

4. The excavations of the TPC Area in the 2012 season

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The 2012 season brought about the beginning of the field work in the previously unexcavated area located in SW slope of the southern prominence of Çatalhöyük East. The trench was opened between two previously excavated and systematically studied areas, namely the South Area and TP Area (Fig. 1). This new excavation zone was named the TP Connection Area (TPC). The decision to open up the trench in this part of the mound was a direct consequence of the results of works in these two areas conducted over the last years. 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 and use, subsistence, landscape use, etc. in the period between the end of the South sequence (Building 10 in South – T) and the beginning of the TP sequence (Building 81 in TP-M).

Works in the early levels of the settlement in the South Area revealed that the neighbourhood community was a major organizing principle of society. It was indicated by the salience of clustered houses and by the asymmetric distribution of sub-floor burials between them. Some houses in these early levels had a dominant position in terms of access to ancestors and religious paraphernalia and performance (compare Bar Yosef 1989; Cauvin 1994; Hauptmann 2002; Özdoğan and Özdoğan 1998; Schmidt 2001), but they did not convert this predominant position into the control of storage, resources, exchange or production. These houses were integrated into larger neighbourhood associations involving economic pooling. Interestingly, in the upper levels of South area, there was less direct continuity as houses were rebuilt, and the pace of rebuilding quickened. These shifts in site formation anticipated substantial changes revealed in the uppermost levels in the TP Area.

At the same time, recent excavations of the upper Late Neolithic strata (c. 6300 – 6000 cal BC), the bottom of which is more than three meters above the uppermost building in South Area, conducted by Team Poznań in the years 2001-2008, revealed considerable differences in material culture indicating significant social and economic transformations of the local community towards the end of the Neolithic (Marciniak, Czerniak 2007). A residential pattern emerged with less densely-packed clusters of households and increasing amounts of open space (Düring 2005; Düring & Marciniak 2006, Marciniak 2008), and an apparent decrease in the importance of building continuity (Düring 2001). They began to control storage and production. These new arrangements made possible to establish a system composed of individual farmsteads characterized by solid economic footing and related to other farmsteads by communal and ritual activities performed at the regional level. The overall context of the process, its mechanisms, pace, and consequences have not been investigated to date.

Accordingly, the primary objectives of works in the TPC Area comprise a study of the development of houses in the excavated sequence in order to capture the emergence of individual households as well as corresponding changes in the economic system. Through time, rather than participating in a communal and shared resource, as seems to have been the case in the lower levels of the East mound, the economy became more intensive, more integrated and more based on individual household production. Accordingly, it is required to investigate whether the processing of different products (e.g. plants, bones, meat or milk) became most effectively achieved in domestic space that was also more controlled and private. The

specialization in different domestic activities and decreased significance of sharing will also be studied.

The excavation season 2012 in the TPC Area began on June 28th and continued until August 2nd. The goal of this year works, carried out in selected parts of the TPC Area, was to recognize and lift post-Neolithic structures, identify Neolithic constructions and strata placed directly underneath and start excavating them. In overall, we managed to excavate a number of late burials (probably early Islamic in date), Hellenistic structures as well as individual elements of the Neolithic and probably Chalcolithic occupation.

The works in this season began by removing fill left by Mellaart in the south most trench in the area excavated by his team in 1961 and exposing Buildings 4 and 5, dated to Level III (Mellaart 1962, Fig. 3). These works were carried out in two new trenches - Trench 1 and Trench 2. Trench 1 is 5 x 5 m and is located directly to the south of the Mellaart Area. Trench 2 was opened up directly south of Trench 1. Its overall dimension is 5 x 6 m.

The work in TPC Area in the 2012 season involved also excavation of the area adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the big shelter above the South Area. This area shall enable to directly link the two stratigraphic strands, as defined above. The works in the area were preceded by the GPR survey (see Campana this volume). Consequently, a Trench 3 was set up adjacent to the south-east corner of the shelter and parallel to its eastern wall. The overall dimension of the trench is 10 x 10 x 6 x 8 m. The works in Trench 3 began on July 16 and were carried out until the end of the season. The ultimate goal of this season in this area was to excavate all post-Neolithic features and layers and get to the Neolithic strata.

Relations of the TPC Area to adjacent excavation areas

The TPC Area vs. TP Area & Mellaart's trenches

As mentioned above, the TPC Area is located between the TP Area and Mellaart Area A to the east and north and South Area to the west and south. The aim of the excavation in the TP Area was the investigation of the latest phase of the East Mound occupation. TP Area is located immediately to the east of where Mellaart had excavated Levels I-IV. The area proved to be heavily utilised in the post-Neolithic period, which sealed the latest Neolithic levels identified as Levels 0 – II. Originally, a trench 10 x 10 m to the east of Mellaart's Area A, close to the top of the mound was opened (Czerniak *et al.* 2001). It was later extended 10 m to the west, including fragments of the area excavated by Mellaart in the 1960s (Mellaart 1962, 1963, 1964). During eight years of excavations over 2000 units have been recorded. They were assigned to particular buildings and spaces and those were in turn allocated to the phases of the mound occupation from the Neolithic to the early Islamic period. Mellaart defined fifteen separate superimposed building Levels numbered 0 at the top (located near the current TP Area), to XIII (in the deep sounding of the South Area). Following a methodology of the new dating project (e.g. Bayliss *et al.* in press), the new levels were defined. They were named by letters, starting from TP M- the oldest Neolithic level, to TP W- Islamic burial ground.



Figure 4.1. Overview of the TPC trenches in relation to the South Area, TP, and Mellaart’s Area A. Plan by Camilla Mazzucato.

TPC trenches were hence set up south of the the Mellaart’s Area A, where remains of buildings

assigned to level I and III were discovered in the 1960's. Generally speaking, Levels I-III can be best characterized by open areas and streets. 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). These comprise the latest wall paintings at Çatalhöyük.

It seems that late buildings were restricted only to the top of the mound. During the years of research, with the exception of TP Area, there were almost no structures discovered that could correspond to the buildings of levels 0-II (Barański 2011: 124). The correspondence between TP and Mellaart sequences proved to be difficult to define. However, the preliminary analysis conducted to date seems to suggest that Mellaart's Level I corresponds to TP-M, while Level II to the levels TP-N to TP-Q.

In the beginning of 2012 excavations, Buildings 4 and 5 from Level III (according to the Mellaart's scheme) were exposed in Trench 1. As the southern wall of Building 5 was not revealed in the trench, it was decided to open up Trench 2 directly to the south. A number of features identified on the Mellaart's plans were recognized while others were not revealed (see Mellaart 1962). A major difficulty in identifying features from the Mellaart excavations was due to impossibility of establishing which of them were excavated and which only exposed and documented.

The TPC Area vs. the South Sequence (B10 & the E Shelter Section)

Trench 3 in the TPC Area was opened in order to link the stratigraphy of the other TPC trenches - and thereby, the TP sequence - to the stratigraphy of the South Area at Çatalhöyük. Accordingly, it was laid 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; Regan 2004). This structure and its related spaces form part of the main stratigraphic spine used to determine the longest dating sequence at Çatalhöyük.

In order to plan the new trench in a way that we would be most likely to find features linking to the architecture in both the other TPC trenches and the South area, Ground Penetrating Radar of the area was conducted. Based on these results, a trench (Trench 3), quadrilateral in shape, was mapped with southern and eastern edges being 10 m long and the northern edge measuring 6 m in length. The topography of the trench slopes steeply downward toward the south. The southern and northern edges of Trench 3 run east-west, and the eastern edge runs north-south, while the western edge runs roughly parallel to the eastern wall of the South shelter (see Figure). The GPR results suggested that the northeast corner of the trench contained evidence of a structure that would relate clearly to the structures in the other TPC trenches. We also hoped to find some architectural features in the southwest corner that would connect to the South area's Building 10 and its associated spaces.

Building 10 has been associated with Hodder Level T, and its connection with James Mellaart's phasing is currently under analysis. Space 131 lies immediately to the south, and Space 126 lies to the east; both of these spaces represent exterior midden deposits. They are most likely contemporary with each other, and both postdate the construction of Building 10. Both Space 131 and Space 126, moreover, are Neolithic in date.

Results of the excavations in Trenches 1 & 2

The Neolithic sequence

The works in this season began by removing fill left by Mellaart in the south most trench in the area excavated by his team in 1961. Buildings 4 and 5, dated to Level III, were exposed. (Figure). It made it possible to identify their layout and compared with the Mellaart plan (1962, Fig. 3). No in-built features, as identified on this plan, were discovered in Building 4, and they must have been lifted in the 1960s. Particularly evident was the situation in the area of eastern platform with two burials placed underneath. They must have been excavated by Mellaart, as indicated by a deep depression in their original location. Similarly, the centrally located hearth was also lifted. Interestingly, however, remains of the platform in SW part of the Building was preserved. Building 5 was placed directly to the south of Building 4. It is now located in a newly opened Trench 1. Similarly as in case of Building 4, the Mellaart plan (1962, Fig. 3) is significantly inaccurate, in particular in terms of stratigraphic interpretation of the walls.

The excavations carried out in the 2012 season made it possible to reveal a sequence of Neolithic buildings, located mainly in Trench 1. As a majority of their features have not yet been excavated, their more detailed analysis will only be possible after completion of the excavation works in the coming season.

The oldest Neolithic structure in this area is Building 110. It was probably contemporary to B.74 from the TP Area, which means it can be dated to TP-N. Its three walls (northern, eastern and southern) were exposed and documented (F. 3910, 3911, 3912). They were made of solid yellow/sandish bricks. The eastern wall of B110 F. 3910 was built on the previously prepared foundation cut. It was later filled with mixed materials (20163). This is a similar situation to B74, in particular its internal Space 327, from the TP Area. It may imply some kind of a deliberate constructional practice in the late levels. This was the time, where buildings were constructed on midden. The southern wall of the Building was completely truncated by a deliberate cut somewhere after the end of the Neolithic (see below). The Building was divided into two rooms by the E-W partition wall F. 3927. The northern part was recorded as Space 485 while the southern part as Space 486. The excavation of the sequence of layers in between the walls of B.110 has not been completed and the floor of the Building was not reached in this excavation season.

The northern room of the Building (Space 485) had a narrow elongated shape. It was filled with a pretty homogenous sequence of deposits. The earliest layer excavated this season comprised a midden (20129) placed on top of what appears to be the room infill, itself placed between the walls of the room. This was followed by a layer of brownish loose fill (20127) and then greyish loose and very homogeneous layer (20124).

The southern part of this Building (Space 486) has also not been completely recognized. A sequence of infill deposits in Space 486 was significantly different than in Space 485. The earliest layer excavated in the 2012 season was a brownish and pretty homogenous and significantly deep infill (20155). It was followed by a homogenous whitish/greyish layer (20124), which also covered the northern room of the Building (Space 485).

All layers from Space 485 and 486 clearly postdates the abandonment of Building 110, and possibly also the later Building 109 placed directly in the same area (see below). The infill

deposits were very homogeneous and made of small striations indicating its long and continuous accumulation. Their character and stratigraphic position imply the Neolithic metrics. However, a number of post-Neolithic pottery sherds found in these layers make this interpretation doubtful and may indicate that in fact the sequence may have been deposited after the end of the Neolithic. However, if this is to be true, the room infill, accumulated directly after the abandonment of the Building, must have been deliberately removed somewhere after the end of the Neolithic, and the space later filled with materials of the later date. A definite understanding of this sequence is further complicated by the Mellaart excavations. The area was certainly exposed in 1961 but it is unclear which deposits were actually excavated and whether the discussed layers may in fact have been backfilled at the end of the excavations in the early 1960s.

The southern wall of the dwelling structures directly to the north of Building 110 was partly excavated in the 2012 season. In particular, it comprises Building 4, as defined by Mellaart. However, analysis of this wall revealed that the plan published after the excavations in the 1960s is inaccurate (Mellaart 1962, Fig. 3). In fact, this wall is actually composed of two superimposed walls, one placed on top of the other.

Moreover, the oven F. 3924 (Space 494) in central part of the wall – attributed by Mellaart to Level III – belongs in fact to the older building (Mellaart 1962, Fig. 3). It was constructed against the southern wall of the Building contemporary to B 110. It was certainly in place, when the wall of the Building from Level III, was constructed. This made it possible to distinguish Building 111 defined by three walls (F. 3923, 3925, 3926). It is stratigraphically later than both Building 110 and its contemporaneous counterpart to the north. As this area was not excavated in the 2012 season, not further details of this stratigraphic sequence are available at this point. These include, among others, an attribution of the features that Mellaart linked to Building 4.

A layer of midden (20255) between N wall of Building 110 and southern wall of Building 111 was excavated. A cluster of almost 200 sheep bones (mainly astragali, phalangi, metapodials), two cattle horn cores, basalt mace, worked bones, along with a cluster of the Neolithic vessels, was exposed. They seem to be deposited after both walls were constructed. This is a deliberate deposit of ritual character.

Following the abandonment of Building 100, the area went out of use for some time. It was later occupied in the form of some kind of open space. Its surface was arguably marked by a solidly made bricky layer (20234) with fragments of a tramped floor (20256). Interestingly, large clusters of phytoliths were found on it. After some time, the activity area went out of use and this area was used as a midden (20232 & 20215). In overall, the fragment of the activity area may be indicative of a temporal inhabitation of the space, similar to the open space revealed in B. 72 and B. 73 in the TP Area. Chronological position of both sequences have not yet been established. Interestingly, the activity area postdates a solid B. 110, which is similar to the sequence in the TP Area, where open space (courtyard) in B. 72 and B. 73 emerged after the abandonment of B.74. Interestingly, B. 110 and B. 74 seems to be contemporary.

A small fragment of *in situ* occupation activities was found directly above the sequence of activity area with superimposed midden. It was badly truncated from all sides making it detached from almost any stratigraphic sequence. Their analysis and interpretation is hence very difficult. It was truncated from the north by a deliberate cut some time after the abandonment of Building 110 and a huge post-Neolithic cut from the south (see below). However, considering

a distinct character of the recognized features, it justified to attribute them to a separate Building 115 (Space 491). The most important element in this sequence was a fragment of solid construction F. 3914, located in the section between Trench 1 and 2 (Figure). Its function is difficult to define but it may have been a kind of unspecified platform. It was built directly on a midden (20215 & 20216), deposited following the abandonment of the activity area (20234), itself used after the abandonment of Building 110 (see above). It is made of a number of superimposed and distinct layers. The base of the construction was made of bricks placed directly on the midden (20213). The following layer was made of small pebbles (20207) and it may have served as a make up of the floor, placed possibly south of this sequence. Interestingly, a fragment of older floor were mixed up with these pebbles. This indicates a destruction of older building that predated this floor. The floor had a whitish plastered surface. This construction is almost identical to the floor of B. 61 in the TP Area. The 'platform's' western and southern face was lined from outside by a homogeneous silty layer (20198), similar to mortar or plaster. Both the floor and the plastered surface were made at the same time. Three distinctively yellow bricks were placed on the floor. This was certainly a deliberate act but its significance remains unclear. A fragment of 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, but truncated as a consequence of later occupational activities. The whereabouts of this room is in dark. The walls, and possibly its floor, were probably excavated by Mellaart in 1961. The W-E walls, assigned by Mellaart to B. 5 from level II, may in fact have been an element of this construction (Mellaart 1961, Fig. 3). A small but distinct fragment of floor (20212), possibly later than the floor of the 'platform', was revealed from this side. The preserved fragment has a triangular shape 9 x 7 x 14 cm. Its surface was made of up to ten plasterings and the entire sequence was c. 0,3 thick. It was placed on top of a make up made of mixed silty layer c. 1,4 – 2 cm deep. The make up itself sits on top of a brick.

Further to the east of pebble make up (20207) and a fragment of white floor F. 3957 was found. It may be a floor fragment of the later room (above the pebble make up floor). The room was located south of the 'platform'. Fragments of an unspecified wall, later significantly truncated by the huge E-W cut, were revealed.

The 'platform' and both floors, indicative of two rooms, seem to belong to Building 115. As it was only preserved in very small fragments, no details of its construction and layout are available. Stratigraphically, this Building is later than Building 110 and it is certainly earlier than Building 109 (see below). This is manifested by the fact that the eastern wall of B. 109 F. 3909 truncated the eastern fragment of the 'platform' sequence of Building 115. Details of these stratigraphic relations will be revealed in the coming excavation season.

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 direct predecessor. The walls were placed directly above the earlier Building. The bricks 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. The two courses of bricks were recognized. This Building is possibly contemporaneous with B. 61 from the TP Area and can be tentatively dated to the Level TP.R. Building 109 was only preserved by highly truncated northern F. 3908 and eastern F. 3909 walls. Not a single feature, that may unquestionably be linked to this Building, was found. Due to a significant post-Neolithic

destruction of this part of the mound, the size of the walls and the building layout cannot be satisfactorily reconstructed. Building was most probably partly excavated in the 1960's in order to unearth earlier structural elements.

The Chalcolithic (?) sequence

The eastern F. 3910 and western F. 3912 walls of B. 110 were truncated by a huge cut of E-W alignment. It removed completely southern sections of both solid walls, the southern wall of the Building, an infill deposited between its walls (20171) following its abandonment as well as later B. 115 (see above). It is clear that this big truncation destroyed the entire Neolithic sequence, which indicates it is post-Neolithic in date. It may have happened directly after the end of the Neolithic or some time afterwards but certainly earlier the Hellenistic occupation (see below). In any case, it is almost certain that that all deposits, at the level excavated this season, south of the truncation are post-Neolithic in date. Considering its large scale, it may indicate that this cut must have been deliberate and related to some kind of construction activity. Its nature cannot be specified at this moment.

The truncation was later filled with diagonally placed layer (20284). It was pretty homogeneous, which indicates slow and continuous accumulation. A horizontal bricky layer (20285) was later deposited on top of this diagonal layer, implying a different depositional situation. Two small pits F. 3969 & F. 3968 of unspecified function later truncated this layer. They may have been Chalcolithic in date. However, this attribution can only be treated very tentatively as no radiocarbon dates are available at present. Similarly, pottery and obsidian from these pits have not yet been systematically studied. One of the pits was later truncated by a Hellenistic pit F. 3921 (see below).

The Hellenistic settlement

The next occupational level in this part of the TPC Area comprises a storage zone of some kind of unspecified settlement, probably Hellenistic in date. Altogether, 13 pits and 6 postholes have been recorded in the 2012 season. They were located in all parts of Trench 2, except for one large pit (F. 3907) placed in NW corner of Trench 1. All pits but one (F.3970) were excavated. 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. Most of them were easily distinguishable, while some others were quite indistinct. A majority of them were pretty shallow with depth ranging from 0,10 m-0,30 m (F. 3903, 3904, 3906, 3919, 3920, 3922). Their function remains difficult to define. Some pits were much deeper ranging from 0,60 to 1,25 m. The outstanding example is a very deep but relatively small pit (F.3921), probably a well. However, a majority of pits were not as deep as similar features excavated in the TP Area (Czerniak, Marciniak 2005).

Stratigraphic position of all pits is pretty straightforward. They truncated different Neolithic and post- Neolithic deposits and features. For example, old Neolithic walls and oven (20226) were clearly visible in the sections of two pits (F. 3934 and 3935). At the bottom of another pit (F. 3920), a well preserved whitish floor was revealed.

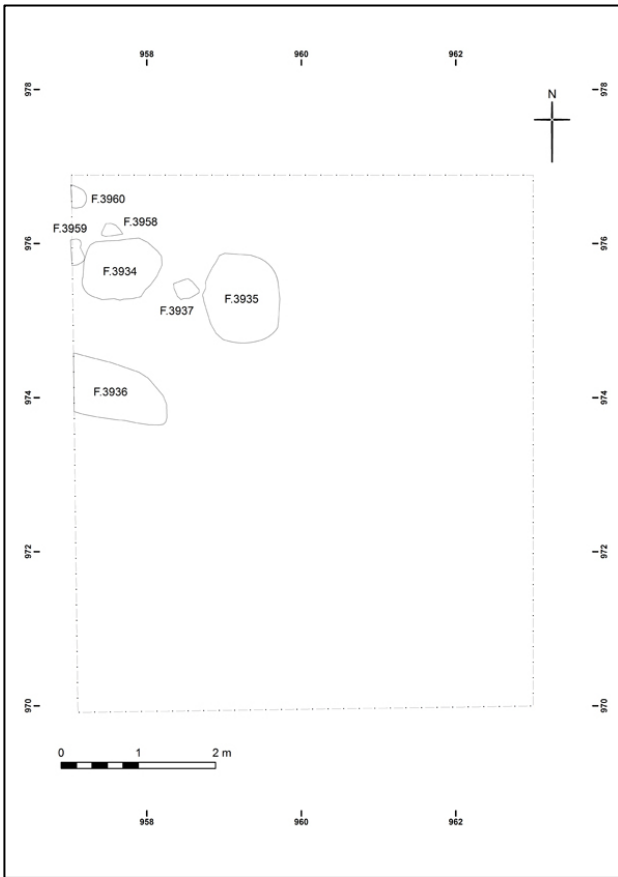


Figure 4.3. The earlier phase of Hellenistic activity. Plan by Camilla Mazzucato.

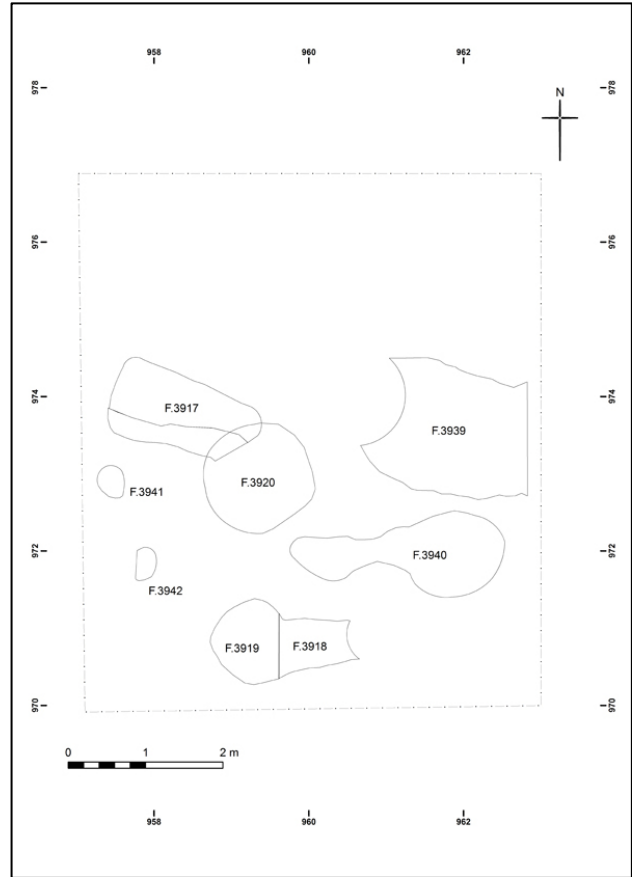


Figure 4.3. The later phase of Hellenistic activity. Plan by Camilla Mazzucato.

Interestingly, Hellenistic pits truncated each other in a couple of instances. E.g. a solid pit (F. 3921) truncated older pit (F. 3939). Based upon a stratigraphic position of the pits as well as their shape and location, two major chronological phases have been distinguished: (a) early Hellenistic, recorded as Space 495, and (b) late Hellenistic, recorded as Space 496.

The earlier Hellenistic phase (Space 495) is characterized by a cluster of three pits and five postholes, located mainly in NW corner of Trench 2, and one (unexcavated) pit F. 3970 in SW section of the trench. Two pits F. 3934 & F. 3935 were deep and circular in shape, while another pit F. 3936 was ovoid and shallow. Five postholes (F. 3937, 3941, 3958, 3959, 3960) were found in a close proximity to each other. They were small, ovoid, and not particularly deep but easily distinguishable. They might have been functionally associated with the pits, arguably serving as posts supporting light roofing above them.

The late Hellenistic phase is more complex and represented by more substantial features. Stratigraphic analysis makes it possible to distinguish two sub-phases. The earlier sub-phase is represented by two pits (F.3939 & F. 3940) and a small posthole (F. 3942). The later sub-phase is represented by three distinct categories of pits: (1) well-defined, circular 'bell-shaped' pits (F. 3919, 3920, and 3921), (2) irregular and shallow pits (two), and (3) rectangular, deep pit (one). Pits are distributed randomly across the excavated area and no spatial pattern was distinguished.

Particularly interesting were 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 pits were backfilled with different deposits, including very homogeneous, black infill (F. 3921), heterogeneous, ashy, multicolour (F. 3920) and sandy, yellowish and very loose layer (F. 3919). Similar bell-shaped pits were also recorded in a close proximity of B. 10 from the phase South-T (previously the Summit Area) (Kotsakis 1996, 1997). The most exceptional was pit F. 3921. This almost circular feature measured 1 by 1 m and was 0,70m deep. However, it is certainly deeper as its bottom was not reached during this year season. The pit was lined with a solid thin brown clay layer.

Surprisingly, very little artifacts were found in most of the pits. There is hardly any discernible pattern in their distribution across particular categories of pits. However, in some pits, a large number of pottery was found (F. 3920). In the pit F. 3907, a big fragment of large storage vessel was discovered. A considerable number of phytoliths was recorded in pit F. 3921, while the fill of pit F. 3920 contained big fragments of the collapsed clay construction.

A stratigraphic position of the large pit F. 3907, located in NW corner of Trench 1, cannot be reliably established at this moment. It is located in a significant distance from the cluster of pits in Trench 2. However, considering its size and shape, it is more probable this is the late Hellenistic in date.

The Islamic burial ground

Recent excavations at Çatalhöyük revealed that the mound was intensively occupied in the post-Neolithic times. It served as a large graveyard in the Byzantine and early Islamic, probably for the people living in the neighbourhood. In the 2001-2003 excavation seasons, a part of a large inhumation cemetery was discovered and excavated in the TP Area (Czerniak et al. 2001, Czerniak et al. 2002, Czerniak et al. 2003). It was initially interpreted as the late Byzantine in date (Czerniak et al. 2001, Czerniak et al. 2002, Czerniak et al. 2003). However, after detailed studies, including radiocarbon dating, it became clear that a majority of burials belongs to the early Islamic period (Kwiatkowska 2009: 129).

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 12th to the middle of the 17th century (the late Selcuk period). Altogether, excavations in the TP Area revealed 63 burials. Almost all skeletons were made supine east-west, with the head at the western end of the grave. There were also clusters of bones without any anatomical order, probably originating from destroyed graves. Two main types of graves were distinguished: (I) pit graves with niche, (II) and pit graves with no niche; with several variants (Kwiatkowska 2009: 132). The latter was the most popular type in the TP Area.

The works in this season comprised excavation of a number of late burials. Altogether, eight burials (6 adults and 2 children) were identified and excavated. Two of them were located in Trench 1 while the remaining six Trench 2. They were concentrated in the eastern part of both trenches and the graves seemed to be placed in rows. The bodies in extended position with their heads facing west were interred in relatively deep pits. They had elaborated superstructure in the form lining made of mudbricks around the pit circumference.

The graves truncated numerous earlier structures. Grave F. 3905 was placed along a solid Neolithic wall running N-S. The body in a supine position was probably against the wall, which may have been used as a kind of superstructure. Another grave F. 3932 (placed partially beyond

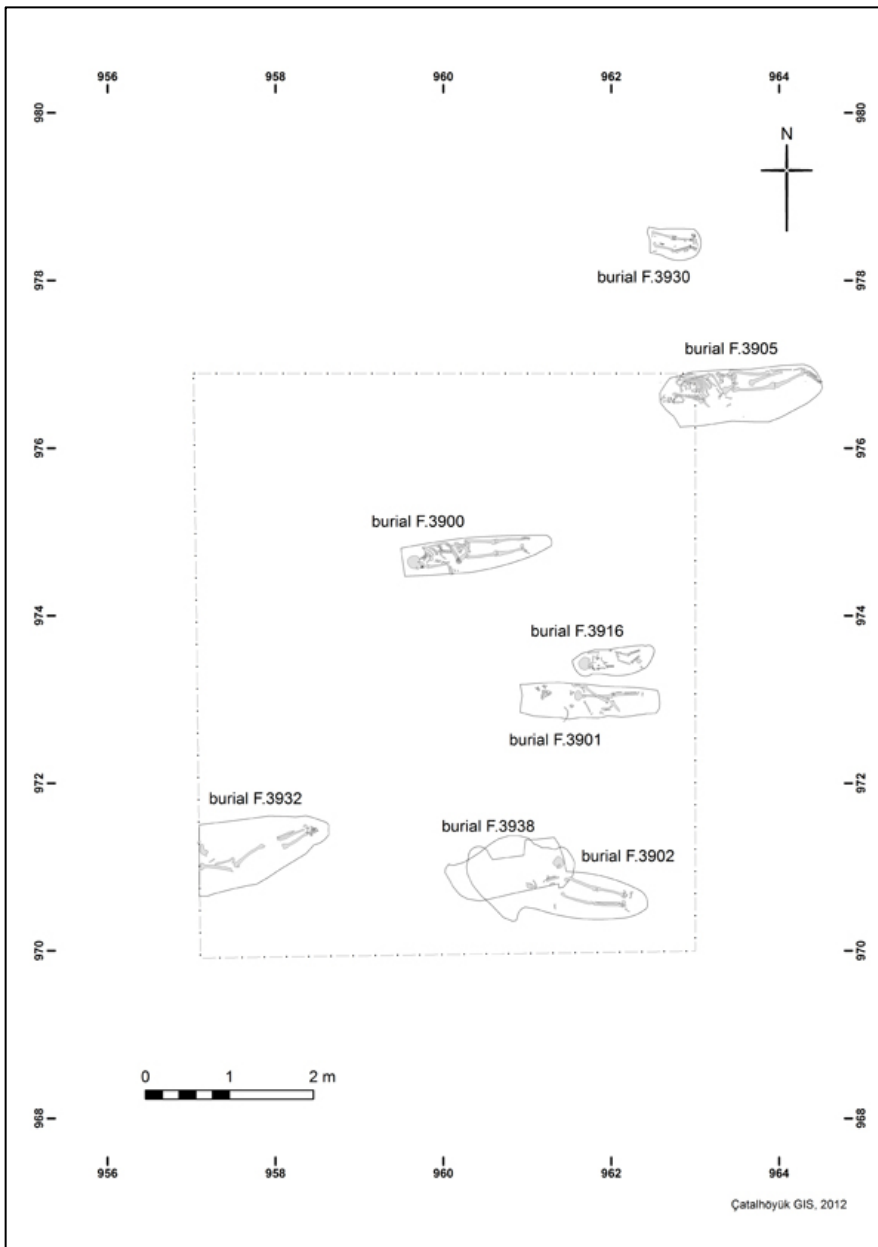


Figure 4.4. The Islamic burials excavated in the 2012 season within the TPC 1&2. Plan by Camilla Mazzucato.

the excavated area and hence only partially lifted) truncated the late Hellenistic wall (F. 3943) and the body was probably interred directly next to it. In one case, there was a direct stratigraphic relation between two burials. The cut of the burial F. 3916 of a 4-5 years old child truncated the superstructure of the older adult burial F. 3901.

Only two of the unearthed graves were in a very good state of preservation, and the skeletons were complete and in articulated position (F. 3900, 3905). The remaining skeletons were poorly preserved, probably due to post-depositional processes, such as animal burrowing. The grave F. 3902 was badly truncated by later cuts of unspecified character. A child burial F. 3930 was partially truncated and excavated by Mellaart in the 1960s campaign. The upper part of the body may have been

lifted up while the lower part remained *in situ*.

In general two categories of graves were revealed in the TPC Area:

(a) with cut lined with mudbrick wall (type IIb according to Kwiatkowska 2009)

This grave type is characterized by a pit lined with mudbricks but it lacks a niche. Three graves from Trench 2 had the very distinct mudbrick superstructures placed within a cut (F. 3900, 3901, 3902). The burial cuts were relatively shallow, cuts were usually rectangular with straight walls and sharp break. 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.

(b) without construction (type IIa according to Kwiatkowska 2009)

This is a simple grave with shallow cut. The bodies were also placed in supine position with head towards the west. It seems that this type of burial is especially reserved for children, as it is represented by two examples: F 3930 and 3916.

One of the burials F. 3938 was significantly different than the remaining ones. The cut was distinct but a cluster of scattered human bones (ribs, sacrum, fragment of pelvis, humerus) was placed in eastern part of the grave.

Unlike the North area (eg. F. 3632 - a burial with a hairpin, F. 3641-with a glass vase and F. 3689 with a glass vessel, copper earrings and iron ring) no grave goods have been found in any of the graves. A trace of ochre was only found below the ribs of the skeleton in F. 3905.

As indicated by the E-W alignment of the graves, the extended, supine position of bodies, with head towards the west and facing south, the graves could be probably dated back to the Islamic period rather than the Late Byzantine.

A number of shallow, irregular pits (F. 3904, 3903, 3906) have been interpreted as belonging to this phase, as indicated by their stratigraphic position. They did not truncate any of the burials.

Results of the excavations in Trench 3

The Neolithic sequence

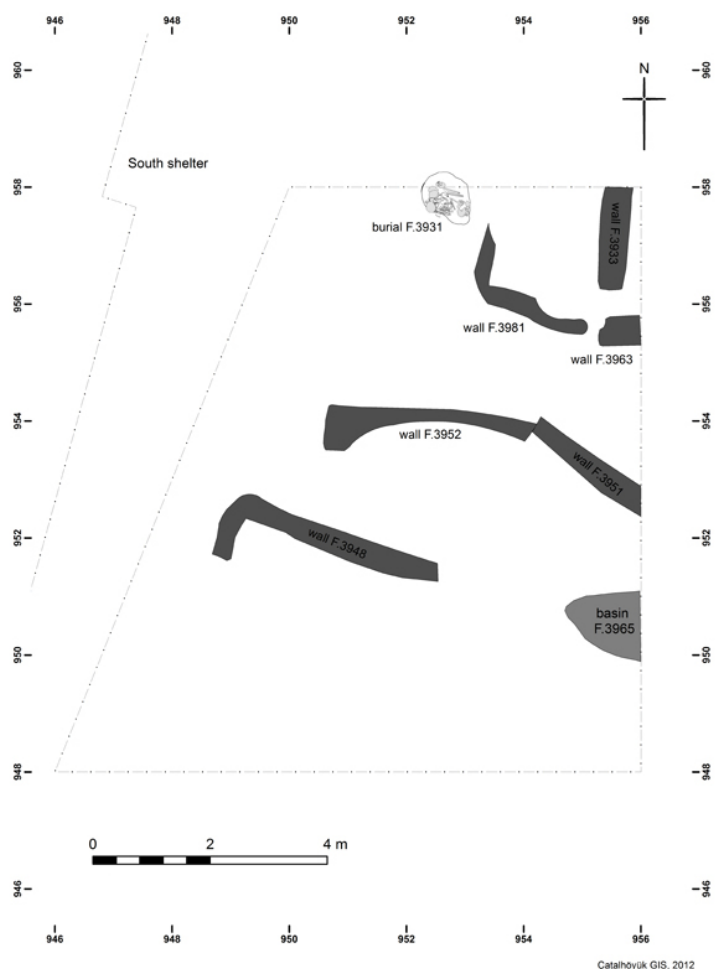


Figure 4.5. Overview of TPC Trench 3. Plan by Camilla Mazzucato.

As we continued to find late period artifacts and features in TPC Trench 3 until the end of the 2012 season, it was difficult to ascertain clear stratigraphic relationships that would allow for the secure dating of any of our features as Neolithic. However, only centimetres below the surface in the northern part of the trench, a series of Neolithic human burials were identified based on the number of individuals contained and the method of interment (F. 3931 and 3961). Altogether, remains of at least four individuals were recognized. It appears that initially, a cut (20258) was made for the burial of an adult female (20217) and a juvenile of about 8 years (20208). These individuals were allowed to partially decompose before being pushed aside to make room for the burial of an older adult female (20166). The three bodies were then covered and left for some time before a later cut (20257) was made, slightly damaging the skull of skeleton 20166. The body of an adult male (20162) was laid in this cut, and covered with a fill

indistinguishable from that surrounding the earlier bodies.

The uppermost cut for the burial dug into a wall F. 3981 curving from the northern edge of the trench, made of the kind of orange Neolithic mudbrick redeposited in several places in the trench and also exhibiting Neolithic plaster on its northern/western face. This means that both burial events must postdate the construction of this curved wall. Wall 3981's western edge meets the eastern edge of wall 3963, which extends to the east from the western limit of excavation and is likewise composed of orange mudbrick. These two walls delimit a round section of the trench's northeastern corner, which has been labelled as Space 493 (see Figure). It is segmented off from the heterogeneous layers to the south, containing features and artifacts from the Roman and Hellenistic eras. Everything within Space 493 appears to be Neolithic in date, including an extremely burnt mudbrick wall F. 3933, the uppermost courses of which were removed in the 2012 season to ensure the conservation of the rest of wall F. 3933 and the other features in Space 493. The bricks in the tallest rows of wall F. 3933 were bright pink, dry, and crumbling and at its top, wall 3933 was extremely thin—only about 20 centimetres wide. Lower down, it appears to become substantially wider. Much of Space 493 is in extremely fragile condition due to the burning that damaged wall F. 3933, although this burning postdates the construction of the walls and use of this space, since the evidence of burning extends beyond the boundary of Space 493.

The Post-Neolithic sequence

TPC Trench 3 contains a substantial amount of evidence for activity that postdates the Neolithic occupation in the area (Space 484). Excavation in the 2012 season focused on removing the heterogeneous deposits surrounding several late period walls and apparent Neolithic mudbrick deposits. These heterogeneous layers consisted of soil redeposited both by anthropogenic and natural processes as well as natural accumulation. These later contexts contained several pits and artifacts postdating the Neolithic occupation. One noteworthy find was a nearly complete Hellenistic vessel from a large layer covering the entire extent of Trench 3 immediately below the surface unit (20156).

One significant aspect of Trench 3, which strongly guided the excavation methodology, is the fact that many of the later features are located lower in elevation than the Neolithic features found in the trench, reflected in the slope of the trench. The counterintuitive discrepancies in elevation between these features suggests that the later occupants of the area cut into extant Neolithic remains to create a landscape of terraces, an interpretation which is supported by the appearance of two walls F. 3951 and 3948 in TPC Trench 3 with construction techniques suggesting a Hellenistic or Roman origin shelter (see Figure). Both walls are made of regular, square, light grey mud bricks that contrast starkly with the highly eroded orange-colored mud bricks of the Neolithic walls in the trench. Wall F. 3948 is at a significantly lower elevation than wall F. 3951, and appears to be built on a lower terrace than wall F. 3951.

Furthermore, the units immediately surrounding walls F. 3948 and F. 3951 show clear evidence of truncation predating the construction of the walls. Wall F. 3948 cuts into a section of redeposited mudbrick (20272), which resembles the construction material of the Neolithic walls in the trench (F. 3981, 3963, and 3952). Likewise, wall F. 3951 cuts into a large deposit of similar composition (20267), as well as a Neolithic wall F. 3952 underlying unit (20267) (see Figure).

Additionally, six extremely shallow pits were excavated in Space 484. None contained any finds of note, but the process of identifying and recording these features provided significant insight into the processes and patterns of erosion on the mound. All of the pits universally showed the greatest wear and damage toward their southern edges.

Final remarks

The first season in the TPC Area resulted in a satisfactory recognition and excavation of numerous post-Neolithic structures as well as identifying Neolithic deposits across different zones. The work in the next season will focus on excavating sequences in all three trenches to pursue the goals of the project. The works in Trench 1 shall involve defining the character of Building 110, in particular lifting remaining infill layers as well as reaching and excavating the floor and associated features. The works will also focus on recognizing details of the stratigraphic relations between Buildings 109 and 115. A sequence of dwelling structures, in particular Building 111, north of Trench 1, will also be excavated. The major objective of works in Trench 2 will be a removal of remaining post-Neolithic structures and strata and the recognition of details of the Neolithic occupation. Future excavation in TPC Trench 3 will involve reaching securely Neolithic levels below Space 484 while further investigating the Neolithic features within Space 493. The works will also be aimed at identifying features that might suggest a clear relationship with the midden deposits of Spaces 126 and 131, next to Building 10 in the South Area.

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