



SOME EVIDENCE ON THE FIRST KNOWN RESIDENTS OF KATAKEKAUMENE (BURNED LANDS)

E. Akdeniz

*Adnan Menderes University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences,
Department of Archaeology, Aytepe-Aydın*

Received: 18/04/2010

Accepted: 02/06/2010

Corresponding author: akdeniz 113@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT

During the surface researches which we initiated to identify the Prehistoric and Protohistoric cultures in the geography of the city of Manisa located at a highly strategic point in the Western Anatolia, examinations were carried out also in the volcanic area known as "Katakekaumene" in the Ancient Age. In our studies on this land, we examined the human-animal fossil foot prints which had been found accidentally during the construction of Demirköprü Dam. In a location very close to these prints, the first rock painting of the region was detected. The point that should be elaborated is the link between these rock paintings and the owners of the discovered foot prints.

KEYWORDS: Western Anatolia, Manisa, Kula, Katakekaumene, rock paint, foot prints

INTRODUCTION

In 2007 a new field research was initiated by our team in order to identify the Prehistoric and Protohistoric cultures in the area of Manisa which is situated on a transition route between north-south and east-west in Western Anatolia. In these surface researches, examinations were carried out in a total of 88 centers of finds dating back to Prehistoric-Protohistoric periods (Fig. 1).

KATAKEKAUMENE

The most interesting area encountered is the region which is located in the east-southeast part of Manisa and which is referred to as Katakakeumene in the Ancient Age. This coinage comprises not only of the district of Kula in Manisa, but covers an area of approximately 60 km² located between the district of Kula, Karataş and Demirköprü Dam.

Prof. Dr. Hasan Malay, who has made significant research in the region on Epigraphy and Ancient History, spotted the first epigraph that includes the name "Katakakeumene" in the area of İğdecik village located in the west of Maionia (Malay 2007; 10). The epigraph tells a decision taken by the Maion community in Katakakeumene. This is a highly significant document for the region. Katakakeumene was considered within the borders of both Lydia (Maionia) and Mysia by the ancient writers (Sevin 2003; 45, 177).

KATAKEKAUMENE FROM THE NARRATION OF STRABON

Strabon, who was born in ancient Amasia (modern Amasya) but spent most of his life in Nysa in the neighborhood of Sultanhisar in Western Anatolia, provides detailed information about Katakakeumene besides many other places in Anatolia. The region is described in Strabon's words as follows:

"...There are no trees here, but only the vineyards where they produce the Katakakeumene wines which are by no means inferior from any of the wines famous for their quality. The soil is covered with ashes, and black in color as if the mountainous and rocky country

was made up of fires. Some assume that these ashes were the result of thunderbolts and subterranean explosions, and do not doubt that the legendary story of Typhon takes place in this region¹. Ksanthos adds that the king of this region was a man called Arimus. However, it is not reasonable to accept that the whole country was burned down at a time as a result of such an event rather than as a result of a fire bursting from underground whose source has now died out. Three pits are called "Physas" and separated by forty stadia from each other. Above these pits, there are hills formed by the hot masses burst out from the ground as estimated by a logical reasoning. Such type of soil is very convenient for viniculture, just like the Katana soil which is covered with ashes and where the best wines are still produced abundantly. Some writers concluded by looking at these places that there is a good reason for calling Dionysus by the name ("Phrygenes")" (Strabon, XIII, 628; XIV, 650).

As also stated by Strabon, the characteristics of this region allowed the progress of viniculture, and a wine called "Katakakeumenites" which was also used for medical purposes was produced in Katakakeumene region (Malay 1983; 52; Sevin 2003; 190). The reason for the development of viniculture is the fact that the scoria in the volcanic land, which does not allow the growth of many products, provides a suitable environment for viniculture. Today, the same land has begun to be used for viniculture by applying traditional methods within the scope of organic agriculture. In the reign of the Roman Emperor Decius (3rd century A.D.), the land in Katakakeumene was interestingly associated with divine happenings, and this aspect attributed to the region was interpreted as "a sign of warning for blasphemers" (Malay 2006; 10). As a matter of fact, the land has indeed a highly eerie appearance, which is due to the reason that plants are very rarely found on these volcanic formations and the soil surface is

¹ In Greek Mythology, Typhon is a gigantic creature with a hybrid grotesque figure depicting dragons and snakes spouting from his body. He is the son of Gaia and Tartarus, and was defeated by Zeus by thunderbolts and trapped underneath Mount Etna (Aetna). This story alone provides a mythological basis for the formation of Etna Volcano.

dominated by a dark color (brown, dark grey, black) for kilometers (Fig. 2). Volcanism does not penetrate to the south of the centre of Kula district, but is confined to a limited area, and gets denser in the west, north and northwest of the district. Katakekaumene region introduces interesting scenes with the volcanic cones, explosion craters and lava flows as well as the earth pillars in the east of Kula.

It is generally acknowledged that the formation of volcanism in Katakekaumene geologically starts in Miocene and continues to Holocene in 3 different phases. There are 68 volcanic cones in this volcanic land, which may be considered very young compared to other parts of Anatolia (Figs. 3-4). Among these volcanic cones, 13 of them belong to the most recent phase (Erinç 1970; 14). These cones, which differ to a great extent in diameter and height, are called as "Divlit, Devlit, Divlit Tepe, Devlit Tepe" by the local people. There are also occasions where they are named after their different characteristics or the region they are located in (e.g. Çakallar Divlit, Kula Divlit and Kara Divlit).

HUMAN-ANIMAL FOSSIL FOOT PRINTS

In the north-western parts of the land named as Katakekaumene, the explorations revealed interesting information that will take the history of the region back to very early periods. The place where the information was obtained is situated in the neighborhood of Akçeşme (Yeni Sindel) village in the west of Demirköprü Dam lake. This land, which is a province of Salihli Town, is located very close to the intersection point of Salihli and Köprübaşı Town, at the 25th km of Salihli-Demirci highway approximately 1 km to the east of Akçeşme (Yeni Sindel) Village and on the slope that lies in the south of the highway leading to the village. The area where the foot prints were discovered is called "Çakallar Tepesi" (Jackals Hill).

The discovery of these foot prints is as old as the construction of Demirköprü Dam (Figs. 5, 9). It is known that during the construction of the earthen structured dam with made-up ground (1954-1960) the trucks, which were carrying building materials to the construction site

and did not want to return empty, were loaded with scoria from this volcanic land to be delivered to briquette factories around Salihli-Turgutlu. Due to the financial profit provided by these piles of scoria that occasionally reached to 40 m. in height, a few scoria pits were run in the region although for a short time. During this process, by the accidental discovery of the foot prints on the slope dug up by dozers, an important and rich cultural heritage was made known to the public. The investigations carried by experts on the subject revealed that the foot prints were left on a wet tuff ground. The prints belong to the people walking on the thin layer of ashes scattered around by mild explosions in the first phase of the volcano (Ozansoy 1969, 207). According to the records, the number of foot prints was about 200 in the first years of their discovery. By a sound decision taken in that period, 60 of these prints were removed to the depository of Natural History Museum in Ankara, and at least one foot print was taken to Manisa Museum and Ege University Natural History Museum. According to the statements of Atakol and local people, an important part of the rest of the prints was smuggled out of the country (Atakol 2003, 109, 116). Today, there are at least 12 human foot prints on this land (Fig. 6-7). These prints are generally named as Çakallar fossil foot prints because of the land's geographical closeness to Çakallar village which was abandoned due to the dam construction and to Çakallar Hill which was actually a divlit (volcanic cone). Whose foot prints were these? As a matter of fact, there are considerable differences between the sizes of these foot prints. The owners of the big foot prints, which apparently belong to adults, are heading from the hill down to the plain, while the prints belonging to a child are observed to be heading for the opposite direction. Was this child walking along with the adults, or was s/he playing? Other interesting information reveals the presence of prints belonging to some animals and even objects like wand and walking stick besides human foot prints (Fig. 8). These people were not the individuals running away from explosions as erroneously stated in some publications, but the people who were trying to walk in normal

steps. For unknown reasons they may have been trying to climb down to the plain (or a possible lake in this bottom land in those periods) which is now under the waters of Demirköprü Dam.

After the discovery of the prints, the most frequently asked question is the date they belong to. Since the period of their first discovery, different suggestions have been introduced regarding their dates. These dates comprise a wide time frame from 250.000 B.C. up to 10.000-12.000 years prior to our day (Tekkaya 1976, 81; Ozaner 2007, 100). Prof. Dr. İlhan Kayan, who fills a great gap in our country with his geoarcheological studies which are followed with great interest by scholars of archeology as well as by geography circles, notes that the foot prints do not belong to a date as old as 250.000 years by basing his argument on geomorphologic research and radiometric assessments (Kayan 1992, 22). Kayan states that dates like 12.000-10.000 years from our day are more consistent with the results of radiometric studies and the characteristics of the formations, therefore more persuasive. In fact, it was shown that the layer of scoria covering the prints belongs to the last period of explosions. The latest volcanic explosion dates back to this time period. With a wary approach, keeping in mind Kayan's emphasis that there is still no exact conclusion regarding this dating, it may be noted that the date of 10-12000 years from our day, that is around 8000-10.000 B.C. constitutes a terminus ante quem for Çakallar foot prints. This date corresponds to the Mesolithic Age for Western Anatolia.

ROCK SHELTER PAINTING

One of the most important questions we try to answer in our studies in the region concerns the place where the owners of these Çakallar foot prints lived and where they sought shelter. For this purpose, after the first examination carried out in the region in 2007, a second wave of investigation was initiated on the land in 2008 in order to find answers to this question.

With the help of the local people in the village, we went to Sarıkaya region located approximately 700 m in the west of Yeni Sindel

Village. At first glance this land resembles Beşparmak Mountains (Ancient Latmos) surrounding Bafa Lake. The area, which has a stream bed in the east-southeast direction, is both watery and sheltered. In this area, which is situated 86 m above the plain and 382 m above sea level, paintings drawn in red and purple brown color were detected on the lower surface of the upper rock of a rock shelter known as Kanlıtaş (Fig. 9, 10, 11). At first glance 3 hands are recognized in these paintings which are highly significant for the prehistory of Western Anatolia. Our studies continue on deciphering the meanings of other depictions and how the paintings were done as well as on the type of paints used in these paintings. Is it possible that the circular drawing filled with dots under the lower-left hand is Çakallar Volcanism known to be active in that period? Moreover, there are three thick rectangular lines in the lower part of the painting, another line on the right, and prints of a band almost showing the borders of a frame at the bottom of the whole painting. Besides these depictions drawn in red, there are also prints belonging to another drawing in purple brown color which has almost become indistinct in time on its left side. The local people gave highly interesting folkloric information about this painting. According to what their grandfathers have told, "a man, who was killed by brigands long time ago, caught on this rock before he died, and these prints were formed by his bloody hands". While they were telling this story, they even added bashfully that they were deeply sorry that such an unfortunate event occurred in their own lands. That is why the rock bearing this painting was called Kanlıtaş (Bloody Stone). Except for the rock paintings in Anatolia around Kars, Hakkari, Adıyaman and Antalya, the most important detections regarding rock paintings in Western Anatolia were done by Peshlow around Bafa Lake and Beşparmak Mountains (Peshlow-Bindokat 1996, 18; Abb.14. Peshlow-Bindokat 2003, Abb.12 ve 13). Furthermore, human figures were recently identified in Soğurluk Dersi region close to Konaklı Town in İzmir Ödemiş. There are figures drawn with a different technique revealing the first use of the eastern wall in ancient period in Aizanoia ancient city in Kütahya Çavdarhisar

(Somuncuoğlu 2007, 135, Fig. 8). However, Kanlıtaş rock painting does not have descriptive features that may be compared to others except for the hands in Göktepe (Söğütözü) and Kavalan paintings. Also, the meaning of the depiction drawn under the hands in Kanlıtaş has not been accurately deciphered.

CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation of Çakallar foot prints together with the newly discovered rock painting suggests that the owners of the foot prints may have lived in the same period with the people who drew the paintings. Although the general characteristics of paintings provide evidence that they were done in Prehistoric Ages, details to further strengthen this evidence are lacking. Moreover, a research in the ground under the rock shelter where the painting is found may reveal finds from the same period. Another

concern is the two separate rock shelters we have detected in Gökçukuru region in the north of Yeni Sindel Village during our researches in and around Kanlıtaş (Fig. 12). These rock shelters are now used by herdsmen as animal shelters. No finds were found on the surface during our investigations amidst animal droppings covering the thick layer of earth in these shelters which are very convenient also for human use.

Consequently, it would be an accurate approach to evaluate the foot prints in the neighborhood of Yeni Sindel and Çarıklar villages in the west of Demirköprü Dam together with the rock painting and rock shelters. When it is considered that the land stretches to the west with the same physical characteristics, extending the initiated surface researches towards the west will be helpful in finding similar rock paintings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study has been realized within the scope of the Research Project No. 107K030 supported by TÜBİTAK SOBAG (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Group) and with the permission received from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Turkish Republic, General Directorate of Cultural Assets and Museums. I would like to express my thanks to the authorities of these institutions, Prof. Dr. İlhan Kayan and the local people for their assistance and support.

REFERENCES

- Akdeniz, A. (2009) Çakallar'daki İzlerin Sahipleri, *Atlas* 190, 30-31
- Atakol, A. (2003) Kula, Yanık Ülke, *Atlas* 119, 104-118.
- Erinç, S. (1970) Kula ve Adala arası genç volkan reliefi, *İstanbul Üniversitesi Coğrafya Enstitüsü Dergisi* 17, 7-31.
- Kayan, İ. (1992) Demirköprü baraj gölü batı kıyısında Çakallar volkanizması ve fosil insan ayak izleri (Çakallar Volcanism and Human Fossil Foot Prints on the bottom of pyroclastic layers. Western Anatolia), *Ege Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Ege Coğrafya Dergisi* 6, 1-32.
- Koçman, A.-Kapsız, A.-İrdem C. (2007) Kula Yöresi Peribacaları ve Doğal Anıtların Jeoturizme Kazandırılması, *Geçmişten Geleceğe Köprü, Yanık Ülke Kula Sempozyumu*, İzmir, 431-444.
- Malay, H. (1983) Batı Anadolu'nun Antik Çağdaki Ekonomik Durumu, *Ege Üniversitesi Arkeoloji Sanat Tarihi Dergisi* III, 51-61.
- Malay, H. (2007) Katakekaumene'de Yerleşimler, Yerel Dinler ve Tapım Merkezleri, *Geçmişten Geleceğe Köprü, Yanık Ülke Kula Sempozyumu*, İzmir, 2007, 1-32.
- Ozoner, F.S. (2007) Kula Çevresindeki Volkanik Şekillerin Jeopark/Jeoturizm Potansiyeli, *Geçmişten Geleceğe Köprü, Yanık Ülke Kula Sempozyumu*, İzmir, 83-103.
- Ozansoy, F. (1969) Türkiye Pleistosen Fosil İnsan Ayak İzleri, *Maden Tetkik ve Arama Enstitüsü Dergisi* 72, 204-209, Ankara.
- Peshlow-Bindokat, A. (1996) *Der Latmos, Eine Unbekannte Debrigslandschaft an der Türkischen Westküste*, Mainz am Rhein, 1996.

- Peshlow-Bindokat, A. (1996) Frühe Hochzeitsbilder zur Deutung Der Weiblichen Figur Den Prahistorischen Felsbildern des Latmos (Beşparmak), In M.Özdoğan-H.Hauptmann-N.Başgelen (ed.) *Köyden Kente Yakındoğuda İlk Yerleşimler (From Village to Cities Early Village in the Near East, Volume I, İstanbul 2003, 199-215.*
- Sevin,V. (2001) *Anadolu'nun Tarihi Coğrafyası*, Ankara.
- Somuncuoğlu, S. (2007) Taştaki Türkler ve Bozkır Kavimleri", *Atlas 177*, 129-147.
- Tekkaya, İ. (1976) İnsanlara Ait Fosil Ayak İzleri, *Yeryuvarı ve İnsan Dergisi*, (July 1976), 8-10.

Ancient Sources

- Strabon, Antik Anadolu Coğrafyası (Geographica XII, XIII, XIV), Translation Adnan Pekman, İstanbul, 1993.