

# The Neolithic In Anatolia: A Review Of The Archaeological Data

by Pilar Pardo Mata

Translation: Natalia Ramos Rubio

**Abstract:** The purpose of this paper is to look into the advent of social complexity by tracking it down from earlier times than those traditionally established: the Neolithic. In order to support this theory we shall examine various archaeological sites in Anatolia (Turkey): Çatal Hüyük, Çayönü Tepesi, Çafar Hüyük, Açıklı Hüyük, Gritille, Nevalı Çori, Can Hassan III, Hacilar, Hallan Çemi Tepesi, Suberde and Göbekli Tepe. Here, certain features which would appear to validate the theory were first brought to light: specialisation of artisans as well as trade of raw materials, such as obsidian and silex.

**Keywords:** Neolithic, grill plan, Çayönü Tepesi, Çafar Hüyük, obsidian.

**Date of Submission:** 24th November 1999; **Date of Uploading:** 17th December 1999.

---

## Introduction

It has been traditionally considered that there is a link between "*social complexity*" and the dawn of great civilisations but is not entirely true. This paper will try to explain why we think that such complexity already existed in Anatolia in earlier times -PPNA, PPNB and the Ceramic Neolithic-. This can be seen in the way certain individuals got together and requested various "imported" products. "*Social complexity*" can also be tracked down through the appearance of early settled life and of a social organisation other than the one supported by some prehistorians (Pardo: 1998, 291).

All this seems to relate to people who lived off the land and their livestock. This paper, however, will focus on other tasks -connected with the welfare of the community- carried out by a certain section of the community.

Their economy is a complex one: they can count on surpluses, which make storage possible. Obviously, as we can see during the Ceramic Neolithic, this situation will keep changing.

Furthermore, we think we can support not the existence in the Neolithic of the features of the traditional societies of chiefs, but a new definition of the characteristics of the early farming communities. The social structures and symbolic aspects of these societies

do not seem to be consistent with those aspects that cultural anthropologists have often supported (Pardo: 1999, 602).

In our opinion, a somewhat "*incipient social complexity*" could be supported. Otherwise, we would have to revise the features of Neolithic societies as a whole.

We will now analyse the historiography of the Neolithic in Anatolia and, in order to validate our theory, we will examine the archaeological evidence available.

### **The Historiography of the Neolithic in Anatolia**

Archaeological research into prehistory -more specifically the Neolithic in Turkey- dates back to the early 20th century. The excavations conducted by P. Thomsen, J. Hogarth and L. Woolley (1911-1914 and 1920) in Karkemish are well-known. Here, a part of the Neolithic period was documented (Halafian culture) through certain sections of the stratigraphy. (Gil Fuensanta, 1996: 10).

J. Gargstang (1908-1911) conducted the excavations at Sakçegözü, also known as Yoba Höyük, at about 30 km north-west of Islâhiye. But it was not until 1929 that J. Du Plat Taylor carried out research into the Neolithic and the Chalcolithic, thus highlighting the importance of the site. (Gil Fuensanta, 1996: 10)

Years later, the excavations conducted by J. Perrot (1962) at Tell Turlu, at about 45 Km east of Gaziantep, uncovered various levels of the Halafian period. (Gil Fuensanta, 1996: 11)

But it was in the 1980s that systematic research was carried out in the regions of Gaziantep and Urfa. In the 1990s salvage excavations have been conducted in the province of Urfa: at Haser Hüyük, Kumartepi and Nevali Çori. (Gil Fuensanta, 1996: 12)

The soundings in the provinces of Antep and Urfa by a U.S. team under the direction of Guillermo Algaze has resulted in the discovery of two important settlements of 6 ha. each: Teteilat Hüyük and Akarçay Tepe. (Gil Fuensanta, 1996: 13-14)

Throughout the 1990s excavations have been conducted at the sites of Çafar Hüyük, Açıklı Hüyük, Hallam Çemi Tepesi, Çayönü Tepesi, Nevali Çori, Gritille and Göbekli Tepe, among others. Since the summer of 1999 excavation has been in progress in Tell Açarkay under the direction of M. Molist (Universidad Autónoma, Barcelona, Spain) and the from the University of Istanbul (Turkey). These excavations belong to the Pre-Ceramic and Ceramic Neolithic.

We should also mention the new excavations at Çatal Hüyük, an important site already excavated by J. Mellaart in the 1960s. The University of London, with a multidisciplinary team, has been conducting work at the site since 1993 under the direction of I. Hodder. In addition, T. Watkins is working on the Konya plain, and Pinarbaşı near Çatal Hüyük: it is in these shelters that remains of burnt wood and animal bones have been found. (Gates.

1997: 248)

Thanks to a volcanology project in Anatolia, a French team from the Maison de L'Orient in Lyon (CNRS) is analysing a raw material -obsidian- under the direction of M.C. Cauvin. The aim is to ascertain the origin of important material located not only in the Neolithic sites of the area -Turkey- but also in Syria and Jordan. The purpose is to establish the trade of the site with other sites in the surroundings.

### **A Review of the archaeological data of the Neolithic in Anatolia**

The particular field chosen for this paper is part of my dissertation of June 1999, which is focused on the Near East, particularly on significant sites in Anatolia, the northern and southern Levant, Iraq and the Zagros flanks. The theory put forward is the possible appearance of social complexity in the Neolithic.

The sites to be analysed are located in two well-defined areas: southeastern and central Anatolia. In southeastern Anatolia we can mention Hallan Çemi Tepesi (10,500-10,000 B.P., which belongs to the early PPNB), Çayönü Tepesi (from the early PPNB to the late PPNB), Çafar Hüyük (9,300-8,600 B.P., early PPNB), Nevali Çori (9,200-6,500 B.P., PPNA), Gritille (6,500 B.P., late PPNB) and Gobekli Tepe (9,400 B.P., PPNA). The sites in central Anatolia are the following: Açıklı Hüyük (8,780-8,500 B.P., middle PPNB), Suberde (Aceramic Neolithic), Can Hassan III (late-middle PPNB), and finally Çatal Hüyük (6,500 B.P., Aceramic and Ceramic Neolithic).

As we have already mentioned, a certain complexity can be established by examining the typical features of this particular area, features which present certain similarities with other areas in Syria and Iraq and which shall be dealt with below.

An interesting aspect to mention is the appearance of shrines. In Çayönü Tepesi there are buildings designed for worship even in early periods, such as the building of the upright stone slabs, the building of the craniums and the terrazzo building. They all have large rectangular rooms with stone or terrazzo walls and floors. (Frangipane, 1996: 44)

Apart from this village two other sites recently discovered are worth mentioning: Göbekli Tepe and Nevali Çori. Göbekli Tepe is a place of worship: rectangular buildings with large flat stones. Inside these buildings stelae have been found. Other stelae are adjacent to the wall of the building. This suggests some sort of religious construction. A large number of naturalistic sculptures have been found all over the site. These figures are representations of small lizards and/or crocodiles, as well as a male human figure and a pillar with a bear or a lion. All these figurines belong to a sculptural tradition which can also be found in Nevali Çori (Gates, 1997: 246). In Nevali Çori we can find buildings designed for local worship (figure 1, no. 1). They are very similar to the contemporary structure of Çayönü Tepesi. The buildings in Nevali Çori must have served as a meeting place for the surrounding settlements. The religious evidence found in this site is related to a series of highly expressive stone statuary: anthropomorphic stelae (figure 2. No. 4) (Frangipane, 1996: 44). Later, local worship from the Ceramic Neolithic has been

documented in Hacilar, with stelae decorated with schematic faces.

However, it is the Ceramic Neolithic of Çatal Hüyük that boasts the largest number of shrines. Forty shrines with the same structure as that of the houses have been found; the main differences, though, are the plastered paintings and reliefs on the walls, as well as the bull horns embedded in the benches and the burial of human bodies under the platforms. The painted decorations have a wide variety of geometric, animal or human motifs. The similarities found to date relate to those appeared in Bouqras or the ones discovered in Tell Halula in October 1997. The latter date back to a thousand years earlier than those in Çatal Hüyük (7,800 B.P.), although their main feature is that they are found on the house floor, and not on the walls, like in Çatal Hüyük.

A 50 x 25m open area in Çayönü Tepesi is an interesting feature which might be pointing to a possible social complexity in the Pre-Ceramic Neolithic. The area lies to the west and it is larger and more spacious than other domestic buildings. Here we are dealing with a fair-sized building, probably serving a quasi-public purpose. It must have been used mainly for communal activities such as butchering animals, rituals or collective activities of an ideological nature. This last purpose is suggested by a two-metre double row of differently-sized stones in the red-paved open area (Frangipane: 1996,44). An earlier example is the central activity area in Jerf El Ahmar (Syria), from the PPNA, surrounded by the village houses.

In Çayönü Tepesi we have found a large number of storage facilities, probably used for grain. From phase B of the PPNB in Gritille we can highlight a deep cylindrical hole with remains of clay and a domed structure, also used, most probably, to store various products.

As regards the earliest houses (early PPNB), the semi-subterranean houses in Hallam Çemi Tepesi are circular in plan, as is customary in the Near East. However, the key element attested in the village is architectural evolution. During the first phase, upright sandstone slabs were used for the walls; the second phase used cobble walls held together with mortar; finally, crania of *Bos primigenius* have been found on plastered platforms.

Çayönü Tepesi is the best documented site to analyse the evolution of architectural planning in the PPNB throughout the three phases: early, middle and late. The basal pits discovered may be the predecessors of the Mureybet tradition of the Syrian PPNA (Mellaart: 1994, 432). The grill plan comes later, also in Çafar Hüyük, Turkey, Tell Mazgalia (Iraq) or Tell Halula (Syria). Equally worthy of note is the broad pavement plan, the cell plan and the long room plan (figure 2, no. 2). Among the most representative features of the PPNB is the fact that the buildings rise well above the floor level in order to stay dry in winter, of which Çafar Hüyük is an example. Concerning the cell plan architecture, it has been suggested that the openings in the stone foundation walls might be either corridors between rooms or used for air ventilation. This kind of plan has been found in the 1997 excavation season in Tell Halula, Syria, although its dimensions are larger than those in Çafar Hüyük. What remains unknown is the function of the cell plan. In the cell plan levels all the buildings are very similar, which suggests that each family or basic economic unit was engaged in its own manufacturing tasks with a certain internal

specialisation, independent of other units (Redman: 1990, 227).

Çatal Hüyük is the settlement which best illustrates the highest degree of sophistication of the inhabitants of Anatolia (figure 1, no. 3). In a study by Watson (1987: 150) the house plan-type is compared to the present-day settlements in the Southeast of the U.S. but further considerations are disregarded. The houses in Çatal Hüyük are pretty uniform, with mudbrick walls and floors. As in Umm Dabaghiyah, the entrance is through the ceiling. Also through the ceiling, in the south wall, the smoke outlet is located. Further away we can find the hearth and the cooking pit and in the wall there is a deeper niche where fuel must have been stored, probably firewood. The cooking area takes up nearly one third of the house. The walls lining the rest of the house are high platforms with standard measures: one of them in the north-west corner, another in the north wall, and a third in the south, beside the hearth. Worthy of note inside the houses are platforms that must have been covered with rugs, cushions, blankets and so on, probably used either as rest or work areas (Watson: 1987, 151). There were just five platforms per house and only in one case has any other been documented (Watson: 1987, 151).

Regarding the pottery repertoire, Çayönü Tepesi boasts the first examples of such craftsmanship in the earliest moments of the period traditionally called Pre-ceramic B (PPNB). The three main types to turn our attention to will be the forerunners of the later consolidation of clay pottery. The first type is represented by stone vessels. It is interesting to notice the amazing similarity both in design and technology between one of these vessels and those in Hallam Çemi Tepesi. Their purpose must be related to containers whose earliest predecessors -as we have already mentioned- are in Hallan Çemi Tepesi. White ware or "*vaiselle blanche*" belongs to the second type (figure 2, no. 1); there is a large collection of such vessels in the Syrian sites of Bouqras, Mureybet and Tell Halula. The third type is represented by the so-called mud-paste bowls, which served as containers and which were made of the same kind of paste used to make mudbrick (Balkan-Atli: 1993, 92-93). Later, in the village of Hacilar (Ceramic Neolithic) a potter's shop has been documented with sophisticated pottery: burnished, well-baked, painted red with a cream background and with a geometric design (figure 2, nos. 2, 3).

Ornaments might also be pointing to some kind of complexity within the social fabric of the village. Hallan Çemi Tepesi -early PPNB- has revealed sphere-shaped beads and large rectangles, pendants with various motifs (incised or geometric), or a fragmentary pendant incised with the figure of a snake; this fragment is contemporary with another one found in Açıklı Hüyük (Gates: 1993, 212). Various objects similar to the above mentioned have been discovered in Gritille: of particular note are disc-shaped and tubular beads, their decoration being engraved linear patterns around the surface or - in the case of stone beads- diagonal grooves bordered at each end by wavy bands (figure 2, no. 5). There are discs and amulets with geometric shapes and a plain surface. Çafar Hüyük, on the other hand, has tubular beads, and bracelets that are biconvex and circular in section from the early PPNB. Çayönü Tepesi boasts a large number pins, and fishhooks made of native copper from the late PPNB. From the aceramic period Suberde has slender needles, circular and perforated beads, as well as small cylinders. The PPNB and the Ceramic Neolithic in Hacilar shows a wide variety of small pendants with the head and shape of a bull, or pendants with geometric forms, stone or mother-of-pearl beads with various figures and forms, as well as fishhooks. But Çatal Hüyük is by far the finest representative of the rich variety of the decoration. From the Ceramic Neolithic

we can mention beads, pendants, tubes, needles used for clothing, weights and other copper and lead ornaments.

Concerning the large number of figurines uncovered in practically all the sites of the area we are dealing with, it is important to mention that most of them are dedicated to some divinity regarded as "*Mother Goddess*" or are representative of some sort of fertility related to the earth (figure 2, no. 7). There is an evident evolution from practically undefined human features in an early period to later times when human figures are recognisable in Gritille, Çayönü Tepesi, Nevalı Çori, and Çafar Hüyük. The various representations include the goddess with a child and the famous fertility goddess sitting on her throne flanked by two lions.

On the other hand, Çayönü Tepesi, Açıklı Hüyük and Çatal Hüyük have a large collection of anthropomorphic figurines and wild animals (heads of lions, pigs and deer).

The stamps might represent some kind of social differentiation for certain groups or individuals. From an early period this could be found in Gritille, in the early PPNB. Among these stamps we must mention the clay cylinders, used presumably for stamping designs on clay, fabric, bones and human crania. One artifact has a spiral design which seems to represent a snake with a diamond-shaped head. Besides, we must mention *tokens*, small geometric pieces made of clay which might have served as counters. In addition to spheres of varying size, forms include hemispheres, cones, ovals, rods with pointed ends and flattened rings. In Çayönü Tepesi we must mention certain impressed or incised bone pieces, which might have been works of art, counters or just used to experiment with some kind of writing (Redman: 1990, 209). The site at Hallan Çemi Tepesi has provided an important find: soft stone batons of uniform type but incised with various numbers of notches, which may have served as counters (Gates: 1993, 212). Later on, in the ceramic Neolithic in Çatal Hüyük, a large number of baked clay stamps have been found: they have been decorated with geometric shapes of meanders, pseudo-meanders and spirals (figure 2, no. 6). Only one stamp has been found for each house. The purpose, according to Mellaart, must have been the owner's mark for storing grain.

Regarding fabrics -another vital factor in this paper - we should mention the remains of burnt textiles of wool and linen found under the lower platforms of clay in the shrines of the house of level 6 in Çatal Hüyük. Besides, there are remains of mats or rugs for numerous floor coverings with a wide variety of patterns: checks, triangles and so on. Similar finds have been uncovered in Tell Halula (Syria) and Jarmo (Iraq).

Among the various objects documented we should start by mentioning the artifacts of hammered native copper of Çayönü Tepesi (Redman: 1990, 209). Hammered copper has also been found in Çafar Hüyük. It is worthy of note that various tools used for working copper -e.g. several kinds of rollers- have been uncovered in Açıklı Hüyük. In a late period hammered copper has been found in Suberde.

In Gritille there is something new: a clay artifact shaped like a human foot: the surface is smooth and some areas are covered with red ochre. To date, a similar object has been documented in Tell Halula, though made of stone. The Ceramic Neolithic boasts a wide variety of stone vessels or oval bowls, small boxes, jars for different lotions, some of

them with motifs in relief and others painted red.

Other finds in Hallan Çemi Tepesi include small stone plaques resembling miniature bucrania (Gates: 1993, 212) (plastered "bulls" heads) (Hodder: 1999, 177).

To the site of Göbekli Tepe, of the early PPNB, belongs a collection of stone vessels incised with geometric patterns and also with animals, such as dogs or foxes, which remind us of similar artifacts in Hallan Çemi Tepesi (Gates: 1997, 246).

Burials may be pointing to the advent of a certain social complexity but there is little information available in comparison with other aspects already mentioned.

In Çayönü Tepesi, under the building of the craniums, 70 craniums have been found, even several infant craniums. According to Özbek's analysis in 1988, many individuals must have been between 18 and 29 years of age; the chin was missing in some of the infant craniums. A large stone slab was found next to the building. The 1988 analysis conducted by Loy and Wood showed traces of human blood and blood of *Bos primigenius* on the surface of the stone slab. Furthermore, one flint knife and some crania of *Bos primigenius* were found. According to the various studies, different burial procedures must have been used within the building: interment under the house floors and the exhumation of a group of individuals of 20-30 years of age (Torremans: 1997/2 Internet).

In Açıklı Hüyük we find graves under the house floors or in pits in rooms related to hearths -life and death are closely intertwined- (Torremans: 1997/2, Internet). The male bodies uncovered in a pit have an east-west orientation, in a foetal position and the head pointing to the west. The female body has a north orientation.

Twelve secondary burials of children have been found inside the houses, as well as a cranium covered with red ochre.

According to Mellaart, there was a correlation between the burials and the platforms in Çatal Hüyük. The north-west platform seems to have been used for males, whereas the southern platforms must have been used for females. The sole exception to this burial arrangement is the male body uncovered in the north-east, which has been interpreted as the burial site for the head of the family (Watson: 1978, 151). Therefore, the role of men and women during their lives still stands for the place of interment (Torremans: 1997/2, Internet).

So there was in Çatal Hüyük one type of secondary interment where the bodies have been buried after they have totally or partially decomposed. This exhumation took place in the charnel houses. As we have already mentioned, they were usually buried under the platforms in the houses and shrines. An ochre layer gives some of the bodies a special appearance. Another kind of burial has been found outdoors: oval graves. In both types of burial the bodies were wrapped up in light clothing.

In this area there is not much information about the small object inventory- a possible distinguishing feature of social status- but, closely examined, some of them are a sure sign of this. The earliest object inventory belongs to the early PPNB in Çayönü Tepesi:

the only one made up of necklaces of stone or shell beads, as well as bone belt buckles. In Can Hassan an infant burial is worthy of mention: the child was holding a piece of copper and a copper bracelet. But the most striking inventory is the one that belongs to the Ceramic Neolithic of Çatal Hüyük: of note are the obsidian mirrors and ornaments such as necklaces and bangles for the females and, for the males tools related to weapons.

Raw materials are an essential feature when deciding whether there was any trade, and also when determining its significance. From the earliest times Hallan Çemi Tepesi and Çafar Hüyük show obsidian imports from Nemrut Dâg, about 100 Km. away. Copper from Ergoni Moden has been found in Çayönü Tepesi, about 15 Km. away. However, Çatal Hüyük is by far the finest representative of the trade of raw materials: cowrie shells from the Mediterranean, manganese copper and turquoise from eastern Anatolia -500 km. away- and the Sinai -1000 Km. away- mercury ore from Sizmar and tabular flint from the Taurus Mountains.

The economy is also another factor which provides important facts about the issue we are dealing with. Economic-based studies, however, have not concluded for all the villages. A general perspective would make it necessary to re-examine the data gathered during earlier excavation campaigns. Nevertheless, specific data on floral and faunal remains have now come to light.

### **Concluding comments**

As we have already suggested in this paper, illustrated by some of the most representative examples, we might conclude that there is strong evidence of an *incipient social complexity* in certain areas of the Near East -in this case Anatolia- during the Neolithic. The appearance of specific, significant features might support this theory: shrines, storage facilities, open areas, some long-distance trade, the evolution of specialised craftsmanship in Hallan Çemi Tepesi, Çayönü Tepesi and Çafar Hüyük among others -textiles, wickerwork, ornaments- as well as counters in Gritille, Çayönü Tepesi, Çafar Hüyük and Çatal Hüyük.

Until recently the information on the Anatolian Neolithic of the south-east was restricted to the Çayönü area. But now, thanks to the new research in sites such as Çafar Hüyük, Gritille, Nevali Çori, Hallan Çemi Tepesi and Göbekli Tepe, the knowledge on this area has grown considerably. For some authors like Özdogân (1993: 88) the Neolithic of south-eastern Anatolia seems to be an extremely complex civilisation. There is strong evidence that their inhabitants had been born in the region and that their roots were much older than had previously been assumed (Özdogân: 1993, 88).

An extremely sophisticated Neolithic culture like this one is well attested by the preceramic phases of Çayönü Tepesi and Nevali Çori, showing a "Neolithisation" similar to the southernmost regions of Syria-Palestine. According to Özdogân (1993: 89), there is conclusive proof of a stratified society which has mastered state-of-the-art technologies. Among these we can mention various tool types -the chipped and ground stone industries, heavy artifacts, bone tools, figurines as a form of worship to crania, as well as the earliest metalwork -copper- terrazzo floors. floors of plastered clay and the



origin of agriculture. The hunter-gatherer society reached its cultural peak through the architecture, the plan types of the settlements, the monumental secular buildings or shrines, the artistic representations of Çayönü Tepesi, Nevalı Çori, Göbekli Tepe and Hallan Çemi Tepesi; the transition stage is pointing to the collapse of a millenary traditional system.

On the other hand Central Anatolia paints a different picture from Southeast Anatolia. The architectural tradition is remarkable in the agglutinative villages surrounded by defensive walls -Çatal Hüyük, Hacilar- the technology of the bone and stone industries shows little in common (Byblos arrowheads), the switch to food production is not complete in certain cases, and there is no evidence in the region of some form of worship of crania (Balkan-Atli: 1993, 29).

First, we must bring up the subject of architectural innovation. The transition from the circular plan -Hallan Çemi Tepesi- to the rectangular or quadrangular is well attested in the excavation sites chosen -Çayönü Tepesi, Açıklı Hüyük, Çafar Hüyük- and also in the Near East as a whole. Therefore, there is a diversity of contemporary plan types, which, from the social point of view, would entail some differentiation within the village: on the one hand the communal structures (open areas, shrines), and on the other hand the houses.

As regards shrines, the apparently vast number of rooms in Çatal Hüyük devoted to rituals has given rise to speculation about the role of religion in such a prominent community. Though we may disagree and have our doubts about this explanation, we wish to quote Redman on this: a religious city served as the centre of a large region. If so, subsistence would be based on the payment that the surrounding population received for conducting the ceremonies (Redman: 1990, 238). On the other hand, Liverani in "*Los Mesopotámicos*" (1995) says that shrines are so numerous that they are evidence of a situation which is diametrically opposed to worship specialisation and centralisation. We cannot deduce from this that there was a priest caste, but merely the family nature, and not public, of worship: people conducted ceremonies on their own, either in the home or at some patriarch's of the time.

Regarding craftsmanship, one section of the population must have worked part-time carrying out these tasks: part of the surplus was probably used here. This has been proved through the information obtained from ornaments: fragments of beads from the early PPNB found in Hallan Çemi Tepesi and Gritille, bracelets in Çafar Hüyük and wickerwork and clothing in Çatal Hüyük. The wide variety of these objects seems to indicate that they were not designed for use, but rather prestige objects or ethnic markers within the society.

In addition, the figurines should also be considered within this context of worship, being a complement to the shrines. As for stamps, they would be related to storage facilities and to the ownership of the products.

As far as burials and their object inventories in Çatal Hüyük, we need to associate them with sex differentiation. Male burials were accompanied by weapon (stone mace heads, obsidian lance or spear heads, flint daggers with wood or bone handles), clay seals, copper finial rings and a few beads and pendants. Female burial gifts consisted mainly of

jewellery and items used for personal adornment (beads and pendants; cosmetic palettes for grinding paint; obsidian mirrors). Where the body of a child accompanied that of a woman, additional goods included bone spoons, spatulas and ladles. There is variation among burials, and many of the more elaborate are in fact shrine burials, so there does seem a correlation of grave goods with architectural settings (Wason: 1994, 160). This sophistication in the burial ritual would indicate a belief in life after death.

Long distance trade, one of the supposed features that some researchers have associated with social complexity, has been documented in the cases of obsidian and copper. Specifically for obsidian, we should mention two very distinct areas: the volcanic crater of Nemrut Dâg, near Lake Van, and the Bingöl region. As a result, we can say that the trade routes are also ways to pass down certain traditions -architectural, symbolical- from very different areas. One of these areas is represented by the north Levant, particularly Syria, and related to the settlements of Tell Abu Hureyra, Tell Mureybet and Tell Halula; the second area includes the Highlands of Mesopotamia and such significant sites as Jarmo, Nemriq -9, Tell Shimshara and Umm Dabaghiyah -the last one from the Ceramic Neolithic.

The native copper documented in Çayönü Tepesi comes from Ergoni Moden, just 15 Km. away.

The village of Çatal Hüyük played a key role in the region, thanks to the unusual quantity and quality of the materials imported -over 35 different minerals- as well as rocks for making ground stone axes. Besides, it has large amounts of flint and obsidian (Sherrat: 1982, 14), together with cowrie shells from the Mediterranean, copper, manganese and turquoise from eastern Anatolia -about 500 Km. away- and from the Sinai -1,000 Km away, and mercury ore from Sizmar.

The community gets all the supplies and equipment needed within a radius of a few kilometres in the settlement of Çatal Hüyük. The transport of food or bulky materials over long distances would be too uneconomical for the Neolithic culture. But there are "precious" materials -for the standards of the time- that are neither bulky nor heavy and become items of trade, sometimes very far from their sources, for example obsidian (Liverani: 1995, 75).

In Çayönü Tepesi the general pattern to exploit meat resources shifted from the hunting of the big game in the surrounding area -*Bos primigenius* and *Cervus*- to the domestication of goats and sheep. Pigs had been domesticated at very early stages.

The botanical assemblage reveals subsistence practices which combined gathering and farming activities. Village agriculture became increasingly popular maybe because the region was ideal in this respect: an average annual precipitation of about 700 mm.

Unlike Çayönü Tepesi, Suberde's economy was based upon the strategy to hunt *Cervus*, wild sheep, wild cattle and pigs; the dog was the only animal domesticated in the village.

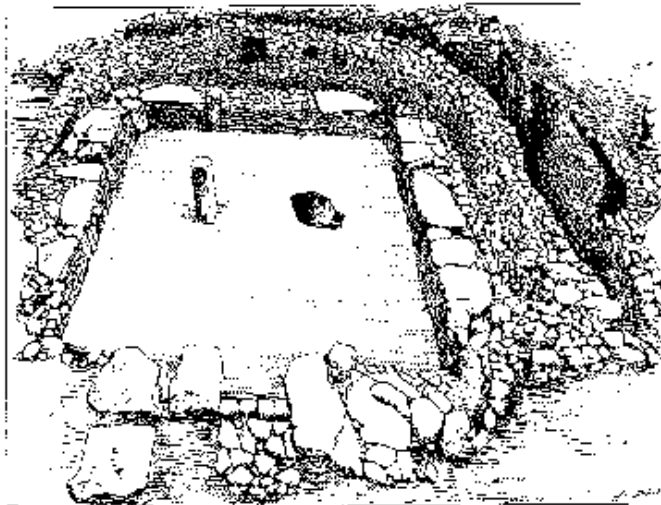
Finally we wish to allude to Redman's ecologically-oriented theory, which is based on the village of Çatal Hüyük. He says that this settlement must have evolved more rapidly than the neighbouring communities thanks to a favourable economy. The cause must be found

in the technological breakthroughs that led to an increase in production and that paved the way for settlement of an ecological centre relatively uninhabited. At the beginning there must have been some elementary irrigation farming, together with better plant species and cattle farming. Thanks to these resources there were bumper harvests on the plain, much larger than those they got through dry farming in mountainous regions. The success of such resources enabled them to free themselves from those subsistence activities for the greater part of the year in order to work on craftsmanship and the obsidian trade (Redman: 1990, 238). Thanks to nourishing foods and to added economic activities, the population grew rapidly, since the surplus must have eased up on the cultural restrictions on the birth rate as well as increased life expectancy. Moreover, the village might have exerted considerable influence on small rural communities which came into contact with a certain wealth (Redman: 1990, 239).

All things considered, we do not support the theory of a hierarchical society. We think, however, that there is enough evidence to assert that there is an *incipient social complexity* in some of these villages, and also, it seems, in other areas of the Near East. In any case this evidence could at least help us move away from the rather simplistic traditional approach to the communities of the first farmers. A certain "*status*" for specific individuals or groups is well attested in the houses, the open activity areas, the shrines -with both human and animal sacrifices- in the burials -of adults and children, together with an increasingly sophisticated object inventory- and in the owner's marks or counters for certain products, and finally long-distance raw materials such as obsidian, copper, cowrie shells and mercury ore among others. All the evidence seems to support the theory of a more complex social structure than had been believed with regard to the groups of first farmers: there might be a certain central figure or group that carried out the tasks the community needed. And obviously the evidence enables us to support the theory that self-sufficiency in these societies would break; this would be evident in the impact of other areas in the north Levant -particularly in the Syrian settlements- or the links with the Highlands of Mesopotamia -particularly settlements in the high regions of the Zagros flanks and the Taurus Mountains, as well as the area of routes for raw materials- and this social complexity could be seen in the aforementioned features.

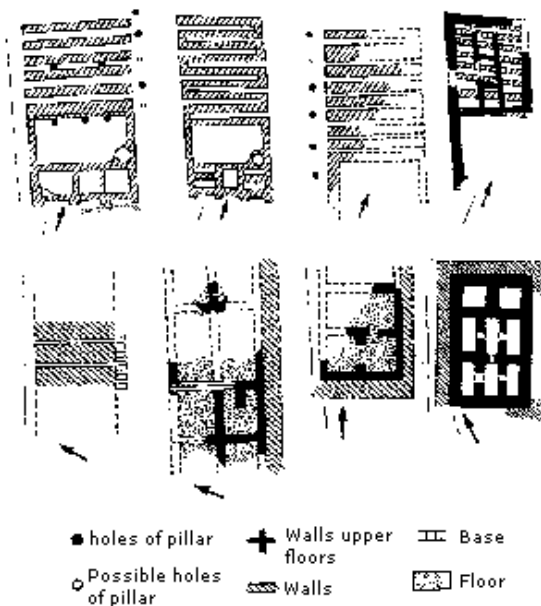
### **Acknowledgements**

I would like especially to thank Dr. Isabel Rubio de Miguel, member of the Prehistory teaching staff at the "Universidad Autónoma", Madrid, (Spain) for her constant advice and useful suggestions during the preparation of this paper. I am also indebted to Jesús Gil Fuensanta, who provided useful information, and to Natalia Ramos Rubio, Carmen Ruiz Triviño and Miguel Jaramago Canora for their wholehearted support.



1. The aceramic Neolithic cult building of level 3.  
(Based on Hauptmann, 1993)

2. Buildings of Çayönü Tepesi  
(based on Redman, 1990)



3. Buildings of Çatal Hüyük (based on Redman, 1990)

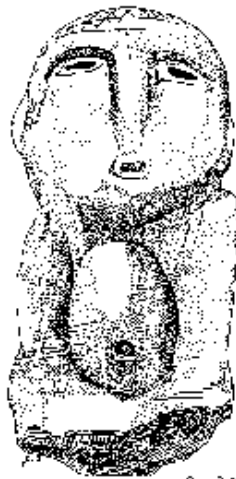
Figure 1. The buildings in Anatolia, Turkey



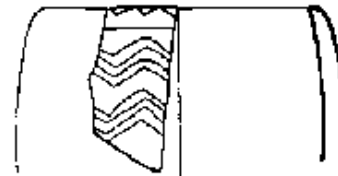
1. "Vaiselle blanche" Çayönü Tepesi  
(based on Aurench et al. 1999)



2. Decorated stone bowl, Çemi Tepesi, aceramic Neolithic  
(based on Yakar 1994)



4. Limestone hydric figure which was originally decorated,  
level 5, cult building, aceramic Neolithic  
(based on Aurench et al. 1999)



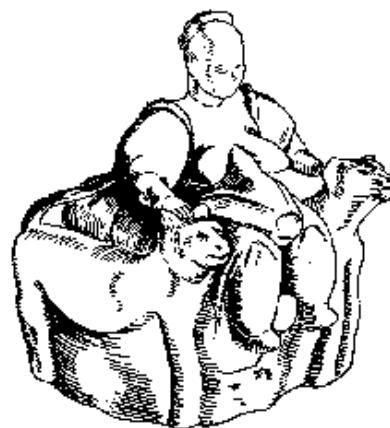
3. Decorated stone bowl, Hallam Çemi Tepesi,  
(based on Aurench et al. 1999)



5. Stone with decoration, Çafar Hüyük  
(based on Aurench et al. 1999)



6. Clay stamp, Çatal Hüyük  
(based on Mellaart 1975)



7. "Mother Goodness" Çatal Hüyük  
(based on Mellaart 1975)

Figure 2. Objects of the Neolithic of Anatolia, Turkey

## Bibliography

- AURENCHE, O., & KOZLOWSKI, S. K., (1999). *La naissance du Néolithique au Proche Orient*, Editions Errance, Paris.
- BALKAN-ATLI, N., (1993). "Els primers poblats neolitics d'Anatolia", *Cota Zero*, pp. 25-30.
- FRANGIPANE, M., (1996). *La nascita dello stato nel Vicino Oriente*, Etditori Laterza.
- GATES, M. H., (1994). "Archeology in Turkey", *American Journal of Archaeology*, 98(2), pp. 249-278.
- GATES, M. H., (1997). "Archaeology in Turkey", *American Journal of Archaeology*, 101 (2), pp. 241-306.
- GIL FUENSANTA, J., GONZÁLEZ, J. M., IRLES, L. and SEVAN ROMÁN, R., (1996). "Trabajos de la misión arqueológica española en Turquía (I): una exploración y prospección en los márgenes del Eúfrates en las provincias de Antep y Urfa", *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Orientalistas*, XXXII, pp7-22.
- GIL FUENSANTA, J., (1997). "Algunas notas sobre la pervivencia de la tradición arquitectónica del Neolítico y Calcolítico durante fines del IV milenio a. C. en el Eúfrates turco", *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Orientalistas*, XXXIII, pp. 175-183.
- HODDER, I., (1999). "Symbolism at Çatalhöyük", in Coles, J., Bewley, R., Mellars, P., (eds.), *Studies in Memory of Grahame Clark, Proceedings of the British Academy*, 99. World Prehistory, The British Academy, Oxford University Press, pp. 177-191.
- LIVERANI, M., (1995). *Los mesopotámicos*, Editorial Cátedra, Madrid.
- Maddin, R., *et alii*, (1991). "Çayönü Tepesi. The earliest archaeological metal artifacts", in Mohen, J. P., Eluere, Ch. (eds.), *Découverte du métal, Méditerranée orientale et Proche-Orient*, Paris, pp. 375-386.
- MELLAART, J., (1975). *The Neolithic in Near East*, London.
- MELLAART, J., (1994). "Western Asia", in Laet, S., (ed) *History of mankind I, Prehistory and the beginning of civilization*, Unesco.
- MOLIST, M., (1996). "El Neolítico del IX<sup>o</sup> y VIII<sup>o</sup> milenio B. P. En el Levante norte: aportaciones del yacimiento de Tell Halula (valle del Eúfrates, Siria)", *Complutum extra*, 6 (I), pp. 63-74.
- MOLIST, M., (1998). "Des représentations humaines peintes au IX<sup>e</sup> millénaire B.P. sur le site de Tell Halula (Vallée de l'Euphrate, Syrie)", *Paléorient*, 24 (1), pp.81-87.
- PARDO MATA, P., (1998). "Las bases del posible origen de la complejidad social en el Neolítico: el caso de las Tierras Altas de Mesopotamia (norte de Iraq)" in Cunchillos. J.-

L., Galán, J. M., Zamora, J.-A., and Villanueva De Azcona, S., (eds.): El Mediterráneo en la Antigüedad : Oriente y Occidente, SAPANU, Actas del Congreso,CSIC,InternetII, <http://www.labherm.filol.csic.es/Sapanu1998/Es/Actas/Pardo/PardoM.htm>

PARDO MATA, P., (1998). "El Neolítico y los inicios de la complejidad social: el caso de las Tierras Altas de Mesopotamia (norte de Iraq) (I)", *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Orientalistas*, XXXIV, 285-296.

PARDO MATA, P., (forthcoming). "El Neolítico y los inicios de la complejidad social: el caso de las Tierras Altas de Mesopotamia (norte de Iraq) (II)", *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Orientalistas*.

PARDO MATA, P., (forthcoming). *Los inicios de la complejidad social en el Próximo Oriente. El replanteamiento de la sociedad Neolítica*. Memoria de Licenciatura, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain), June, 1999. Pages: 669.

PARDO MATA, P., (forthcoming). "Algunos aspectos sobre la arquitectura del Neolítico en Anatolia(Turquía) y sus posible repercusión en los inicios de la complejidad social, *ERIDU*.

ÖZDOGAN, M., ÖZDOGAN, A., (1993). "Pre-halafian of southeastern Anatolia with special reference to the Çayönü sequence", in Frangipane, M., Hauptmann, H., Liverani, M., Matthiae, P., Mellink, M. (eds.): *Between the rivers and over the mountains, Archaeologica anatolica y mesopotamica*, Alba Palmieri dedicata, Grupo Editoriale internazionale, Roma, pp. 87-103.

REDMAN, Ch. L., (1990). *Los orígenes de la civilización. La revolución del radiocarbono y la Europa prehistórica*, Editorial Crítica, Barcelona.

ROSENBERG, M., NESBITT, R., REDDING, R., W. and PEASNALL, B. L., (1998). "Hallan Çemi, pig husbandry, and post-pleistocene adaptations along the Taurus-Zagros (Turkey), *Paléorient*, 24(1), pp. 25-41.

TORREEMANS, R., (1997). "Burial practices in Neolithic Anatolia", *Orient Express*, <http://www.ziggourat.com>.

YAKAR, J., (1994). *Prehistoric Anatolia. The Neolithic transformation and early Chalcolithic period*, Monograph series of the Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University.

WASON, P. K., (1994). "ÇatalHüyük: a ranked neolithic town in Anatolia", in Wason, P. K. (ed.). *The archaeology of rank, New studies in Archaeology*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 153-179.

WATSON, P. J., (1987). "Architectural differentiation in some Near Eastern communities prehistoric and contemporary, in Redman, Ch. L., J., Berman, M., Curtin, F., Lanhorne, G., Versaggi, W., and Wanser, J.,(eds.) *Social archaeology. Beyond subsistence and dating*, Academic Press, New York, San Francisco, pp. 131-157.