts available for levels II-0), and further that the vertically-pierced knob handles (or 'straight lugs') and the 'pointed lugs' are both variants belonging to a single class. Conceived thus, the relation vertically-pierced knob handles *vs.* horizontal lugs is on a roughly equal footing from level V onwards (Tab. 3). On this basis, it can be further inferred that - necked pots taking over from holemouths from level III - necked pots also were provided with vertically-pierced knob handles or horizontal lugs.

level	n	vertically-pierced knob	horizontal lugs
III	(5)	50.0%	50.0%
IV	(22)	40.0%	60.0%
V	(54)	60.0%	40.0%
VIA	(27)	94.7%	5.3%
VIB	(4)	?	?

Tab. 3. *Çatalhöyük East, levels VIB-III. Relative frequencies of major handle types (after Last 1996).*

The pottery assemblages from basal Ilıpınar (and by extension those from the Fikirtepe sites, Menteşe and Demircihöyük) connect in one structural sense with Çatalhöyük East VIB and later. The simultaneous occurrence in the northwestern sites of two major pot categories, morphologically identical and only differentiated through their handle types, and both associated with discrete uses in the cooking process, continues a practice involving cooking and vessel manipulation first established in the Konya Plain during the Çatalhöyük East VIB-0 time frame. Also the shape of the individual handle sets, as well as their location and mutual exclusive occurrence in twos and fours is fully compatible with the Konya region.

While the southeastern origin of basal Ilıpınar's pottery use and technology could be established, other northwestern culture variables do not automatically fit the picture. The early houses at Ilıpınar and Menteşe, if not in the cob-on-post method later to be widely applied in the Balkans, were built with *pisé* walls occasionally reinforced with horizontal wooden balks. While the cob-on-post method seems to have been dictated by climate and available material (cf. Roodenberg 1993.254; 1995.169), the pure 'earth' walls with wooden anchors could be distant echoes from the Central Plateau. They certainly contradict the purely environmental determinism apparent from the other construction method. However, the free-standing, single room houses of Ilıpınar strongly contrast with the planned, tightly nucleated settlement plans known from Aşıklı Höyük, Çatalhöyük East or Erbaba.

Simultaneously, neither Fikirtepe's, nor Ilıpınar's lithic industry bear any resemblance to that of the Konya area, with its sophisticated bifacial pressure flaking techniques and highly diversified repertoire (e.g., Çatal East, Çukurkent, Ilıcapınar). Ilıpınar, in this respect, represents a continuation of a local epipalaeolithic tradition analogous to Pendik and Fikirtepe (J. Roodenberg, *pers. comm.*). But, as Roodenberg has stressed, "ties with the Anatolian highlands were preserved through the provision of obsidian, which was imported from the Hasan Dağ area in Central Anatolia" (Roodenberg 1995.169; cf. Bigazzi *et al.* 1995).

If a connection between the Konya area and the northwest (Demirci, Menteşe, Ilıpınar, Fikirtepe) on the level of ceramic knowledge involving the transmission of specific concepts (of technological and morphological nature and those concerning use) is

accepted, I may put forward the hypothesis that the link between both areas was established somewhere during Çatalhöyük East levels VIA-III. It was during that time slice that holemouth pots dominated the repertoire of Çatal, and both the horizontal lugs and the vertically-pierced knob handles co-occurred in equal proportions, thus providing the category basis on which the earliest pottery of the northwestern sites was established. I do not wish to suggest contemporaneity of Çatal VIA-III and early Ilıpınar. While the establishment of Ilıpınar is rather confidently set at about 6000 cal BC, the ¹⁴C dates from Çatalhöyük East levels VIA-II fall within the second half of the seventh millennium cal BC. To be more precise, not one of the dates from this cluster is later than 6200 cal BC at 1σ. Consequently, the possible time range for the spread of concepts on pottery just mentioned from Çatal to the Northwest may be set anywhere between 6500/6400-6300/6200 cal BC.

Recapitulating the evidence, I propose that, despite the wide divergences between the Konya area and the Marmara Basin in settlement pattern, building methods and stone industry, the underlying concepts as apparent in the manufacture, appearance and use of the pottery of both areas relate the Anatolian Northwest to the Central Plateau. This selective parallelism in material culture is then either a function of the observed discrepancy in time between both regions, or else is directly related to the specific material culture variable itself, *viz.* pottery, to its producers and to patterns of tradition and know-how involved. The same selection would, in my view, preclude migration from the Plateau to the Northwest, but it might reflect exogamous marriage practices. Simultaneously, the transmission out of the Plateau of knowledge concerning farming, was possibly another parallel feature of culture contact between Çatal and the mesolithic population further north.

VI.

Evidently, the research base for testing these assumptions is still on a humble level. However, the links between the Konya area and the Anatolian Northwest do not disclaim the observations made by Bittel and Mellaart that the Konya Plain connects directly to the Northwest by way of the Eskişehir Basin, via the İnegöl and Yenişehir Basins to the İznik Lake, and from there to the Marmara (cf. Bittel and Otto 1939.7; Mellaart 1955.55, 75, Pl. XI).

The neolithisation of NW Turkey had its roots in the knowledge of methods and techniques concerning farming accumulated in the Konya area for nearly a millennium, and in their subsequent application. At present, there are no immediate reasons to consider the establishment of early farming sites in the Northwest as due to migration – the Konya area was not particularly densely settled in the seventh mill. cal BC. Nor was the eventual abandonment of Çatalhöyük East by the end of the millennium due to deteriorating circumstances, occupation simply being transferred to Çatalhöyük West.

To conclude, it is proposed that the first farming villages in the Eskişehir Basin (Demircihüyük and Fındık Kayabaşı (Efe 1995)) were the result of mesolithic culture contact with the Konya area or, more probably, given the large intervening area,

were themselves settled from villages lying between the Konya and Eskişehir Basins. The establishment of the three early farming sites in the Yenişehir Basin was linked to the Eskişehir Plain, although presently available data preclude any further assessment. I have further argued that the settlement of Ilıpınar (and possibly a contemporaneous site on the east shore of the İznik Lake) was a deliberate move by farmers from the Yenişehir area, the peculiar commitment to the land as evidenced by the faunal remains from Ilıpınar discrediting a local hunter-gatherer adaptation. Finally, the inverted evidence from the Fikirtepe sites is strongly in favour of a local mesolithic population adopting simultaneously an adapted form of farming and the full use of ceramics. The immediate know-how for both innovations has most probably to be sought in the İznik Lake villages.

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