

## Spiral wall motifs reveal Çatalhöyük migration

In the course of an excavation project currently under way at Çatalhöyük, researchers have recently discovered a burial chamber and wall paintings that echo spiral motifs first seen on ancient seals and kitchen utensils.

Çatalhöyük is a 9,000-year-old Neolithic site in central Turkey that displays evidence of animal domestication and agricultural activities and is considered to be one of the first permanent community settlements.

The excavation is sponsored by Boeing and Yapı Kredi and is led by Professor Ian Hodder, who has been conducting the excavations since 1993 in order to better understand how and why people first domesticated plants and animals and established cities.

More than 100 experts from various disciplines and archaeologists from the US, England and Poland have been working jointly in laboratories next to the excavation site.

Archaeologist Banu Aydınoğlugil, an assistant on the Çatalhöyük excavation, noted that the most significant difference of Çatalhöyük from other Neolithic sites is the presence of preserved reliefs and pictures on the walls.

### Strong archaeological interest in Çatalhöyük

Aydınoğlugil stated that Çatalhöyük is very popular among archaeologists around the world and that many archaeologists are eager to conduct excavations here. Saying that Çatalhöyük displays urban planning and an egalitarian societal structure, Aydınoğlugil described the site: "The houses in Çatalhöyük were made of sun-dried brick and there were doors and roofs on these houses. The houses were adjacent and no house was superior to another, which can be indicated as a sign of their egalitarian structure of society. They did not have a leader and they lived in peace."

In Çatalhöyük, only 5 percent of which has been excavated up to now, a group of archaeologists from Poland's Poznan University recently discovered the first burial chamber at the site.

Dr. Arek Marciniak, an archaeologist from a Polish excavation team, said that they came across skeletons buried in the floor of the room and they were quite happy to see a specially designed burial chamber for the first time. Marciniak also said: "On the walls of this room we saw some motifs, which we first thought to have been carved out by a bone. We saw spiral motifs that we had seen on seals and kitchen utensils before. We predict that these motifs on the walls are the source of the motifs that are used on kitchen utensils."

Marciniak highlighted that they had seen these motifs on seals and kitchen utensils that were found in mounds in Central Anatolia. "What is more important is that the objects bearing these motifs will be analyzed and thus we can maybe find the migration routes of people living in Çatalhöyük. This might be a step forward to shedding light on the adventure of humanity in the world," said Marciniak.



Motifs discovered in the wall paintings may shed light on the migration routes of the people who lived in Çatalhöyük, a 9,000-year old Neolithic site.