

# TWO LANGUAGES ON ONE "KOUPA": Discourses on Anaiia Byzantine Glazed Ceramics

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Late Byzantine ceramics, unearthed during more than two decades of archaeological excavations at ANAIA, a medieval seaside settlement on the southern coast of Kuşadası in Turkey, are indicative of a versatile pottery production inspired by overseas trade in the 13th and 14th centuries. The blend of forms and patterns extending from the Islamic lands of the Eastern Mediterranean to Western Mediterranean Italy via the Crusader ports was reinterpreted in the hands of the Byzantine potter from Anaiia. Of course, they were not imitations of famous brands like today, but especially the vessel forms and some decorations were taken of much admired and luxurious ones of the East, were produced in different ways.

A blend of forms decorations extending from the Islamic lands of the eastern Mediterranean, via the ports of the Crusader, to western Mediterranean Italy, had been reinterpreted in the hands of the Byzantine potters of Anaiia. Of course, they were not like the imitations of today's famous brands, especially the vessel forms and some decorations taken from the most admired and luxurious wares of the East were reproduced in a remarkable style. While Syrian lustres were interpreted with yellow paint and cream glaze, the Syrian-influenced forms of San Simeon and Proto-Maialica ware were repeated by potters of ANAIA as similar type of forms and patterns evocative to Islamic samples. However, everything produced was much more than these and was original.



### TALKING EARTHEN VESSELS IN ANAIA

A small bowl unearthed during the Kadikalesi/Anaiia excavations presents us with a mystery both with its inscriptions and visuals (Fig. 1). Rising on a low foot, the bowl with a hemispherical body and a large rim projecting outward is a red-paste, yellow-glazed or egg yolk glazed cup. It was found in pieces and unfortunately some pieces are missing, especially around the rim. For this reason, it leaves a partially readable inscription on both the rim and the inner body. What is noteworthy is that the inscription on the rim is written in Latin letters and partly in Greek, while the inscription on the inner body is written in Greek. Additionally, a design (a graphical representation of the penis and vulva) is placed immediately following the Greek inscription.

This rather interesting piece of pottery deserves a detailed discussion based on the deconstructionist approach. This would require a discreet approach to the visual elements that this piece offers us, namely the inscriptions on the rim and on the inner surface. There will be another level graphical representation. Its relationship with the inscriptions and finally the form and function of the vessel.

#### The Inscriptions on the Rim

The inscription continues along the rim of which only 2/3 survived. The Greek inscription starts with diamond shaped a capital O, followed by the word beginning with a capital A. It is possible to complete this as follows:  
The visible letters:  
O A...Ω COY ...AKO... (Fig. 1/A)

And the completed words:  
O A(ΔΕΛΦ)Ω COY (I)AKΩ(BOC)  
That is "Your brother Jacob"

The word O AΔελφω being a singular masculine noun in dative inclination, followed by a possessive pronoun "ου" and a name "Iακωβω(i)" again in singular masculine dative form leads us to think that this cup was a present (i) presented to somebody called Iακωβω.

The inscription with Latin letters continues as follows:  
...thoine/...t home sire ser iorgi drapier ge...ami jaq (Fig. 1/Ba).

As far as we understand from the inscription there are two personalities involved: Iorgi and Jacques. We can find the occupation of Iorgi as cloth merchant while we find Jacques or may be Jacobos in Greek as his friend. We can assume the first title as "Gent home" meaning "gentilehomme" which is followed by two other titles as "sire" and "ser" (Fig. 1/Ba and Bb).

The inscription mentions a certain man whose name is "Iorgi" whose occupation is "drapier", cloth merchant. We also encounter another name "Jacques" which reads as "jaquem". Although we have read this word as "drapier", the first three letters seem quite interesting resembling Greek letters "δ", "ε" and "θ" seen in some manuscripts in Greek.

#### Analyzing the Inscriptions



#### The Inscriptions on the Inner body of the Bowl

Perhaps it is a feature of the Medieval Greek script, some of the words can be read from the inscription on inner of the bowl. Perhaps a feature of medieval Greek script, we have only been able to decipher a few words from the inscription on the inside of the bowl.

Αυυός (ο) (σωληνας)  
αινακ(γ?)ιον or αινακγιων  
and  
θυαλακος  
means amulet/protection

Although it is not a translation of the entire inscription, we think that the text accompanying the design here looks like a talisman, based on its readable words. It was probably presented from one man to another, from Iorgi to Jacobos (Jaques) or vice versa, perhaps with a slightly suggestive expression of good wishes (?). Iorgi that is Georgios, whose name is mentioned in Latin letters, must be a local Greek; while Jacobos (Jacque), whose name is written with an addressing as my friend in Greek, an Italian. We do not know this for sure, but it is known that magic amulets existed in daily life in the Middle Ages, whether they had a religious basis or not. And the history of such habits, especially malicious ones, goes back a long way. In his "Republic" Plato describes traveling experts knocking on the doors of wealthy citizens and promising their clients to use "αυυαυι και καράθειου", "spells to destroy and bind the dead", to harm anyone they chose for a small fee.

Fig. 1

### THE OTHER INSCRIBED CERAMICS OF THE KADIKALESI/ANAIA EXCAVATION

Among the early years found Byzantine ceramics in Kadikalesi/Anaiia excavation were also monogrammed Zeuxippus ceramic tondos. Only three of them could be read, with the letter gamma (Γ), rho (Ρ) and eta (Η) deciphered as Gregorius.

However, the plate with the inscription, tree-of-life and the leopards design from Kadikalesi/Anaiia is a unique medieval masterpiece with its design and iconography (Fig. 2). The large plate with cut narrow edge rim and a ring foot, found in many broken pieces, has red paste and yellow glaze. On sgraffito decoration covering the entire interior of the plate, the Anatolian leopards placed on either side of the palm-like tree in the middle. Some parts of animals and most of the inscription beginning with a cross at the bottom of the plate are missing. Shards of this vessel, found in a pile of rubble in front of the walls in the southwest of the castle, made us think that it was a waste with its scribbled design parts.

Unfortunately, the inscription on it could not be understood because of the missing letters and the monograms could not be deciphered. The knot motif in the middle of the tree of life and the knot seen in the middle of the tail of the leopard on the left - which should have been on the right one too - indicate that this plate also has a meaning like a kind talisman. Because we know that the knot motif, a tradition from ancient times in Byzantine art, is a protective talisman against evil. In the Middle Ages, protective talismans were widely used on eating and drinking vessels due to the belief that evil entered through the mouth to human body. Among these, the Knot of David, examples of which we found among the Kadikalesi excavation ceramics, was the most common. Indeed, there are various examples of the knot motif, from the stone works such as the knotted columns in church temples to the minor objects of metal and ceramics during Byzantine time. Beside this meaningful and nice plate, the uncovering of three more sherds of another plate with the same details inside the castle in the following years showed that a similar one to this one was also produced (Fig. 2/B). These, as the previous plate, showed the privilege of many Anaiia-made ceramics, with their high-quality glazes, fine graffities, well-baked ceramic pastes and thin bodies.

In fact, there are not many inscribed Byzantine ceramic finds in the Kadikalesi excavations. Among a few monogrammed examples that three of them contain the name of Gregorius, and some meaningless inscriptions, only one sherd stands out for its quality of its script (Fig. 3). This is a red-paste, thin-

bodied, olive green/khaki glazed plate fragment, on which there is a well-engraved and small part of an inscription in capitals: the remaining letters of a word, sigma (C), eta (H), and sigma (α), are followed by a monogram or ligatures delta (Δ), pi (Π), and eta (Η). But unfortunately, no meaning was found in either the preserved letters on the monogram. On the other hand, if there had been a mu (Μ) instead of pi (Π) here, we could decipher the monogram as Demetrios.

Another masterpiece from the inscribed ceramics of the Anaiia excavation is a "chalice" which has low-footed, cylindrical-bodied, used in one of the altars in the site (Fig. 4). The ceramic goblet shaped vessel, found in 5 broken pieces, has red paste and egg yolk glaze and has incised patterns on it. There are some missing parts of the body and on some sherds have worn. Despite the missing parts, there seems engraved the crosses with double horizontal arms repeated on four faces on the goblet, appear to be separated from each other by two vertical rows of abstract diagonal scrapings as if palm leaves. Each cross has the monograms IC and XC on each side of the upper arm and the abbreviations of the name of Jesus Christ I(KT)O(C)X(PI)Σ(T)O(C) in Greek. It is interesting that here sigma (C) is attached to the upper right corner of chi (Χ). Due to large broken parts of the body of goblet, we cannot see whether the crosses were depicted in the same style four times. This is an unusual feature of depiction. Actually, the use of crosses with the monograms of Jesus on liturgical objects is naturally very common. Likewise, crosses with together the monogram of NIKE, meaning victory or Σ(Ω)ΤΗΡΑΣ savior in Greek, has been widely used since the Early Christian period. Thus, here too, this abbreviation appears on both sides of the lower arms of the cross: On both sides of the lower arm of the cross are the letters NI to the left and K to the right. However, here eta (Η) is not seen right next to kappa (Κ), that letter is engraved at a distance from kappa which is not a known depiction. This is too the originality of Anaiia Chalise and it could not find the paralleled one, yet. Unfortunately, because of the missing sherds, this cannot see clearly; also, so what the straight lines at the bottom of the crosses with the partially curved lines on the sides are? Who knows? Nevertheless, this goblet used in the ceremonies of the Anaiia church fulfilled a ritual function but it was different from with a long inscription or the stereotypical monogrammed cross-depicted goblets. For this reason, we can say that the "Anaiia Chalise" an original and rare work of Byzantine art.

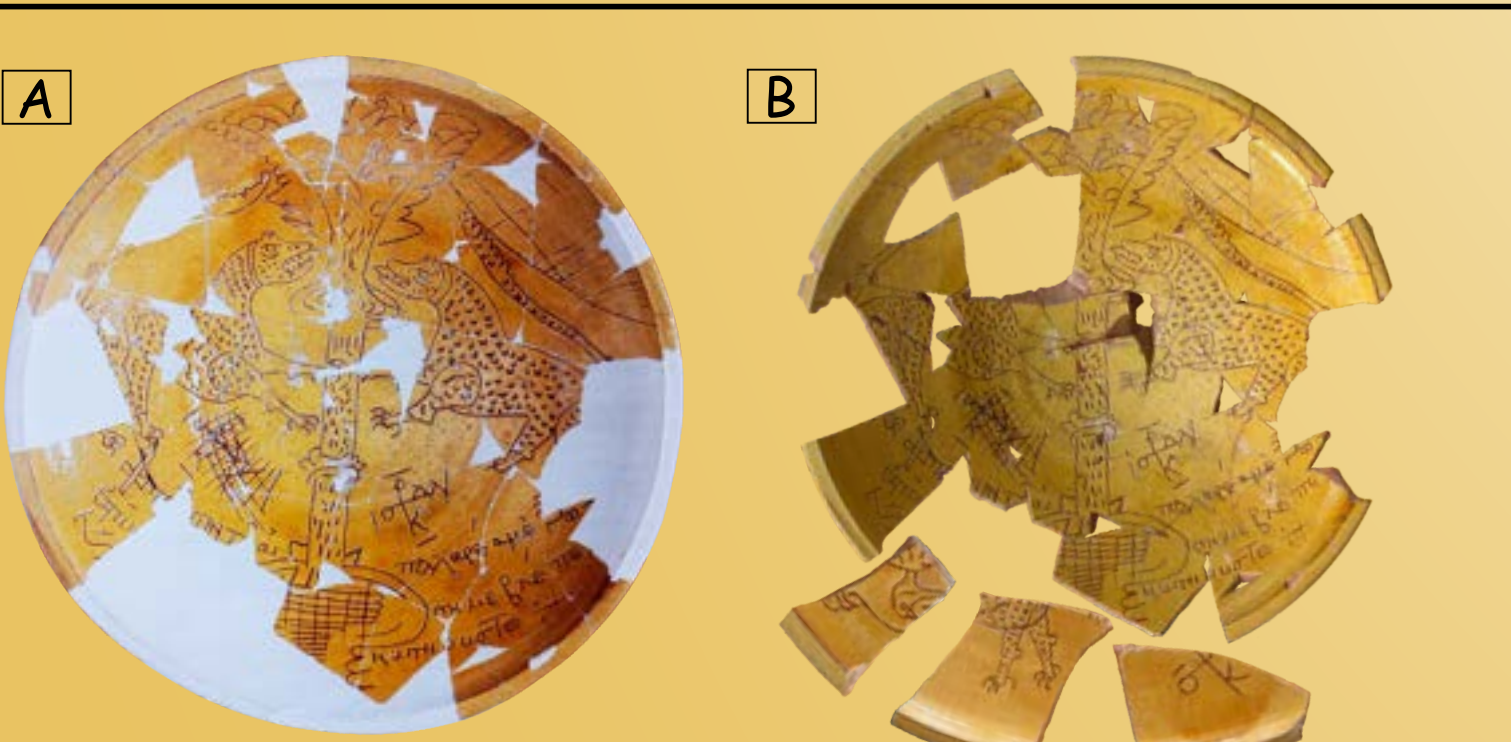


Fig. 2 A. Large Plate With Tree Of Life, Leopard And Inscription (H. 8, rim diam. 30, foot diam. 10.5 cm), B. Three Sherds from a Second Similar Plate



Fig. 3



Fig. 4 H. 8.9, rim diam. 10, foot diam. 5.6 cm (chalice)

### OVERSEAS INSPIRATIONS IN SOME BOWL FORMS IN ANAIA

A vessel form seen mostly in a group of luster vessels in the Islamic lands, especially in Syria, in the Middle Ages, became very popular in its contemporary and later period, starting from the immediate surroundings. These are plate and bowl types with a hemispherical body, a large rim projecting outward and low base (Fig. 5/A). Ceramics from some excavations from Southern and Southeastern Anatolia, where centers such as Korykos, Mopsoustia (now Misis), Al Mina (now Samandğ but more commonly known as the Crusader port St. Simeon) stand out, reveal the effects of this form in the immediate surroundings. It seems that there was at least one, perhaps more than one, center in this region that made production according to its customers. As a matter of fact, cross-legged male and female figures, similar to the human figured patterns of Seljuk ceramics, suggest that some of the buyer of this production was from the Islamic world. There seems to be at least one, perhaps more than one, center in this region that produces according to its customers. That's why from the excavation at such an Islamic settlement like Harran, Hasankeyf etc., there are traces of this vessel form on the finds. In Byzantine ceramic literature, Crusader or Port St. These vessels, referred to as Simeon ceramics, are undoubtedly commercial production of the region under Crusader rule. The main striking features of these are their multi-colored, shiny glazed ceramics. Particularly in these vessels, which have hemispherical bodies, wide flaring mouths and low bases, the ends of the rims are sometimes serrated, a feature that comes from Islamic metal art. Two pieces of such a vessel were also found in the Kadikalesi excavations (Fig. 5/B). These pieces among the Late Byzantine ceramic context of the excavation, belong to an import large plate. One of the production centers of these vessels was unearthed during an excavation in Misis recently. This excavation works is about to be published on the kilns from the 13th-14th century, and one of the ceramics found there was very similar to the Kadikalesi imported one (Fig. 5/C). So, it showed that the ones at Anaiia had been produced at Misis. In other words, these ceramics produced in Misis (Mopsuestia) were produced. They were transported to the Mediterranean world via the Port of Simeon and thus became the vessels bearing his name. As a matter of fact, the context of the Kadikalesi excavation where these pieces were found showed that Italian patrons were engaged in overseas trade of goods produced by local Greek masters in the same period.

Here these forms, which originate from Islamic ceramics and were also preferred in Misis and Al Mina vessels, became the model for a group of bowls produced by Anaiia potters. A small bowl imported from Lycia (?) may have inspired the production of these vessels as beverage cups (Fig. 5/D). Inside the small bowl, which differs from similar ones in Kadikalesi by the color of the paste, this dark green bowl, a large decorative cross was engraved and some crosses were scratched on the edge. Among the excavation finds, a small group of proto-maialica ceramic sherds are distinguished by their orange, blue and pink painted patterns, and belong to hemispherical bodies and low-foot plates and bowls (Fig. 5/E). Traces of all these foreign elements show themselves in new interpretations on some vessels of Zeuxippus ceramics produced by Anaiia (Fig. 5/F). Sometimes the large projecting outward rims are shaped to slope inwards and are decorated with incised wavy lines.

Compared to the abundance of ceramic finds in Kadikalesi, the number of bowls with hemispherical bodies, a large rim projecting outward and low foot does not exceed ten. The bowl with the double-tongued inscription, which has the largest rim diameter among them, is also the largest in height. Others appear to have been produced more as beverage cups, with their smaller diameters and heights (Fig. 6, 7).

Bright green (Fig. 6/A), egg yolk (Fig. 6/B, C) and creamy yellow (Fig. 6/D, E, F) bowls, as well as two smaller bowls, are notable for their brown/manganese splash painting (Fig. 7). While only the inscribed bowl probably has an intensive decoration design (Fig. 6/C), one of the bowls has a incised concentric circles on its tondo and rim (Fig. 6/E). The unique aspect of these bowls is that Anaiia Zeuxippus ceramics have thin walls, bright colors and a glass-shimmering appearance. The monogrammed bowl (Fig. 6/F) with the name Gabriel, a combination of the Greek letters gamma (Γ), alpha (Α) and lambda (Λ), suggests that it may have been made to order for a Christian believer or a monastery in the region; another one with a coat of arms (Fig. 6/D), points to an Italian customer. In other words, these two small bowls speak for themselves with both their shapes and the simple patterns they contain.

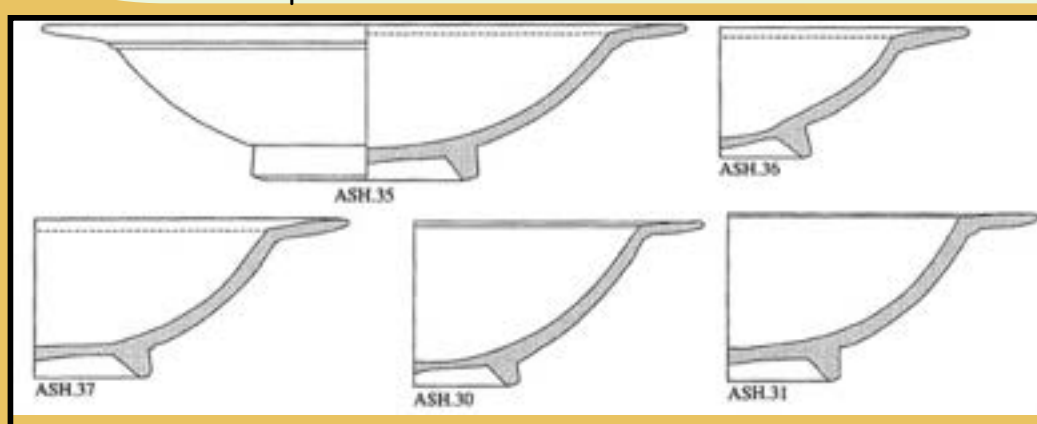


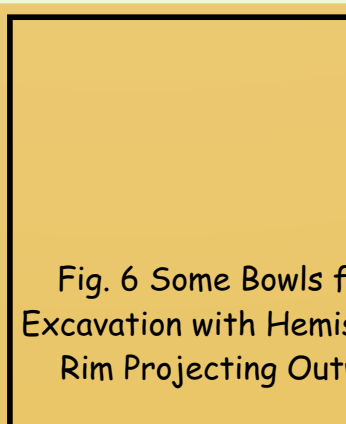
Fig. 6 A. Mason's A Group of Syrian Luster Vessels



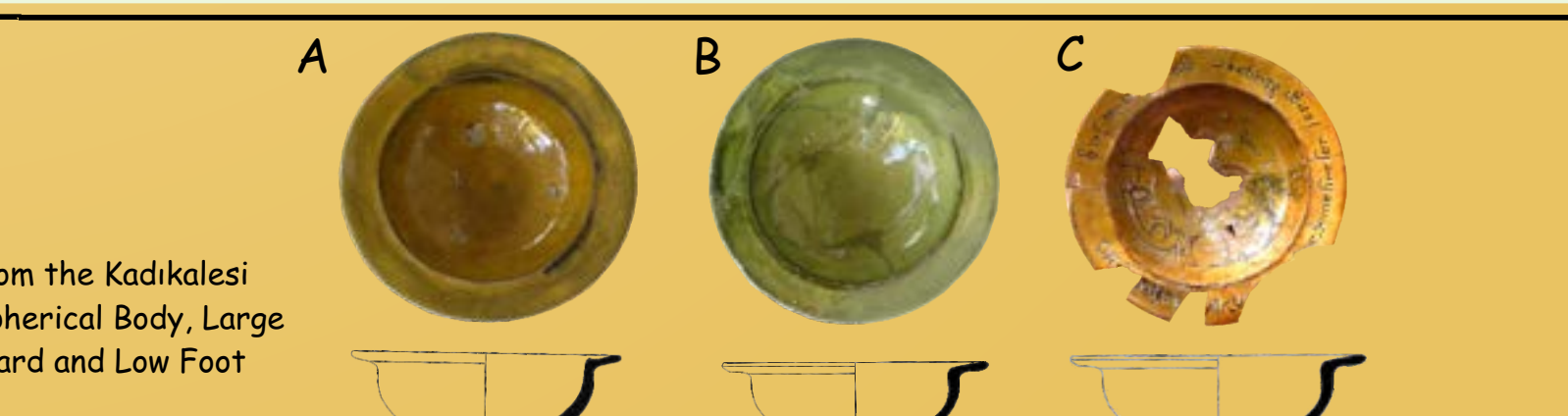
B. Sherds of an Imported St. Simeon Ware (Circa rim diam. 32)



C. Sherd from the Kiln of Misis



D. Imported Cup from Lycia (?) of the Kadikalesi Excavation Find (H. 3.7, rim diam. 10.8, foot diam. 4.2 cm)



E. Proto-Maialica Sherds from Kadikalesi Excavation



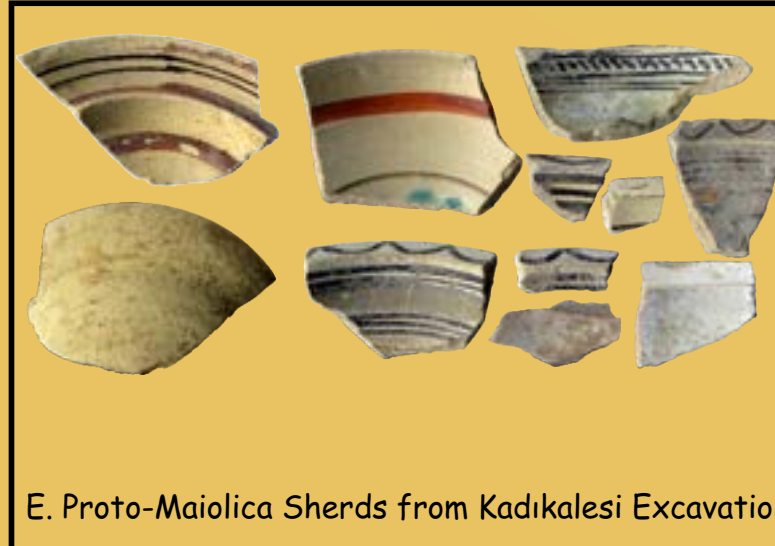
F. Some Ceramics of hemispherical body from the Anaiia Production Vessels



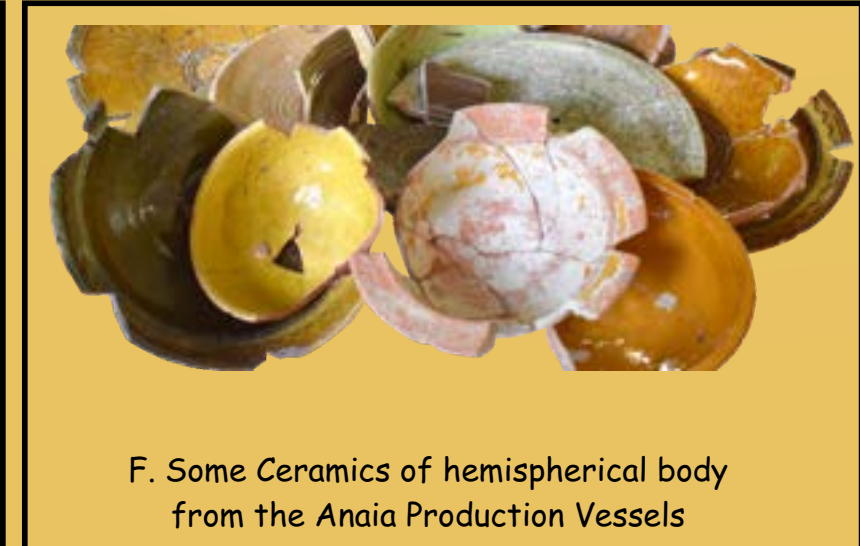
Fig. 7 Splash Brown Paint Bowl (H. 4.3, rim diam. 12, foot diam. 5 cm)



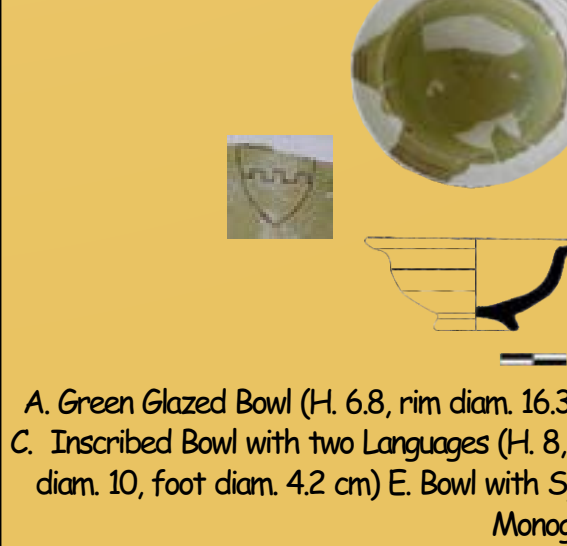
A. Green Glazed Bowl (H. 6.8, rim diam. 16.3, foot diam. 6.8 cm)



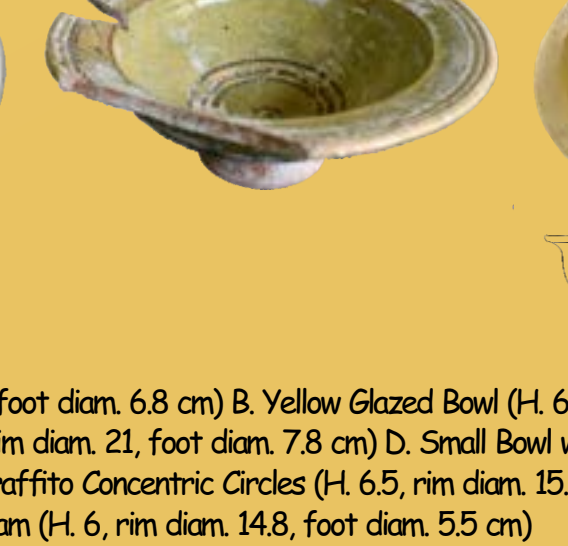
B. Yellow Glazed Bowl (H. 6, rim diam. 14.8, foot diam. 5.5 cm)



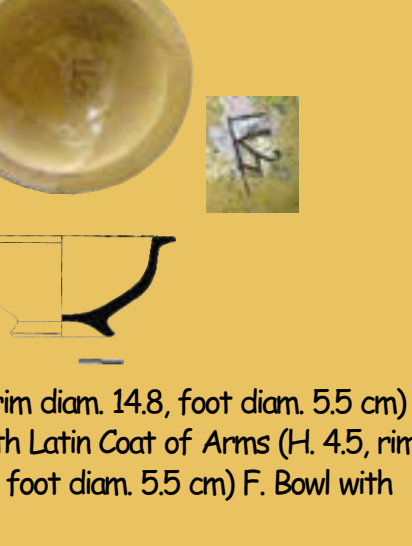
C. Inscribed Bowl with two Languages (H. 8, rim diam. 21, foot diam. 7.8 cm)



D. Small Bowl with Latin Coat of Arms (H. 4.5, rim diam. 10, foot diam. 4.2 cm)



E. Bowl with Sgraffito Concentric Circles (H. 6.5, rim diam. 15.8, foot diam. 5.5 cm)



F. Bowl with Monogram (H. 6, rim diam. 14.8, foot diam. 5.5 cm)



### ANAIA AS A MULTICULTURAL COASTAL TOWN

Anaiia, a Byzantine settlement attention from the beginning of Early Christian period, was one of the most popular religious episcopal centers of the Laskaris. At that time firstly, Theodoros Laskaris I (1204-1222) and secondly, Ioannes Doukas Vatatzes (1222-1254) reconstructed and decorated the previous monumental church as the cathedral of Anaiia. They also built a customs castle overlooking the sea for the entrances of the port in the same place. This place turned into a port fortress, fortified with thick walls that included the church complex and customs building by time. This was the Middle Byzantine Period of the site, when prehistory, ancient Greece, Rome and even Christianity existed on top of each other.

And then, with the privileges provided by the Treaty of Nymphaion, the Genoese, together with the local Greeks/Byzantines and other Italian elements, established a neighborhood on the Laskaris archaeological ruins destroyed in the earthquake. By the end of the 13th century, Byzantine masters who were producing pottery and glass for overseas trade in the naves of the church and the entire castle were producing for Latin patrons. This was the Late Byzantine Period here.

Excavation data indicate that the merchants were people with multiple identities, roaming freely in the Mediterranean under Latin protection, bringing goods from the East to the West. Among the findings, there are pieces belonging to Crusader ceramics, some of which appear to have come from the Eastern Mediterranean ports under Crusader rule, as well as ceramics imported from Islamic lands and Italy. In addition, it is possible to include, which are known from documents and are archaeological evidence of the wine trade carried on by the Latins, in the commercial circulation of Zeuxippus type glazed ceramics produced in Anaiia in the Mediterranean, confirmed by archaeometry. Among these jugs, which constitute eighty percent of the unglazed ceramic finds in Kadikalesi, very few finds were taken to Anaiia and they are witnesses of mutual trade. But the most important thing is the excavation findings that indicate that Kadikalesi hosts an important center of production of Aegean type vessels, which are scattered from shipwrecks to museums in Turkey and the world. Following the ongoing archaeometric studies on this subject, it can even be said that Anaiia goods were carried in some of the shipwrecks.

Today, the work called the Kadikalesi/Anaiia excavation in this archaeological area has been continuing since 2001. The vessels that are the subject of the poster are just a group of finds from this productive excavation.



Reference for the two main publications on Kuşadası Ceramics, Kadikalesi/Anaiia Excavation:

Z. Mercangöz (ed.), Byzantine craftsmen - Latin patrons: Reflections from the Anaiia commercial production in the light of the excavations at Kadikalesi nearby Kuşadası, İstanbul, 2013.

Z. Mercangöz, A pottery production for whom and for what target? Thoughts on pottery finds from Kadikalesi (Kuşadası) excavation, Multidisciplinary approaches to food and foodways in the medieval Eastern Mediterranean Archéologie(s) 4, MOM Éditions, Lyon, 2020, 307-321.