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# **A GLANCE AT THE PREHISTORIC PLAIN OF BOZOK**

## **FROM THE COLONIAL PERIOD TO THE PERSIAN INVASION**

Muhammed Fazil HIMMETOGLU<sup>a</sup>

### **Öz**

Archeological excavations in Alishar and Mount Kerkenes show that the Plain of Bozok displayed dynamism in the prehistoric period. It owns an important platform in the Northern-Southern and Eastern-Western trade. In the Assyria trade colonial period (1975-1725 BC), Yozgat region, which makes its mark in the prehistoric trade life, was also used as a settlement area for the Hittite Empire where King Anitta laid its foundation in Neşa, which is now in the south of Yozgat. Later, being on Kaskians' route of invasion, Yozgat went through dark ages due to the devastation caused by the invaders coming from the Aegean. After these migrations, Late Hittite Kingdoms also drew attention throughout the political history of Anatolia, which was awakened with the entrance of Mushkis and Phrygians into Anatolia. Meanwhile, the Assyria imperialism revived. After, around 6th century BC this time Anatolia came under the domination of the Persians, who came from the East, but were much more disciplined invaders. Then the Persians became the dominant authority all around Anatolia as was the case in the Plain of Bozok.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yozgat, Mount Kerkenes, Ankuwa and Alishar



### **Introduction**

The Anatolian Peninsula is a region where humanity established settlements and formed cultures in its earliest periods. Yozgat and its environs are located at a place that can be referred to as the heart of Anatolia. Yozgat, therefore, has hosted many cultures and civilizations since the ancient times. Archaeological excavations and historical interpretations have indicated that the region was a location of settlement that dates back to 5000 BC. The timeline was divided into ages with the purpose of analyzing the history of humanity easily, and the Prehistoric Period appeared to be the longest age. That long

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period extending from the invention of writing to the establishment of Istanbul as the capital of the Roman Empire, is a timeframe in which the civilizations and cultures of our day were born. This study aims to explain the historical adventure in the Plain of Bozok within the period that covers the Colonial Period to the rule of the Persian kings.

#### A. Amkuwa, The Case Of The Alishar Mound

Alishar is a tumulus, located in the north of the village of Alishar, which is 45 km far in the southeast of Yozgat. The mound was named after the village nearby and was first excavated by H. Von der Osten between 1926 and 1932.<sup>1</sup> Many scientists have agreed on the idea that Mound Alishar was originally the city of Ankuwa, which was a wabartum in Kanesh texts<sup>2</sup>. Under the light of the tablets studied, Ankuwa is believed to have been an important kingdom, taken part in political alliances, and been a powerful authority that was politically needed.<sup>3</sup> The excavations in Alishar showed that the mound had been a settlement area before the period of Assyrian Trade Colonies, and had an earlier experience in using metal goods. This belief was based on the exploration of metal items dating from the Bronz Age (2200 BC).<sup>4</sup> It is also observed that there were active mining activities around Alishar in following periods though they partly remained behind their contemporaries. Under the light of the studies, 9 artifacts from the Early Bronze Age were found as well as copper, silver, lead and low-tinned bronze needles and figurines from the Early Bronze Age II. Besides this information, it is necessary to pay attention that Alishar was a center that used to purchase metal technology rather than sell it.<sup>5</sup> A great amount of ceramic pieces were found as well as metal items during the excavations. It was observed that potter stands were used to produce pottery with the inspiration from Northern Syria and Mesopotamia civilizations, especially at the third layer of Mound Alishar.<sup>6</sup>

Political history indicated that Kanesh- once being the most important state of trade in Anatolia- and Alishar had strong relationships. Tablets of Kanesh came to an end due to the fire in the second layer. The tablets of Kanesh and Alishar at the Ib layer displayed some similarity to each other<sup>7</sup>. King Anitta, the legendary leader of Kanesh, had been a governor before he came to the throne. After King Anitta, Warşama ruled

<sup>1</sup> Ronald L. Gorny, *Project Reports, Aşilar Regional Project*, [http://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/03-04\\_Alisar.pdf](http://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/03-04_Alisar.pdf), 19.02.16

<sup>2</sup> Cahit Günbattı, *Kultepe-Kaniş Anadolu'da İlk Yazı, İlk Belgeler*, Municipality of Kayseri, Cultural Publishings, Kayseri 2012, p. 21

<sup>3</sup> Cahit Günbattı, *a. g. e.*, p. 37

<sup>4</sup> Savaş Özkan Savaş, *Çivi Yazılı Belgeler Işığında Anadolu'da (İ.Ö. 2.Bin Yılında) Madencilik ve Maden Kullanımı*, TTK Yay, Ankara 2006, p. 36

<sup>5</sup> Yüksel Aslantaş, *Prehistorik Çağlarda Anadolu'da Madencilik (En Eski Çağlardan Asur Ticaret Kolonileri Dönemine Kadar)*, Fırat University Publishings, Elazığ 2008, p. 114-115

<sup>6</sup> Kutlu Emre, *The Traces of Kültepe/Kanesh In Hittite Art, Anatolia's Prologue Kültepe Kanesh Karum Assrian In Istanbul*, Kayseri Metropolitan Municipality Cultural Publication, Istanbul 2011, p. 154, 154-158

<sup>7</sup> Emin Bilgiç, *Kultepe Höyüğünde Çıkan Üç Tablet*, <http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/14/699/8853.pdf> 14.08.2016

Kanesh, who was followed by Halkiashu, the heir to the throne. Later, a usurper, Harpitiwa was known to have ruled Kanesh, who had also ruled in Alishar, after whom Labarsha succeeded to the throne.<sup>8</sup>

There have been many debates about the existence of a link between Ankuwa and Alishar, yet, no evidence has existed. Although there are many indications showing that the place was Ankuwa, there is no sound evidence to do away with the doubts. It is apparent from the resources that there had to be a wabartum in Ankuwa. However, the excavations in Alishar have not indicated any data about the presence of a wabartum or a trade post. On the other hand, the existence of a wabartum is understood from the tablets as mentioned above<sup>9</sup>. Still, it is not certain that Alishar was Ankuwa. However, it is clearly seen that Alishar was a typical Anatolian town that was inhabited both during the reign of the Hittite and the Assyrian Colony Period. The public works of Alishar involved a palace that belonged to the king who ruled the city, an inner castle that protected the palace, a settlement area situated around the inner castle, and an outer wall to protect the public.<sup>10</sup>

Different from Alishar, the current excavations being carried out within the boundaries of Yozgat, shows how important the area was in ancient times. A number of written documents from the Hittite period were obtained thanks to the excavations carried out in 2015 at Mound Uşaklı near Sorgun. The well-known Storm-God of the Hittites, Teshub was mentioned in the inscriptions. Those written records support our hypothesis mentioned above. Under the lights of the archeological excavations, Yozgat and its environs will prove to be an important settlement area during the reign of the Hittites. As there was quite a lively life in the neighboring cities of Yozgat such as Kayseri, Sivas and Çorum, it seems almost impossible not to have a settlement within the boundaries of Yozgat.

### **B. The Plain Of Bozok After The Aegean Migrations**

1200 BC accepted as the beginning of the Iron Age was also a period when masses immensely proceeded from the west to the east.<sup>11</sup> The mass movements called the Aegean Migrations, which then caused formidable devastations, are believed to have taken place around 1192 BC. Those plunderer crowds known as **Northern Tribes** or **Sea Tribes** vandalized everything from Greece to Egypt. It is also believed that Phrygians and Mushkis came along with them. Thus, the political, economic and demographic structure of Greece, Anatolia and Syria became complicated.<sup>12</sup> The Aegean Migrations, believed to have been caused due to economic reasons such as famine and insufficient

<sup>8</sup> Hasan Ali Şahin, *Anadolu'da Ticaret Kolonileri Devri (M.Ö 1975-1725)*, Kayseri Ve Yöresi Tarih Araştırmaları Merkezi Yayınları No: 7, Kayseri 2004 p. 22

<sup>9</sup> Ahmet Ünal, *Hitit Kenti Ankuwa'nın Tarihçesi ve Lokallzasyonu Hakkında*, Belleten, C. XLV/2, p. 180, TTK, Ankara, Ekim 1981 p. 437, 434-455

<sup>10</sup> Sevgi Aktüre, *Anadolu'da Demir Çağı Kentleri, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları*, İstanbul 2003 p. 33

<sup>11</sup> Sevgi Aktüre, a. g. e., p. 55

<sup>12</sup> Tefik Gedikli, *Hitit İmparatorluğu*, Sivas 2004 p. 86

land, would weaken and destroy even the Hittite Empire with a history of 500 years<sup>13</sup>. The mass movement from the Aegean did not comprise mercenary troops but rather irregular plunderers composed of women and children. They not only caused the destruction of the Hittite Empire but they also reached the Egyptian borders. The Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses III mentioned about the plunderers from the Aegean in epitaphs of victory and said:

*“No one was able to stand against them in the land of Hatti. Kode, Carchemish, Arzawa and Alashia were vandalized. These people encamped somewhere in the land of Amurru. They ruined the local people as if they had never existed. They walked to the land of Egypt with a fire screen in front of them. Their allies were Peleshet, Tursha, Shekelesh, Tjekker, Denyen and Weshesh. These people encroached to the lands located on the edges of the world. Their hearts were full of confidence and they said “we achieve our plans”<sup>14</sup>*

Undoubtedly, the tribe known as Mushki was one of the communities that directly influenced the environs of Yozgat among the foreign masses flowing into Anatolia. That community, which was also mentioned in Torah and Assyrian resources, became influential in the environs of Yozgat following the Hittites. While the Hittite Empire was still surviving, Anatolia started to undergo the influence of the immigrants coming from the northeast, namely Caucasia and straits. The Mushkis came into Anatolia from the east and first settled in Elazig. On the other hand, the other communities coming from Macedonia into Anatolia over the straits were called Bryges or Phrygians. This tribe settled in a region by the Sakarya River and Lake İznik, known as Bitinia when Homer told the legendary Wars of Troy<sup>15</sup>.

The erosion caused by the Aegean migrations led the Hittite Empire to vanish. Small political organizations called Late Hittite Kingdoms undertook the task of maintaining the heritage of the great empire. Those kingdoms extending from Kayseri to Yozgat, centered at **Kululu** (Kaletepe-Eskikale), or **Tabal**<sup>16</sup> the unexplored capital to

<sup>13</sup> Ekrem Memiş, *Eskiçağ Mezopotamya Tarihi*, Ekin Kitabevi 2007, p. 191

<sup>14</sup> Ekrem Memiş, *a. g. e.*, p. 191

<sup>15</sup> Veli Sevin, *Anadolu Arkeolojisi*, Der Yayınları, İstanbul 1999, p. 188

<sup>16</sup> Given that the Land of Tabal was a confederation consisted of 24 kingdoms, the issue about the exact centre of that confederation reveals as an important question to answer. Until recently, though some scholars claimed that the centre of that kingdom was Mazaka, it is apparent that it was just one of the cities within the confederation. The excavations and findings focused on the suspicion that the centre was in Kululu. The late Professor Doctor Tahsin Özgüç stated that the headquarters of Tabal had to be searched within the triangle composed of Topada near Kayseri, Nevşehir and Yeşilhisar because of the density of stellars. See: Selim Pullu, *Tabal Bölgesi Tarihi, MÖ I. Bin Yılın İlk Yarısında Tabal Krallığı'nın Siyasal ve Ekonomik Tarihi*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, İstanbul 2006, p. 81, p. 36, 38; According to another opinion, Tabal, which was mentioned in Assyrian resources, existed around Kayseri. The idea that the centre of Tabal was in Tuwana, was based on the following findings: Eleven H.H. inscriptions were found on the route from Kayseri to Nevşehir, the name of King Warpalas (Urbala) mentioned in Tuwana (Tyana) was also mentioned in the epitaphs around Kayseri, and the existence of rock reliefs of Ivriz in Eregli, namely Southern Tabal is an important example for the work

be searched in Topada or- as to another viewpoint- in Kayseri, Nevşehir and Yeşilhisar; **Gurgum**, whose centre was Marqasi in Maraş; **Melid** whose centre was in Malatya; **Kummuh**, located around Diyarbakır and Samsat; **Tuvana** located in Ereğli and Kemerhisar basin; **Carchemish** in Gaziantep basin and **Hilakku** and **Hiyewa** (Que) in Çukurova.<sup>17</sup>

As mentioned above, many tribes came into and settled in Prehistoric Turkey during the Aegean Migrations. Among those tribes, Phrygians and Mushkis were the most remarkable. The two tribes have long been claimed to have involved the same people. According to that belief, Assyrians called Phrygian people Mushkis.<sup>18</sup> However, some historical and archeological research resulted in the judgment that those nations were not the same but could have been relatives. Though Phrygians are not encountered in Assyrian records, people of Mushki and Tabal are frequently seen in those records. The word 'Tabal' is often used especially in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. Hayls (the Kızılırmak River), the region where this kingdom was located, extended from an area including the northern territories and the hinterland of Cappadocia to the southern territories up to the Aladağlar Mountains, the borders of Que (Hiyewa), another representative of a Late Hittite kingdom, which ruled Cilicia.<sup>19</sup> As is seen, at least an important part of Yozgat was under the control of Tabal during the Late Hittite period. Çalapverdi in the north and Karadağ inscriptions in the west are clear evidence showing that the reign of Tabal extended to the hinterland of Phrygia. Though Göllüdağ, situated 40 km to the northwest of Nigde, belonged to Tabal, it was associated with Mount Kerkenez situated 38 km to the southeast of Yozgat with respect to structural similarities. The similarity shows that a substantial part of Yozgat was under the influence of Tabal.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, it is known that the wall foundations in Alishar from the Hittite period were fortified during the reign of Phrygians.<sup>21</sup> This shows us that Phrygians used Alishar as a settlement.

It is clearly observed in ancient Semitic sources that the word Mushki was used instead of Phrygian. Mushkis were called upon as a society in Assyrian sources as well as in the Torah, as stated hereunder:

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of art of the Late Hittite Kingdoms. See, Ekrem Memiş, *Eskiçağ Türkiye*, Ekin Yayınları, Tarihi, p. 176. See, Mehmet Kurt, *Tabal Ülkesi'nin Politik ve İdarî Yapısı*, Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, 23 / 2010 p. 129

<sup>17</sup> Kemalettin Köroğlu, Erkan Konyar, *Anadolu Uygarlıklarından Yansımalar*, Anadolu'da Pişen Toprak, 2007 İstanbul, p. 20-21

<sup>18</sup> Server Tanilli, *Yüzyılların Gerçeği ve Mirası*, I. Cilt, İlkçağ: Doğu, Yunan, Roma, İş Bankası Yayınları, İstanbul 2009, p. 120

<sup>19</sup> Sevgi Aktüre, *a. g. e.*, p. 79

<sup>20</sup> Selim Pullu, *Tabal Bölgesi Tarihi, MÖ I. Bin Yılın İlk Yarısında Tabal Krallığı'nın Siyasal ve Ekonomik Tarihi*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, İstanbul 2006, p. 81

<sup>21</sup> İnci Bayburtluoğlu, *Eskiyapar "Phryg Çağı"*, VIII. Turkish History Congress C. I, 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> October, 1976 Ankara, p. 294, 293-303

**“2 The sons of Japheth: Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. 3 The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah. 4 the sons of Javan: Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim”<sup>22</sup>**

In the above verse taken from the Torah, Meshech, the sixth son of Japheth, most probably refers to Mushkis, and the fifth one Tubal must refer to Tabal. As stated in the Old Testament, the people of Tabal were said to be competent at trade.<sup>23</sup> It is also said in Torah that Tabal had trade relationships with one of the oldest cities of Phoenicia, Sur (Tyre) and that they were involved in bronze vessels and slave trading.

**“<sup>1</sup>The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>“Son of man, take up a lament concerning Tyre.<sup>3</sup> Say to Tyre, situated at the gateway to the sea, merchant of peoples on many coasts, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says:**

**“You say, Tyre, ‘I am perfect in beauty.”**

**Javan, Tubal, and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged slaves and vessels of bronze for your merchandise”<sup>24</sup>**

The abovementioned verse shows that *the relationship between the people of Middle Anatolia, Mushkis, and trade was mentioned in the Torah. The trade among the people of Phoenicia, who were the inventors of Latin and Arabic Alphabets<sup>25</sup> used in our day and who had colonies throughout the Mediterranean basin, and the trade among Mushkis or Phrygians took its place in the primeval holy text.* According to these verses, mining developed in Central Anatolia and the production of kitchen utensils made out of bronze reached to a certain extent. The information given about the mining activities mentioned above under the heading of Alishar-Ankuwa shows parallelism with the information given in the Old Testament. Besides, the people of Mushki must have been renowned for slave trading, which was one of the monetary activities of the old world, as the people of Phoenicia, who had an important role in slave trade, came to buy slaves. The significant issue here is how Phoenician traded in a place which did not have a coast. As mentioned in previous sections, they most probably followed the old trade route of the Hittites through Cilicia. Similarly, Que was another Late Hittite Kingdom, which was mentioned in the Torah with a focus on its trade. Prophet Solomon bought a horse from Que and strengthened its army.

<sup>22</sup> Torah, *Yaratılış, Nu’un Soyu*, 10/2, Bursa Protestant Church.

<sup>23</sup> Selim Pullu, *a. g. t.*, p. 89

<sup>24</sup> Torah, *Hezekiel, Sur Kenti İçin Yakılan Ağıt*, 27/13, Bursa Protestant Church.

<sup>25</sup> The name of the writing system known as the alphabet is formed by the combination of the first letter, Alpha and the second letter, Beta. **Alef**, the first letter of Phoenician language system, was adopted as **Alfa** in European coasts. The writing system appears as “**Elifba**” in the Arabic world. In short, **Alef** of the Phoenician turned into **Alfa** in Europe while it turned into **Elif** in the Arabic world and **Olef** in Assyrians. As might be expected, this change spread to all letters in the alphabet. For example: Bet became Beta, Gimel became Gama, Dalet became Delta, and Elif, Be, Cim, Dal etc. in Arabic.

***“Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Keve (Que). The royal merchants purchased them from Keve at the current price.”<sup>26</sup>***

Data showing that Keve was actually Que can be reached in the explanations sections in various editions of the Torah. For example, in the example of Torah in Bursa Protestant Church, Keve was stated as a region which was “probably Cilicia, namely Cukurova”. Prof. Dr. Ahmet Ünal stated on this issue that, ***“According to Torah, Prophet Solomon (965-931) had relationships with Que known as QWH (Coa) regarding the horse trade”***. However, in another example of Torah that the writer came across, “QWH” region was named as Egypt.<sup>27</sup> This reminded a significant coincidence because Kayseri and its environs were called in ancient world as Cappadocia, which was named by Persians. It is really noteworthy that this name means *“The Land of Beautiful Horses”*. It is highly likely that the horse trade between the people of Que and Mushki drew Prophet Solomon’s attention, and they traded through Que. Besides this, it must be remembered that Assyrian kings demanded horses as taxes and gifts from the Kingdom of Tabal.

The people of that Kingdom were mostly of Mushki origin. Although the people of Mushki were known as the same nation as the Phrygians, they were actually different societies who were relatives to each other. On the other hand, Assyrians might have called Phrygians as Mushki, without being interested in their being another nation because Midas, the King of Phrygia was stated as Mita of Mushki in Assyrian records.

### C. The Persian Invasion

Astyages, King of Medes reached the coasts of Kızılırmak and influenced Cappadocia, but failed to rule Anatolia completely and was not able to proceed further. Cyrus the II put an end to the Kingdom of Medes and became considerably powerful.<sup>28</sup> The Persian invasion had rapidly spread towards Syria and the Mediterranean, and also Cappadocia in the north thanks to the regular army and trade network he established.<sup>29</sup> The Persian domination had continued in Kayseri and its environs during the rule of Cyaxares, King of Medes, and then Astyages, yet, Keyhusrev the Great ended the reign of Medes in 612 BC, and established the domination of ***Archaemenid*** in Kayseri and its environs. The Archaemenid dynasty was completely Persian and relatives to the people of Medes. As especially mentioned above, the relationship between Keyhusrev the Great (Cyrus the II) and Astyages was a grandfather and grandson relationship.

Kayseri and its environs went under the rule of Cyrus the II in 550 BC and the region was started to be dominated by the governors called Satrap. His system continued all through the reign of the Persian domination. The Satrapy called ***“Katpatukya”***

<sup>26</sup>Tevrat, I. Krallar,10/28, Bursa Protestant Church.

<sup>27</sup> Ahmet Ünal, *Hitit İmparatorluğu’nun Yıkılışından Bizans Dönemi’nin Sonuna Kadar Adana ve Çukurova Tarihi*, ÇÜ Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, Volume 15, No 3 (Archeology Special Edition), 2006 p. 69

<sup>28</sup> Susan Wise Bauer, *Antik Dünya*, Alfa Tarih Yayınları, İstanbul 2013, p. 481

<sup>29</sup> Server Tanilli, a. e., p. 159



meaning “*Land of Beautiful Horses*” was one of the Satrapies founded by the Persians in Anatolia and at the central position in Anatolia at times when the Persian domination was intensively felt. Its center being located in Mazaka in Kayseri, this Satrapy included today’s Kayseri, Nevşehir, Aksaray, Niğde and Kırşehir.

Another Satrapy neighboring Cappadocia was known as Pontos, an administrative organization. The name Pontus, which was a geographical denotation in ancient times (1000 BC), was used to define the eastern coasts of the Black Sea and sometimes the Black Sea itself. The people of Persia called the region as **Pont Satrapy** as well as **Pont Cappadocia**. The Pont Satrapy expanded in time at a rapid pace against Cappadocia and Armenia especially in its late periods. As a result of this expansion, Pont Satrapy annexed Yozgat, Muş, Erzurum, Erzincan, Gümüşhane, Trabzon, Ordu, Giresun, Samsun, Amasya, Tokat and Sivas, considerably expanding its sphere of influence.<sup>30</sup> Based on such knowledge, it can be assumed that Cappadocia region was not a political border, yet it involved Yozgat under the Persian rule.

Specific knowledge about the destiny of Yozgat and its environs after the entrance of Persians into Anatolia was obtained by researchers as result of archeological excavations carried out in the Ancient City of Mount Kerkenes. There have been serious suspicions about the existence of the lost city of Petra there, which was an alluring settlement both during the reign of Phrygians and Persians. Many geographers and historians have indicated that Boğazköy was, in fact, Petra. Among these scientists, W. M. Ramsey explained, at great length, why Petra must be searched in Boğazköy<sup>31</sup>. However, he could not offer any sound evidence.



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<sup>30</sup> Fatma Acun, *Tarih Boyunca “Pontus”*, Milli Mücadele Döneminde Giresun Sempozyumu, 6-7 Mart 1999 Giresun, İstanbul, 1999, p. 22

<sup>31</sup> W. M. Ramsey, *Anadolu’nun Tarihi Coğrafyası*, Çev. Mihri Pektaş, Milli Eğitim Basımevi, İstanbul 1960, p. 33

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## **ESKİÇAĞ BOZOK OVASINA BİR BAKIŞ**

### **KOLONİ DEVRİNDEN PERS İSTİLASINA**

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#### **Öz**

Küçük Asya olarak bilinen Anadolu kıtasının kalbi konumundaki Bozok bölgesi, medeniyet tarihinin en eski devirlerinden beri insanoğlunun dikkatini çekmiştir. Coğrafi kader noktasında oldukça talihli olan şehir aynı sebepten dolayı tarih boyunca istilalara da maruz kalmıştır. Buna rağmen insanlık tarihinde Bozok Ovasının çeşitli bölgelerinde medeni yaşam sürdürülebilmiştir. Alishar'da ve Kerkenes Dağında yapılan kazılar göstermiştir ki eski çağ dünyasında Bozok Ovası, hareketlilik göstermektedir. Kuzey-Güney ve Doğu-Batı ticaretinde mühim bir platforma sahiptir. Asur ticaret kolonileri devrinde (MÖ 1775-1725) Eskiçağ ticaret hayatında adından söz ettiren Yozgat bölgesi, Kral Anitta'nın temellerini Yozgat'ın hemen güneyindeki Neşa'da attığı Hitit İmparatorluğunun da yerleşim yeri olarak kullanılmıştır. Daha sonraları Kaşkalar'ın istila istikametinde olan Yozgat, Egeden gelen istilacıların neden olduğu tahribat nedeniyle karanlık bir devre girmiştir. Bu göçlerden sonra Muşkilier'in ve Frigler'in Anadolu'ya girmesiyle tekrar canlanan Anadolu siyasi tarihinde Geç Hitit Beylikleri de dikkatleri çekmektedir. Bu arada Asur emperyalizmi tekrar dirilmiştir. Sonrasında ise M.Ö 6. Yüzyıl dolaylarında Anadolu bu sefer de doğudan gelen fakat daha disiplinli istilacılar olan Perslerin egemenliğine girmiştir. Bozok Ovasında da olduğu gibi bütün Anadolu'daki baskın otorite artık Persler'e aittir. Görüldüğü üzere en eski devirlerde yaşam merkezi olma özelliğini kaybetmemiş olan Bozok Ovası jeostratejik konumunu muhafaza edip halkları tarafından daima değerlendirilmiştir.

Asur Koloni Devri, Hitit, Tabal ve Roma çağında önemini koruyan şehir, hem askeri hem de ticari yolların önemli uğrak merkezi olmuştur. Bunda Yozgat'ın fiziki yapısı da önemli rol oynamıştır. Bozok Ovası zahmetli yollardan maceralı geçitlerden ve tehlikeli vadilerden sonra sığınılacak, güven içinde dinlenilecek bir coğrafyadır. Çevresindeki Roma hamamları, tapınaklar ve kervansaraylar bunun en önemli delilleridir. Alishar'dan farklı olarak Yozgat sınırları içerisinde hali hazırda süren arkeolojik çalışmalar bu coğrafyanın arkaik dönemlerde ne kadar önemli olduğunu göstermektedir. Özellikle 2015'te Sorgun civarında Uşaklı Höyük'te yapılan çalışmalar sayesinde bir takım Hitit dönemine ait yazılı belgeye ulaşılmıştır. Bu yazılarda meşhur Hitit Fırtına tanrısı Teşup'un adı geçmektedir. Bu yazılı belgeler

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yukarıdaki tezimizi destekler niteliktedir. Arkeolojik çalışmaların vereceği veriler ışığında Yozgat ve çevresinin Hitit döneminde önemli bir yerleşim alanı olduğu ispatlanacaktır. Zira Yozgat'ın komşu illerinde Kayseri, Sivas ve Çorum'da oldukça canlı bir hayat yaşanırken Yozgat sınırları dâhilinde bir yapılanma olmaması mümkün görünmemektedir. Hitit İmparatorluğu batıdan gelen istilacılar yüzünden sarsılacaktır. Kıtık ve toprak yetmezliği gibi ekonomik nedenlerden dolayı cereyan ettiği düşünülen Ege göçleri yaklaşık 500 yıllık bir tarihi olan Hitit İmparatorluğunu dahi zayıflatıp yıkacaktır. Ege'den gelen bu kitle hareketi paralı askeri birliklerden değil aksine düzensiz kadınlı çocuklu yağmacılardan mürekkepti. Hitit İmparatorluğu'nun yıkılmasına neden olduğu gibi Mısır kapılarına dek dayanacaklardır. Anadolu'nun demografik halini ciddi şekilde değiştiren bu göçler neticesinde farklı bir görüntü ortaya çıkacaktır.

Anadolu'ya akan yabancı kütlelerin içerisinde Yozgat havalisini doğrudan etkileyecek halklardan biri de şüphesiz Muşki olarak bilinen kavimdir. Tevrat'ta ve Asur kaynaklarında da geçen bu halk Hititlerden sonra Yozgat havalisinde söz sahibi olacaklardır. Henüz Hitit İmparatorluğu ayakta iken, Anadolu kıtası kuzeydoğudan yani Kafkasya'dan ve boğazlardan gelen göçmenlerin etkisi altına girmeye başlamıştı. Muşkiler doğudan Anadolu kıtasına girdiler ve ilk olarak Elazığ'da konumlandılar. Makedonya'dan boğazlar üzerinden Anadolu'ya girenler ise Bryg ya da Phryg (Frig) adlarını taşımaktaydı. Homeros'un uzun uzun anlattığı efsanevi Troya Savaşları'nın yaşandığı sırada adı geçen bu kavim Bitinya olarak bilinen Sakarya Irmağı ve İznik Gölü havalisinde ikamet ediyordu. MÖ 550 de II. Kiros'un atılımla Yozgat ve çevresi bu kralın egemenliğine girdi ve bölgeyi Satrap adını verdiği valilerce yönetmeye başladı. Onun bu sistemi Pers iktidarı sürdükçe devam etti. **“Katpatukya”** adı verilen ve **“Güzel Atlar Ülkesi”** anlamına gelen Satraplık, Persleri'in Anadolu'da kurduğu beş satarplıktan biri olduğu gibi Pers hakimiyetinin yoğun olarak hissedildiği dönemlerde hemen hemen bütün Anadolu'nun merkezi konumundadır. Kapadokya'ya komşu başka bir satraplık ise Pontos olarak anılacak idari teşekküldür. Pontos ismi çok eski devirlerde (MÖ 1000) kullanılan bir coğrafi adlandırma olup Karadeniz'in doğu kıyılarını bazen de Karadeniz'in kendisini tanımlamakta kullanılmıştır. Persler buraya **Pont Satraplığı** dedikleri gibi **Pont Kapadokyası** da demişlerdir. Pont Satraplığı zamanla genişlemiş bu genişleme son dönemlerde Kapadokya ve Armenia'nın aleyhine bir seyir izlemiştir. Bu genişleme sonucunda Pont Satraplığı Yozgat, Muş, Erzurum, Erzincan, Gümüşhane, Trabzon, Ordu, Giresun, Samsun, Amasya, Tokat ve Sivas'ı topraklarına katarak etki alanını bir hayli genişletmiştir. Bu bilgiden yola çıkarak Kapadokya denilen havali siyasi bir sınır oluşturmadığı takdirde Pers muktedirleri döneminde Yozgat'ı da içine almaktadır denilebilir. Yozgat ve yöresinin Persler'in Anadolu'ya girişinden sonra nasıl bir kaderle karşılaştığı bilgisi Kerkenez Dağı Antik Kenti'ndeki arkeolojik kazıların sonucunda araştırmacıların eline ulaşacaktır. Zira gerek Frig gerekse de Pers döneminde oldukça cazip bir yerleşim yeri olan kayıp Petria kentinin burası olduğu konusunda ciddi şüpheler mevcuttur. Birçok Anadolu coğrafyacı ve tarihçisi Petria'yı Boğazköy'e yerleştirmekteydi. Bunların arasında W. M. Ramsey de bulunmaktadır. O, Petria'nın neden Boğazköy'de aranması gerektiğini uzun uzun anlatmaktadır. Fakat somut bir delil öne sürememektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yozgat, Kerkenes Dağı, Ankuwa ve Alishar

