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Traits of Nomadic People: Ethnoarchaeological and Archaeological Research in Turkey

Jak Yakar

Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities of Turkmen and Yörük encountered in the countryside of Turkey, especially in the summer pastures of southern Anatolia and the Lake Districts are the remnants of large Turkic nomadic tribes that invaded Anatolia in the 11th and 13th centuries AD. Additional groups of nomads are the remnants of the Kurdish and Zaza tribes of the Ottoman period that inhabited the remote provinces of eastern and south-eastern Turkey, north Syria, northern Iraq and north-western Iran. Despite their fragmentation from large nomadic tribes numbering in the thousands into much smaller sub-tribal units, and relocation, most of them managed to preserve their ethnic identities, traditional social organization, and an economy mainly based on pastoralism.

Fig. 1. A Yörük family in the Lake Districts.

Since ideal conditions for both sedentary agrarian and nomadic pastoral economies existed in Anatolia since the early Holocene period, I believe that these two rather diverse subsistence strategies could have co-existed ever since the Neolithic period. The fact that villages and campsites of such groups are almost impossible to locate during archaeological surveys, does not exclude their presence in the Anatolian countryside since prehistoric periods. Certain types of mortuary finds can obtain reflections of their presence in archaeological records. Moreover, occasional cases of sudden cessation of organized settlement activity in regions previously densely occupied by urban and sedentary rural communities could also be considered as possible indication of their disruptive presence. When dealing with historical periods, such absence of records evaluated in the light of written documents could sometimes support the view that nomadic tribal groups would have been present among the ancient Anatolian populations. Ethnographic models can explain the non-visibility of their archaeological records. For instance, architectural characteristics of secondary villages and seasonal camps occupied during periods of transhumance could explain some of the reasons that nomadic sites tend to delude us. This has to do with the location, the construction material and the temporary nature of most site locations. Ethnographic records demonstrate that changing courses of seasonal migrations is one of the reasons that would have caused the occasional shifting of site locations. Along riverbanks, on mountain slopes or hill tops such sites with their meager and unstratified architectural deposits can be expected to disappear under dense alluvial or vegetation cover or by erosion. In the distant past too, environmental changes, socio-economical considerations, or territorial conflicts between rival tribes would have been among the factors leading to the alterations in the migration paths. Moreover, the emergence of city-states and chiefdoms with newly defined political territories could have forced nomadic tribes to deviate from traditional migratory movements. Before focusing on the invisible nature of archaeology in relation to a small number of semi-nomadic and nomadic groups in the Hittite Kingdom and in Early Iron Age Eastern Anatolia, I will briefly refer to the nature of nomadic invasions and nomadic tribal structures in the Seljuk and Ottoman periods.

Nomads in Anatolia: Historical examples

The massive invasion of Anatolia by Turkmen tribes starting in 1071 AD was the culmination of a process that had begun much earlier on a smaller scale and slower pace, and recurred in the 13th century during the Mongolian invasion. In Anatolia these nomads of Central Asia found a suitable environment for pastoralism and pillage. Although they did not impose their nomadic way of life on the indigenous population of Anatolia, farmers increasingly felt their concentrated presence with large flock in the countryside. As for the land and settlement policy

of the Seljuks, soon after their conquest of Iran they pushed for the spread of farming in the territories they controlled. As part of this strategy land was also distributed to the local population of Iran and some of the nomadic Turkmen groups that agreed to settle and take up farming.[1] However, the large body of nomadic tribes continued to pursue their traditional way of life venturing into Byzantine controlled Anatolia.[2] Even after the formation of the Anatolian Seljuk State, the nomads continued to oppose sedentarization and taking up farming. In order to preserve their economic and political autonomy they slowly and gradually retreated to marginal lands. Nevertheless, their wide-scale seasonal migrations between the summer and winter pastures continued to be a major cause of friction with farming communities. Often ignoring the political borders of the Anatolian Seljuk State, Turkmen nomads repeatedly penetrated deep into Byzantine controlled countryside in southern and western of Anatolia, pillaging villages and destroying cultivated fields. Such actions often resulted in peasants abandoning their villages and moving out of the area.

In the early Ottoman period the central administration faced with opposition to its authority made moves to curtail the political and military power of the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribal confederations in Anatolia. In the later 14th and early 15th centuries forceful persuasion convinced some to settle in designed state controlled territories. Those that refused were relocated from northern, central and southern Anatolia to sparsely populated areas in western Anatolia, the Balkans as far as Albania.[3]

This policy of the Ottoman state vis-à-vis the troublesome nomadic tribe is somehow reminiscent of the attitude adopted earlier by the Roman administration towards the hostile Galatian nomadic tribes in Anatolia. Already in 278 BC King Nicomedes of Bithynia in need of mercenaries brought over to Anatolia 20,000 nomadic Celts (Gauls), a tribal society which was distinctly stratified. According to classical sources they were constantly on the move using baggage wagons and accompanied by auxiliary groups created frequent opportunities to raid and loot cities, towns and villages. Before their arrival in Anatolia, their migratory movements were rarely, if at all, dictated by a need to settle permanently.[4] Initially at the service of the king of Bithyina, they soon started to raid the rest of the Anatolian countryside at will. These nomadic Celtic tribes, later known as Galatians, had a devastating effect on the farming economy of Anatolia. In addition to offering their services as mercenaries to local kings, they imposed

1 Yakar 2000, 67.

2 Cahen 1968.

3 Lindner 1983; İnalcık 1994; Yakar 2000, 71.

4 For classical sources such as Diodorus, Strabo, Pausanias, Polyaenus, Livy and Memnon, see Mitchell 1993, 15, notes 17, 19–29.

the payment of tribute on small kingdoms and cities whose land they otherwise threatened with destruction. Some two decades after their arrival in Anatolia, the Celts established their base in the sparsely settled region which was later called Galatia after them. The political vacuum that existed in central Anatolian plateau may have been the reason why they choose this area as the nucleus of their new tribal territory. However, in view of the nomadic way of life the geographic limits of their occupation in central Anatolia were not firmly marked for a number of generations.[5] However, it was not until the growing involvement of the Romans in Anatolian affairs in the middle of the 1st century BC that the Trocmi in Pontus and Cappadocia felt the need to build a small number of fortified strongholds (e.g. Tavium, Mithridatium and Posdala).[6] They did so in order to consolidate their own political and military power against Rome.

Going back to the Ottoman period of the 18th and 19th centuries, competition for land and pasture in the eastern provinces led to conflicts between the government and nomadic tribes. In order to resist the pressures exerted by the central government the latter formed large confederations. Unable to restrain them, the provincial governors had no alternative but often turn a blind eye to the independent activities of the tribes with their strong nomadic components and did not involve in their internal conflicts. This delicate balance of power between the state, the local feudal chiefs and the chiefs of nomadic tribes in the remote parts of eastern Anatolia was maintained almost until the formation of the Turkish Republic. It has to be admitted, however, were it not for the local feudal chiefs controlling the ethnically heterogeneous rural sectors in these eastern highlands, physical or political control by the central state administration would have been extremely difficult. The Seljuk and Ottoman records prove that when dealing with large tribes their loyalty to the state could have been obtained only by allowing tribal leaders to retain a good deal of political and economic autonomy. Even as late as in the 19th century large nomadic tribes and chiefdoms wielded considerable political and economic power within the state system and controlled a considerable portion of the countryside.

One of the well-recorded examples from the Late Ottoman period concerns a Kurdish tribe bearing the name Hayderanlı. Some two centuries ago this tribe controlled the territory northeast of Lake Van. In the summer members of the

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5 Mitchell 1993, 51.

6 The Celts in Anatolia consisted of three tribes, namely the Trocmi, the Tolistobogii and the Tectosages. Each of these tribal formations was divided into four sections (tetrarchies), and to each section was assigned a chieftain (tetrarch). Each chieftain ruled with four subordinates; a judge, a military commander and two junior commanders. The council of a total of 12 tetrarchs headed an assembly of three hundred men who handled cases of homicide in their communities. Tetrarchs and judges handled internal disputes; cf. Mitchell 1993, 27, 49, 81.

tribe pastured their cattle on the neighbouring mountains, and spent the winter in their villages situated near the northern shore of the lake. This tribe was made up of two divisions headed by two brothers, one in Turkey and the other in north-western Iran. The Turkish division comprised up to 2000 tents (families) and as many armed horsemen. Like other tribes in the Van region, they too did not usually pitch their tents in large clusters in one location. Instead, they organized in scattered groups of five to ten, spreading out down the valleys and up the hills in order to better exploit the pastures and not exhaust their carrying capacity.

Fig. 2. Nomad encampment in Eastern Anatolia.

Fig. 3. Nomad household in the summer pastures of Eastern Anatolia.

Come spring, they took their herds first to the lower pastures, gradually moving upwards as the season advanced. They would return from the high grounds as the autumn cold forced them to descend. In times of danger these tribes manned outposts on the hills and notified the approach of an enemy by beating drums. When the emergency signal was relayed from camp to camp it took very little time for armed men to be called up. In just an hour the tribal chief could have summoned over a hundred and fifty armed horsemen, not including well-armed warriors joining the battle or raiding parties on foot.[7]

In another part of the highlands a Kurdish tribe known as Badikanlı, which in the early 19th century consisted of 550 households in tents, provides a good example of the troublesome nature of large nomadic tribes. Refusing to submit to the provincial government authority that objected to their nomadic way of life, this tribe retreated to a protected mountain valley between Muş and Harput. They held this mountain tract in lawless independence, permitting neither caravan nor traveller to pass through without some form of payment. Eventually, when confronted by Ottoman government forces with superior fighting capabilities, they

7 Brant 1840, 414.

suffered a severe defeat and surrendered. The punishment meted out to them was harsh and included the confiscation of their territory and weapons. In addition to that, the provincial government forcefully recruited 300 of their warriors into the army, a practice that served to pacify troublesome tribes.[8]

This policy of recruiting captivated tribal warriors into the regular army instead of executing or selling them as slaves, was already pursued by the Hittites, Assyrians and Urartians. In Urartu for instance even lower echelon tribesmen would have been incorporated into the state system in different capacities. An Urartian inscription (UPD 12), mentioning 'armed men from the tribes' that were recruited as members of the royal guard in the new city of King Rusa II at Toprakkale at Van illustrates this quite clearly.[9]

Although Hittite texts do not directly mention nomads, indirect references suggest that such groups probably existed in the Kingdom. The small and socially inferior ethno-cultural community referred to in articles 48–49 of the Hittite Laws as the LU *hippara* may have been such a group.[10] Perhaps recruited to serve in the Hittite military from among the nomadic tribes living in the steppe, mountain and desert regions of Anatolia and north Syria, they kept their own group-based social structure. Living in their own settlements members of this group, perhaps like the HAPIRU/HABIRU groups, did not integrate into the Hittite society.[11]

Additional communities that were not fully sedentary included the Kaska tribes. They were the northern neighbours of the Hittites inhabiting the mountainous central Pontus region. The paucity of identifiable Late Bronze Age settlements in the region discredits claims by certain Hittite kings that by the 13th century BC they fully controlled the regions inhabited by the troublesome Kaska tribes. These tribes who seem to have pursued a semi-nomadic lifestyle often pillaged border villages in Hittite controlled territories, plundering harvested crops and carrying away livestock. Allusions to their semi-nomadic/semi-sedentary mobility can also be found in Hittite texts describing the conflicts and confrontations with them. The Hittite accounts give the impression that each time the Hittite army entered the enemy territory, the main body of the Kaska warriors evaded them, probably regrouping in their well-hidden mountain villages. An example is given in Fragment 13 and 14 of "The Deeds of Suppiluliuma":[12]

8 Brant 1840, 354.

9 Diakonoff 1991, 19.

10 Imparati 1982, 235; Yakar 2000, 39.

11 Bottero 1954, 1981; Na'aman 1986.

12 Yakar and Dinçol 1974, 93.

13:(3): "The (Kaskeans) assembled nine tribal groups…." (12) "…. (my) father (Mursili referring to Suppilulima) had built fortification behind empty towns of the whole country which had been emptied by the enemy….."

And in connection to Suppiluliuma's campaign to Masa and Kammalla we hear (E7): "…..in the rear the Kaskean enemy took weapons again, and destroyed the empty towns, which (the king) had built fortifications." Fragment 14 reports: "When (the king) arrived in the country (he found that) the Kaskean enemy whom (the king) met inside the country consisted of twelve tribes."

The "Annals of Mursili II" report for year 16:[13] "The Land of Pala [west-central Black Sea] was a country without defences; no fortified towns or sites to which one could fall back was there at all. It is a country (rather) in its natural state. Though Hutupiyanza [the local leader] had this country to protect, no army stood at his disposal. So he built hideouts in the mountains, the group of men, which he had brought there in small numbers, surrendered nothing to the [Kaska] enemy."

A rather similar chaotic security situation developed in the Pontus region in the 11th century AD with the arrival of Turkmen nomadic pastoralists. Their presence forced the sedentary Greek communities to abandon their villages in the lower elevations and move up to the mountain valleys. We may confidently say that the influx of nomads into the region caused a change in the settlements pattern that led to the decline of farming.

Archaeological indicators

However, the pressure exerted by the Turkmen on farming communities is not archaeologically visible, since no new material culture was introduced. The peasants who abandoned their villages moved up with their belongings and cultural traditions to the mountain valleys were they built their new homes.

Going back to the Kaska, since the Hittite military campaigns always started in spring, most Kaska tribal communities would have been in any case on their way to the mountain pastures with their herds. Armed confrontations with them did not take place in open country nor involved the siege of towns, supporting the view that these tribes were not fully sedentary. The fact that the Hittite army encountered difficulties in obtaining local supplies of food and wine for its troops during the campaigns in the Kaska populated territories suggests that the region

[13] Yakar and Dinçol 1974, 94.

was sparsely settled.[14] Moreover, the absence of Kaska cemeteries in the alluvial plains and river valleys strengthens the assumption that these tribes may have practiced inverse transhumance, maintaining secondary villages in the lower elevations occupied in winter and their principal settlements dispersed in the mountain valleys and slopes. When surveying for ancient settlements in the central and eastern Black Sea regions it is important to take into account that the upper limit of permanent rural settlement along the humid northern flanks of the Pontus Mountains is ca. 1000 m. However, isolated hamlets (canik) may be found in heights up to 1450 m, especially in the eastern Pontus. This height is still below the upper limits of barley cultivation.[15] Such communities living in mountainous habitats subsist mainly on pastoralism, raising cattle and sheep.

Fig. 4. Seasonal occupied wooden houses in the Black Sea mountains.

The archaeology of semi-nomads or nomads in Anatolia can best be studied in the Eastern Highlands. Among the numerous sites in the Erzurum plain, Sos Höyük provides a good picture of the fluctuating character of rural settlement

[14] Yakar 2000, 299–300; Yakar and Dinçol 1974.

[15] Yakar 2000, 287.

during the Bronze and Iron Ages. The kind of architectural remains suggest that mainly semi-nomadic pastoralists inhabited the Erzurum basin and the surrounding plains during this long time span. The Early Bronze Age occupation is represented by five building levels.[16] Although the pottery repertoire remained largely unchanged throughout the Early Bronze Age occupation of the site, fundamental transformations in architecture reflect socio-economic related changes in the settlement pattern. Remains of a few solidly constructed houses suggest that in the early third millennium BC a small sedentary community inhabited this site. Subsequent remains of wattle-and-daub house walls raise the possibility that in the later part of this period the site was inhabited seasonally, most likely from spring to early autumn. This assumption appears sound since the lightly constructed free-standing wattle-and-daub houses could not have provided proper shelters in the extremely cold winters in this highland region. Portable fireplaces corroborate the view that the inhabitants may have been semi-nomadic pastoralists.[17] Subsequently, constructions of stone and mud-brick replaced these flimsy shelters. This change to a more solid architecture indicates that either the inhabitants decided to pursue a more permanent mode of life or a new sedentary community occupied the site. The second millennium sequence at Sos Höyük created a 1.75 m deep deposit. This thickness of occupational deposits is proof that the site had not been settled continuously. The occupation remains consist of compact earthen floors, pits and roughly circular basin-like plastered depressions. The absence of solid architectural remains could suggest that the dwellings were constructed with reeds and matting, possibly supported by wooden posts which make it doubtful whether the settlement at this time was of permanent nature.[18] In fact the absence of built-in features points to the seasonal nature of occupation in the Middle Bronze Age. Two burials in the Trialeti tradition of Transcaucasia leave no doubt about the ethno-cultural identity of the inhabitants. [19]

16 Sagona [et al.] 1996, 33.

17 Sagona [et al.] 1996, 37.

18 Sagona [et al.] 1996, 32.

19 Sagona [et al.] 1997, 184, Pl. 4.

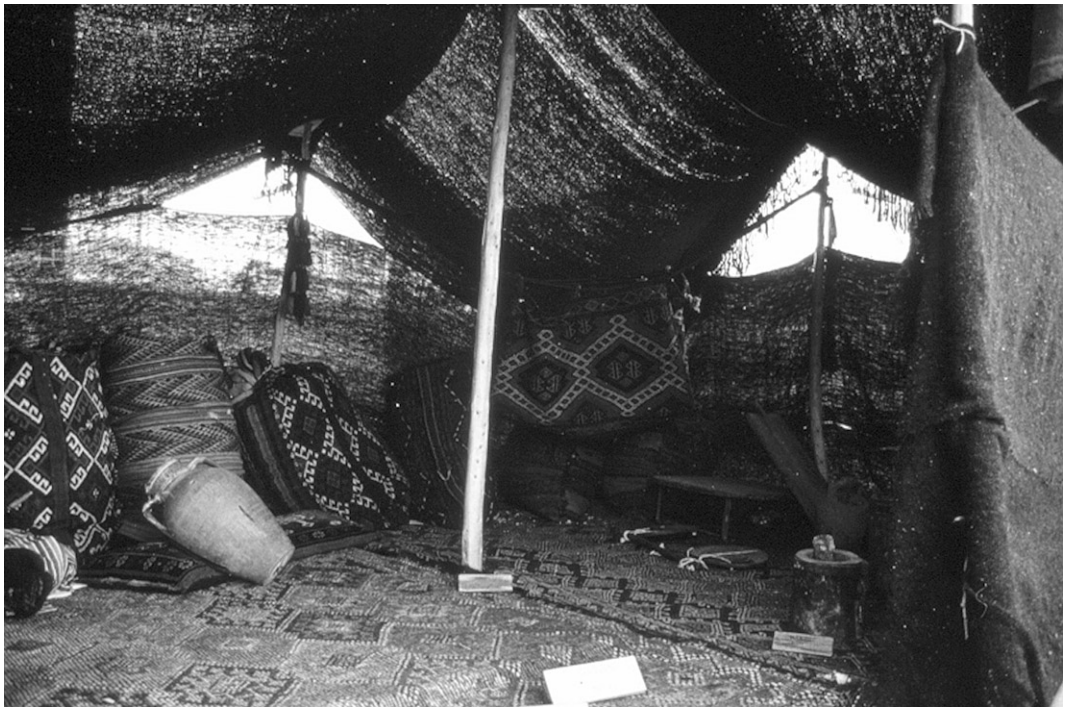

Fig. 5. Inside of a Yörük tent.

In the Early Iron Age the settlement pattern did not change. But this time we are better informed about the inhabitants of the region from the Royal Assyrian sources. Indeed, the human and political geography of eastern Anatolia a few decades after the collapse of the Hittite Kingdom can be partly reconstructed from the annals of the Assyrian kings such as Tiglath-Pileser I who ascended the Assyrian throne towards the end of the 12th century BC.

This king claims to have invaded tribal territories of various tribes (e.g. the Muški and Kadmuḫḫi) in the upper Tigris valley north of Diyarbakır and fighting other tribes in the mountains (e.g. Paḫḫi).[20]

[20] Some fifty years before this king came to power, the Muški tribes, which may have been of Thraco-Phrygian origin, had probably crossed the Upper Euphrates and penetrated into the Murat valley occupying the territory of Alzi and Purulumzi. Almost in concert with this invasion, the Urumean and Apeslian tribes advanced into the Upper Euphrates valley (Yakar 2000, 434). The movement of ethnically heterogenous new tribes into this region would have certainly created territorial pressure on the tribal Hurrian groups such as the Kadmuḫḫians, Alzains, Purulumzians and the Paḫḫi (Diakonoff 1984, 67–8). Eventually, however this situation would have resulted in the formation of new tribal confederations. See also, Taffet and Yakar 2002.

The most important campaign of this king into the Eastern Highlands was undertaken three years after his accession to the Assyrian throne. Its goal was to submit the "countries of the far away kings, on the shore of the Upper Sea", probably the Black Sea. In this campaign the Assyrians claimed to have marched through sixteen mountain ridges before facing and defeating a coalition of 23 kings at the head of 22,000 warriors. This king later defeated an even larger coalition of "sixty kings of Nairi". It is rather obvious that the large number of kings in these mountainous territories were no other than chiefs of tribes. In other words the Assyrian king raided a land inhabited by large tribes and divided among chiefdoms. The fact that the lands, according to the Assyrian king, possessed extensive herds of horses, countless mules and huge numbers of cattle spread over extensive pastures, supports the assumption that the tribes in question were pastoralists maintaining some form of nomadic existence. Following their defeat the sixty kings or tribal chieftains of Nairi submitted to the demand for the payment of an annual tribute in livestock consisting of 1200 horses and 2000 cattle.[21] In my opinion only pastoralists with very large herds would have been capable of paying this kind of tribute without seriously compromising their economy. And such large-scale herding would have required a great deal of mobility in order not to exhaust the existing pastures. The fact that Tiglath-Pilesar I, while reporting on his successful campaigns into neighbouring lands during the first five and a half years of his reign, also mentioned "I cut off the path of my enemy into my land," leaves no doubt that formerly these mountain inhabitants used to attack the Assyrian farming settlements south of the mountains. Nomadism or semi-nomadism with pastoralism as the mainstay of the economy was the dominant mode of subsistence in the eastern Anatolian highlands and Transcaucasia on the eve of the formation of the Urartian kingdom.

South of Van the mountainous province of Hakkâri may hold a key as to the identity of the inhabitants of the highlands prior to the formation of the Urartian state. Here the discovery of a large Early Iron Age chamber tomb with 25 burials deposited with metal artifacts, including iron objects, 1 km from the medieval castle in Hakkâri is of historical significance. The similarity of this tomb to those found at Karagündüz indicates that pastoral nomads inhabited this mountainous region. This province was probably part of the land of Ḫubuškia mentioned in the Assyrian sources of the 9th century BC.[22] Confirmation may be provided by the recent spectacular chance discovery of 13 stone stelae with human and various other representations rendered in relief. They were found resting on a stone-built platform at the base of the medieval castle in Hakkâri.[23] The main figures are male warriors, clad only in a loincloth, holding weapons and what may be wine-

21 Yakar 2000, 434.

22 Sevin and Özfırat 1998, 9.

23 Sevin and Özfırat 1998; 2001, cf. now Sevin 2005.

skins in their hands. On some of the stelae a *yurt*-like tent is depicted either above the left or right shoulder of the warrior.

Fig. 6. Stone stela from Hakkâri (after Sevin and Özfırat 2001, figs. 6 and 10).

Fig. 7. Stone stela from Hakkâri with *yurt*-like tent (after Sevin and Özfırat 2001, figs. 7 and 12).

In addition smaller female and young male figures, animals such as deer, leopards and mountain goats appear around the male figure. The rich variety of weapons, which include swords, daggers, spears, axes and maces have distant parallels in late second millennium BC north-western Iran (e.g. Luristan). These objects cannot be much later than ca. 1000 BC and perhaps even earlier, but without any doubt pre-date the formation of the Urartian Kingdom. The status symbols such as a spear, mace and axe represented with the figures could identify them as prominent warriors or leaders of nomadic tribes inhabiting the territory of Ḫubuškia.[24]

In summing up this discussion of ethnoarchaeology of nomadism in Anatolia, the following tentative conclusions may be proposed:

1- In archaeological records, flimsy architecture with no or insignificant built-in installations in regions where a continental climate prevailed could be attributed to rural communities pursuing a semi-nomadic mode of life that involved pastoralism accompanied by small-scale selective agriculture and/or horticulture, hunting and foraging. Considering that even among the nomadic tribes of the Ottoman period certain segments of society involved in farming were rather sedentarized, we may assume that in antiquity too they would have included settled components. The latter will have pursued an agrarian based subsistence yielding surpluses which would have complemented the pastoral economy of the nomadic pastoral component of the same tribe.

2 - The sudden cessation of human activities in settlements previously inhabited without significant interruptions in habitats in the Eastern Highlands and Pontus region could be attributed to the incursion of semi-nomadic or nomadic pastoralists.

3 - In the past nomadism could have also been adopted as a temporary economic strategy by sedentary farmers forced out of their habitats. Such communities leaving behind their land and houses, but taking with them their livestock would have been on the move until political or ecological conditions would have allowed them to turn sedentary again. In fact, in times of repeated wars or droughts, this would have been the only mode of survival. The environmental and political events that caused the final collapse of the Hittite Kingdom in the early 12th century BC could have created such a situation. The abandonment of a large number of settlements at the end of the Late Bronze Age indicates that their inhabitants became temporarily mobile in search of safer and better territories.

4 - Unlike average sedentary farming communities, nomadic pastoralists usually posses a manpower surplus, that could be channelled towards a variety of activities, including surplus production, long range trade, and so on. With the re-

[24] Yakar 2000, 415.

sponsibility to defend their herds and pastures, young males specializing in mounted warfare could have engaged in hostile activities vis-à-vis the settled farmers. Rural communities not immune from such attacks could have employed rival mercenaries as village guards. Since the trademark of such nomadic warriors would have been the weapon/s they carried, in Anatolian archaeology, burials with rich funerary deposits, particularly weapons, found in regions best suited for pastoralism, are often attributed to nomadic communities.

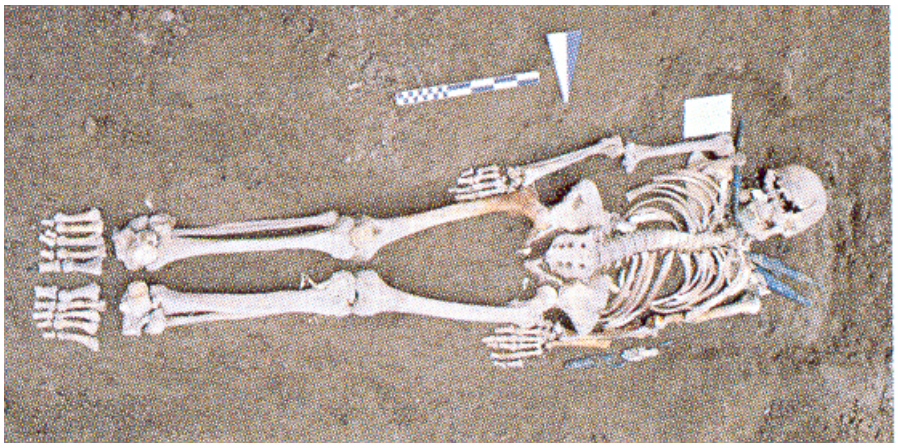

Fig. 8. One of the late third millennium İkiztepe burials (after Bilgi 2001, fig. 135).

Fig. 9. Bronze weapons from late third millennium BC burials at İkiztepe (after Bilgi 2001, fig. 71).

5 - Sites with remains of stone built animal shelters but with no signs of domestic architecture, especially in regions where continental climates prevailed could be considered indicative of nomadic camp-sites. It is important to stress that nomads are often seen camping in abandoned settlements, pitching their tents and using the ruins of ancient buildings as animal shelters. In fact in the past certain tribal leaders in the eastern provinces controlling large tracts of land also inhabited by farmers made abandoned castles on high elevations their abode.

Fig. 10. A seasonally inhabited encampment with stone-built animal shelters.

Fig. 11. An animal shelter in a nomad encampment in the eastern highlands of Anatolia.

6 - Ever since the principalities period in Anatolia, which gradually emerged since the mid third millennium BC, the centralized state system would not have tolerated the autonomous existence of large tribal polities within the borders of their respective territories. Often, a delicate but mutually beneficial co-existence with tribal groups required the confinement of their encampments to the fringes of farmlands or towns in state controlled territories. Since this was the case in Anatolia under the Achaemenids, Hellenistic states, the Romans, Byzantines, Seljuks and Ottomans, we may assume that it would have been no different under the Hittite administration of the second millennium BC.

7 - Political entities based on nomadic tribes often proved to be unstable having the tendency to split into smaller groups. Once permanently fragmented into smaller units, loyalty to the main tribal body could no longer be maintained. On the other hand non-political temporary seasonal fragmentation towards dispersal into seasonal campsites would not have affected the tribal unity or its social fabric.

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