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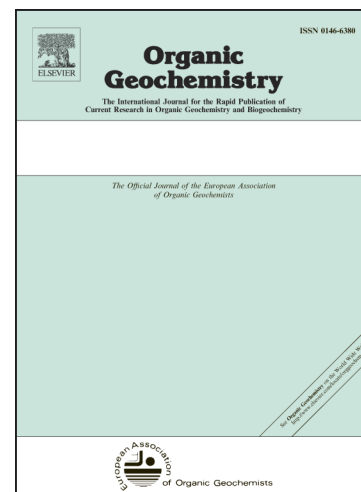
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A geochemical study of bitumen residues on ceramics excavated from Early Bronze age graves (3000–2900 BCE) at Başur Höyük in SE Turkey

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Abstract

Eight black residues, scraped from outer surfaces of painted ceramics, unearthed from graves 1 to 3 at Başur Höyük (SE Turkey), were analysed by geochemical techniques in order to characterize bitumens and to try to identify their source. Ceramics are dated from the Early Bronze period (3100–2900 BCE). The black organic matter was indeed identified as bitumen, but its source has not been discovered despite its comparison with several oil seeps from the area. The bitumen at Başur Höyük does not match the bitumens analyzed at Kavuşan Höyük, Salat Höyük, Hakemi Use and Kuriki Höyük which are Cretaceous in origin and likely imported from the Eruh tars deposit. The stable carbon isotope values of their asphaltene

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