

## EXCAVATIONS AT ÇATAL HÜYÜK, 1962. SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

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Supported by the Bollingen Foundation, the Wenner - Gren Foundation, the late Mr. Francis Neilson, the British Academy, the Australian Institute of Archaeology the University of Edinburgh. Canterbury University, N. Z., a second season of excavations took place at Çatal Hüyük from June 7th until 14th August 1962, under the direction of James Mellaart, and another week was spent on the site, dismantling wall - paintings and reliefs for transport to Ankara. Results were even more spectacular than last year's and they concern the archaeologist, palaeobotanist, palaeozoologist, the art historian as much as the student of Ancient Religion,

After two seasons of work at Çatal Hüyük, it is now abundantly clear that this site was not a village, but a city, inhabited by a community with a developed economy, social organisation, a rich religious life, specialised crafts and a well - developed art. They were anything but self sufficient and traded far wide to obtain the raw materials their economy demanded. But for the absence of writing, they satisfied all the conditions usually demanded for the use of the term "civilisation". Compared to its neighbours Çatal Hüyük alone can claim to have produced a civilisation in the 7th millennium B. C.

Far more important than questions of terminology, is that at Çatal Hüyük, we can detect numerous influences which link its culture to the remote past of the Upper Palaeolithic, adapted to a new surrounding of food production. At the other end of the scale, the latest levels provide numerous links with the

Late Neolithic culture of Hacilar and with the Early Chalcolithic which developed out of it.

This year's work was concentrated on the two main areas opened up last year Area A on top of the mound and Area E down the slope (see *Anatolian Studies*, Vol. XII, 1962). The whole of Area E was taken down to Level VI, with a small sounding below Level VII which revealed a large building of Level VIII and a house of Level X, decorated with a wall - painting of geometric design. Towards the top of the mound, it was established both in Area E and in A that below Level VI there are at least ten metres more of earlier deposits to be excavated in order to reach the level of the plain, i. e. more than half the height of the mound, without counting the deposits below plain, level.

In the upper area (A), a shrine was found, with a red - plastered platform (cf. Hacilar Aceramic and Pre - pottery Neolithic B of Jericho), a red - plastered ceremonial hearth on which grain offerings were burnt, one stone and nine clay figurines of seated women, with beautifully modelled hands and features. The tenth, much larger (7, 5" high) showed a goddess seated on a throne flanked by lions (or leopards) whose tails curled up her back, her feet on human skulls (one survives) and in the process of giving birth. The entire group, extraordinarily fine, is ancestral to the clay figurines of Hacilar VI. Other finds in the sanctuary included five stamp seals, pottery with basked shapes, vessels on pedestal bases, bowls, cooking - pots, much obsidian flint and chert and numerous offerings of cereals

and legumes, put in the storerooms surrounding the sanctuary (grain, wheat, barley, peas etc.). This is the latest shrine so far found at Çatal Hüyük and there were no wall-paintings. On the other hand, it offers rich evidence for links with Late Neolithic Hacilar. (See *Anatolian Studies* vol. XI, 1961).

Below this shrine, we found another, belonging to Level III and not far from the other, the "Hunting Shrine" discovered last year. Although empty of finds and replastered, most walls bore frescoes showing motifs clearly derived from textiles or kilims. One of these covered not less than 90 square feet with a textile pattern in red, white and grey. Partly unfinished it was possible to work out the technique used by the painters. Other patterns include quatrefoils, zigzag lines with tendrils, solid circles, a labyrinth pattern etc. A room next to it had another hunting scene, showing a bowman shooting an arrow at a stag (fallow deer?) followed by its young and below it an animal (dog?), part of a larger composition, now destroyed.

Investigations below the "Hunting Shrine" of Level III, cleared in 1961, yielded fragments of a large part of the leopard dancing scene, which can now be restored almost entirely. Secondary burials below the bench in front of this scene included a fine human skull, stained or painted red and covered with what may have been a cloth cap, part of which adhered to the paint.

The Level IV building below it had a small painting on a pilaster, with two lively running figures and part of a bull (?). Some extraordinarily fine necklaces and bracelets were found on the secondary burials below the platforms: beads of blue and green apatite, fossil red and yellow coral, white, red and black limestone; bone beads like deer's teeth and brown bands of coal.

The underlying building of the Vth Level was not well preserved and immediately below it, we came upon the terrific burning associated with Level VI. Here, a large shrine was found (main room C. 6 metre square), its

west wall still standing C. 2 M. high, ornamented with a deep groove, painted red. One the edge of the northeast platform, stood two plastered pillars, each containing the horn cores of a bull and another stood in the southeast corner. The raised bench contained not less than seven horn cores of enormous bulls, in a row, a most impressive sight. In an L-shaped storeroom of this shrine, was found a fine clay painted figurine of a seated goddess, modelled with exquisite softness. With it were two maceheads, one with a wooden, the other with a bone handle; flint daggers, obsidian spear, lance and arrowheads, three horn cores of wild cattle, two rush baskets, a rush mat on the floor and a carved wooden dish (ø, 5 m. long). Another room produced a coarse clay basin, fragments of two cooking pots, grain, peas and carbonised almonds or plums.

Three other rooms were excavated north of the shrine. Of these, one was very small and entered through a porthole as doorway, on the side of which were painted hands, toes and the footprint of a child. A large deposit of acorns was found on the hearth. A second house yielded a large geometric wall-painting depicting ladders (?), of surprising ingenuity. It was a small third building, however, which had a most spectacular painting in orange, white and manganese purple on buff. The top of the bench had been turned into a stylised bull's head with open mouth, painted a brilliant red, orange and white. The painted panel shows a number of crosses of various types, a double axe and a complicated cross with four arms and a double circle at the crossing. It is painted in bright orange and manganese purple, to which "glimmerschiefer" had been added to make it glitter. Between the arms of the cross, on the right, are small figures: a steatopygous seated woman, an archer, two stylised figures like our plaster reliefs and two minute others.

In the main lower area (E), a strip of 40 X 20 m. of Levels IV and V were excavated down to Level VI, extending in all directions where it was necessary to obtain the plan of a building complex. One such unit

has now been isolated. Surrounded by Courtyards of moderate size, and probably not quite free-standing on the outward side, but linked by rooms to a second complex (as at Hacilar I), it contained some 34-36 rooms, grouped around not less than five cult-rooms or shrines, all of which were ornamented with reliefs of achematized human figures, animals or bulls and rams' heads, modelled in plaster over the actual part of the skull bearing the horn cores.

Two of these shrines are preserved to roof, level, 2.70 m. above the floor. Four of these shrines are arranged in a cruciform pattern forming the centre of the block and separated by storerooms or houses. Domestic dwellings, each with a storeroom are grouped around the shrines, one or more houses near each of them. The whole layout was carefully thought out and planned before building began. All these rooms present blank walls to the outside and there are no doorways communicating with the exterior, not even opening onto the courts. There are no doorways between the rooms, except with storerooms. All the main rooms were entered through shafts from the flat roof and by ladders set in the south wall, where they have left clear impressions in the wall plaster. With a system like this, there is no need for defensive walls, which in any case have not yet been located. That the system was defensive is beyond doubt - hoards of slingstones are common near the outer periphery of the block. Ladders were no doubt used to reach the roofs from the courtyards and vice versa and although the system of communication was cumbersome, it seems to have served its purpose for in the twelve levels excavated, there are no traces of a sack or massacre.

The shrines differ from the houses only in decoration and contents, not in size and general plan, which at Çatal Hüyük is standard and varies only according to the position of a house in the block and the side from which it gets its light. The decoration of these shrines varies, but the most important relief appears to be on the west wall. In the

first shrine (E. VI. 8), a figure of the goddess with uplifted arms legs (1m. 25. high) is shown with a large bull's head immediately below her: Evidently a scene of birth. On the north wall, a bovid 8 feet long is modelled in sunk relief above wavy lines indicative of water, whereupon the opposite (East) wall, three bulls heads, a ram's head and two rows of breasts face the goddess. Below the breasts, in an earlier phase of the building, there were rows of very large lower jaws of boar with their tusks and below that, two still earlier phases of painted decoration, an upper panel of a honeycomb, framed in pink and white hands and a lower with human hands silhouetted on a red background. In the earliest phase, an earlier honeycomb and hand pattern took its place, but the lower panel was painted plain red. Another shrine (E. VI. 7) shows a bull's head and a ram's head with hands painted on them and a deep red niche beyond. Another (E. VI. 31) had two superimposed bull's heads between two columns, while a third (E. VI. 10) shows three superimposed bulls heads supporting a frame above which squatted a large goddess giving birth (?) to a small ram. On the north wall, a ram's head with four horns (a freak that occurs in nature) supports a column and the east wall shows a big bull's head above a niche and a pair of breasts (containing birds skulls), further to the right. The shrine E. VI. 14 shows a twin goddess with two heads and two bodies, one of which gives birth to a bull's head, on top of which is shown a smaller one. Bull and ram's heads are also found on the east wall and three pairs of horns decorate the bench. This shrine was full of weapons: About 60 spear and javelin heads of obsidian, seven maceheads, four flint daggers (one with its limestone handle) etc. Thirteen carved stone figures of gods and goddesses, all different, were found in the E. VI. 10 shrine, together with many limestone concretions collected in caves. Their weird forms reminiscent of women are a link with an earlier world of mysterious cults in caves. Among the statues carved in white limestone, marble,

a black stone, etc. There is a seated twin goddess, a goddess carved out of a concretion, a god on a bull, a group of two goddesses with leopards and a child riding one, a seated young god etc.

The variety of religious detail in Level VI is truly astounding and it would appear that the plaster reliefs tell a story, the first examples of mythological thought and symbolism, associated with fertility cult.

The evidence for funerary ritual and care of the dead is likewise abundant and hardly less important than all the architectural and artistic splendour of this mid-7<sup>th</sup> millennium civilisation.

In the two houses of Level VI where we have so far penetrated below the floors, we found besides the normal tumble of human bones, evidence for curious and fascinating burial rites. Two burnt burials were found, consisting of a woman and child in house E. VI. 25 and a whole family of about six to eight individuals, including three children less than 10 years old in E. VI. 5. These seem to be victims of fires: The bones were burnt and covered with fat tar. After the removal of the flesh, the bones had been wrapped in textiles, probably garments, skulls and long bones separate, etc. Together with burial gifts, these individual packages were put in a cloth bag, held together with cloth straps and buried below the platform in either house. One of the skulls was covered with red ochre before wrapping; two others, not so treated, still contained the carbonised brains. Funeral gifts consisted of bone pendants, stone pendants and bead necklaces, often with the thread preserved, wooden bowls of several sizes, some containing meat, cups in the form of a wine glass, delicately carved boxes, etc.

The discovery of wooden vessels now definitely answers the question why so little pottery was found in Levels VI-VIII (less than one pot per house). The textile remains (over a hundred samples were preserved and sent to the Ankara Museum) are fascinating and the earliest of its kind. As flax was not

grown by the Çatal Hüyük people. the material may be wool. There are several weaves, coarse, medium and a fine, shawl-like one. Knots, tassels, straps, etc. are preserved and the woman in E. VI. 25 seems to have worn a string skirt, the ends of which were held down in little tubes of sheet copper (copper beads occur at Çatal Hüyük as early as Level VIII). The question that is immediately raised by the practise of secondary burial is what was done with the bodies upon death? They were obviously exposed somewhere to get rid of the flesh through the agency of sun insects, birds of prey etc., but where? How did the families keep a check on who was who, which was obviously important, as the bones had to be re-collected for proper interment afterwards. The lower part of a fresco discovered in November 1961 and cleaned this year, seems to supply an answer to this question. When reassembled, the fresco shows a series of decomposing heads below what is evidently a building of wood and reeds (or mats) - a light structure with gabled roof and tall pillars, which are probably reed bundles, comparable to the *midbife* and *sarifas* of South Iraq, the predynastic structures of Egypt and the Chassulian ossuaries. If this is indeed a charnel house, such buildings must have been located well away from the settlement, probably to the south, as the prevailing winds come from the north. Another wall-painting from the same room shows what looks like parts of human bodies, some what stylised. It is difficult to imagine such paintings in a normal house, situated between the first shrine and the house with the large burnt burial, (which is, however, later than the paintings).

These burials throw another light on the wall-painting with human head (8) found last year in the shrine of Level XV (*Anat. Studies* XII, 1962. pl. XII, b. c.), which may have shown a scene connected with burial rites.

Finally we must mention the large deposits of vegetable food discovered in the

Level VI settlement and clswierc, fish bones and numerous animal bones. It is this abundance of food which, more than anything else, allowed the people of Çatal Hüyük to create a neolithic civilisation.

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*Note:*

In October 1962, M. Jean Perrot visited Çatal Hüyük and saw a hitherto unknown panel of red hands on the Wall of room E. VI. 5. He sent an urgent message and, accompanied by my wife, I went to Konya on October 6, in order to photograph and record this new wall-painting. It had obviously appeared after rain had loosened the upper layers of the plaster which covered it and consists of 6 rows of small red hands, with an adjacent "kilim" pattern. We spent some time on the site in order to treat and cover them up, thus hoping to preserve this wall-painting until the next campaign in 1963.