

arch 1600. archaeologies of the near east  
joukowski institute for archaeology and the ancient world  
spring 2008



Prehistory: the Neolithic in the Near East  
February 11, 2008





200 mm annual rainfall line and the distribution of barley and wheat in the Near East, with some Epipalaeolithic and Proto-Neolithic settlements.



## The Neolithic: transformations of prehistoric societies

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- New social relations in the context of the settled life: political contestation, family rivalry etc. Neolithization as socialization
- New conceptions of the landscape: now partially cultivated, not entirely hostile environment
- Beyond the hunt: Changing relationships between animals and humans. Domestication of sheep and goat, cattle...
- Agricultural technologies: domestication of wheat and barley, legumes, sheep and goat. Cattle comes a bit later.
- Pottery technologies: discovery of possibilities of clay, with the rising need of long term storage of footstuffs.
- Architectural technologies: mudbrick building with extensive use of wood. Mud, mudbrick, pise. Cladding techniques such as plastering, white-washing, wall paintings. Three-dimensional cult imagery incorporated into the architectonics of the house. Neolithic house as a space where most daily practices concentrate.
- Textile production.
- Figurines: stone, bone, clay.
- Emergence of representationality through multiple media: textile patterns, pottery decoration, figurines, architectural sculpture, wall paintings...
- New burial practices: intramural or in cemeteries. Deposition of grave goods. Differentiation of burials according to social status, age, gender, etc.



**Obsidian** a volcanic glass, mined and exchanged heavily across regions in the Neolithic period, adaptable to multiple uses, from acting as mirrors, projectile points, swords, ornaments, knives.



Neolithic in the Near East: early sites of socialization

“neolithic revolution”: domestication of wheat, barley, sheep, goat:  
early settled communities (ca 10,000 to 6000 BC)







[gobekli tepe](#) site before archaeology



**gobekli**tepe landscape





"starting as a sacred spot..."



**gobekli tepe** pre-agricultural social interaction and cult practice, feasting, visual/architectural culture



[gobekli tepe](#) archaeology of a ritual place



[gobeklitepe](#) archaeology of a ritual place



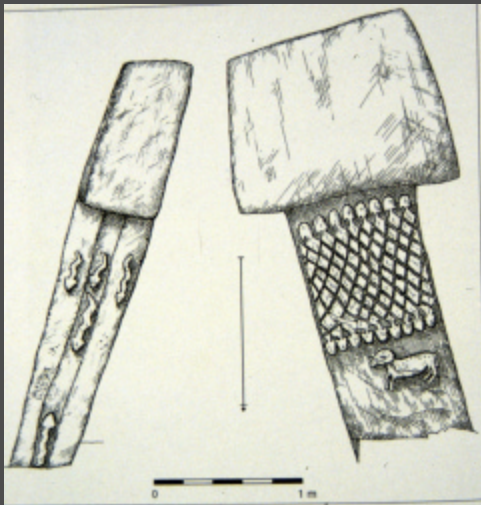


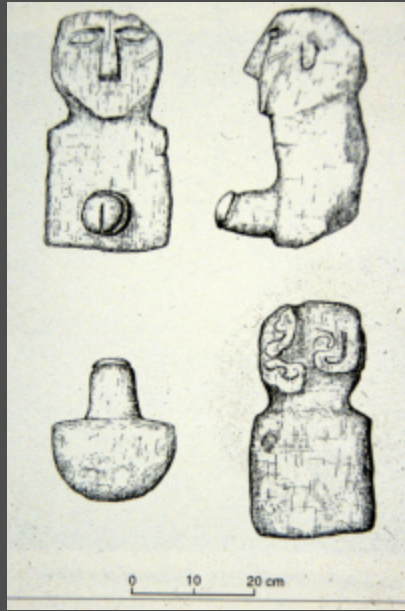


[gobeklipe](#) pillars and animal iconography



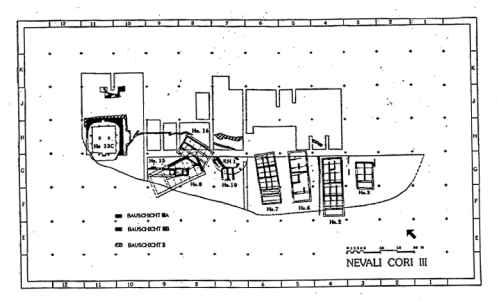
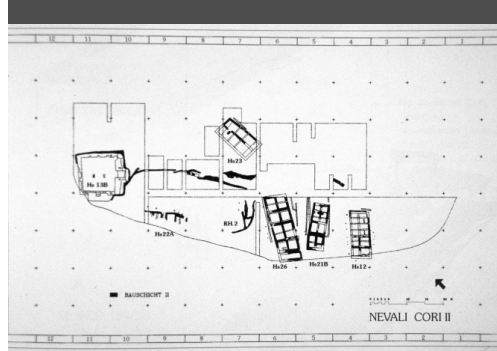




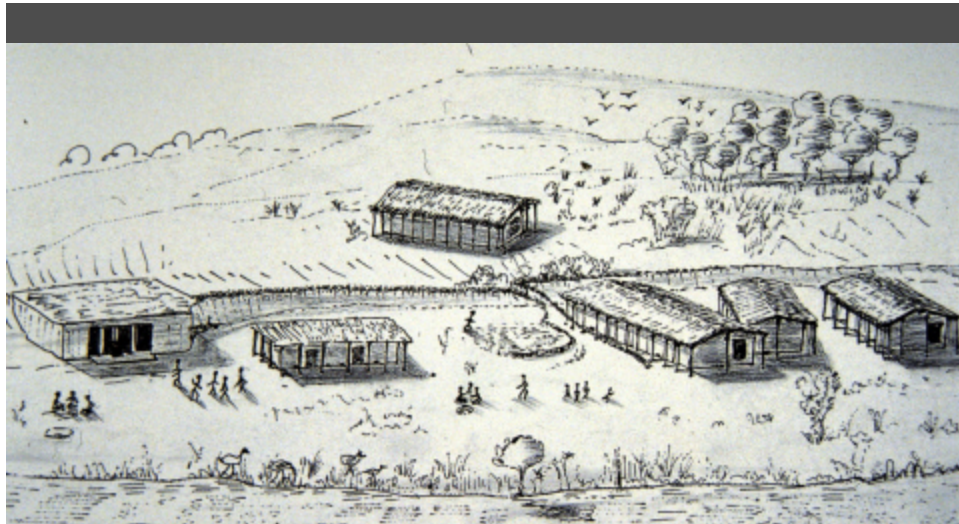




Neolithic in the Near East: early sites of socialization

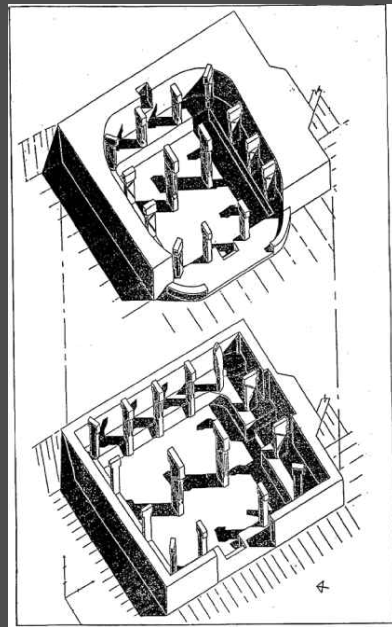


nevali cori settlement and architecture



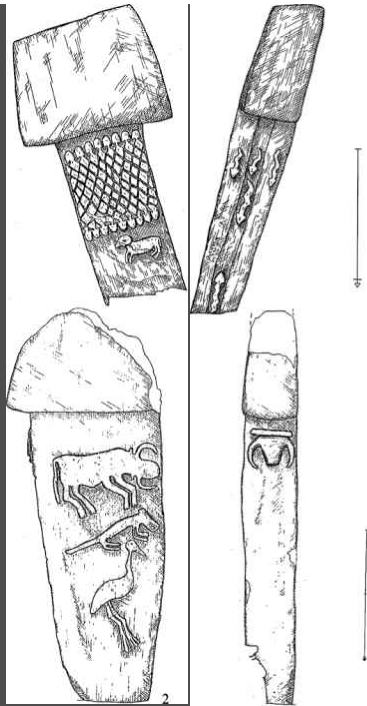
nevali cori reconstruction of settlement  
with houses and cult building

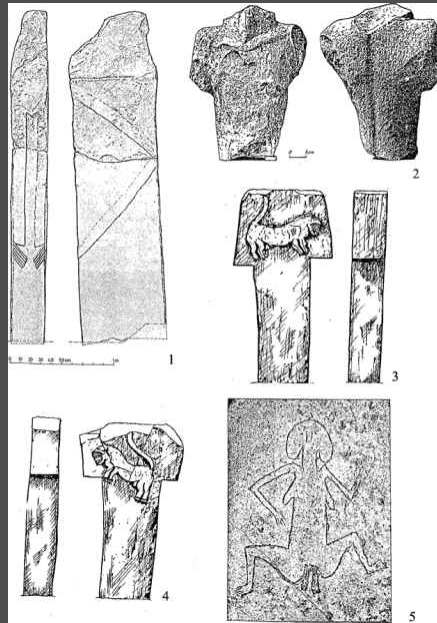




nevali cori cult buildings

nevali cori  
megallithic columns



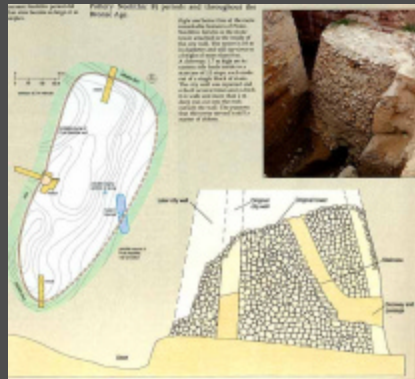


nevalı cori Material and visual culture





nevali cori oddities



jericho fortifications



Khrokitea, Cyprus bee-hive houses of the Neolithic



Neolithic in the Near East: early sites of socialization





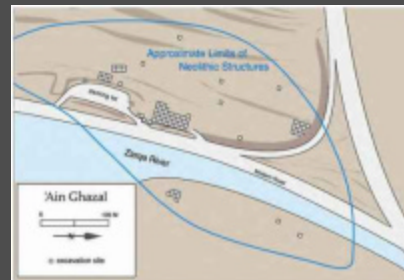
### Ain Ghazal, Jordan Ca 7300-6500 BC

Middle Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (MPPNB) 7,250 - 6,500 bc•

Late Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (LPPNB) 6,500 - 6,000 bc•

Pre-Pottery Neolithic C (PPNC) 6,000 - 5,500 bc•

Yarmoukian Pottery Neolithic 5,500 - ? 5,000 bc





Ain Ghazal, Jordan  
Ca 7300-6500 BC

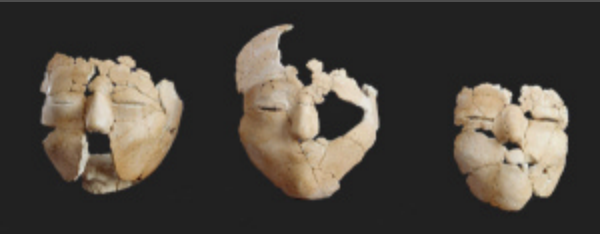
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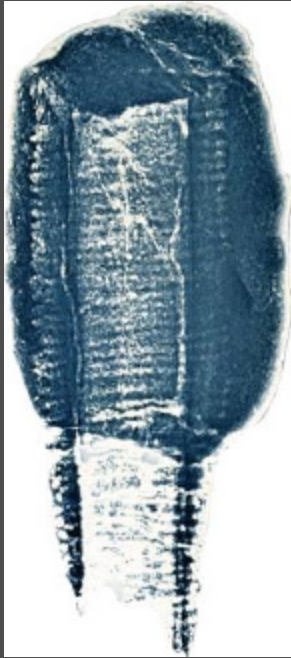
Yarmoukian Pottery Neolithic  
5,500 - ? 5,000 bc











QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.





**Preserving ancient statues from Jordan**

**Preserving Ancient Statues From Jordan**  
an exhibition at the  
**Arthur M. Sackler Gallery**  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, D.C.  
28 July 1996 -- 6 April 1997

Eight examples of the oldest human-form statues ever found in the Near East were on display from 28 July to 6 April 1997 in *Preserving Ancient Statues from Jordan*.

This Website provides information about the discovery, construction, conservation, and display of the statues and explores them as works of art and cultic objects.

Artifaction of the Artifact, Episode 2:  
The (new) life and times of Aln Ghazal "statues"  
(middle to late pre-pottery Neolithic plaster human-shaped figures, 7250-6000 BC)





The new life and times of Ain Ghazal "statues": from retrieval to exhibition: *reverting rituals of destruction and ancestor cult*

