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## BRYGES AND PHRYGIANS: PARALLELISM BETWEEN THE BALKANS AND ASIA MI- NOR THROUGH ARCHEOLOGICAL, LINGUISTIC AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

*Abstract:* This paper is a contribution to the efforts to delineate the relations between the Balkans and Asia Minor, notably between the Bryges and the Phrygians, through archaeological, linguistic and historical evidence. There are close analogies between the matt-painted geometrical pottery from the south of the central Balkans of the Early Iron Age and the Phrygian geometric painted pottery of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. There are also similarities between the onomastic material from this Balkan area and Phrygia Maior. Historical sources confirm numerous contacts between the Balkans and Asia Minor in the Transitional Period and the Early Iron Age, related with the Brygian migration.

Although many authors consider the Bryges as a population of Thracian origin, the linguistic researches have shown that the Thracian, the Phrygian and the Daco-Mysian are close but distinct languages originating from a common Indo-European language.<sup>1</sup> This closeness and the development of the languages distinguishes the Bryges/Phrygians as a separate proto-population, in relation to the others, whose formation started during the last waves of settling of the Indo-Europeans. The second important answer in

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\* This paper was presented at the International Symposium on Archaeology, History and Ancient Languages of Thrace and Phrygia, Ankara, 3-4 June 1995. The text has meanwhile been modified.

<sup>1</sup> V. Georgiev, 1977, 216, 220; R. Crossland, 1971, 225-236; R. Crossland, 1976, 61-66.

determining the Bryges/Phrygians is given by the archeology. The preceding archeological researches presumed that the Bryges had come to the Balkans during the end of the Late bronze Age, i.e. in the Transitional Period, had stayed for a short period of time in this areas and had moved towards Asia Minor. A very similar, almost identical pottery from the sites in Lower Macedonian to the pottery from Troy VII b 2 with a characteristic knobbed pottery in gray-black coloring and smooth surface from the same period, could serve as an evidence for these statements. Their origin was searched in middle Europe and was connected to the pottery of Gava type in Hungary, while their movements were traced from the Balkans to Asia Minor.<sup>2</sup>

On the other side, mainly on the basis of certain historical sources, a theory of the origins of the Bryges in Asia Minor and their movement from Asia Minor to the Balkans after the Trojan war, was in use. The identical onomastic and toponomastic forms in such distant geographic regions, as well as the similarities of the archeological finds, were explained by this theory.

Such unclear and unsettled data do not allow placing the Bryges in a fixed chronological, geographic and cultural frames and their closer connection, although even the ancient authors, starting from Herodotus to Strabo, claimed that the Bryges and the Phrygians were parts of one and the same population in the Balkans and in Asia Minor.<sup>3</sup>

All these ambiguities made me start a multidisciplinary research in the field of archeology, history and linguistics in a search for the real connections between the Bryges and the Phrygians. The following conclusions resulted these researches.

In the area of the Central Balkans, especially in its south-west part, where a latter concentration of the Bryges is supposed, there is a continuity in tumuli burials from the Early Bronze Age up to the Iron Age II. This continuity was not essentially disturbed by the latter settling, which shows that the populations settled in the Early Bronze Age continued to live in this area during the whole 2nd and in the beginning of the 1st millennium BC. F.<sup>4</sup> (The term Early Bronze Age is used according to the Heladic and Middle European chronology, and its beginning is placed towards the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C. The Anatolian

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<sup>2</sup> M. Gimbutas, 1965, 325, 334; N. G. L. Hammond, 1972, 407-416.

<sup>3</sup> Herod. I, 171; VII, 73, 74, 75; Strab. VII, 295, XII, 550, 572; XIII, 628.

<sup>4</sup> Prendi, 1966, 255-280; Zh. Andrea, 1985, 218-228; N. Bodinaku, 1982, 49-101; M. Garasanin, 1982, 723-726; M. Garasanin, 1988, 9-144, (81-144).

chronology goes much earlier and due to the point of contact a part of Thracia enters this chronological scheme. In the Central Balkans the Eneolithic sites, having no contacts with the last wave of the settling of the Indo-Europeans, correspond to the Anatolian chronology).<sup>5</sup>

According to the burial types and the specific features of the material culture some cultural groups, later to become ethnic groups, may be defined. Certain proto-populations occupying distinct areas of the Balkans could be distinguished on the territories of the cultural groups.

In the western part of the Balkans the Proto-Illyrians, in the east the Proto-Thracians, in the south the Hellenes, in the northern part of the Central Balkans the Proto-Daco-Mysians and in the south-west of the central Balkans the Proto-Bryges. Parts of the Proto-Mysians and the Proto-Bryges, most probably migrated to Asia Minor in the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C. as in the historical sources, first of all in the Iliad, they are mentioned as a population occupying this area long before the Trojan war. In the Iliad Pryam is mentioned as an ally to the Phrygians against the Amazonians.<sup>6</sup>

On the basis of the conclusions of a certain number of archeologists, historians and linguists, and according to my researches this should be the first wave of the migrations of the Bryges toward Asia Minor, which, unfortunately is not documented in the archeological researches.

The second wave of migrations of the Bryges is supposed in the period after the Trojan war, when a considerable number of populations from Southeast Europe, the predominant ones being the Mysians and the Thracians, settled in Asia Minor. In this stage of migration the Bryges were most probably not so numerous, as they did not influence the changes in the material culture of Troy VII b2 where the European migrants had settled. This migration wave is mainly established on the basis of archeological finds. In the same period there were also movements from Asia Minor to the Balkans, and further toward Italy. The information of the ancient authors are controversial, as they point out to the migrations of the Bryges/Phrygians toward Asia Minor before and after the Trojan war, but also to the migrations of the Phrygians from Asia Minor to the Balkans.<sup>7</sup>

Most probably there was a third stage of migrations of the Bryges proved by the changes found out in the north-west Greece and Epirus - a complete stop of life in the settlements belonging to the Bryges in Bubushti, Vergina and Pateli, a sudden fall of the number of inhabitants in Vitsa, and

<sup>5</sup> J. Maran, 1997, 171-192.

<sup>6</sup> V. Georgiev, 1977, 265-266; V. Mikov, 1970, 48-56; Hom. Iliad., III, 181-190.

<sup>7</sup> Hom. Iliad., III, 181-190; Herod., VII, 20; Strab., XII, 572; XIV, 680, 681; App., B.C. II, 29.

a vacuum of finds in the Ohrid region.<sup>8</sup> These changes are supposed to have happened about 800-700 B.C. most probably due to the rise of the Illyrian and the Macedonian ethnic communities and even their direct pressure at these territories. After those migrations from the Balkans the existence of the Phrygian state in Asia Minor is confirmed. The occupation of the east Mediterranean area is in fact a migration of the majority of this ethnic community from one geographic area to another. The Asia Minor group of the Phrygian population had created a state of their own which had a great historic and cultural importance for the development of the east Mediterranean, and particularly for the Hellenic civilization. The material culture of the Phrygians, for example, the pottery production, shows some connections with the Balkan area, while the tumuli burials are considered to be of a direct European influence.

The appearance of the Phrygian painted pottery was certainly influenced by the east Anatolian pottery in the Alisar IV style, with elements of the flora and fauna, and the old Anatolian tradition,<sup>9</sup> but also by the geometric matt-painted pottery from the Balkan Brygian areas as a western element.<sup>10</sup> The Phrygian geometric painted pottery, which has a basic decoration from the both styles,<sup>11</sup> appears in the 8th century B.C. corresponding the last wave of the migrations of the Bryges from the Balkans.

The third wave is also very well documented from an archeological point of view, while the decline of the number of population and the desertion of the sites in south-west part of the Central Balkans is not explained till now. Thus, we suppose that our theory corresponds to the last movements of the Bryges from the Balkans to Asia Minor. (The fact that in this period the ethnic community of the Bryges occupies only enclaves scattered in a wider geographic areas on the Balkans, most probably because the majority of them had moved away from these areas, confirms our theory).

Towards the end of the Late Bronze Age and in the beginning of the Iron Age I, a specific matt geometric painted pottery, made rather according to the model from the mid Helladic traditions than to the Mycenaean pottery, appeared in the south-wester part of the Central Balkans. This pottery, along with the characteristic metal production of weapons and jew-

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<sup>8</sup> W. A. Heurtley, 1939, 99-100, 104-105; M. Andronikos, 1969, 279; I. Vokotopulu, 1986, 351-377.

<sup>9</sup> E. Akurgal, 1955, 1-18; R. S. Young, 1968, 231-241; R. D. Barnett, 1975, 426-427.

<sup>10</sup> Zh. Andrea, 1985, (T. I-XVI, XXIV-XXIX, XXXI-XXXV; F. Prendi, 1966, (T. XXVII-XXIX); W. A. Heurtley, 1939, 227-229, 252; M. Garasanin, 1982, T. CX)

<sup>11</sup> K. G. Sams, 1994, 1, 2, (fig. 24-44, 62-65).

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<sup>10</sup> Zh. Andrea, 1985, (T. I-XVI, XXIV-XXIX, XXXI-XXXV); F. Prendi, 1966, (T. XXVII-XXIX); W. A. Heurtley, 1939, 227-229, 252; M. Garasanin, 1982, T. CX)

<sup>11</sup> K. G. Sams, 1994, 1, 2, (fig. 24-44, 62-65).

elry, especially the pins decorated in a manner similar to the pottery, became an essential characteristic of the region inhabited by the Bryges.

The historical sources, except the Iliad, which gives us data on the period before and during the Trojan war, are mainly bound to the classical period. On their account we may locate the Bryges on the Balkans in the area among Dyrrachium, Lichnydus Lake, the Thesprothians on the south and Pelagonia in the later period.<sup>12</sup> In the area to the east of Axios, Herodotus places the Thracian Bryges.<sup>13</sup> In fact, those are enclaves of Bryges in the Thracian area, assimilated completely during the 5-4th c. B.C. The authors from the 5th century B.C. regard Troy and the Trojans, as well as the Trojan royal house as Phrygian and Phrygians.<sup>14</sup> The mentioning of the Phrygian king Midas by Herodotus opens the question of the relations between Midas from Phrygia and Mita from Mushki - an antroponym appearing in the Assyrian sources. The opinions on the same origin of Mita and Midas, as well as of the Phrygians and the Mushki are divided. Barnett's thesis for the Mushki as an alliance of several Anatolian tribes, one of them being the Phrygian, as a western Anatolian element, is acceptable for us, and does not oppose the Balkan component of the Phrygian population.<sup>15</sup>

The most reliable and the most evident is the linguistic linkage of the Bryges and the Phrygians. The linguistic researches show that the Phrygian was one of the older Indo-European languages which entered into the base of certain Paleo Balkanic languages, as the Paeonian, Macedonian and the Mygdonian, and it is supposed that it could not have such a role if the Bryges had appeared in the Balkans in the Transitional Period. Some linguists believe that the Proto-Phrygian language developed and was used in the southwest part of the Central Balkans. According to the same researches the majority of the tribes speaking Proto-Phrygian migrated to Asia Minor, i.e. Anatolia up to the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st millennium B.C.<sup>16</sup>

A large portion of the onomastic material in the south-wester of the Central Balkans, and even wider, has points of contact to Asia Minor, i.e. Anatolia. Such are the antroponyms Ama, Brygos, Bastos, Bennius, Dida, Delus, Mama Mamas, Tato, Tataia, Torkion etc. For a long period those names were considered as Thracian or Illyrian. Some twenty years ago they

<sup>12</sup> Eugam. Teleg. (Proclus Chrest. lib. II); Herod. VI, 45; VII, 73, 185; Strab. VII, 7, 8; App. B.C. II, 29; Pseud. Scym., 434.

<sup>13</sup> Herod. VI, 45, VII, 20, 73.

<sup>14</sup> Euryp. Hec. 1-41; Rhesos, 585-586; Soph. Antig., 823-827.

<sup>15</sup> Herod., I, 14.; R. D. Barnett, 1975, 412-442.

<sup>16</sup> O. Haas, 1966, 8-231; R. Crossland, 1971, 225-236; V. Georgiev, 1977, 216-234.



were definitely defined as Brygian, as is the case with the name Tato, which appears also in the Illyrian and the Thracian onomastics and certainly has a wider Mediterranean origin. The names of Phrygian origin Kotys and Torkos became assimilated in the Thracian onomastics too. Toponym parallels can be made between the names of the place Kydrada in Anatolia and Kydrai "Polis ton Brygon" in Pelagonia, according to Strabo.<sup>17</sup>

The importance of the Brygian population on the Balkans during the 2nd and the 1st millennium B.C. as a distinct ethnic community and as a nucleus of the powerful Frigian state which influenced also the Hellenic civilization may be defined on the basis of these researches.

The literary tradition considered the Phrygians as the oldest population in the world.<sup>18</sup> The Phrygians entered the history of the Hellenic culture and civilization also as predecessors and inventors of many skills.<sup>19</sup>

The metal production and the beginning of coinage in Asia Minor is also connected to the Phrygians. Although the Hellenes attributed all the inventions of the ancient world to them, the Phrygians, tended to enter the Hellenic cultural sphere.<sup>20</sup>

Anyhow, dispersed in the mayor parts of the Mediterranean, the Balkans, Asia Minor and Italy, the Bryges have left many traces of their existence from the Early Bronze Age to the classical period, which could not be avoided.

## БРИГИ И ФРИГИЈЦИ: ПАРАЛЕЛИЗАМ ИЗМЕЂУ БАЛКАНА И МАЛЕ АЗИЈЕ НА ОСНОВУ АРХЕОЛОШКИХ, ЛИНГВИСТИЧКИХ И ИСТОРИЈСКИХ ПОДАТАКА

### Резиме

У досадашњој археолошкој литератури постоји велики број података који се односе на сличности у материјалној култури и ономастици Балкана и Мале Азије. Међутим, у археолошком смислу ова два географска простора најмање су повезивана са Бригима и Фригијцима. Овај рад је покушај да се осветле релације између Брига и Фригијаца из више аспеката.

У археолошком смислу, мат геометријска сликана керамика из јужног дела централног Балкана, настала у периоду XIII-XII и VIII-VII века пре н.е., повезује

<sup>17</sup> L. Zgusta, 1964; F. Papazoglu 1974, 59-73; 1979, 153-169; V. Georgiev, 1977, 222; L. Zgusta, 1984, 310; Strab., VII, 7,9.

<sup>18</sup> Herod., II, 2; Paus., I, 14, 2; Apul. Metam., XI, 5.

<sup>19</sup> Plin. N. H., VII, 197; A. M. Kempinski, 1984, 103-113.

<sup>20</sup> Herac. Pont., XI, 3; Polux. Onom., IX, 83; Herod., I, 14; Iust., XI, 7, 14.

се са фригијском сликаном керамиком са геометријским мотивима из VIII века пре н.е.

У ономастичком погледу, постоји много имена која су иста и у јужном делу централног Балкана и у Великој Фригији у Малој Азији, као што су : Ама, Бригос, Дида, Делус, Мамас, Тато, Торкион и др. Поред ономастичких блискости, постоје паралеле и у топономастици, као код имена места Кидрада у Анадолији и Кидрај у Пелагонији.

Историјски подаци упућују на више миграција на релацији Балкан - Мала Азија, а многа од њих могу да се идентификују као бригијски таласи сеоба.

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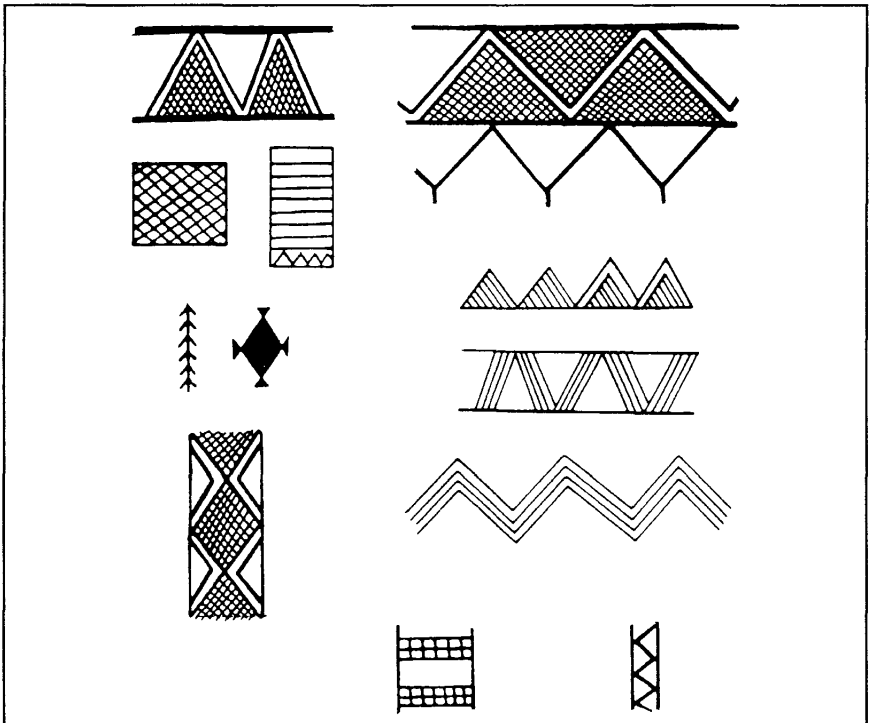
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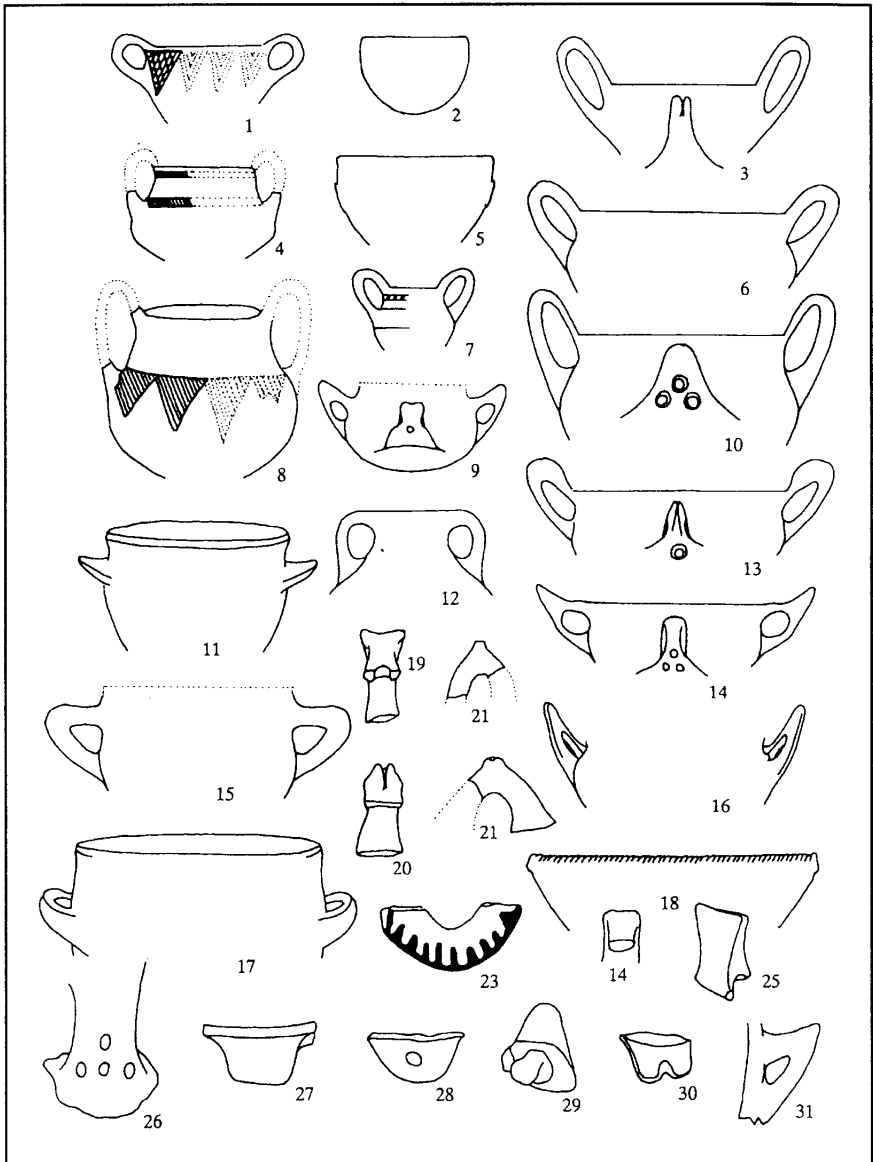
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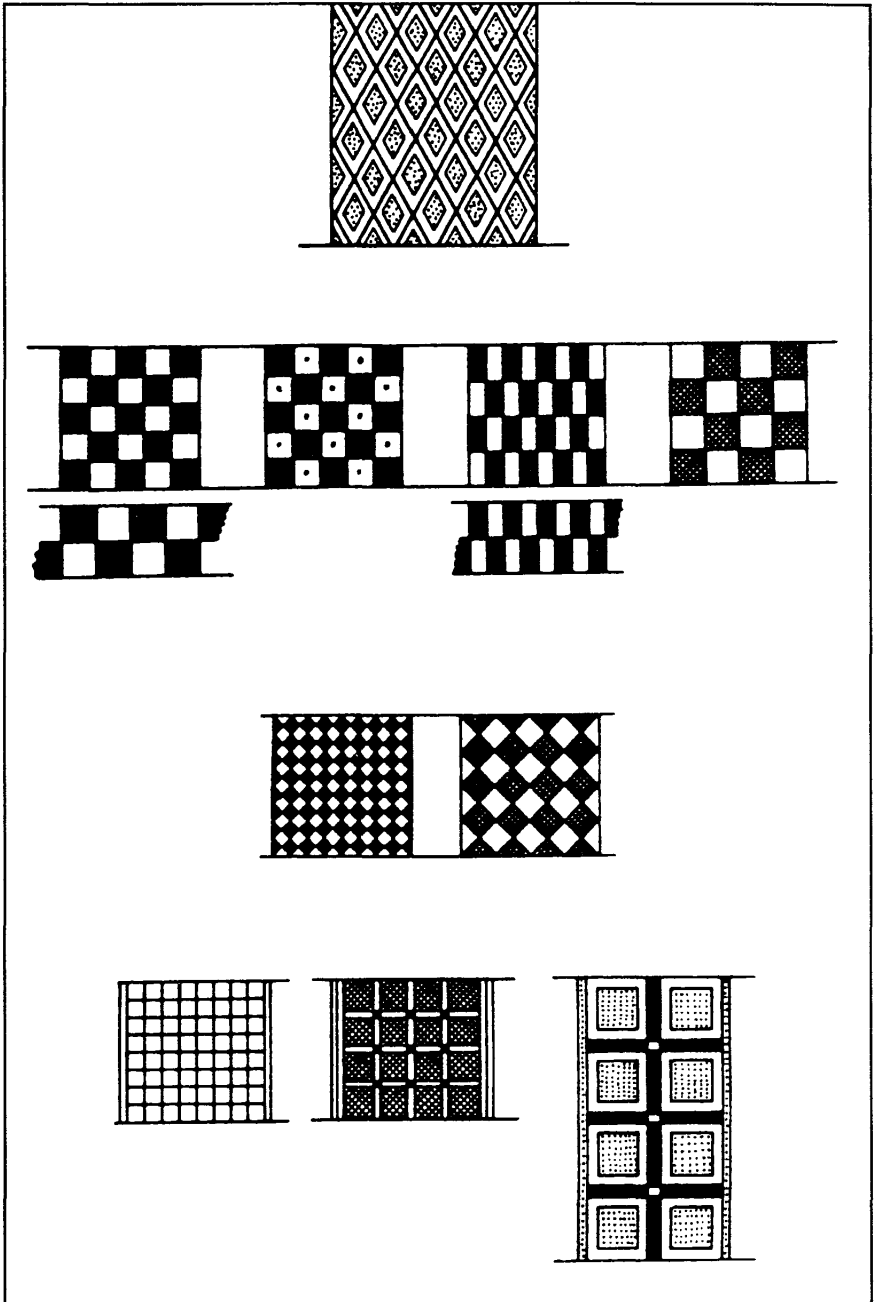
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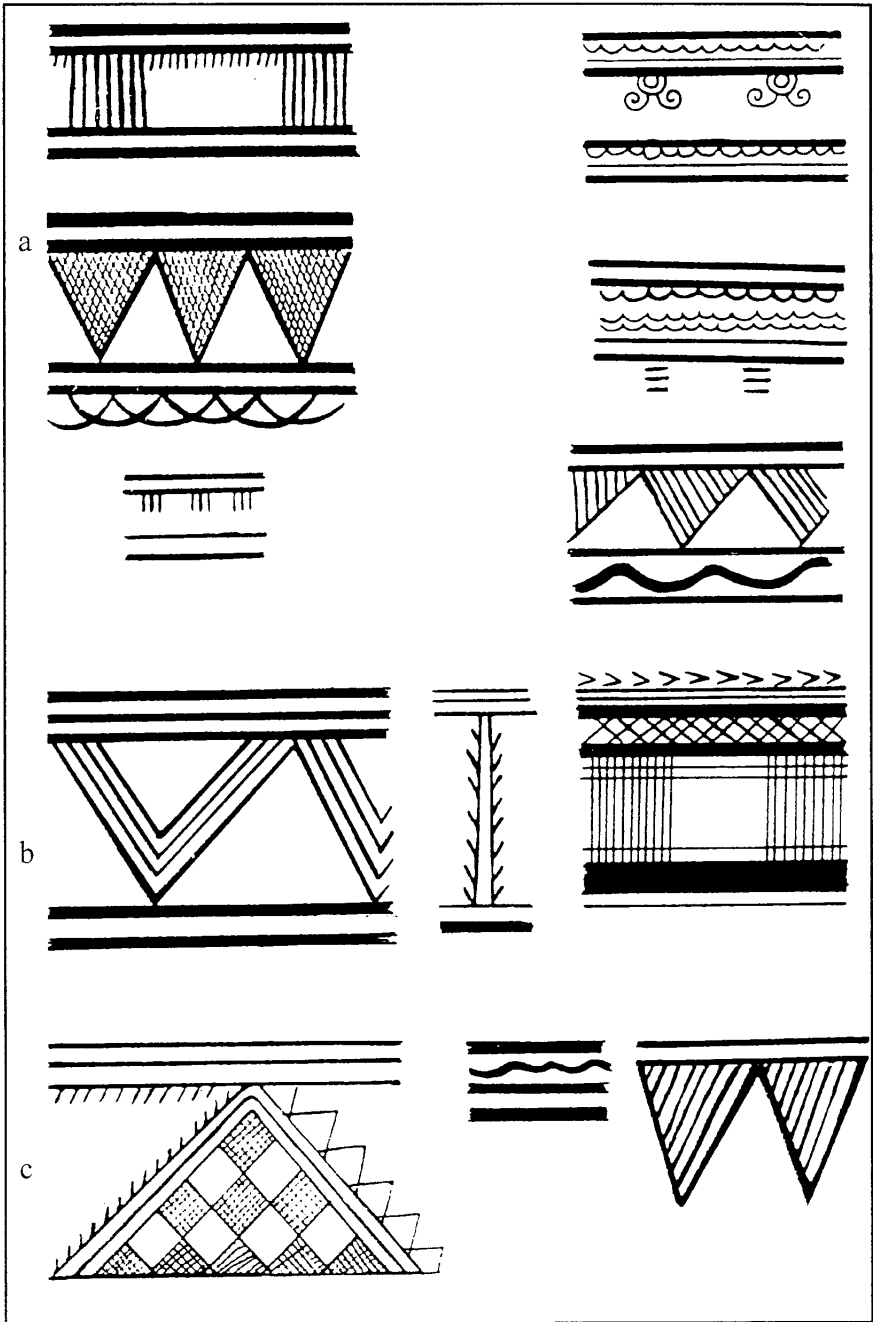
*Decoration from the Protogeometric and Geometric Period,  
Marmariand (Vokotopulu 1986)*



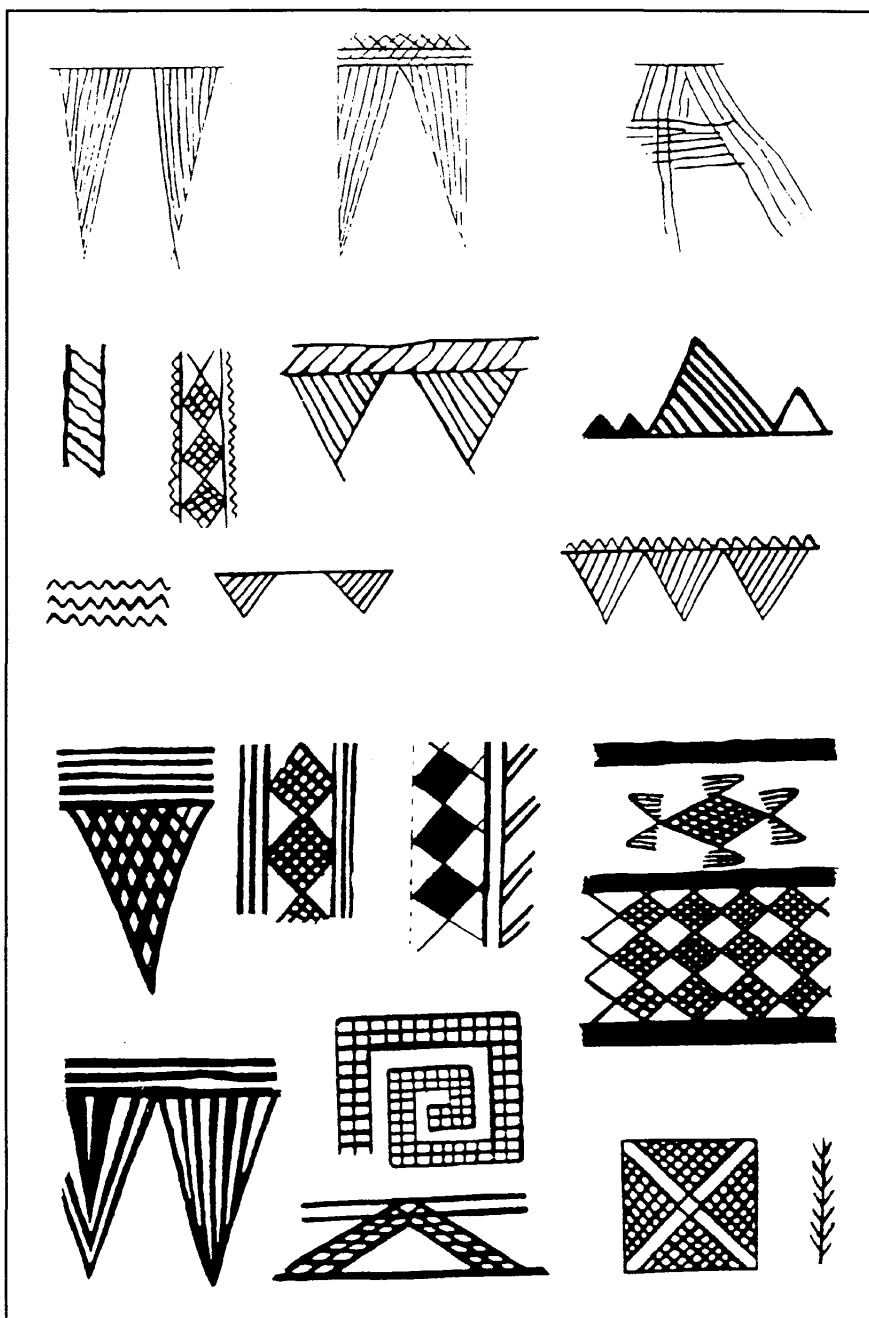
*Pottery Shapes from Maliq (Maliq IIIc, Prendi 1996)*



*Painted Motifs on Phrygian Pottery from Gordion (Sams 1994)*



*Geometric Decoration in Middle Heladic Tradition: a) Mycenae, b) Prosymna, c) Chyrai (Vokotopulu 1986)*



*Matt-Painted Geometric Decoration, Boubousti (Vokotopulu 1986)*