

TPC Area burials

Four Post-Chalcolithic burial features were excavated in the TPC Area in 2015. Most were heavily disturbed by later activity, both animal and human related.

F.7287, Sk(22740, 22746, 22759), Cut (22752), Fill (21046)

This was very disturbed burial located in the south part of Trench 4. It was located very close to the topsoil and destroyed by numerous animal burrowings. Three skeleton numbers were given but probably remains of more individuals will be identified in the lab. All individuals were incomplete and disarticulated. One belonged to a neonate Sk(22759). Some loose bones were also found within the infill.

F.7298, Sk(22778), Cut (30446), Fill (30447)

Feature 7298 is a niche burial of a child located in the southwest corner of Trench 4 (Fig. 5.17). It likely dates to the medieval Islamic period. The skeleton was oriented east-west with the head to the west. In 2014 the upper part of the grave cut was excavated and recorded as a pit by mistake. This was clarified in 2015 when the skeleton was found within the niche cut.



Figure 5.17. Burial F.7298 child Sk(22778) (Photo: Patrycja Filipowicz).

F.7358, Sk(21042), Cut (21040), Fill (21042)

Feature 7358 is the heavily disturbed extended supine primary burial of a young adult male. Many skeletal elements were missing or disturbed as a result of rodent burrowing.

F.7377, Sk. (21036), Cut (21034), Fill (21016)

Feature 7377 comprised only a partial skeleton with the remainder remaining *in situ* in the western section of Trench 4 in the TPC Area. Only the cranium, mandible, cervical, and uppermost thoracic vertebrae and the left clavicle were recovered. These belonged to a small female, an adult 20+ years of age at death. This supine burial was oriented east to west, with the cephalic extremity to the west. Upon careful removal of

the cranium and mandible, the atlas was found rotated on the axis such that the individual faced to the southeast. We have recognised that this orientation of the cephalic extremity appears to identify this individual as a medieval Islamic burial, possibly dating to the Seljuk period.

Related research

In addition to excavating/lifting, cleaning and inventorying skeletal remains from the site, the Human Remains Team also completed or continued a number of research projects during the 2015 season. These included student thesis projects. As part of the Laboratory's work on the state of the skeleton prior to interment, Alexandra Barmettler (University of Zurich) completed data collection for her Master's thesis on cutmark evidence at the site, supervised by Marco Milella. Barbara Betz (Ohio State University), supervised by Clark Spencer Larsen, collected data for her doctoral thesis on enamel hypoplastic dental defects in children. Barbara's research will contribute greatly to understanding demographic aspects and well-being of the buried population sample recovered from the site. In a nicely complementary project on mother and infant health, Belinda Tibbetts (University of Exeter), supervised by Christopher Knüsel (Université de Bordeaux) continued her demographic and palaeopathological analyses to more accurately assess the demography of in utero, term, and immediately post-term individuals to address the important issues of fertility, fecundity, and health status at the site. Barbara and Belinda also contributed extensively to the excavation and retrieval of human remains this year. Bright Zhou (Stanford University) collected data for his undergraduate final-year thesis on cranial porosities, both porotic hyperostosis and cribra orbitalia

The Team took advantage of being on site at the same time to complete several publication submissions. With Scott Haddow and Christopher Knüsel, Marco Milella finished and submitted "A Neolithic Irregular Burial in a Midden at Çatalhöyük (Turkey)" to the International Journal of Palaeopathology. In addition to continuing her analysis of dental non-metric traits for biodistance studies, Marin Pilloud with co-authors Scott Haddow, Christopher Knüsel, and Clark Spencer Larsen completed and submitted "A Bioarchaeological and Forensic Re-Assessment of Vulture Defleshing and Mortuary Practices at Neolithic Çatalhöyük" to the Journal of Archaeological Science Reports for an edited volume edited by Christopher Knüsel and John Robb (University of Cambridge) on funerary taphonomy. The KOPAL trench study of 2013 that involved collaboration between the Faunal and Human Remains Laboratories, and which has featured in previous archive reports, will form another submission to the same volume. Scott Haddow and Christopher Knüsel completed the write-up and submission of "Manipulation of Elements of the Cephalic Extremity: The Space 77 Skull (Cranium and Mandible) Retrieval Pit at Çatalhöyük", Turkey to *Antiquity*. Scott Haddow, Josh Sadvari, Christopher Knüsel and Rémi Hadad also submitted "A Tale of Two Platforms: Commingled Remains and the Life-Course of Houses at Neolithic Çatalhöyük" for an edited volume entitled *Theoretical Approaches to Analysis and Interpretation of Commingled Human Remains* due to be published in late 2015. Finally, Dorian Fuller and members of the field and Human Remains Team, completed and submitted a manuscript on the flax linen discovered under the burnt Building 52 northeast platform.

These publications derive from an on-going concern of the Human Remains Laboratory to obtain a better understanding of the state of the corpse upon burial. This has considerable importance for understanding the funerary behaviour as well as the social structural and organisational complexity of the once residents of the site. Eline Schotmans' first two-week field season at the site concentrated on sampling burial fills in order to better appreciate the burial environment after the deposition of the corpse. Eline previously identified the white substance found on the bones of the deceased as gypsum, a finding that echoes previous work done on the walls and burial platform re-decoration and maintenance. A pertinent question now is to try to determine if this is a geo-chemical product of the interaction of the corpse with the burial environment or rather relates to a form of corpse preparation. In an extension of this work, Bon-