

arch 1600. archaeologies of the near east  
joukowski institute for archaeology and the ancient world  
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Prehistory: the Neolithic in the Near East II: Catalhoyuk  
February 15, 2008



## 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.



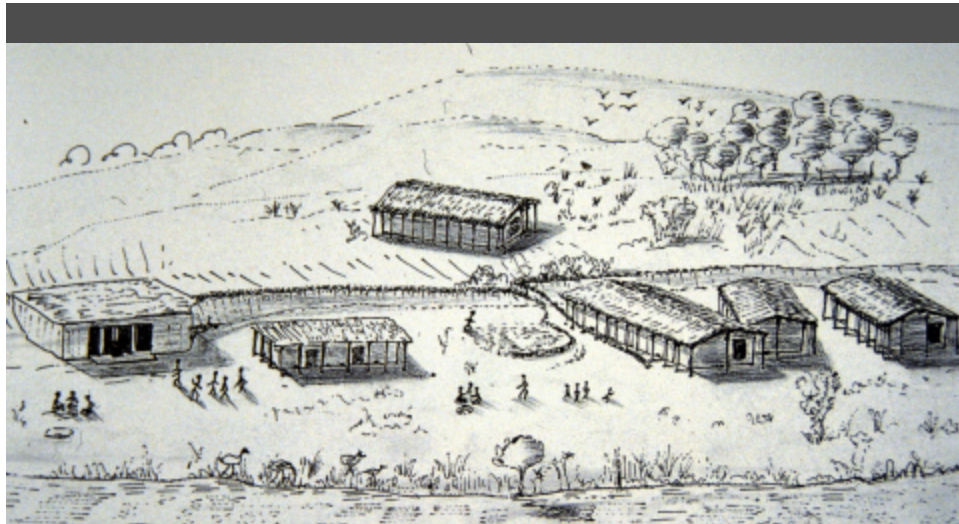
Neolithic in the Near East: early sites of socialization  
 "neolithic revolution": domestication of wheat, barley, sheep, goat:  
 early settled communities (ca 10,000 to 6000 BC)



"starting as a sacred spot..."



[gobekli tepe](#) pre-agricultural social interaction and cult practice, feasting, visual/architectural culture



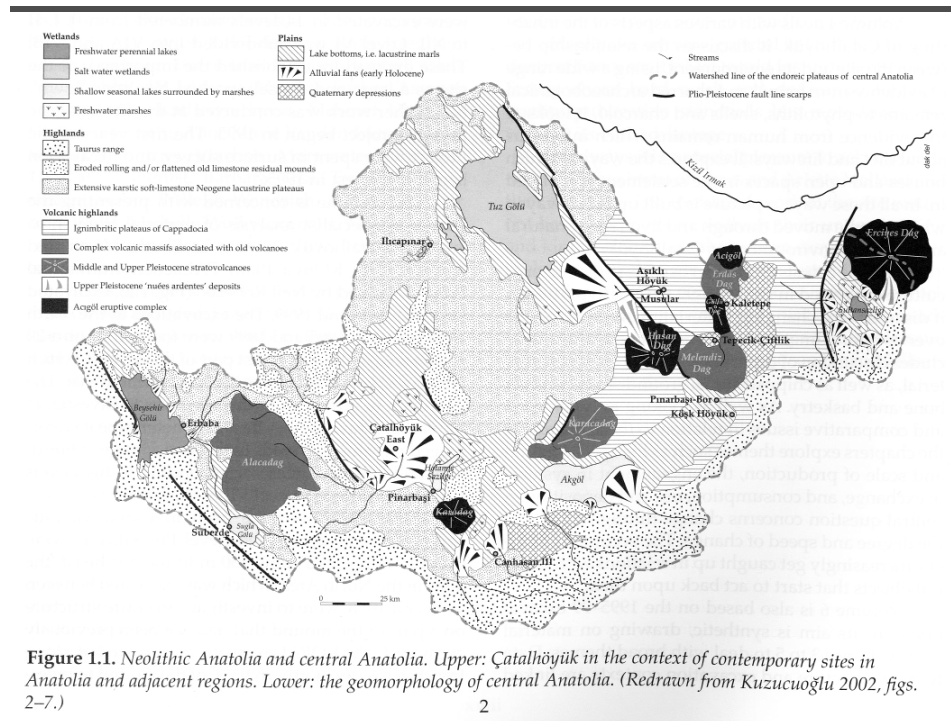
nevali cori reconstruction of settlement  
with houses and cult building







Neolithic in the Near East: early sites of socialization  
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**Figure 1.1.** Neolithic Anatolia and central Anatolia. Upper: Çatalhöyük in the context of contemporary sites in Anatolia and adjacent regions. Lower: the geomorphology of central Anatolia. (Redrawn from Kuzucuoğlu 2002, figs. 2–7.)

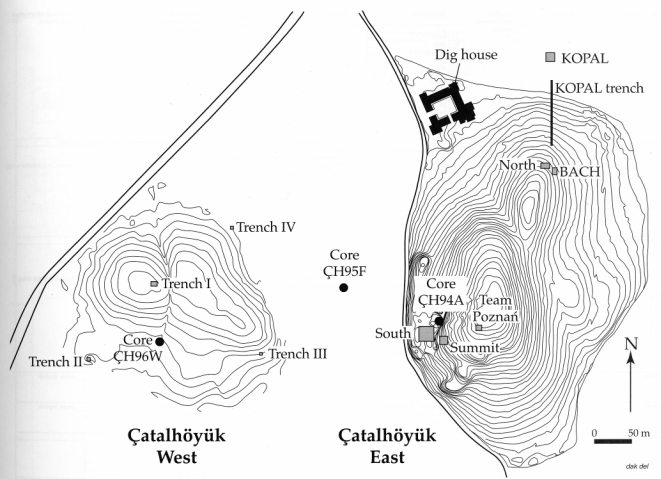


Figure 1.2. Plan of Çatalhöyük East and West.

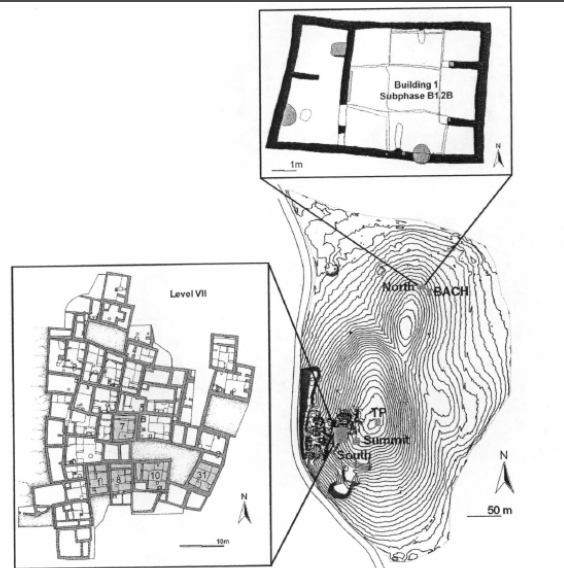
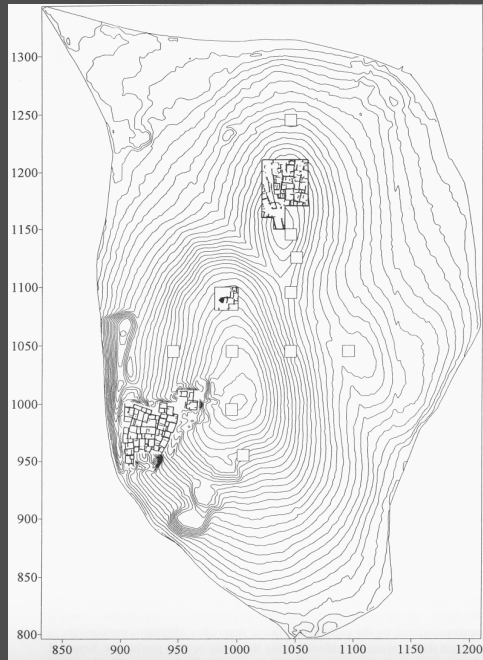
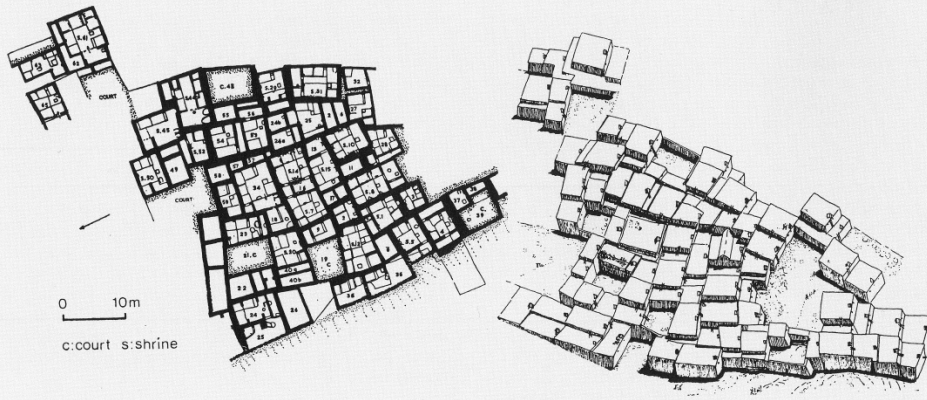


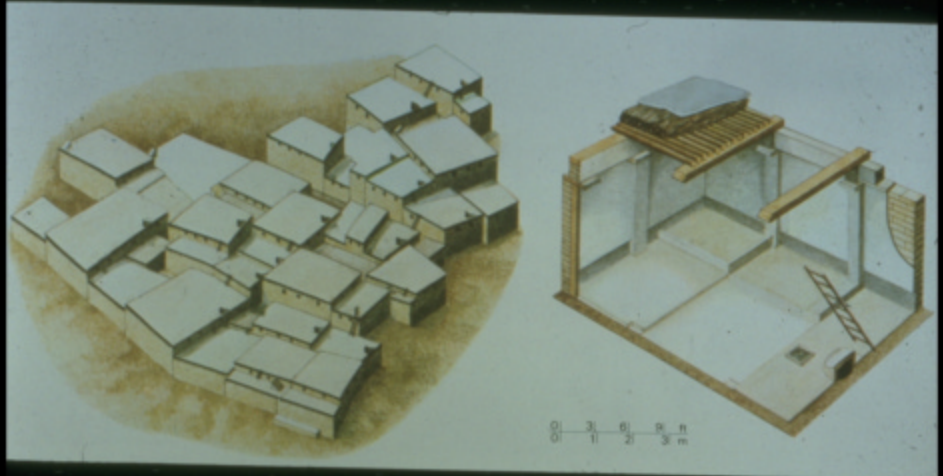
Figure 2. Excavated areas at Catalhöyük and the locations of the buildings most referred to in the text. The building identified as “shrines” 1, 7, 8, 10, and 31 in Level VII are indicated. Buildings 6 and 17 occur in Levels VIII and IX respectively beneath “shrine” 10. Buildings 18 and 23 occur in Level X below “shrines” 8 and 1 respectively. Building 5 lies directly below Building 1.

catalhöyük: neolithic-chalcolithic transition in Anatolia

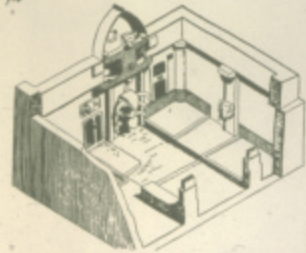


*Fig 6.1. Contour plan of east mound.*

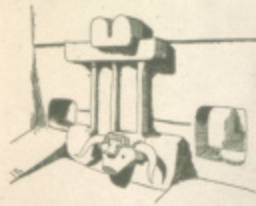








of These altars from Carl  
Hertz (1) (2) above (3) (4) with  
basins and horns (5) (6) in a  
house (7) above (8) (9) with  
the roof of a garden (10) (11)  
with a stone (12) (13) the  
top (14) (15) (16) (17) (18)  
from the west wall of stone  
VI 14 (19) (20) (21)



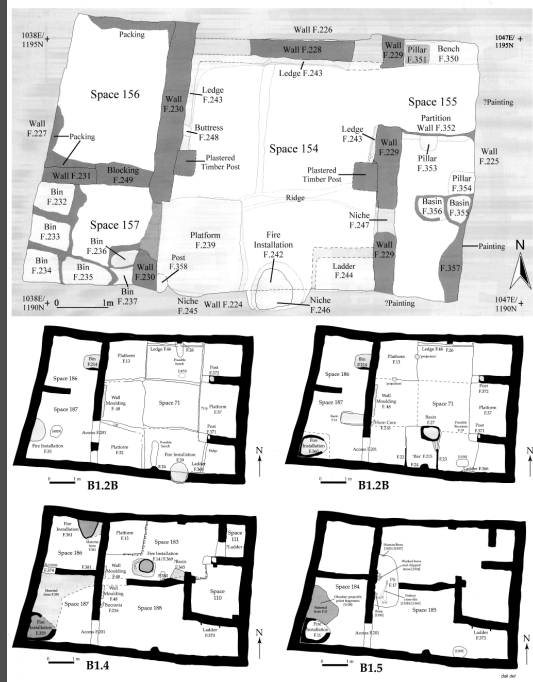


Figure 1.5. Main occupational phases in the North Area, B5.B, B1.2B, B1.2C, B1.4 and B1.5.





15 This large wall-painting from a building in Level V shows a group of figures, many of whom are wearing leopard skins, baiting or teasing a bull.





Ian Hodder



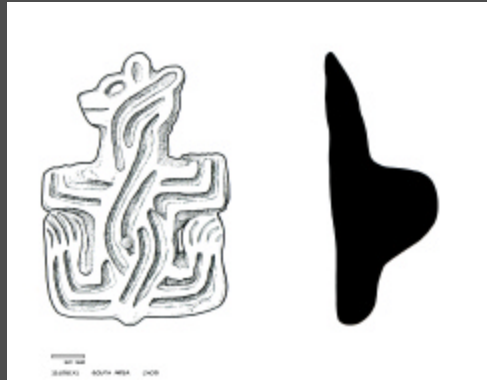


Catalhoyuk, 2006 Season. Plan view of Building 56 in South Area











restored head

restored head

clay figurine from Catalhoyuk, excavated by Mellaart in a grain bin,  
now in Ankara Anatolian Civilizations Museum





19 (above) Three quadruped figurines from the current excavations. It is often difficult to discern the animals depicted, but many may be cattle.  
 21 (below right) Figurine from Building 42. This is an example of a type of figurine found in the upper levels. Made of limestone it is badly eroded and the face may have been scoured.



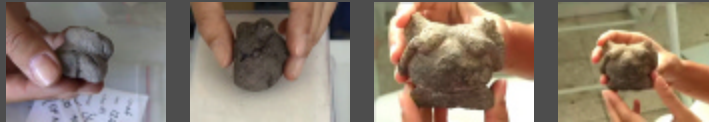
20 (above) Human form found in Level VI, shows wearing leopard skin and perhaps also standing alongside a leopard. It is made from blue limestone.



22 Clay figurine found in 2005 by a team from Istanbul University working to the south of the South shelter, in the upper levels of the site. There is a hole for the head and the back part of the figurine shows scapulae, ribs, vertebrae and pelvic bones.



23 This stamp found in the SE of a Level II building beneath the main South shelter on the East Mound sheds new light on past interpretations of the sphinx-like figure reliefs at Catalhuyuk (see Plate 18)



[Figurines Project at Neolithic Catalhoyuk](#)  
(Lynn Meskell and Carolyn Nakamura)

