

## PRELIMINARY REPORT ON A SURVEY OF NEOLITHIC SITES IN CENTRAL ANATOLIA

IAN A. TODD

The survey to be described in this short paper was undertaken in the summers of 1964-1966 with the aid of a British Government State Studentship and the Fellowship of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara. My sincere thanks are due to the Eski Eserler ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü for permission to carry out this survey.

The survey conducted by the writer covered the area bounded approximately by a line between the modern towns of Ankara - Yozgat - Kayseri - Niğde - Konya Ankara (Fig. 1); the main aim was to discover remains of the Neolithic period and to correlate these with material of the same period in other areas of Turkey and the Near East. Although excavations and surveys have revealed considerable information about the Neolithic period in the Konya plain and the Lake District, very little was known about central Anatolia. No excavations have reached Neolithic levels and only a few surface finds such as that from Ilıcınar served to prove the existence of Neolithic sites in central Anatolia.

It must be stated at the outset that the aim of discovering Neolithic material over the whole of the area surveyed was not fully realized. Abundant evidence was found of Neolithic occupation in the southern part of the area, but no recognizable traces of Neolithic occupation were found in the more northerly half. It was to be expected that Neolithic sites would be found in the southern part of the central Anatolian plateau where the main

obsidian deposits are located, but no thoroughly plausible excuse can be offered at the present time for the lack of such sites further north. Clearly not all the Neolithic sites that exist in central Anatolia have been found—hüyük are easy to spot, but flat sites or those located on hill-sides are notoriously difficult to find; but for the present, the sites found by the writer prove conclusively that the southern part of the central Anatolian plateau was occupied in the Neolithic period just as thickly as the Konya plain or Cilicia, if not more so.

Although no attempt was made to carry out a complete survey of the obsidian sources in central Anatolia, a number of sources were visited, and the following notes supplement, in the main, the information given by Renfrew Dixon and Cann<sup>1</sup>. No hitherto unknown sources of obsidian were found outside the areas of Acıgöl and Çiftlik; in the vicinity of Acıgöl the mountain named Hotamış Dağ is a very likely source of the material, the whole of the south face being covered with large blocks of black obsidian. In the area of Çiftlik two sizeable flows of obsidian were found on the lower slopes of Göllü Dağ, one at the foot of the north-east slopes of the mountain near the village of Kömürcü, and the other on the south-west flank of the mountain, named Sırça Deresi. A third flow is reported to exist near the village Kayırlı, but this was not checked. Analysis has shown that obsidian from the sources in the Çiftlik area was

<sup>1</sup> Renfrew, Dixon and Cann: *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* XXXII, 1966, 30ff.

widely exported in the early Neolithic period, and it would seem that the flows on Göllü Dağ are far more likely to have supplied the necessary quantity of material than the 'bombs' to be found south or south-west of Çiftlik. Neither Hasan Dağ nor Erciyes Dağ can be considered as major sources of obsidian used by early Neolithic communities on the evidence available today.

Only one Protoneolithic site was found in central Anatolia by the writer, and no such sites were known previously; since a report about the site and the chipped stone industry was published recently<sup>2</sup> a brief summary will suffice here. The site lies ca. 25 km. south-east of Aksaray in the rich valley of the Melendiz Çay; the hüyük has suffered considerable erosion by the river, but its present size is still considerable. The erosion has enabled certain information, normally available only by excavation, to be learnt about the site. Mud brick walls ca. one metre high are visible in section together with red plaster floors in the lower levels. Large areas of what would seem to be courtyard debris are also to be seen.

The obsidian industry is the most interesting feature of the site; typologically it is pre-Çatal Hüyük. Very few projectile points were found, but large quantities of blades and scrapers occur. The workmanship is generally of a very high standard, and the industry is without true parallels. The nearest equivalent lies in the later Anatolian Neolithic industries; parallels with sites in the Levant are few, and no connections can be postulated with the Zagros area.

Until the present survey was undertaken Neolithic material was only known from isolated surface finds: obsidian implements with clear affinities to those from Çatal Hüyük were found at Ilcapınar<sup>3</sup>, and some bifacially retouched implements

are on display in the Niğde Museum<sup>4</sup>; several other sites with obsidian industries were reported by Dr. H. Kleinsorge in the Tuz Gölü area<sup>5</sup>.

Nine sites in central Anatolia bearing evidence of a considerable obsidian industry including bifacially retouched implements were discovered or visited by the writer<sup>6</sup>:

#### *Pınarbaşı:*

The hüyük at Pınarbaşı lies ca. 3 km. west, north-west of Bor on the Bor-Altınhisar - Aksaray road; situated immediately adjacent to a strong spring, it lies near the foot of the mountains that limit the Bor Ovası on its northern edge. To the south of the site there is a stretch of rich agricultural land before the infertile centre of the plain is reached. The site bears evidence of a considerable period of occupation after the Neolithic period.

#### *Köşk Pınar:*

The site at Köşk Pınar is situated ca. 8 km. south-east of Bor, a little to the west of the main Niğde to Ulukışla road. There is a small hüyük on the top of a hill-side overlooking a large Roman settling tank—the source of the Tyana aqueduct. Obsidian is to be found on the hüyük and all over the hill-side, but more especially low down near the spring. The site was also extensively occupied after the Neolithic period. Like nearly all the other Neolithic sites in central Anatolia, the site situated near an ample water supply with high ground and good agricultural land near at hand.

#### *Kayaardı Tepesi:*

The tepe lies on the west side of the town of Niğde; Neolithic obsidian imple-

<sup>2</sup> Todd: *Anatolian Studies* XVI, 1966, 139ff.

<sup>3</sup> Kleinsorge: *Maden Tetkik ve Arama Enstitüsü Mecmuası* 5, 1940, 400ff. Mellaart: *Istanbul Mitteilungen* 8, 1958, 82ff.

<sup>4</sup> Kökten: *Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi* VIII-2, 1958, 11 and Lev. X.

<sup>5</sup> See note 3.

<sup>6</sup> Preliminary notes on the survey have appeared in *Anatolian Studies* XV, 1965, 13-14; XVI, 1966, 15-16 and XVII, 1967, forthcoming. Drawings of some obsidian implements and brief descriptions of some of the sites have appeared in *Anatolian Studies* XV, 1965, 34 and Fig. 1-12; XVI, 1966, 43-44, 48 and Fig. 1-4.

ments were found in an limited scatter on the top of this tepe. The site occupies a commanding position overlooking the route from the obsidian sources of the Acıgöl and Çiftlik areas to the south and south-west to the Konya plain, Cilicia and the countries as far south as Jordan. Very little pottery-none definitely Neolithic-was found on the site which may indicate that it was not a true settlement; seasonal occupation perhaps coupled with the obsidian trade may account for the site in this position. This site should probably be considered as the source of the implements in the Niğde Museum.

#### *Tepecik-Çiftlik:*

The hüyük is located ca. one km. east of Çiftlik in the well-watered Melendiz Ovası; it measures about 4-5 metres in height and ca. 200 metres in length. The sherds and obsidian to be found on the site indicate lengthy occupation from the Neolithic to the Early Bronze Age. Although there are large quantities of obsidian to be found on the hüyük itself, there is also a very sizeable scatter of worked obsidian in the fields around the site. Situated very near to the Göllü Dağ obsidian sources, the site is in very fine position for the control of the trade in that material.

#### *Değirmen Özü:*

The site lies ca. 4 km. north-east of Ortaköy in Niğde vilayet; obsidian implements are to be found on both sides of the stream where there are three mill signs marked on the 1:200,000 map<sup>7</sup>. Between the two branches of the stream there is a possible small hüyük formation with small quantities of chipped stone implements. It would seem from the location of the site that, although there is a plentiful water supply nearby, the site may not have been occupied all the year round, and seasonal occupation along the lines of that suggested for Avla Dağ<sup>8</sup> may

be postulated. The quantities of waste material in the industry suggest a working site, but it is situated a long way from the sources for this, and obsidian seems generally to have been worked on the sites rather than be transported from factory to settlement sites in finished form.

#### *Sapmaz Köy:*

The small hüyük, known locally as Yastören, is located ca. one km. south-west of Sapmaz on the road from the village to the main Ankara-Aksaray road. It is a low hüyük formation on a natural ridge, situated above the level of the Tuz Gölü plain, ca. 33 km. north-west of Aksaray near the end of a low spur which runs out from the mountains that border the lake on the east side. The existence of Neolithic obsidian industries reported by Kleinsorge<sup>9</sup> at Çokyatan and Aliuşağı hüyükü was not confirmed by the writer. Once again there is a reasonable water supply close at hand.

#### *Ilıcapınar:*

The site of Ilıcapınar was re-located by the writer; obsidian implements are to be found on a low tepe near the spring at the north end of the Acıtuz Gölü. There is a possible low hüyük formation on the tepe at its southern end. The site is less favourably situated than the other Neolithic sites described here, but the salt trade may be postulated as the reason for a site in this location<sup>10</sup>.

#### *İğdeli Çeşme:*

The site lies ca. 4 km. west of Acıgöl on the north side of the Aksaray-Nevşehir road beside a modern çeşme, and on the border of Niğde and Nevşehir vilayets. The site may originally have been a low hüyük but it has now been completely ploughed out. The original size of the site is impossible to estimate as a result of this. Obsidian was not found on the south side of the road, but a few worked pieces were found on the top of the nearly İğdeli

<sup>7</sup> Map ref. Kırşehir 70-İğ/h

<sup>8</sup> Todd and Pasquare: *Anatolian Studies* XV, 1965, 111.

<sup>9</sup> Op. cit. 402.

<sup>10</sup> Mellaart: op. cit. 83.

Tepe. The setting is rather more upland than most of the other sites, but it is near an ample supply of water, and there is plenty of agricultural land suitable for dry farming near the site. This is the only Neolithic site in the near vicinity of the Acigöl obsidian sources.

*Kumluk Tepe:*

The small hüyük named Kumluk Tepe lies a short distance south of İncesu Station in Kayseri vilayet; the site measures ca. 5 metres in height, but it is impossible to estimate the overall length since ploughing has removed part of the hüyük. Obsidian can be found over wide area around the hüyük, and the Neolithic site may have been fair-sized. In later periods the settlement moved nearer the area now occupied by the Station and Hacafer Tepesi grew up.

A considerable quantity of chipped stone implements was found on all the sites listed above, and various features differentiate one industry from another. In the category of projectile points comparisons with the industries of Çatal Hüyük and Mersin are marked, with finely worked, bifacially retouched points occurring on all sites. The proportion of blades to be found on the central Anatolian sites is never as high as that found at Çatal Hüyük, and Ilıcınar provides the highest percentage with 38%. İğdeli Çeşme is the lowest with only 3%. Other types of implements such as burins, sickle blades, borers, fabricators and firestones are also commonly found, and, in general, these bear similarities to those from Çatal Hüyük. Scrapers are also commonly found. The industry found at Tepecik-Çiftlik deserves special mention: although the projectile points are of Neolithic date, other types of implement resemble Palaeolithic types. Blades are very scarce on this site. In general, the chipped stone industries of the central

Anatolian sites bear marked similarities to that of Çatal Hüyük, but they are by no means identical. Since most of the sites were occupied after the Neolithic period there is always a danger that some material may be wrongly allocated to the Neolithic period, and this may account for some of the apparent differences.

Although the quantity of sherds of definitely Neolithic date found on the central Anatolian sites is small, a few general comparisons can be made. As might be expected from the location of the sites, Köşk Pınar and Pınarbaşı show the closest connections to the Konya plain earlier Neolithic wares; but later Neolithic fine wares, similar to those found at Can Hasan are found on a number of sites<sup>11</sup>. Considerable variation is displayed by the pottery found, and the uniformity of the Konya plain and Lake District is not paralleled in central Anatolia. No recognizably Neolithic pottery was found on Kayaardı Tepesi, but further north at Tepecik-Çiftlik the parallels with the Konya plain are scant indeed. The hole-mouth vessel is never predominant on the central Anatolian sites and bowls are more common. In many cases the material is too fragmentary to allow safe comparison of shapes. Many of the central Anatolian sherds are of a much lighter colour than the Konya plain types, but great variations occur.

All the sites described above lie in the southern part of the central Anatolian plateau; it is to be hoped that further intensive field work will lead to the discovery of sites to the north of those already found, thus presenting a more complete and balanced picture of the distribution of Neolithic settlements in Anatolia.

<sup>11</sup> French: *Anatolian Studies* XVII, 1967, 178 and Fig. 6 (seen in page proof).

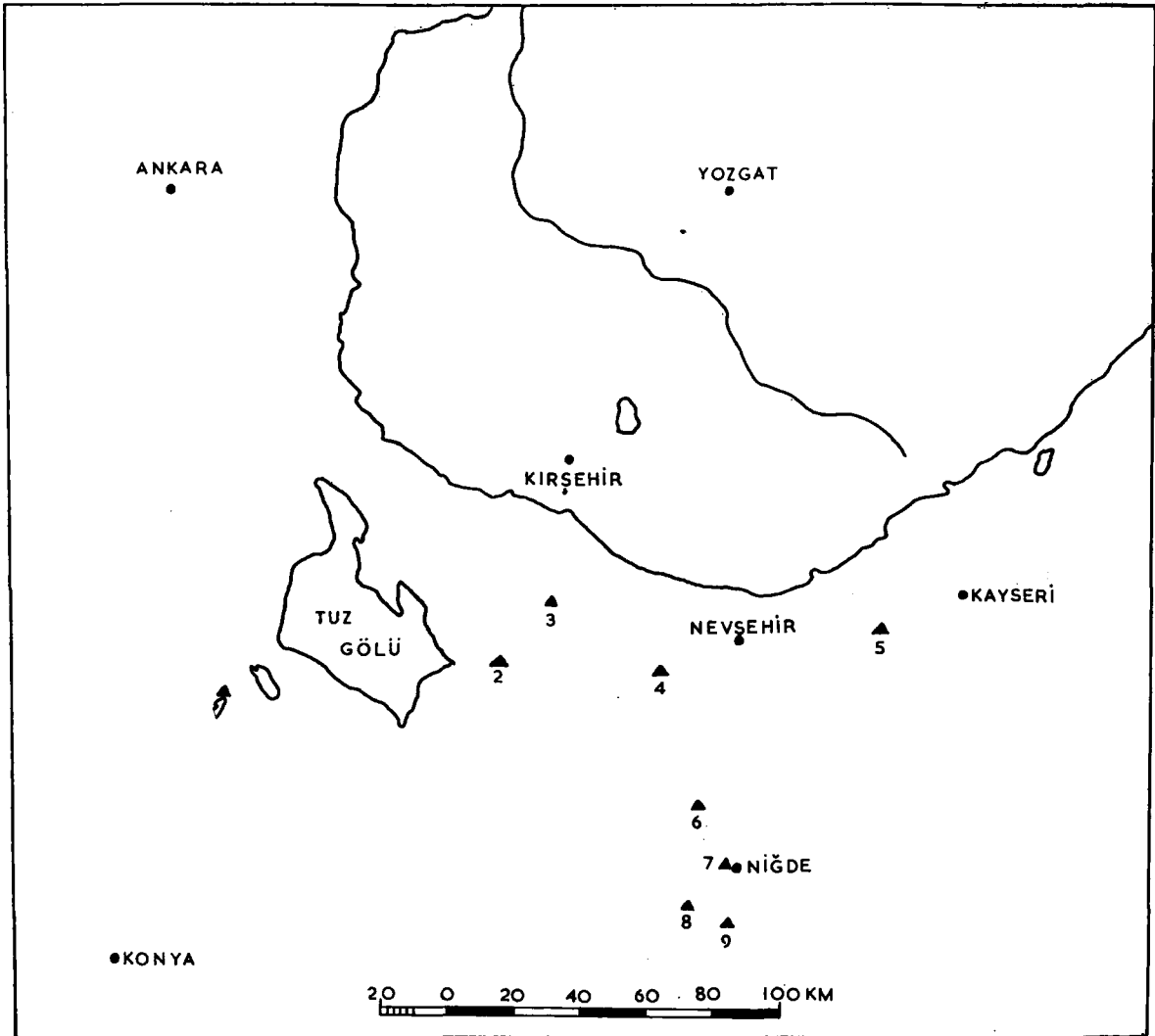


Fig. 1. Neolithic sites in central Anatolia,

1. Ilıcıpınar.
2. Sapmaz Köy.
3. Değirmen Özü
4. İğdeli Çeşme

5. Kumluk Tepe
6. Tepecik-Çiftlik
7. Kayaardı Tepesi
8. Pınarbaşı
9. Köşk Pınar