

TEH TEST EXCAVATION AT HÖYÜCEK,
IN THE VICINITY OF LARISA

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Höyücek, which is near the village of Helvacı, in the district (Kaza) of Menemen, of the Vilayet of Izmir, and in proximity to the ancient city of Larisa, is a small höyük among the vineyards and olive groves and is known by the name of Höyücek Tepe by the peasants. Höyücek, which is in the western part of the lower Gediz (Hermos) plain, is near where the plain meets the mountains covering the Foça (Phocae) peninsula and close to the point of junction of the Menemen-Foça and Menemen-Bergama highways.

After Mr. Hakkı Gültekin told us about the existence of a mound near the village of Helvacı we went there together. As the handmade potsherds we collected on the surface as soon as we stepped on the mound showed the existence of a very ancient culture here, we decided to make a test - excavation in this höyük.

This test excavation was made between the 19 th and 26 th of August, 1949, under the auspices of the Turkish Historical Society. In this brief first report we shall merely give the results obtained, having worked only for a week at Höyücek; as the clarification of the complete status of the mound necessitates excavating on a larger scale. We hope that the pictures we have appended to this report will give sufficient information about Höyücek.

At first we opened a test trench (Trench A) on the eastern slope of the höyük near the top. After finding the existence, *in situ*, of potsherds similar to those we had gathered on the surface, we abandoned this trench and opened a second trench, Trench B, at the bottom of the northern slope of the mound and

a third trench, Trench C, on the eastern slope. Trench C was at a lower level than Trench A and further south.

In Trench B, we descended to a depth of 3.90 meters with a breadth of 2.45 and length of 4.50 meters. In this trench were present remains of at least two building levels. In the upper part of the southern wall of this trench we encountered a thin layer of ashes (Fig. 7). But as we did not have enough time we could not follow this ash layer and learn its nature.

In Trench C, with dimensions of 2.50×9.50 meters, we descended to a depth of 3.50 meters. In this trench was encountered the remains of stone foundations without the mortar (Figs. 9, 10 and 11), representing three building levels. As we did not have enough time to extend the excavation and to follow these building remains we stopped the excavation at the depth of 3.50 meters. Below this level there exists at least as much cultural soil as the part excavated.

In trenches B and C a great number of potsherds were found. The existence of grit especially draws the attention in the clay of the handmade Höyücek ceramics. The pottery has been fired according to the known Chalcolithic and Copper Age (Troy I and II) techniques. Most of the pottery is slipped and burnished, but a small portion of these, especially the kitchen wares, are unslipped. Most of the pottery is, inside and outside, black or brown. From the view-point of color the brown ceramic is more variable than the black wares. There are also inside brown-outside black and inside black-outside brown pieces, but these are relatively rare. In addition, there are a few red burnished pieces and some specimens with black stains.

Among the forms there are bowls of Troy style, with broad mouths, simple profiles and indrawn rims (Figs. 12-15), tripod vases, which are again characteristic of Troy (Fig. 16), and jars (Figs. 17 and 24). The existence of many sherds with indrawn rims (Fig. 18) is evidence that this bowl type, which is frequently met with in western Anatolia, was also very popular in Höyücek. In addition to these, the pieces of a thick-walled storage vessel was found in Trench B.

The rims of the Höyücek pottery are straight, inverted or everted. Fig. 24, A and B, shows the beak-shaped mouth frag-

ments which are especially characteristic of the prehistoric cultures of western Anatolia.

The forms of the handles are very variable (See Figs. 20-23). Among these, besides knobs, depressed knobs, and ridge-formed lugs, there are long, pierced tubular or cylindrical lugs, lugs through which a rope was passed (Fig. 21), "Bandhenkel," forms, handles with an oval cross section, etc¹. The bottoms are round, straight, or concave. Most of the Höyücek pottery is devoid of decoration. In Trenches B and C only a few decorated pieces were found. The foot shown in Fig. 25, is decorated with six rows of parallel grooves. In a sherd from the belly of a pot there are seen two grooves (Fig. 26 C). There are, on the inner surface, straight parallel lines in a couple of the rather infrequently encountered potsherds with surfaces smoothed by scraping with something hard. It is probable that such regular, parallel lines were made for the purpose of decoration. In addition to these, two sherds with white paint on their external surfaces have been found. On an inside-outside black burnished sherd, found in Trench C at a depth of 200-250 cm. from the top, there are four white lines (Fig. 26B). On an externally burnished black sherd, found in Trench B at a depth of 130-155 cm., there are three white painted lines (Fig. 26A). These painted pieces are contemporary at Höyücek with the pottery of Troy I culture.

Dr. Tahsin Özgüç², who has studied the distribution of the white-painted pottery states that this ceramic type, besides being found at Troy I, exists in Thermi, Yortan and Kusura A and that although it appears in the Chalcolithic Age, in Yortan it has survived somewhat longer. Again, according to Dr. Özgüç the white painted pottery has been found in central Anatolia at Karaoğlan IV³, corresponding to the Copper Age, and in the

¹ A handle similar to the lid-handle shown by letter «A» among the handles in Fig. 22 was found in 1949 at Büyük Güllücek, excavated under the direction of Dr. Hamit Koşay. We express our thanks to Dr. Koşay for allowing us to mention this handle found at that excavation, in which Dr. M. Şenyürek had participated as an anthropologist.

² Tahsin Özgüç: Birinci Truva'yı kim kurdu? Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi, Vol. II, No. 5, 1944. pp. 698-702.

³ As is stated by Dr. Özgüç, (op. cit., p. 699) at Karaoğlan the white paint is on the inner surface of the wares.

Samsun region in the Copper Age stratum of Dündartepe and in Kaledoruğu and Tekeköy, which are also of Copper Age date. Dr. Tahsin Özgüç⁴, records that in the Chalcolithic level of Dündartepe two white painted pieces were encountered. In addition to these, in the Chalcolithic stratum of Büyük Güllücek, in the vicinity of Alaca Höyük, white painted ceramic also was found⁵. In a test excavation made by Dr. Kılıç Kökten in 1949 at Kaymaktepe⁶, in the vicinity of Ayvalık the white painted pottery was also encountered. Thus, the two pieces found at Höyücek extends the area of distribution of the white painted black ceramic to the vicinity of İzmir.

Fig. 27 A shows a bone awl. It is probable that the incisor tooth of an animal with the tip of the root broken, seen in Fig. 27 B, was also used as an awl. An incisor tooth used as an awl or a pin was found at Kumtepe I a.⁷ For ornaments we possess only a perforated stone (Fig. 27 C) and a ring made of shell (Fig. 27 D), which may have been used as part of a necklace or a bracelet. At Höyücek two biconical spindle whorls (Fig. 27 E, F) were found. The use of the terra-cotta piece shown in Fig. 24 C is not definitely known. As it resembles closely a form from Thermi⁸; it may also be, as is the case with the Thermi specimen, part of a hook.

In this test excavation no metal specimens were found. As the copper implements, though only a few, were found in the contemporary Troy I culture⁹ and in the oldest layers of Thermi¹⁰, we are inclined to attribute the lack of metal pieces in

⁴ Tahsin Özgüç: *op. cit.* p. 701.

⁵ Hamit Koşay and Mahmut Akok: *Büyük Güllücek araştırmaları üzerine ilk rapor. (Preliminary report on test excavations at Büyük Güllücek). Belleten, Vol. XII, No. 46, 1948. p. 475 and p. 483*

⁶ I. Kılıç Kökten: *1949 yılı Tarih öncesi araştırmaları hakkında kısa ön rapor (Recherches de Prehistoire faites en 1949). Belleten, Vol. XIII, No. 52, 1949. p. 316.*

⁷ See: Hamit Koşay and Jerome Sperling: *•Troas• da dört yerleşme yeri. 1936, İstanbul. Fig. 22, No. K-13.*

⁸ Winifred Lamb: *Excavations at Thermi in Lesbos. 1936, Cambridge. Plate XXIII, No. 30-51.*

⁹ C. M. Blegen: *Truva hafriyatı, 1932—1937. İkinci Türk Tarih Kongresi. Türk Tarih Kurumu yayınlarından, Ser. IX, No. 2, 1943, İstanbul. p. 769.*

¹⁰ Winifred Lamb: *op. cit.* p. 165.

the excavated part of Höyücek to the limited extent of our excavation. On the other hand, many stone artifacts have been found at Höyücek. Figs. 29 A and B show two fragments of stone battle-axes, known from Troy and Thermi, and Fig. 29 C shows a small, polished stone celt which is much worn. In addition there are a number of scrapers and blades of flint and obsidian. Some of these are shown in Fig. 28.

In Trench B, at a depth of 145 cm., a stone mortar was found. The external diameter of this is 26 cm. and its internal diameter 17 cm. (Fig. 30). The stone mortar and the round stone shown in Fig. 31, were obtained from the owner of Höyücek, who says that it had been found in the mound. The maximum external diameter of this second mortar which was not found in the dig is 32.6 cm. and it is not so regular as the specimen found in the excavation.

In Trenches B and C, in addition to the animal bones (Fig. 32), a large number of sea shells (Fig. 33) were found. That is, the ancient inhabitants of Höyücek have consumed as food both mammals and shell-fish. Although no fish bones were found, it is possible that they also had fish on their diet.

In this text excavation no plant seeds were discovered. But the lack of these may just be because of the limited extent of the trenches. Furthermore, no human skeletons were encountered.

The excavated part of Höyücek represents Troy I and II cultures. It appears that Höyücek was deserted during Troy II. The existence of a culture older than Troy I underneath this mound is a possibility, but only future excavations will show whether there is an older culture in the lower, still undug, part of the höyük or not. For this reason we hesitate to say anything definite at this stage.

As for the relation of Höyücek to the sea in prehistoric times, it is known that the plain extending from Menemen to the sea has been filled in by the river Gediz (Hermos). Professor Besim Darkot¹¹ states on this matter: "*The river Gediz, after coming*

¹¹ Besim Darkot: Coğrafi araştırmalar I. İstanbul Üniversitesi yayınlarından No. 62. Edebiyat Fakültesi, Coğrafya Enstitüsü neşriyatı, No. 4, 1938, İstanbul. p. 37. (*This passage has been translated by authors*).

out of its wide valley through the narrow gorge (Menemen Gorge) between Manisa mountain and the Dumanlı mountain, has spread a wide delta in the Gulf of İzmir. This delta has gained the region between the Foça peninsula and Karşıyaka of İzmir from the sea and has incorporated the several islands (Üçtepeler) in this region and has tied them to the land. . . The classical writers had also supposed that this plain had been filled by the Gediz river¹². Cadoux¹³ states also that at one time "the northwestern portion" of the Gulf of İzmir had been called "The Hermeian Gulf". As it is known that the plain of Menemen has been filled by the river Gediz, at the time when the Höyücek culture was flourishing, that is, approximately in the latter part of the 4th and in the 3rd millenium B. C.,¹⁴ it is probable that the sea was nearer to Höyücek than it is now. But the place where the northern shore of the Gulf of İzmir stood at that period, is not yet definitely known.

Other Prehistoric Settlements Near Höyücek

After completing the excavation at Höyücek, we toured the vicinity to see whether other prehistoric settlements existed in the neighborhood. During our tour we gathered potsherds, numerous flint artifacts and sea shells, resembling those from Höyücek, on property belonging to Mr. Hafız Rifat and Mr. Sabri Öztürk on the eastern slope and on top of Araptepe which is located one or two kilometers west of Höyücek. Some of the potsherds and flint artifacts are shown in Figs. 36 and 37. On this hill grey, black, brown and red slipped sherds were found. However, among these surface finds the red potsherds were more numerous than the others. The handles gathered are of long, pierced, tubular or cylindrical form. Although, Troy I ceramic is present among these surface finds, most of them belong to Troy II culture.

¹² See : W. M. Ramsay : Contributions to the History of southern Aeolis. The Journal of Hellenic Studies, Vol. II, 1881. p. 275.

¹³ C. J. Cadoux : Ancient Smyrna, 1938, Oxford. p. 18.

¹⁴ Troy I culture corresponds to approximately 3200 - 2600 B. C. and Troy II culture to 2600 - 2300 B. C. See : Tahsin Özgüç : Öntarihte Anadolu Kronolojisi. Belleten, Vol. IX, No. 35, 1945.

From Araptepe we passed on to Bekirler-tepe, which is nothing but a continuation of the former. On the surface of this hill, containing the remains of a wall on its eastern slope and two column fragments at its eastern foot, we gathered flint artifacts and potsherds. Amongst the Archaic, Hellenistic, Roman and doubtful Byzantian potsherds gathered there are some pierced tubular, but rather short, lugs. The handmade, red slipped potsherds gathered here correspond to Troy II culture. The relatively well-made flint artifacts from Araptepe and Bekirler-tepe probably belong to Troy I and II cultures.

During this excursion we gathered a few flint pieces and some Hellenistic potsherds on Çakmaktepe which is somewhat north of Höyücek, immediately east of the Menemen—Bergama highway and on the country road going from the highway to the village of Şehit Kemal (Fig. 40). As we did not find any ceramic earlier than the Hellenistic Age at this place, there is no evidence showing that the few flint pieces found here are older than the Hellenistic period.

As for the earlier prehistoric finds in this region, in addition to the brown, burnished wares of the Yortan type¹⁵ found at Çandarlı (Pitane), three stone idols were found at Cyme¹⁶, and ancient pottery, which has not yet been definitely dated, on the citadel of Larisa¹⁷. In addition to these in the Bayraklı (Ancient İzmir) excavation, made under the direction of Professor Dr. Ekrem Akurgal and Mr. John Cook, director of the British Institute of Archaeology in Athens, Troy I and Troy II pottery was found.

¹⁵ (a) W. Dörpfeld, A. Ippel, P. Schazmann, G. Darier, S. Loeschke: Die Arbeiten zu Pergamon, 1910-1911. Mitteilungen des Kaiserlich Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Athenischer Abteilung. Band XXXVII, 1912, pp. 404-405; (b) Kurt Bittel: Prähistorische Forschung in Kleinasien. Istanbuler Forschungen. Band 6, 1934. İstanbul. p. 123.

¹⁶ Kurt Bittel: op. cit. p. 130.

¹⁷ For the dating of this ceramic see: (a) J. Boehlau: Larisa hafriyatı hakkında rapor. İlkbahar 1932. Türk Tarih, Arkeologya ve Etnografya Dergisi, No. 1, 1933. p. 108. (b) Kurt Bittel: op. cit. pp. 94, 115 and 123. (c) J. Boehlau and Karl Schefold: Larisa am Hermos. Vol. I, 1940. Berlin, p. 15. (d) Hel-muth Th. Bossert: Altanatolien, 1942. Berlin. p. 26.

Red and grey monochrome pottery of the second millenium B. C. was also found here¹⁸.

The investigations we have made at Höyücek and its vicinity indicate that this region is very rich from the view-point of Troy I and II cultures and that the excavations to be made here, will throw additional light on the prehistory of the İzmir region.

¹⁸ Ekrem Akurgal: Bayraklı Kazısı. Ön rapor (Bayraklı. Erster vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Alt-Smyrna). Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi, Vol. VIII, No. 1-2, 1950. pp. 1-51 and pp. 52-97.

FIGURES

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Fig. 3: Höyücek seen from the south.
Fig. 4: Larisa viewed from Höyücek.
Fig. 5: Larisa viewed from the vicinity of Höyücek.
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Fig. 7: Höyücek. Ash layer in the upper part of Trench B.
Fig. 8: Höyücek. Trench B.
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Fig. 29: Höyücek. Stone axes.
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Fig. 31: Höyücek. The mortar and the round stone obtained from the villager.
Fig. 32: Höyücek. Remains of some carnivorous and herbivorous animals.
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Fig. 38: Bekirlertepe. Stone artifacts and potsherds.
Fig. 39: The fragment of column beside the fountain at the foot of the eastern slope of Bekirlertepe. Another fragment of a column stands within the fountain.
Fig. 40: Çakmaktepe. Flint pieces and Hellenistic potsherds.