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**An Overview of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium BC and Iron Age Cultures of Sinop Province in  
Light of New Research**

Archaeological research conducted to date has shown that the earliest settlement in Sinop province goes back to the Late Chalcolithic period. In spite of this dating, cultural strata identified at Kocagöz Höyük and Boyabat-Kovuklukaya excavations, stone bracelet fragments from Maltepe Höyüğü and potsherds thought to have come from Kıran Höyük and Kabalı Höyük (but hitherto unpublished), indicate that the settlement process of the region may have started in the Early Chalcolithic or even Late Neolithic period.

In the Early Bronze Age that followed the Late Chalcolithic period, the number of settlements increased as the population grew. Numerous settlements identified in the excavations at Kocagöz Höyük and Kovuklukaya as well as during surveys indicate that the Early Bronze Age was a very vivid period in Sinop province. In the ensuing Middle Bronze Age, finds pointing to the fact that Sinop province was one of the northern extremities of the commercial network of the Assyrian Trade Colonies period centered at Kültepe/*Kaneş*, came from Gerze-Hıdırlı Cemetery and its settlement at Keçi Türbesi Höyüğü. As is the case with the neighboring province of Samsun, it is understood that Sinop province probably did not host any settlements in the late phases of the Middle Bronze Age. Along the Black Sea coasts of Anatolia, and thus in Sinop no centre or find dating to the Early Iron Age period (1190-900 BC) has been identified to date. The settlements become more frequent in the inland part of the Central Black Sea region during the Middle Iron Age (900-650/600 BC), and by the Late Iron Age (650/600-330 BC) they are seen both inland and along the coastline. Examples of this have been obtained from the city centre of Sinop and from Kovuklukaya.