

## CHAPTER TWO

# A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THE CENTRAL ANATOLIAN LATE NEOLITHIC: THE TPC AREA EXCAVATIONS AT ÇATALHÖYÜK EAST

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### Introduction

The Late Neolithic in the Near East is a major threshold in the development of farming communities. It is marked by a transformation of the major constituent elements of the Neolithic revolution, creating conditions for strengthening and consolidating local groups and providing prerequisite foundations for their spread across vast areas. The new mode of existence comprised individualized and autonomous social units, integrated character of arable-husbandry economy, pastoralism, and occupation of forest and coastal areas as well as the creation of sacral landscape (see Marciniak 2015, in preparation).

The ongoing work in the upper strata at Çatalhöyük East has significantly contributed to a better understanding of this important period in the history of the Near East. The last half century of the Çatalhöyük East occupation corresponds to Mellaart Levels III-0, South P-T, North G-J Levels, Summit, KOPAL, IST, TP-M to TP-R and TPC (see Hodder, 2014c: Fig. 1, Table 1). These are dated to the period ca. 6500-5950 cal BC. However, a correspondence between these different excavation areas (1960s and 1993-2000s) has not yet been systematically scrutinized. The period witnessed dynamic changes in different domains and can be divided into (i) early Late Neolithic (6500–6250 cal BC) and (ii) the late phase of the Late Neolithic (ca. 6250-5950 cal BC). The top levels in the South sequence (Q-T) have been dated to the period 6400-6300 cal BC (Hodder 2014: s. 4, Table 1), while the bottom of the TP Area to the period around 6300 cal BC (Marciniak et. al. 2015a: 169).

The first round of excavations on the top of the southern eminence of the East Mound was carried out in the years 2001–2008 in an area known as the Team Poznań (TP) Area. It was conducted by a joint expedition of Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznań and University of Gdańsk, and directed by Lech Czerniak and myself. This work revealed significant change in different domains of the local community, as compared to the pattern characterizing the period that may be labelled classic Çatalhöyük. These comprised, among other things, settlement layout, house architecture, burial practices, human-animal relations, lithics procurement and technology, and pottery production and use. The excavated levels were named by letters, starting from TP-M, the oldest Neolithic level, to TP-R, marking the final Neolithic sequence. Thanks to this work we know that the mound was finally abandoned in the first decades of the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium cal BC (e.g. Marciniak and Czerniak 2007, 2012; Marciniak et al. 2015a).

The work on the Late Neolithic at Çatalhöyük is now carried out in the new excavation zone named the TP Connection Area (TPC), located in the previously unexplored area on the SW slope of its southern prominence. It is placed between the TP Area and Mellaart Area A to the east and north and South Area to the west and south. TPC trenches were hence set up south of Mellaart's Area A, where remains of buildings assigned to Level I and III were discovered in the 1960s. It is also worth mentioning that Level III in Area A is represented by two buildings designated by Mellaart as shrines (Shrine 1, "Hunting Shrine," and Shrine 8). The most northern part of the TPC Area is located where Buildings 4 and 5 from Level III (according to Mellaart's scheme) were located. It is also placed as close as possible to the South shelter's southeastern corner and its eastern edge, where Building 10 and several associated exterior spaces were excavated in past years (Kotsakis 1996, 1997; Jonsson 2003).

The work in the TPC<sup>1</sup> Area commenced in the 2012 excavation season, and three excavations seasons have been carried out to date. They are conducted within the Çatalhöyük Research Project (see e.g. Hodder 2014) as a project of Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznań directed by the author. They are carried out in four new trenches. Trench 1 is 5 x 5 m and is located directly to the south of Mellaart Area A. Trench 2 is placed directly south of Trench 1 with an overall dimension is 5 x 6 m. Trench 3 is located in the southern part of the TPC Area. It is quadrilateral in shape, with the southern and eastern edges being 10 m long and the northern edge

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measuring 6 m in length. Trench 4, measuring ca. 8 x 6 m, is located in between these two sections of the TPC Area (Fig. 2-1).



Figure 2-1. TPC Area and other excavation areas in the southern part of the East Mound at Çatalhöyük (Camilla Mazzucato, revised by Gareth Cork).

The ultimate goal of this project is to connect the stratigraphy in the TP Area, excavated in the years 2001-2008, with the main stratigraphic sequence in the South. The corresponding goal comprises recognition of architecture, burial practice, pottery, and obsidian manufacture. They will make it possible to investigate changes in subsistence and the economic system, in particular whether the economy became more intensive, more integrated, and more heavily based on individual household production. These variables will be studied in the period immediately following the demise of the classic phase of occupation, delimited by the end of the South sequence (Building 10 in South-T), and the beginning of the TP sequence (Building 81 in TP-M).

The chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of major results of the work carried out in the TPC Area in the 2012-2014 excavation seasons.

## **The TPC Excavations in 2012-2014**

Work in the TPC Area in the past three excavation seasons was carried out in all four trenches. These excavations brought about the discovery of a complex Neolithic sequence as well as intense post-Neolithic occupation.

### ***The Late Neolithic Occupation***

The excavations carried out in the past three seasons made it possible to reveal a sequence of Neolithic buildings and features in three excavated Trenches: 1, 2, and 3. Altogether, remains of four buildings (B.121, B.110, B.115, and B.109) in Trenches 1 and 2, and two (B.122, Space 520) in Trench 3 have been unearthed to date. The work in Trench 4 conducted to date has concentrated on post-Neolithic occupation, and only yet unspecified remains of the Neolithic architecture have been revealed.

### ***Trenches 1 and 2***

The oldest structure discovered to date in the TPC Area is Building 121 (Fig. 2-2). (Marciniak et. al 2013). It was exposed in its entirety within the limits of the trench but not yet excavated. It is a relatively large structure with a suite of in-built structures and arguably a complex history of occupation. Its details may be difficult to reveal as it has been badly truncated by later occupation activities.

Only the eastern and northern walls were identified and exposed, as the remaining two extend beyond the edge of the trench. The eastern wall (F.7160) has been plastered and painted with black and white geometric design in the form of vertical and transverse sets of parallel lines (Fig. 2-3). The northern wall (F.7187) was also plastered and painted. However, its character is unknown as the wall was almost completely torn down by a large post-Neolithic truncation. The solidly built structure followed a division into “clean” and “dirty,” typical for the classic phase of the settlement occupation.



Figure 2-2. Çatalhöyük East, TPC Area. Building 121.

The house had five subsequently built platforms, a hearth and a bin. A large fire installation (F.7250) was placed in the center of the house. It was rectangular in shape with thick raised and plastered walls. The eastern part of its infill was composed of a number of burnt striations, full of phytoliths, seeds, charcoal, and dung. A small circular bin (F.7187) with plastered, concave walls was placed directly against the northern wall of the building. A small pit was dug into the platform (F.7251) abutting the building's eastern wall. It appears that a posthole was placed against the richly decorated wall with geometric motifs, which is a quite uncommon location. Five platforms, located in the eastern and western parts of the building, were not contemporaneous and are indicative of subsequent

reconstructions of its space. The house was then deliberately abandoned. Interestingly, shortly afterwards, it was temporarily used, as indicated by the presence of a fire spot and two adjacent pits of unspecified character in its fill. B.121 is dated to the period of ca. 6400-6250 cal BC, which appears to be contemporaneous with B.81 (TP-M level) from the TP Area (Marciniak et al. 2013).



Figure 2-3. Çatalhöyük East, TPC Area. Building 121, eastern wall with geometric decoration.

The following Neolithic structure in this part of the TPC Area is Building 110 (Fig. 2-4). Its preserved dimensions were ca. 8 x 6 m. The walls were made of solid yellow/sandy bricks. The eastern wall (F.3910) was constructed in the previously prepared foundation cut, a practice recognized also in the TP Area. It may imply some kind of deliberate construction practice in the late levels. The floor has not yet been reached, which may indicate that it either did not exist or was completely destroyed. The building was divided into two rooms by the E-W partition wall (Space 485 and 486). Both rooms were filled in with a fairly homogenous sequence ca. 1.30 m deep and composed of small striations indicating its long and continuous accumulation. As indicated by the character of the walls and elements of construction practices, the building

was probably contemporary to B.74 from the TP Area, which means it can be dated to the TP-N level (Marciniak et al. 2012, 2013).



Figure 2-4. Çatalhöyük East, TPC Area. Building 110.

A cluster of artifacts and ecofacts was found between the northern wall of B.110 and southern wall of adjacent B.111 (not yet excavated). It contained a large amount of animal bones, pottery, ground stones, shells, and phytoliths. They seem to have been deposited after both walls were constructed. This is a deliberate deposit of a ritual character, dated to the period of ca. 6350-6220 cal. BC (Marciniak et al. 2012). In particular, it contained almost 200 sheep bones (mainly astragali, phalangi, and metapodials) and two cattle horn cores. Around 30 per cent of them were flattened on one or both sides, which are known as “knucklebones” (Best et al. 2012; Jones et al. 2013). There was an extraordinarily rich assemblage of stones, both worked and natural. They represented a wide range of raw materials, including andesite, schist, greenstone (possibly diabase), limestone, metamorphosed limestone/marble, quartz, crystal, chert, and quartzite. In terms of forms, the assemblage was made of upper and lower grinding tools (querns and grinders). Debitage from the

production or modification of grinding stones was also found, as well as polishers, an abrader, a palette, small sized stone balls, unmodified pieces of crystal, limestone pebbles of different size, and chert objects. The production/modification debris more likely originated from different grinding tools, possibly from different primary contexts. They seem to represent all stages of production and use (Tsoraki 2013). A small jar of Dark Gritty Ware found in this context is a typical representative of the classic holemouth that continued to be used from the preceding period into the Late Tradition (Özdöl and Tarkan 2013: Figure 14.3).

Following the abandonment of Building 110, the area went out of use for some time. It was later re-occupied in the form of some kind of open space, as identified by a solidly made brickly layer with fragments of a packed floor (20256). After some time, the area again went out of use and was transformed into a midden (20232 and 20215). This makes it a sequence identical to that in the TP Area, where temporarily occupied B.72 of a light construction and the following open space (B.73) emerged after the abandonment of a solid B.74. This further supports the claim that B.110 and B.74 may have been contemporaneous (see Marciniak et al. 2015a).

A small area of *in situ* occupation activities was found directly above the open space and superimposed midden. Despite the fact that it was badly destroyed, but considering its character, it is right to attribute the activities there to a separate Building 115 (Space 491). The only preserved fragment comprises a kind of unspecified platform. It was built on a layer of bricks, placed directly on the midden (20213), and the following layer above was made of small pebbles (20207). The outer surface consisted of whitish plaster. This construction is almost identical to the floor of B.61 in the TP Area, the latest in that sequence. The “platform’s” western and southern face was lined from outside by a homogeneous silty layer (20198), similar to mortar or plaster. A fragment of a short E-W partition wall, with lining from the south, was discovered east of the “platform.” Two distinct superimposed floors were recorded from the northern side of the “platform.” They may have been remains of the room, possibly linked to Building 115. As it was only preserved in very small fragments, no details of its construction and layout are available.

The latest dwelling structure in this part of the TPC Area was Building 109. It probably respected both the size and layout of Building 110, its indirect predecessor. The walls were made of greyish/beige bricks of a poor quality. They were very homogenous in terms of their length—80–82 cm—and were relatively well preserved. This building is possibly contemporaneous with the latest B.61 from the TP Area and can be



tentatively dated to the Level TP-R. This preliminary conclusion cannot be further explored due to a profound destruction of the structure.

### ***Trench 3***

The excavations carried out in Trench 3 have led to the discovery of two solid Neolithic buildings. They are placed next to one another, with B.122 in the north and Space 520 to the south. B.122 is a large complex-style structure extending beyond the edges of the trench. It is composed of three spaces located within Trench 3 (Space 517, 521, and 493).



Figure 2-5. Çatalhöyük East, TPC Area. Building 122, Space 493.

Space 493 was a storage room of 3 m<sup>2</sup> within the perimeter of the trench with two small bins. It was built into the interior of the building following a destruction of some kind of structure ('platform'?) placed against its eastern wall. It is dated to the period ca. 6400-6250 cal BC (Marciniak et al. 2013). The room infill yielded a lot of botanic remains and several ground stones. Both turned out to be storage bins for barley grain (Fig. 2-5). The amount and preservation of the barley could indicate a quick destruction phase. In the west-middle part of the room floor a cluster of worked antler, bone, clay objects, and ground stones was found.

A major discovery comprised pure deposits of naked barley in two bins (30785, 30859) and in a small deposit (30871) immediately outside and between them. A large charred grain concentration and thick layers of articulated phytoliths represents a deposit of glume wheat (20703), preserved both carbonized and silicified and found in the adjacent room. This is the elongated “striate emmeroid” wheat, which used to be important in the Neolithic of Anatolia, Europe, and the north Iranian Plateau, but became extinct through modern cultivation practices. It has only been recognized as a distinct species for about 15 years. This find provides new details on some of the lost crop diversity of the Neolithic. The state of storage has implications for the organization of crop-processing, at least for this household. The bin finds of barley indicate that this was stored as pure grain ready for food preparation, with few inclusions of chaff or weed seeds (Fuller et al. 2014).

The final re-construction of B.122 involved inserting yet another structure (Space 517) inside B.122, which was placed against the wall of Space 493. It is preserved only in the form of small fragments of floor. It seems to significantly post-date Space 493, as indicated by a radiocarbon date from its floor (6230-6070 cal BC). Hence, it is unlikely these two rooms were used at the same time; Space 517 is a much later addition. Space 521 is another element of B.122. It is 0.65 m wide north-south, and 2 m long east-west and is placed east of Space 517. Its floor (F.7199) was plastered in the same way as the floor in the latter room. It may have served simply as a passageway. However, a great deal of barley on its floor is indicative of serving a similar function as Space 493 to the north.

Directly above Space 517 and only centimetres below the surface a series of four human burials was identified (F.3931 and 3961). These originate from some kind of building or burial chamber later than B.122, which was completely destroyed. Burials of an adult female and a juvenile of about 8 years were followed by that of an older adult female. The three bodies were then covered and left for some time before a later cut was made for the body of an adult male.

Evidence for Neolithic occupation in the remaining parts of TPC Trench 3 takes the form of several segregated spaces; all of them are related in some way to three large walls running east-west across, built immediately against one another (from south to north, these walls are F.3952, F.7171, and F.7176). They are composed of large rectangular mudbricks which are orange in color. They surround several large, walled, interior spaces that together form yet unspecified building(s). The largest of them is Space 520.

These elements of another Neolithic structure were clearly placed slightly below B.122; this may indicate some kind of terracing. Another E-W terrace was probably located along the slope further to the south. Its northern face was later used to construct the northern wall of the Hellenistic building, B.120 (see below), built directly against it. These examples may be indicative of a terracing pattern in this part of the mound and placement of a row of houses on subsequent terraces, all facing south. The terracing of the mound surface in the Late Neolithic would not be surprising considering that the buildings discussed were constructed on a significant slope. The Neolithic builders must have been forced to follow the curvatures of the mound.

### ***Other Late Neolithic Data***

The excavations of the TPC Area brought about a discovery of a wide range of artifacts and ecofacts. They have been studied to a limited degree, and only preliminary conclusions can be drawn at present. The dominant form of ceramics are straight lined jars with a very few S-formed profile forms. Unperforated lugs, referred to as “unperforated hooked lugs” are present in a small number. A couple of interesting vessels were discovered in different parts of the TPC Area. This includes a cooking pot (30886), the largest ever unearthed at the site. This vessel was 40 cm tall, 31 cm wide, and has a diameter of 24 cm. This is a light S-profiled pot typical of the Late Tradition from the later levels after South S and Mellaart III. Another cooking pot (20703) (Fig. 2-6) in the form of an oval bowl with four square feet and a basket handle was decorated with a motif resembling bull horn incisions around the mouth (Özdöl and Tarkan 2013).

Altogether six anthropomorphic and one zoomorphic figurine have been unearthed: (i) a headless clay figurine (30242.x1) with a torso showing a protruding belly and sway back, in a post-Neolithic layer of fill in Space 508; (ii) a figurine (30783.x1) from Space 516 with rectangular body shape, a non-differentiated head, a large broad back, and a delineated stomach and breasts; (iii) a figurine (30783.x1) with geometric breasts, a large, delineated back and stomach, non-differentiated head, and the arms disproportionate to body; (iv) a figurine (30242.x1) with a torso showing a defined belly and a sway back, broken at the legs, arms, and the head; (v) a figurine (20171.x1) from Space 486 with a beard and very prominent jaw area; (vi) a figurine (20215.x1) from Space 486 of a corpulent female with a dowel for a detachable head and the legs unnaturally folded at the sides; (vii) a large headless quadruped (30754.x1) with a stocky body and short

legs reminiscent of a feline, hollowed out underneath the torso (Meskell et al. 2012; Der et al. 2013; Nakamura et al. 2014).



Figure 2-6. Çatalhöyük East, TPC Area, oval bowl with basket handle and decorative motif of bull horns (20703) (after Özdöl and Tarkan 2013).

A total of 4,044 animal bones have been recorded from Neolithic contexts in the TPC Area to date. Caprines are the most dominant animals, representing 86.2% of NISP, with more sheep identified than goats. *Bos*—probably domestic—is very poorly represented, as are wild taxa. This seems to indicate that an economy was mainly based on sheep and goat husbandry (Daujat 2014). Detailed zooarchaeological analysis of faunal materials from Space 486 in B.110 revealed the fragmentation indicative of marrow extraction. The heads and feet caprine bones indicate a low degree of processing, which is unusual as compared with other Neolithic strata and is reminiscent of the post-Neolithic (Best et al. 2012).

Among the worked bone, a flute/whistle was found in Space 486. It was made of a caprine femur with two holes. A well preserved deer antler was found in Space 514, one of the best known from Çatalhöyük. It comes from an adult male. As its base has not been preserved, it is difficult to judge whether it was shed or collected (Jones et al. 2013).

Cereal remains are present in all of the samples; most prominent are hulled wheat glume bases and barley grain, followed by hulled wheat grain and free-threshing wheat rachis. Pulses appear rare compared to cereals. Sedge (*Cyperaceae*) seeds are found in a large number of samples. They appear to result from the use of sheep/goat dung as fuel and may, therefore, indicate a (varying) presence of dung-derived material across different deposits (Filipović 2014).

The composition of the majority of samples indicates that they are “mixed” in terms of crop type and plant part (e.g. combination of barley grain with hulled wheat glume bases). They represent a combination of residue(s) from food preparation—cleaning of hulled and free-threshing

cereals (glume bases, rachis, weed seeds)—often mixed with (other) fuel remains (wood charcoal, dung). Some distinct deposits of potentially primary origin have also been recovered with a more or less preserved “original” composition, thus making it possible to infer a discrete activity/process/event (Filipović 2014). The material from middens confirmed previous observations of increased *Phragmites australis* (common reed) in the Late Neolithic levels on the East Mound (Fuller 2014).

The anthracological studies revealed significant differences between charcoal composition in middens in comparison to the infills. Two analyzed midden units were made of a diverse range of taxa: juniper, almond, willow/poplar, elm/hackberry, deciduous oak, and tereb. These were similar to TP taxa composition (see Marciniak et al. 2015b). Midden deposits yielded a mix of twigs and debris from woodworking. At the same time, the infills were characterized by low diversity and were dominated by juniper and oak charcoal. Some juniper specimens were flattened along the tangential plane and had numerous boreholes, indicative of structural wood (Kabukçu and Asouti 2013).

### ***The Post-Late Neolithic Occupation***

The excavations in Trench 1 and 2 made it possible to identify a complex sequence of three pre-Hellenistic phases indicative of considerably destructive activities and some kind of unstable occupation. These were followed by two distinct occupational phases:

- (1) Truncation responsible for the destruction of the western wall of B.121 and a part of the southern wall of B.110, which was followed by construction of three solid ovens (F.3955, 7181, 7190) (Space 519). These are most likely pre-Hellenistic in date (perhaps Bronze Age), as two ovens (F.3955 and F.7190) got truncated by a Hellenistic pit (F.3934).
- (2) Large cut in the form of a large, deep, almost circular shape and easily distinguishable as a pit (F.7154) followed by a set of six pits (Space 508). It destroyed the central part of the southern wall of B.110, and the northern wall of B.121 and its northern part (Space 514). In one of the pits (F.7154) an almost complete skeleton of an adult dog was found. It was lying on its right side in an anatomical position. Remains of other dog burials were also found in F.7158 (Jones et al. 2013). The stratigraphic position of Space 508 implies

that it is to be dated to the period between the end of the Neolithic and the beginning of the Hellenistic period.

- (3) A series of large truncations from the pre-Hellenistic period made by pit F.3939, placed against the eastern wall of Trench 2, and by a large unspecified truncation (Space 507). It was followed by a longitudinal truncation in E-W alignment that destroyed top fragments of the southern wall of B.110 (Space 497) and then a large cut destroying a large section of the southern and western parts of the fill of B.121 (Space 516).
- (4) Hellenistic activities consisting of numerous pits and large structure.
- (5) Early Islamic burial ground with numerous inhumation graves.

### ***The Hellenistic Settlement***

The Hellenistic settlement is made of a large building (B.120) and numerous pits of different function. Its remains were recognized in all four trenches in the TPC Area. A large Hellenistic building (B.120), dated to 325-167 cal BC, was discovered in the southern part of Trench 3. The northern wall of the building (F. 3948) was placed directly on top of the Neolithic wall. The size of the building cannot be estimated as its parts go beyond the edge of the trench. Its floor was made of a grayish silty surface. Three distinctive and overlapping features, possibly bins, were found. Another enigmatic aspect of B.120 is an apparently interior wall (F.7150), which extends toward the east from the western exterior wall (F.3984). This probably served as a partition wall. The building was extremely burnt, but at one time the floor, walls, and the three bins were all plastered. The destruction and abandonment of the building were likely to have been sudden and concurrent events, effected by the fire concentrated in the northwest corner of the building which scorched and damaged walls F.3984 and F.3948 (Marciniak et al. 2013).



Figure 2-7. Çatalhöyük East, TPC Area, a bell-shaped Hellenistic pit (F.3934).

The other element of the Hellenistic settlement comprised a large storage area made of ca. 40 large pits (Marciniak et al. 2012, 2013; Filipowicz et al. 2014). They were distributed randomly across all of the excavated area with no spatial patterning. The pits were very diverse in terms of their size, shape, and type of infill. They could be best divided according to their shape into circular/ovoid and irregular. A majority of them were fairly shallow, with depth ranging from 0.10 to 0.30 m. Their function remains difficult to define. Some pits were much deeper, ranging from 0.60 to 1.25 m (Fig. 2-7). The most characteristic were the bell-shaped pits. These were elaborate constructions, possibly meant to keep foodstuffs for long periods of time. They had undercut sides, and their diameter at the top was smaller than at the bottom. They may have been lined with a solid clay layer. Their depth ranged from 60 cm to 1.25 m. The outstanding example is a very deep but relatively small pit (F.3921), probably a well. Based upon their stratigraphic position as well as by their shapes and locations, two chronological phases have been distinguished: (a) early Hellenistic, and (b) late Hellenistic. These pits are consistent with possibly Hellenistic pits excavated in the TP Area (Czerniak and Marciniak 2003, 2005; Czerniak et al. 2002) and in the upper layers of the South area (Kotsakis 1997).



Figure 2-8. Çatalhöyük East, TPC Area, the Seljuk-period burial with cut lined with mudbrick (F.3900).

### *The Early Islamic Burial Ground*

The final phase of the occupation of this part of the East mound at Çatalhöyük was a large early Islamic cemetery featuring inhumations, which is a part of the same burial ground identified in the TP Area, where 63 burials were unearthed (Czerniak et al. 2001, 2002, 2003). The Muslim cemetery was located on top of the mound and was in use for a long period of time, probably from the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> to the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (the late Seljuk period) (Kwiatkowska 2009: 129).

The excavations in the TPC Area in the years 2012-2014 brought about a discovery of twenty burials from the Seljuk period in a different state of preservation (Fig. 2-8). The bodies were buried in a supine, extended position with head towards the west and facing south. They possessed no grave goods or any grave inclusions. The burials appeared in three forms: (i) with cut and lined with a mudbrick wall. Bodies were interred in individual pits, directly in the ground with no coffin. The body position was supine, head towards the west, legs extended and right leg positioned on the lateral side. They were leaned against the northern part of the grave; (ii) niche graves with distinct grave-marker in the form of diagonally placed courses of regular mudbricks. The upper limbs were either slightly adducted or in standard anatomical position with the forearms in a pronated position; in a number of cases the hands were placed in the pelvic



region. This position of the skeleton is indicative of bodies having been wrapped in a shroud, winding sheet, or covering of some description; (iii) simple burials without any construction and shallow cut. It seems that this type of burial is especially reserved for children (Filipowicz et al. 2014; Knüsel 2012; Haddow et al. 2014; Marciniak et al. 2012, 2013).

## **Conclusions and Outlook**

Results of the three first excavations seasons in the TPC Area revealed a range of interesting features characteristic of the Late Neolithic. Thirteen radiocarbon dates available to date are very homogenous and date the studied sequence to the period between 6350 and 6100 cal BC. However, due to a severe destruction of the uppermost levels (B.109 and 115), it is possible that the sequence extended longer. Both the range of these dates and character of the settlement architecture implies that the studied sequence may have been in use as late as the TP Area, that is the very end of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium cal BC. This is irrespective of the fact that these structures are located ca. 3 m below the latter sequence. This should imply some kind of terracing respecting the shape of the mound. This kind of spatial organization seems to be recognized in Trench 3 where a sequence of buildings was constructed in rows. The results of the ongoing work also revealed a range of characteristic features of the Anatolian Late Neolithic. This is manifested in the sheer size of the buildings, presence of pebbled floors, construction of smaller rooms inside existing larger structures, as well as a probable lack of intramural burials and monumental installations. They largely remind us of arrangements from the top of the mound; however there are also some differences. The only exception is B.121, which resembles many features of the classic occupation at Çatalhöyük. They will be systematically examined during the next excavation seasons.

Future work will concentrate on the Neolithic strata in Trenches 3 and 4 as well as B.111 placed directly north of Trench 1. The excavations in Trench 3 shall involve reaching Neolithic levels below Space 484 while further investigating the Neolithic features within Space 493. The ultimate goal of the upcoming seasons would be to connect the TPC Area with the complex of B.10 from the South-T level. These investigations, along with the results of work from the TP Area, will contribute to a thorough understanding of different facets of this major threshold in the development of Near Eastern farming communities.

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