

Farming the Land of Hatti:
A Socio-Economic History of Agriculture in Central Anatolia from the Bronze Age to the
Hellenistic Period

by
Lorenzo Castellano

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Professor Lorenzo d'Alfonso

ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to provide a multidisciplinary and diachronic reconstruction of Anatolian agricultural systems, focusing on the period from the Early Bronze Age (3000 BCE) to the incorporation of Asia Minor under Roman rule (1st century BCE/CE).

This project is built upon a survey of the available primary sources, including archaeological data, archaeobotanical evidence, paleoenvironmental sequences, textual accounts, and ethnographic records. Evidence from literature is complemented by an extensive original archaeobotanical (wood charcoal and seed/fruit remains) and archaeological dataset from the site of Niğde-Kınık Höyük (Turkey), which has been obtained in the framework of the dissertation project. The volume is organized in three parts, as briefly summarized below.

Part I, *Agriculture in Pre-Roman Central Anatolia: Contexts, Sources, and Questions*. This part of the dissertation is composed by two chapters. In Chapter 1, I provide a general introduction to the historical and environmental contexts covered by the project. The specificities of the Anatolian physical geography are discussed, and the regional socio-cultural and historical trajectory is outlined. Chapter 2 is a literature survey of the available primary sources informing on ancient Anatolian agriculture. After a methodological introduction to each specific field, the published archaeobotanical, palynological, and textual sources are critically reviewed.

Part II, *The Agricultural Landscape of the Ancient Tyanitis (Southern Cappadocia) in the Late 2nd and 1st Millennia BCE: Archaeological and Archaeobotanical Evidence from Niğde-Kınık Höyük*. The second part of the dissertation is based upon original archaeological and archaeobotanical research I have conducted at the site of Niğde-Kınık Höyük, in southern Cappadocia (Turkey). This extensive original dataset allows to reconstruct the history of the southern Cappadocian agricultural landscape, from the late 2nd to the end of the 1st millennia BCE. In Chapter 3, I provide a general introduction to the physical geography, history, and archaeology of the study region, the historical *Tyanitis*. Chapter 4 concentrates on the large-scale

granaries brought to light at Niğde-Kınık Höyük, which are radiocarbon dated to the 10th century BCE. Already in the early 1st millennium BCE, agricultural production appears to have represented a pivotal aspect of the local political economy, which hints to the presence of a surplus-oriented centralized agriculture. The evidence of large-scale storage from Kınık Höyük is discussed in relation to the regional and supraregional political and economic history. In Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, I present and discuss the results of the archaeobotanical study conducted on samples from Kınık Höyük, respectively on wood charcoal (Chapter 5) and seed/fruit remains (Chapter 6). The evidence collected indicates a progressive expansion of the cultivation of water-demanding crops throughout the 1st millennium BCE, peaking in the Achaemenid and Hellenistic period. Viticulture and arboriculture appear, in particular, to have represented a cultural and economic hallmark of this thriving agricultural landscape.

Part III, *Agriculture in Pre-Roman Central Anatolia: from the Emergence of Complex Societies to the Beginning of Roman Rule*. In the final part of the volume, I provide a diachronic reconstruction of Anatolian agricultural systems, which is based on the published and original evidence outlined in the previous chapters. In this multidisciplinary narrative, the regional agricultural history is discussed in connection to the local environmental setting, paleoclimate, and socio-cultural and political history. The picture that emerges is characterized by a high degree of local complexity and specialization in agropastoral economies. In this part of the dissertation, among several other topics, I discuss the role played by agriculture in the formative processes of the Hittite polity, the degree of continuity and discontinuity in agricultural systems across the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age transition, and the flourishing of viticulture and arboriculture during the 1st millennium BCE.

The dissertation aims to provide a reference work on the history of agriculture in Asia Minor, targeting a multidisciplinary readership. The Anatolian trajectory is discussed in a supraregional framework, engaging with central debates in Eastern Mediterranean and Western Asia history and archaeology.