A REINTERPRETATION OF THE FIGURINES FROM ÇATAL HÜYÜK⁽¹⁾

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Çatal Hüyük, located in the south of the Central Anatolia, is one of the earliest settlements of the village farming communities of the Early Neolithic period, which is dated ca. 6500–5700 B. C. (Fig. 1). During the excavations carried out there by J. Mellaart in 1961–1966⁽²⁾ many figurines made of stone and of clay were discovered, among many other important finds. The purpose of this paper is to propose a new interpretation regarding the meaning and function of these figurines.

I. General Interpretations of the Prehistoric Figurines

The small anthropomorphic figurines have been generally related to earth rites and mother-goddess worship. The archaeologists call the figurines mother-goddesses or their consorts, associating them generally with representations of such as follows; the mystery of fertility and natural creation, the prosperity and continuity of human generations, the protection of human beings and animal beings from diseases and disasters, the protection of the dead and the reign over the nether world, and the guarantor of the means of life, such as hunting, farming, weaving, and so on.⁽³⁾

Further, R. Duru suggests that these functions of figurines might have led to their use as cultic objects of magical rites for fertility, as amulets, or as devices to explain the phenomena of the mythical world.⁽⁴⁾

The interpretation that regard the anthropomorphic figurines as mother goddesses and their consorts are probably based on the find-places and shapes of figurines. Many of figurines have been found in areas suggested to be sanctuaries.⁽⁵⁾ Particularly a few female figurines which were found in the bins or among the grains, as Mellaart suggested at Çatal Hüyük, indicates that they are the guardian goddesses of farming. Moreover from the existence of the figurines combined

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with animals Mellaart suggested the possibility that they are guardian goddesses of hunting, and considering the textile motifs painted on the walls of the rooms which are probably sacred rooms, those of weaving.⁽⁶⁾ The suggestion that they are the goddesses who guard the deads and the nether world might have been analogized from the beliefs in the historical period, the beliefs which have been recorded on tablets as myths like those of Ishtar. According to Timme the female figure with two heads is the symbloic representation of the moments of living beings, that is, life and death, or death and rebirth.⁽⁷⁾

As Birtel pointed out, these religious interpretations are based on the belief in a long tradition of mother-goddess worship dating back to the Upper Palaeolithic and continuing into the south-west Asian Bronze and Iron Ages.⁽⁸⁾ From this belief derived also some other assumptions. First the Palaeolithic figurines represented mother-goddesses and that their function and style were directly inherited by the Neolithic ones. For example, James also regarded the female figurines from Arpachiyah⁽⁹⁾ to be descended from the Venuses in Palaeolithic Europe.⁽¹⁰⁾ In the Near East, however, no figures belonging to the previous ages have been connected with Arpachiyah. Secondly the simple analogies that caused ethnohistoric documentations concerning mother-goddess worship and use of figurines from the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages are extended to all figurines of all periods in both Europe and southwest Asia, ignoring the geographic and historic context whereby each figure was produced. As Ucko claimed, it seems to be profitless to link together figurines from all over the world and from quite diverse periods simply because they are represented similarly.⁽¹¹⁾

Ucko, who used the figurines as "cross-cultural" indicators, contrary to previous researchers concentrated on the functional interpretations, stressed that great care must be taken in any intercultural comparisons to ensure proper spatial and temporal controls of working with groups of known cultural contact.⁽¹²⁾ This paper which intends to propose a new view of the function of Çatal Hüyük figurines before making inter-cultural comparisons will attach more importance to the situation of each figurine within each culture or each site.

Ucko also claimed that it is unreasonable to interpret all figurines religiously as the images of gods or goddesses, because all of the prehistoric figurines have not been located in sacred places, and there are no signs of deity in the figurines themselves

Moreover, south-west Asia including Anatolia and Mesopotamia is the

only geographic area in which there is early historical evidence supporting worship of mother-goddess connected with fertility, and therefore an investigation of figurines assuming this function is valid only in this region. Hence, he suggests, there might be also secular figurines such as servant figures, children's dolls, technical esquisses, or devices for sympathetic magic.⁽¹³⁾

The interpretations mentioned above, whether religious or not have been offered for all prehistoric examples without the distinction between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic and so on. However, S. Kimura, who pursues the development of the female statuettes, draws a distinction between the figurines of European Palaeolithic age and those of European Neolithic age. When he discusses the female figures expressed in the cave and rock shelter art and the mobiliary art, he observes that "in Neolithic farming communities the mother-goddesses were symbols of fertility and regarded as transcendental beings. Therefore they must have been worshipped. While in the Palaeolithic the female figurines are scientific expressions of pregnant women. The plastic female figurines are particularly small and seem to be a kind of fetish."⁽¹⁴⁾

M. Eliade mentions that the horns of bulls characterize the fertility gods and symbols of mother-goddesses, so that in the Neolithic cultures wherever the horns of bulls are found, the great goddess of fertility is manifest.⁽¹⁵⁾

II. Representations of the Life Continuity in Prehistoric Anatolia (from Çatal Hüyük to Kültepe) (Fig. 2)

It is said that the Çatal Hüyük (East) culture ended in the Early Neolithic period and does not have any influence on the tradition of the cultures of Anatolia.⁽¹⁶⁾ As for the figurines, those of Çatal Hüyük are distinguished clearly from those of other sites of the ages after the Neolithic, with exception of a female figurine from Can Hasan. The forms of the figurines after the Neolithic, particularly in the Early Bronze Age, are very schematized compared with those of Çatal Hüyük. In south-eastern Anatolia, Elmalı and Beycesultan, have appeared the so-called "violin-shaped" figures which indicate the beginnings of inter-cultural exchange between eastern Anatolia and Balkan or Mediterranean areas.

The tendency of abstraction of the figurines led to the making of the strange disk idols of Kültepe around 2200–2000 B.C.⁽¹⁷⁾ (Fig. 2). From the thin disklike body project one to four long necks which are capped by small triangle heads

with engraved eyes and eyebrows. On the neck or the base of it designs like necklaces are occasionally engraved. Bands filled with many short parallel lines or gratings cross the body diagonally or semicircularly. Between bands are drilled many small concentric circles. On the lower part of the body there is a triangle filled with several zigzag lines. Some disk idols have similarly shaped but smaller one in relief on their bodies. Some have comparatively realistic human and lion figures.

The meaning of these disk idols has not been defined satisfactorily. But the resemblances in forms and features to the eye-idols from Brak suggest to apply the interpretations about the eye-idols to the Kültepe disk idols. Frankfort connected the eye- or spectacle-idols with Ishtar and Mallowan suggested that they symbolized the great-goddesses or the deity of regeneration.⁽¹⁸⁾ The idea of connecting the Kültepe disk idols with Ishtar is supported by several moulds which must have been made in Central Anatolia contemporarily with the disk idols. Above all, the mould gotten at Akhisar⁽¹⁹⁾ (Fig. 2) is helpful in explaining the Kültepe disk idols.

On this stone mould from Akhisar two women are represented, one of them being naked and the other clothed, while on each of the other moulds generally either a naked or clothed woman is portrayed. But lions, reed huts, and personal ornaments like earrings, which are the attributes of Ishtar, are arranged around a woman in the same way on all of the plaques of this type. Judging from the surrounding objects, the woman engraved on the stone plaque is regarded as Ishtar described in the myth of "the descent to the nether world".⁽²⁰⁾ The naked and clothed figures show her two aspects.

These plaques prove that the myths concerning Ishtar had already introduced to the people in Anatolia. Perhaps these myths were brought to Anatolia from Mesopotamia with the immigration of Assyrian merchants. That is to say that the people who made those strange disk idols of Kültepe knew the myths of Ishtar although this has not yet been attested by written texts.

Kültepe disk idols, as much as the Akhisar plaque, represent the two momemnts of living beings, namely life and death or death and regenerarion, by plural necks and the representation of small similarly shaped figures on the bodies. Neumann suggested that the female figure surmounted the same but smaller figure on its head which was discovered on the Paros is the representation of a female family-tree from mother to daughter.⁽²¹⁾ Timme supported him and also suggested that in the stone idols from Early Bronze Anatolia the repetition

of the smaller figure on the body is the representation of birth and regeneration or the extending of life by the continuation of generations.⁽²²⁾

The figures which have plural necks or smaller figure are connected to the figure of mother-and-child from Horoztepe⁽²³⁾ by the point that both of them are representations of extending life including the moments of life and death. The figures of mother-and-child have been found mostly at Hacılar, where the children are clinging to their mothers and mothers are nursing and suckling them. In Hacılar there is a female figurine embracing an animal baby with a tail which is in the same posture as the mother-and-child figure of Horoztepe. The ancestor of the mother figure embracing animal babies is found in Level III of Çatal Hüyük (Fig. 2). The species of these animal babies also seems to be panther-like, as in the other examples of animals combined with female figures. As a matter of interest, in Çatal Hüyük there have been no discoveries of panthers bones at all, nor are there any hints as to how the panthers related to the people of those times. Thus we still have the question of why the panther should be valuable enough to be a sacred animal following the great-goddess or a symbol of her. All that can be said here is that the panther is, connected to the figures of mother-and-child, the symbol of the new life or regeneration of all the creatures including both human and animal beings. In spite of the transformation from panther to lion, the comprehension of death and regeneration is thought to have been inherited. The concentric circles over the bodies of the disk idols from Kültepe might be thought of as the spots of the panther's skin similar to those of the bodies of Çatal Hüyük figurines.

The forms of the Kültepe idols are curious at first sight. However, the plural necks or representation of the small figure on the bodies are inherited from the preceeding ages. They are found here and there in Anatolia, Cyclades and the Balkans before the Early Bronze Age. Further, the tradition which mingled with the imported image of Ishtar and produced the strange disk idols at Kültepe, may go back to Çatal Hüyük.

Here it is possible to conceive that the idea of the continuity of life and the mother-earth-ship included in the abstract disk idols from Kültepe which can be regarded as Ishtar had already produced the female figures in Çatal Hüyük and Hacılar. However, because of the earliest figures are represented in a very normal posture, it is still questionable whether those of Çatal should have been regarded as mother-goddesses and set at a high value even if they represented the productive function of Terre-Mère.

III. Burial Customs and Conceptions of Space

In order to regard the figurines as the representations of deity such as mother-goddess to be worshipped, it must be assumed that the people of the community who produced the figurines had established the clear concept of another world and a belief in transcendental beings. Here, we survey the burial customs of Çatal Hüyük and try to guess to what degree the people of Çatal Hüyük had been able to distinguish this world from another world or how far they had been able to understand abstract space.

The burial forms of Çatal Hüyük, as Mellaart indicates, are similar not to those of Hacilar nor Yümüktepe which are typical sites of the Late Neolithic and the Chalcolithic in Anatolia, but to those of the Natufian culture and the aceramic culture in Palestine.⁽²⁴⁾ The burials of Çatal Hüyük are characterized as follows:

1. Bodies were buried under buildings.
2. Red ochers was painted or scattered on the bodies.
3. Some skulls were buried with special care apart from the bodies.
4. There seems to have been no rigid rule concerning the orientation and attitude of the bodies.
5. They seem to have been buried at the same time on some definite dates of the year, but it seems that there were also second burials.⁽²⁵⁾
6. Most of the wall-paintings and reliefs were covered with plaster and they seem to have been temporarily painted and moulded during the period of the burial services.
7. There have not been found buildings with special structure. Therefore it seems that permanent mausoleums for the ancestors or gods were not built.

These features of the burial customs of Çatal Hüyük listed above indicate that the inhabitants of Çatal Hüyük began to be aware of the distinction between the soul and the body, and to believe in a world of the dead. But this world and that world were apparently not separated from each other and were associated with transcendental beings.

S. Kimura explains the development of the spatial and temporal conceptions or world view of the people of prehistoric Europe, comparing the burials of the ages dated from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Neolithic.⁽²⁶⁾ According to Kimura:

1. The Upper Palaeolithic to the Early Mesolithic; There were bodies fastened at the limbs or scattered with red ochre, and the dead were buried at the fire side. These facts indicate that the people in those days considered the real existence of life as the simple coexistence and the uninterrupted continuity of actual facts. Therefore they did not distinguish this world from another one, and they were far from a belief in transcendental beings.
2. The Mesolithic; The deads were buried facing to the west in special places separated from the living spaces. The number of skulls which were buried apart from their bodies also increased. Here we can see that people began to acknowledge their souls as much as their bodies, and the nether world beyond this world.
3. The Neolithic; Services for the dead were held and mausoleums for ancestors or gods are associated with the thought that the souls, separated completely from the bodies, belong to another world. When the invisible beings were located in the invisible world, that is to say, in heaven, the myths must also have been born.

According to Kimura's diagram, the inhabitants of Çatal Hüyük are assumed to have held the same degree of spatial and temporal conceptions as those of Mesolithic men in Europe. This assumption is reinforced by the following two types of wall paintings.⁽²⁷⁾ One of them is the type of painting which shows the hunting scenes from V to III Levels (Fig. 3). These paintings remind us of the schematic rock-paintings among the so-called Levant Arts in the east of Spain. The other is a landscape painting from Level VII, which seems to represent erupting twin volcanoes and a town rising in graded terraces closely packed with rectangular houses. This wall-painting shows the intention of the artist to relate the distant view and the near view by some sense of space which is still far from today's sense of perspective. We can accept that these types of wall-paintings were clearly planned, considered the composition of the scene wholly, and show the ideal space on the wall-canvas as distinct from actual space. However, there were no distinct attempts to represent things in the abstract.

The burial custom and wall-paintings as observed above imply that in Çatal Hüyük, which is one of the earliest village-farming communities, the way of thinking which conceives ideal space abstractly had grown greatly compared with that of the Palaeolithic, but it was not enough to establish any religion — a kind of social regulation such as that in certain cultic behaviours, for instance,

praying for fertility or a successful delivery, the purpose should ascribe the cause of the effect, whether good or bad, on only to the decision of transcendental beings.

Levi-Strauss defines the relation of religion and magic as “if we can accept that religion is a personification of natural laws, while magic is a naturalization of human behaviour as if they consist of the parts of the laws of causality in the natural world — religion and magic are neither alternative items nor two steps of development. Personification and naturalization are the two component forces in a human life, and they vary only in their distribution.”⁽²⁸⁾ After his definition S. Kimura suggests the practical connection between religion and magic. He says, “When we think of magic and the myth from the viewpoint of outsiders, we are inclined to consider the former being [directed objectively towards techniques and the latter subjectively towards beliefs in transcendental beings. But if we try to think of them from the view point of insiders, it becomes clear that there is little difference between them. The reason why we usually recognize the difference between them may be that the magic and religion are practically connected with the rites for the purpose of fulfilling their alleged effects. But in the course of actual rites, the religion seems to ascribe the cause of the effect to transcendental beings, while magic ascribes it to the rites as such.”⁽²⁹⁾

Here if we pay attention to the difference between religion and magic in the course of the rites, we can suppose that in Çatal Hüyük, where people had not yet established conceptional patterns about either the soul or the other world, it had been the basis of the community's life to consider human behaviour as being included in the law of causality of the natural world.

From this observation, if we return to the figurines of Çatal Hüyük, it does not seem necessary for us to agree with Eliade's suggestion that wherever the horns of bulls exist the great-goddess is manifest, nor Kimura's thinking that the female figurines in the Neolithic farming communities are images to be worshipped.

IV. Features of Çatal Hüyük Figurines

Mellaart listed about 50 figurines from Çatal Hüyük in his book.⁽³⁰⁾ But not all finds are reported, so that the exact number is not known to us. In this study we deal with 42 figures which are exhibited at Anadolu Medenîetleri Müzesi in Ankara. 34 of them gained from Levels VIII–II are published by

Mellaart. It is not noted from which levels the others were found, nor their details. But from the comparisons with clearly stratified figurines, it appears that they belong to the Levels V–II.

There are also clay figurines in the crude form of men and animals. According to Mellaart's reports, the figurines of this kind are uncovered outside of the houses in all levels above Level IX.⁽³¹⁾ But he never mentioned them in detail and we will not deal with them in this paper.

The figurines of Çatal Hüyük are made of clay and stone such as marble, alabaster, limestone, chalk and other volcanic stones.⁽³²⁾ The stone figures measure about 4.2–21.5 cm. high, while clay ones are smaller measuring 5–8 cm high.⁽³³⁾ And some of the 8 figures which were not allowed to be measured are apparently smaller than 5cm. The stone materials of suitable shape and quality to be easy to work were selected carefully to facilitate engraving the posture of the figures. The surface of the stone figurines is smooth and polished. The surface of the clay figurines is also polished and some of them are painted. The polishing of the figurines is generally said to be better than that of the pottery of this site.⁽³⁴⁾ Above Level VI the number of these stone figurines decreases, while that of the clay ones increases.

In this chapter, without description of each detail, the characteristic feature of the figurines related to their meaning will be discussed.

1. Male figurines: In Çatal Hüyük it is difficult to distinguish the male figures from the female ones because neither have representations of reproductive organs. But six of 42 figurines are most likely to be male, including the four examples riding on animals (Fig. 4).

All of the male figures were discovered in the levels below Level VI. During the four thousand years after Çatal Hüyük VI, no figures are to be found anywhere in Anatolia. The male figures reappeared a little before the Weather God Tešup began to be worshipped as the supreme god of the Hittites. Thus the appearance of the male figures was associated with the growth of the male gods. In the Near East, according to the development of the communities based on the farming and growth of the city-states, myths were gradually arranged in order. In the latter stages of the arrangement of the myths, it is the sky god who reigns over all beings. Then the male figures of gods with their own attributes described in the myths began to be represented.

In the age of Çatal Hüyük when the life of the settlement based on farming and cattle breeding had just begun, it is supposed that people regarded the

earth as the mother of all creatures and as a whole, including everything which derived from it and returns to it. Probably for people at that time life and death were also only two moments of the destiny which the "Terre-Mère" traces.⁽³⁵⁾ Therefore the earth or the earth-mother is usually identified with the female of human or animal beings intuitively. But that never means the definition of the sexuality of the earth itself. It is better the earth be thought of as a bisexual being which includes both male and female factors of all living beings. Then if it is accepted that the female figures were connected to the earth in some regards, it should be accepted that the males were also. Further the male figures of Çatal Hüyük should be distinguished from those of the latter ages.

2. Figurines accompanied by animals: There are eight figurines accompanied by one or two animals. The animals are thought to be restricted to two species, the panther and the bull. Three of the male figurines ride on bulls and another on a panther (Fig. 4), while the female ones never ride on them. Two female examples stand behind panthers embracing them in their arms (Fig. 2), one example squats on the earth embracing two panther babies in her arms (Fig. 2) and another one sits on a throne putting her hands on the heads of two panthers escorting her on both sides (Fig. 6).

The male figure on a panther was called Boy-god by Mellaart.⁽³⁶⁾ In Anatolia children were almost always placed with women and belong to the female group. The relation of the Sun-Goddess Hēpatu and her son god Šarruma⁽³⁷⁾ that is seen from the relief on the rock-wall gallery of Yazılıkaya⁽³⁸⁾ which is a sanctuary of the Hittites, indicates that children should be classified with the women. On this wall is engraved a scene of the gods and goddesses parading from both sides. A row of gods headed by the Weather God Tešup from the left and a row of goddesses headed by Hēpatu from the right meet at center, which is regarded as a scene of "hieros gamos". It is Šarruma, one of the sons of Tešup and Hēpatu, that is the only god represented among the row of goddesses. He is standing on a panther that is crossing over two monuments, behind his mother. Although the relief of Yazılıkaya is a Hittite example dating from long time after Çatal Hüyük, it seems to be true in Çatal Hüyük that the children belong to the female group, because the bodies of children buried with women under the platforms along the east walls have been occasionally found.⁽³⁹⁾ Sometimes children's bodies have been buried alone, but never found under the smaller platforms at the northeast corners where the adult men were buried.

Thus if we classify the boy figurine riding on a panther with the female

group, it seems that the female figurines of Çatal Hüyük are combined with panthers and the male with bulls. However, among the wall reliefs the female figure are often connected with heads of bulls moulded out of plaster with real horns. So it can not be determined that the bull symbolizes the male and the panther the female. It can only be supposed that both animals were related to something like fertility or productivity.

3. Female figurine in the birth-giving posture: Mellaart commented that the figurine from Level II (Fig. 6) is the representation of a delivering goddess and that the round object at her feet is the head of the appearing baby of man or animal.⁽⁴⁰⁾ This explanation is not based on any exact proof but is very interesting and extends our supposition that the squatting figures are also assumed to be probably in the birth-giving posture. This assumption finds its analogy with delivery in the squatting position which is widely observed among the customs of ancient peoples and primitive tribes of today.⁽⁴¹⁾ Besides the plastic figurines there are female figures in wall reliefs from Level VI-V (Fig. 8), which are also suggested to be in the posture of delivery.⁽⁴²⁾ In addition, most of the female figurines put both or either hand on or under their breasts. This seems to indicate the suckling pose as in the mother-and-child figures from Hacilar. Considering the portrayals of potential delivery and suckling among the female figurines from Çatal Hüyük, it can be said that these figures represent Motherhood.

4. Twin or grouped figures: From Level VI appears a slate on which two pairs of embracing men and women are engraved (Fig. 2). In the left scene embracing man and woman are represented, and in the right scene embracing mother and child. Mellaart says that it may be one of the earliest representations of the "hieros gamos".⁽⁴³⁾ From Level VI a twin-idol (Fig. 2) was discovered, which has two pairs of heads and breasts and only one pair of arms and the lower part of body. These figurines together with those in the posture of delivery and suckling indicate that the Çatal Hüyük figures are connected with motherhood and fertility, delivery, generosity, and so on, even if they are not the actual representation of the mother-goddess herself.

5. Figurines in clothes: Besides the majority of naked figures, there are also dressed figures. Some are dressed partly in clothes such as caps or scarves (Fig. 2). And others are in blouse and skirts (Fig. 2). The material of their clothes seems to be only leopard skin. Besides six clothed figures there is a female figure painted with black dots on its whole body. The black dots also seem to

be leopard skin, although it has not been determined whether those of the skindress or those painted or engraved directly on the human body as a kind of decoration.

6. Figurines without representation of reproductive organs: In Çatal Hüyük female figurines are generally recognized by their large breasts, bellies and buttocks, while the male ones are understood by plain breasts, waists and muscular bodies. But occasionally it is difficult to distinguish male and female figures, because there is no representation of reproductive organs on any figures of Çatal Hüyük. This can also be said of the Hacilar figurines with only one exception, and it is a common feature of the Neolithic figurines of Central Anatolia.⁽⁴⁴⁾

The figurines with clothes and no reproductive organs are distinguished from those of the Chalcolithic and the Early Bronze Age of Anatolia, which have very schematic forms (Fig. 9). The latter are generally small and thin, and their limbs are usually absorbed in the trunk. Most of them are naked and the breasts and sexual triangle of the female are represented symbolically in spite of the fact that the other details are omitted. The simple and symbolical representation with buttonlike breasts and sexual female triangle seems to be the most effective means to display a woman on a plain and thin body. Therefore it was probably necessary to be naked. It is possible that they were amulets worn on the human body or placed on walls or pillars. The thin figurines made of golden plaque from Aalca Höyük (Fig. 2) were discovered in situ in the position in which the clothes are thought to have been worn at death.⁽⁴⁵⁾ While it appears that the Çatal Hüyük figurines were not worn on the body. Their realistic appearance in contrast with the Chalcolithic schematic figurines makes interpretations as to what they represent unnecessary. Their realistic forms indicate that actual and vigorous approaches must have been made towards them.

7. Decapitated figurines: 19 figurines out of 42 are decapitated. They consist of 4 stone and 15 clay figures above Level VI. All of them are classified into the female group including the boy figure riding on a panther. Particularly the female ones accompanied by one or two panthers are always decapitated whether made of stone or clay. The head of the clay figure from Level II (Fig. 6) is a modern restoration.

V. Decapitated Figures and Skull Adoration

There have been unearthed many decapitated figurines from Çatal Hüyük as observed in Chapter IV. If they had been broken during the long ages or in the process of the excavations, some fragmented heads should have been found. In fact, in Hacilar there are some heads remaining, some of which have been fitted to some of the trunks.⁽⁴⁶⁾ In Çatal Hüyük, however, except two stone examples there has been no report of finding figures' heads. Besides the plastic figurines, most of the female reliefs on the walls are also decapitated (Fig. 8). Moreover the heads of two of the five women in the hunting scene of the wall-painting of Level V are not clear. In the case of the wallpainting it is most probable that the heads have faded or the paint has fallen off. In the case of the wallreliefs, however, Todd points out the marks which indicate that they had been scraped deliberately.⁽⁴⁷⁾ It is most probably that the decapitation of the figurines had been caused on purpose.

Mellaart indicates the existence of second burials in Çatal Hüyük on the basis of the finds of skeletons painted with red ochre, lack of some bones, and the disorder of their arrangement.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Also the wall-paintings from Levels VII–VIII (Fig. 7) may indicate second burials. These wall-paintings represent vultures attacking headless men which are drawn in black. Here Çatal Hüyük people showed one of the scenes in their burial process, that is, the bodies of the dead were separated from their heads and left in the open air where great vultures were gathering.⁽⁴⁹⁾ On the other hand, the heads detached from their bodies must have been enshrined in a certain place until the final burial. The places where they were enshrined are indicated on the wall-painting from Level VI. It is certain that the Çatal Hüyük people had acknowledged the special importance of the heads parted from their bodies. The bodies cleaned up by vultures, for example, were buried under the rooms at certain times.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Exceptional in the vulture shrine of Level VII, are four skulls which are probably related to the headless men in the vulture paintings on the wall of the same room. Most of the corpses painted with red ochre were recovered in Levels VIII–VI.⁽⁵¹⁾ Some of them are painted all over their bodies and others only partly. The skulls particularly are frequently elaborately decorated and among them the one from the room of Level VII is painted carefully and inlaid with cowrie shells, which is in the same style as those from Jericho in PPNB and Tell Ramad.⁽⁵²⁾ Besides

the buried or enshrined human skulls, there are heads of bulls and rams modeled in plaster, onto which true horns of bulls and rams are often attached. They are found set on the wall. It is generally said that they suggest the cultic significance of the bull or ram.⁽⁵³⁾ But more exactly it should be thought that the life of the bull and other animals is centered in their heads. Probably people of that time believed that the vitality of human and animal beings originated from their heads.

If people thought like above, why did they decapitate the figurines in the levels above Level VI? What is the reason for cutting off the heads of the female figurines and scraping out those of the wall-reliefs?

VI. Drastic Changes of Life at Level VI

The majority of the female figurines are found above Level VI as mentioned before. Above Level VI the number of the female figurines made of clay, whether decapitated or not, surpasses that of the male figures in stone. The finds from the upper levels show a remarkable difference in form from those of the lower levels. The female figure from Level II (Fig. 2) which is embracing two infant animals, perhaps panthers, is very attractive and is perhaps the earliest known example of the mother-and-child figures continuing in Hacilar, Horoztepe, and so on.

This difference is also recognizable in the wall-reliefs, wall paintings, pottery, and stone products as follows: Above Level VI,

1. No reliefs modeled female figure and female breasts in plaster were found.
2. No cut-out figures of bulls were found.
3. Neither heads of bulls or rams modeled in plaster with horn cores, nor berches decorated with several pairs of bull horns were found, but only a few bucrania (or bull-pillars) which usually consist of a rectangular mud brick pillar, height ca. 50 cm., with a pair of bull horns set in the top.
4. In Level V, the wall-paintings representing hunting scenes (Fig. 3) suddenly appear, instead of those repeating the geometrical patterns, hands, flowers, and other symbolic designs from below Level VI. The hunting scenes consist of comparatively naturalistic animals such as bulls, red deer, etc. and more schematized and smaller human figures.

5. Ceramics, which were discovered from Level XII but which had been sec-

ondary in use to the wooden and stone pottery until Level VI, begin to be used generally and widely.⁽⁵⁴⁾

6. The stone instruments increase,⁽⁵⁵⁾ and particularly in Levels V and III a great number of taged projectile points and endscrapers were found.

The difference can be seen in burials: Few painted skulls and skeletones were found above Level VI.⁽⁵⁶⁾ And burials of infants were not found at all in Levels V to II and those of children are also very rare.⁽⁵⁷⁾

The decapitated figures together with other intriguing objects which appear above Level VI seem to indicate a drastic change in the life of Çatal Hüyük villagers at the end of Level VI.

Angel and Mellaart estimated the population of Çatal Hüyük VI to have been 5000–6000, based on the number of the architectural remains and burials.⁽⁵⁸⁾ But it is difficult to expatiate the number which is estimated in the excavated area upon that of the entire mound, because this area of Çatal Hüyük covers only one thirtieth of the mound and may be a special area including so-called shrines and moreover it can not be imagines that the living quarters covered the entire mound. Thus Todd suggested that we can make only a rough estimation of 5000 to 10000 from the number of burials.⁽⁵⁹⁾

It is assumed that at Çatal Hüyük people occupied the territoty of 7850 ha. within a 5km. radius of the site. It seems that the majority of the area, approximately 7500 ha., was available to the inhabitants of the site as cultivatable land.⁽⁶⁰⁾ Accepting Allan's suggestion about the fallowing system and a figure of approximately 600kg. of grain per hectare as the general yield level and a figure of approximately 300kg. per head of the population,⁽⁶¹⁾ Todd suggests that the exploitation zone of Çatal Hüyük could have supported a population of 7500.⁽⁶²⁾ If calculation is cased on the figure of 1.5 ha. of cultivatable land per head of population, based on a fallow system, the carrying capacity of the Çatal Hüyük region could have been approximately 5000 people. Angel pointed out that a population at Çatal Hüyük of 5000 to 6000 have required three heads of cattle per day (or almost 50 sheep or goats) to supply adequate meat protein for all, and that it is unlikely that the herds were so large that more than 1000 cattle could be slaughtered per year without seriously depleting or annihilating the available life stock. The evidence of dental analysis also supports Angel's contention that the daily meat ration at Çatal Hüyük was in the order of one fifth or one tenth of the optimum of the Upper Palaeolithic.⁽⁶³⁾ Considering these suggestion by Angel, Todd concluded that the carrying capacity of Çatal Hüyük

area must have lain between 5000 and 7000 people.⁽⁶⁴⁾

Angel estimates an annual increase of 0.8% in the population based on his analysis of the human skeletal remains.⁽⁶⁵⁾ This high rate of population increase means that if we assume an initial settlement of about 50 people ca. 6500 BC., the carrying capacity of the area would have reached ca. 5800 BC. if not earlier. With this assumption Todd sets the turning point of Çatal Hüyük culture at about 6000 BC.⁽⁶⁶⁾ According to Todd, signs of the final abandonment of the Çatal Hüyük settlement caused by the population increase had already appeared around 6000 BC.

The suggestion by Todd is an assumption based on the human skeletal analysis and geological analysis. But it seems to be one of the most persuasive assumptions at the present time, when the excavation of this site remains to be completed.

The wall-paintings which show hunting scenes can be pointed out to support Todd's assumption. Most of the wall-paintings below Level VI consist of repeated motifs such as geometric patterns and other patterns mentioned above, while in Level V the hunting scene with complete constructions were painted abruptly and continued to the upper levels. The hunting scenes are often said to represent imitative huntings. Whether they were so or not, hunting still features chiefly in the wall-paintings. This fact indicates that the people of the time turned their minds towards hunting after the period of Level VI. If we can assume that Çatal Hüyük East began to "burn itself out" some time after Level VI as Todd suspects,⁽⁶⁷⁾ it must have been serious problem to secure food enough to maintain the increasing number of people. However, there has been no trace of improve productivity of farm products. Therefore it would have been difficult to solve the problem only by farming and cattle breeding in the old way. So people searched for other means of life and looked back to hunting to feed the increasing population. The wall-paintings from Levels V-III can be regarded as evidence proving that the people of the period a little after Level VI would have had a renewed understanding of the necessity of hunting, which had been subordinated to farming and cattle breeding in the lower levels,⁽⁶⁸⁾ and revived. The theory of the the revival of hunting is supported by the increase of tanged projectile points which were used as arrowheads and spear heads, and the endscrapers which seem to have been used for tanning the hide. In the rooms from which the typical paintings of hunting scenes had come to light, there have been no finds of burials of adult men.⁽⁶⁹⁾ This fact urges us to

suppose that the hunting scenes were painted to mourn the hunters who had gone hunting and never come back, or whose bodies had not returned home.

However, the analysis of teeth by Angel does not indicate an increase of the meat intake,⁽⁷⁰⁾ and the revival of hunting seems not to have been successful. The reason why the hunting revival did not succeed to keep enough meat for the population may be as follows. With this change of the means of life, the villagers must have immediately faced a number of serious difficulties: 1) It was long after human beings had shifted their means of life from hunting to farming and cattle breeding. Hence, hunting techniques had long been ignored and it must have been almost impossible to revive the techniques for large scale hunting instantly. 2) The geographical and climatic conditions of the plateau were quite different from those of the mountainous regions where their ancestors had been occupied in hunting. Then, various social confusions must have occurred due to the increasing population, the food shortage, and the loss of adequate means of life.

VII. Conclusion

Without a sound prospect for the harvest, the people must have been forced to reduce the growth rate of the population. In order to control the population for themselves they had to terminate child-birth or thin out the babies. According to Angel there are no finds of the burials of infants and the number of the burials of children also decreased greatly above Level VI.⁽⁷¹⁾ From the fact that the mortality rate of infants has been a great social problem until the twentieth century, it is most unlikely that there were no infant-deaths in the upper levels on Çatal Hüyük. Angel thinks that the fact that few skeletal remains of infants and children have been discovered is an accident of the archaeological records.⁽⁷²⁾ And he estimates the proportion of the death of infants: children: adults; 7: 4: 10. However, the number of the deaths of infants and children were probably greater than our estimates and it is likely that each infant body was not respected as much as an adult and not buried carefully, and that, if it were buried, it was gathered together with others in a place like a pit which has not yet been discovered. This indicates the probability of the culling of infants. But it is necessary to await future excavations before speculating further.

The second probably way to control the population is to terminate child-

birth. Now pregnancy and child-delivery were the essential functions of women. To deprive the women of their essential functions must have meant to deny their existence. But it is unlikely that the villagers forced their women actually to die. Returning to the decapitated female figurines and considering such an unusual environmental and social background as mentioned above, one may assume the following: The women who were forbidden to become pregnant and to deliver children were represented in the forms of female figurines. They probably resembled their models in appearances. To decapitate these figurines meant very probably the annihilation of their womanhood. Hence, the figures were broken at the heads because their life-substance was thought to be concentrated there. This was practically an enactment of the termination of women's reproductive functions. This assumption can be also applied to the wall-reliefs, where the heads of female figures were also scraped for the same reason.

In conclusion, the female figures of Çatal Hüyük, particularly the decapitated figures, were imitations of their models, that is, pregnant or potentially pregnant women, and were used to terminate the reproductive functions of their models. It was believed that to decapitate the figures guaranteed to free the women from the delivery of infants beyond the carrying capacity of the society. The headless figures were remains of figures used in the magical rites to bring about a certain actual situation. The figurines from Çatal Hüyük satisfy the conditions of "HITOGATA" in Japanese, being personal, temporary, and fragile, which distinguish it from the other plastic figures including god images and human portraits.⁽⁷³⁾

It is certain that Çatal Hüyük shows the new development in the living patterns of the village-farming community, but the world view which its people held is similar to those of the Mesolithic cultures of Europe and their burial customs resemble closely those of the Natufian cultures as observed in Chapter III. This proves that the Çatal Hüyük people still held the views and customs of the previous ages, and that they had not yet formed any myths or religion which, being aware of an afterlife and of a distinction between the soul and the body, could have led them toward the transcendental. Therefore, it is probable that the figurines from Çatal Hüyük may have been made not as religious images to be worshipped but as cultic objects with magical functions.

Notes

Abbreviations

AnSt	Anatolian Studies
CAH	Cambridge Ancient History
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
LAAA	Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology. University of Liverpool
MDOG	Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin
PEK	Jahrbuch für Prähistorische und ethnographische Kunst
RA	Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale
RHA	Revue Hittites et Asiantique

(1) The double mound of Çatal Hüyük consists of the East mound from the early Neolithic and the West mound from the early Chalcolithic. But the excavations to date has been concentrated on the East mound, with little work having been undertaken on the West mound. In this paper, unless the site as a whole is being considered, the name "Çatal Hüyük" refers to Çatal Hüyük East.

(2) James Mellaart, "Excavations at Çatal Hüyük; Preliminary Report," *AnSt*, XII-XVI (1962-1966).

(3) Refik Duru, *Neolitik ve Kalikolitik Çağlara ait Anadolu'da Bulunmuş İnsan Figürinleri*, İstanbul 1969, p. 16; Kurt Bittel, *Prähistorische Forschung in Kleinasien*, Istanbul 1934, p. 40; Bernard Goldman, "Typology of the Mother-goddess figurines," *PEK*, 20 (1960-63), pp. 8-9; Jurgen Thimme, "Die religiöse Bedeutung der Kykladen Idole," *Antike Kunst* (1965), p. 72 ff.; J. Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük: A Neolithic Town in Anatolia*, London 1967, p. 82.

(4) Duru, *ibid.*, p. 16; Tahsin Özgüç, "Kurs Vucutlu Kültepe İdoller," *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Yıllık Araştırmalar Dergisi*, I (1940-41), p. 867; Erich F. Schmidt, *The Alishar Hüyük. Seasons of 1928 and 1929* (OIP XIX), Chicago 1932, p. 53; B. Goldman, *ibid.*, p. 9; Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, p. 180.

(5) Duru, *ibid.*, p. 14; John Garstang, "Jericho: City and Necropolis," *LAAA*, 22 (1935), p. 166; M. E. L. Mallowan, "The Development of Cities; From Al-Ubad to the End of Uruk 5," *CAH*, VIII/1, 2, Cambridge 1967, p. 69; Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, p. 180.

(6) E. O. James, *The Ancient Gods*, New York 1960, p. 46; Mallowan, "The Excavations at Tall Arpachiyah, 1933," *IRAQ*, II (1935), pp. 79, 87; Mellaart, *ibid.*, p. 180; Thimme, *ibid.*, p. 75. Mellaart, *ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

(7) Thimme, *ibid.*, p. 72.

(8) Brad Bartel, "Cultural associations and mechanisms of change in anthropomorphic figurines during the Neolithic in the eastern Mediterranean basin," *World Archaeology*, 13/1 (1981), p. 73.

(9) Leonard Wooley, "On a Steatopygeous Stone Figure from North Syria," *Melanges Syriens offerts a M. R. DUSSAUD*, Paris 1939, pp. 135-137.

(10) James, *ibid.*, p. 47.

(11) Peter J. Ucko, *Anthropomorphic Figurines of Predynastic and Neolithic Crete with Comparative Material from the Prehistoric Near-East and Mainland Greece*, London 1968, pp. 410-412, 419-421, 431-436.

(12) Bartel, *ibid.*, p. 73.

(13) Ucko, *ibid.*, pp. 410-436.

(14) Shigenobu Kimura, "Art and Religion in the Palaeolithic Art," (in Japanese) *Studien zur Vergleichenden Kunstwissenschaft III; Kunst und Religion*, Tokyo 1981, p. 96.

- (15) Mircea Eliade, *Traite d'histoire des religions*, Paris 1968: Translation into Japanese by Hiroshi Kume, Tokyo 1974, p. 21.
- (16) Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations of the Near East*, London 1965, p. 78; Ian A. Todd, *Çatal Hüyük in Perspective*, California 1967, p. 136.
- (17) Özgüç, *ibid.*; Bilgi, "Kültepe Kazılarında Bulunmuş olan İnsan Figürinleri," *BELLETTEN*, XXXIX/154 (1975), pp. 201–216; K. Karamete, "Idols récemment découvertes au Kültepe," *RHA*, 30 (1938), pp. 205–207.
- (18) Henri Frankfort, "Ishtar at Troy," *JNES*, VIII (1949), pp. 194–200; Charlotte Ziegler, "Die Tempelterrasse von Tell Brak," *MDOG*, 82 (1950), pp. 1–18.
- (19) Kutlu Emre, *Anadolu Kurşun Figürinleri ve Taş Kalıpları*, Ankara 1971, pl. III-1.
- (20) S. N. Kramer, "Inanna's Descent to the Nether World," *RA* 34/3 (1937).
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- (22) Thimme, *Art and Culture of the Cyclades in the Third Millennium B. C.*, Chicago 1977, pp. 183, 558.
- (23) T. Özgüç, "The Statuette from Horoztepe," *Anatolia*, III (1958), pp. 53–56.
- (24) Mellaart, *AnSt*, XII, p. 52.
- (25) Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, pp. 204–205.
- (26) Kimura, *ibid.*, p. 96.
- (27) S. Kimura, *The origins of Arts (in Japanese)*, Tokyo 1971, pp. 208–223; Herbert Kühn, *Die Felsbilder Europas*, Stuttgart 1952, pp. 59–80.
- (28) Claud Levi-Strauss, *Le Pensée Sauvage*, Paris 1962: Translation into Japanese by Yasuo Ohashi, Tokyo 1976, p. 265.
- (29) Kimura, "Art and Religion," 1981, p. 82.
- (30) Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, p. 181.
- (31) *ibid.*, p. 180.
- (32) Duru, *ibid.*, p. 49.
- (33) The female figure 16.5 cm. high (Fig. 9) is exceptionally big among the clay figurines.
- (34) Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, p. 178.
- (35) Eliade, *ibid.*, p. 155.
- (36) Mellaart, *AnSt*, XIII, pl. XX-c.
- (37) Emmanuel Laroche, "Recherches sur les Noms des Dieux Hittites," *RHA*, 46 (1946–1947), pp. 17–18, 58.
- (38) Ekrem Akurgal, *Ancient Civilizations and Ruins of Turkey*, Istanbul, 1978, pp. 306–317; Emmanuel Laroche, "Les Dieux de Yazilikaya," *RHA*, 84–85 (1969), pp. 61–109.
- (39) Mellaart, *AnSt*, XII.
- (40) Mellaart, *AnSt*, XIII, p. 93.
- (41) Eliade, *ibid.*, pp. 147–149.
- (42) Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, p. 105; *AnSt*, XIII, p. 54, pl. VIII-b; *AnSt*, XVI, pl. LIX-b, LXII.
- (43) Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, pl. 83.
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- (46) Mellaart, *Excavations at Hacilar*, Edinburgh 1970, p. 166, ff.
- (47) Todd, *ibid.*, pp. 50–51.
- (48) Mellaart, *AnSt*, XIII, p. 95.
- (49) Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, p. 166.
- (50) Mellaart, *ibid.*, pp. 204–205.

- (51) Mellaart, *AnSt*, XVI, p. 183.
- (52) *ibid.*: K. M. Kenyon, *Digging up Jericho*, London 1957, pp. 60-72.
- (53) Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, p. 82.
- (54) Mellaart, *AnSt*, XIV, p. 81.
- (55) Perry A. Bialor, "The Chipped Stone Industry of Çatal Hüyük," *AnSt*, XII, p. 69.
- (56) Mellaart, *AnSt*, XVI, p. 183; *AnSt*, XIV, p. 93.
- (57) J. Lawrence Angel, "Early Neolithic Skeletons from Çatal Hüyük: Demography and Pathology," *AnSt*, XXI (1971), p. 82.
- (58) *ibid.*: Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, p. 206.
- (59) Todd, *ibid.*, p. 123.
- (60) *ibid.*, p. 124.
- (61) William Allan, "Ecology, techniques and settlement patterns," P. J. Ucko ed., *Man, Settlement and Urbanism*, London 1972, p. 214.
- (62) Todd, *ibid.*, p. 124.
- (63) Angel, *ibid.*, p. 89.
- (64) Todd, *ibid.*, p. 125.
- (65) Angel, *ibid.*, p. 82.
- (66) Todd, *ibid.*
- (67) Todd, *ibid.*, p. 136.
- (68) David H. French, "Settlement distribution in the Konya Plain, south central Turkey," P. J. Ucko ed., *Man, Settlement and Urbanism*, London 1972, p. 232; Bialor, *ibid.*, p. 69.
- (69) Todd, *ibid.*, p. 72.
- (70) Angel, *ibid.*, pp. 89-90.
- (71) *ibid.*, p. 82.
- (72) *ibid.*, Table 1.
- (73) S. Kimura, "Arts in the living Space 3: Dolls," *Kado* 39/3 (1977), pp. 4-6.

- 1) Chronological Table after J. Mellaart, Çatal Hüyük, p. 52.
- 2) Twin-idols and Mother- and -child figures, from Çatal Hüyük to Kültepe.
- 3) Wall-painting, bull and hunting, Çatal Hüyük V.
- 4) Male figure, Çatal Hüyük VI, Limestone, 5.6 cm.
- 5) Female figure, Çatal Hüyük VI, Limestone, 11 cm.
- 6) Female figure, Çatal Hüyük II, Terra cotta, 16.5 cm.
- 7) Wall-painting, vultures and men, Çatal Hüyük VII.
- 8) Female figure in wall-relief, Çatal Hüyük VII.
- 9) Female figures, Hacilar I (the Chalcolithic), Terra cotta, left 3.7 cm., right 4.5 cm.
- 4), 5), 6), 9) by Tsugusato Omura
- 3), 7), 8) J. Mellaart, Çatal Hüyük, London 1967.

HACILAR			
c. 5000 BG	I d		
	— I c		
	I a	<i>5247 ± 119</i>	<i>Radiocarbon dates in italic type.</i>
c. 5250	II b		<i>→ extreme tolerance.</i>
	II a	<i>5434 ± 131</i>	<i>All dates calculated with half-life of</i>
c. 5435	III		<i>5730.</i>
	IV		<i>Doubtful dates in brackets.</i>
c. 5500	V		
c. 5600	VI	<i>5620 ± 79</i>	
	VII		
		ÇATAL HÜYÜK	
	VIII		O
	IX	<i>5614 ± 92</i>	I
		<i>→ 5706</i>	
c. 5700		c. 5720	II
		c. 5750	III
			<i>5807 ± 94</i>
		c. 5790	IV
			<i>(6329 ± 99)</i>
		c. 5830	V
			<i>5920 ± 94</i>
		c. 5880	VI A
			<i>5781 ± 96</i> destruction
			<i>5800 ± 93</i>
			<i>5815 ± 92</i> beginning
			<i>5850 ± 94</i>
		c. 5950	VI B
			<i>5908 ± 93</i>
			<i>5986 ± 94</i> beginning
		c. 6050/6070	VII
			<i>6200 ± 97 (?)</i>
		c. 6200	VIII
		c. 6280	IX
			<i>6486 ± 102</i>
		c. 6380?	X
			<i>6385 ± 101</i>
		c. 6500	Pre-X floor levels (not yet dated)

Fig. 1 Chronological Table of Çatal Hüyük and Hacilar
(J. Mellaart, Çatal Hüyük, p. 52)

<p>B.C. 2000</p>
<p>III</p>	<p>Akkisar</p> <p>Alaca Höyük</p>
<p>2300</p> <p>Age</p> <p>II</p> <p>Early Bronze</p>	<p>Cypros</p>
<p>2500</p> <p>I</p>	<p>Cypros</p>
<p>3000</p> <p>Chalcolithic</p> <p>Can Hasan</p>	
<p>5000</p> <p>Late Neolithic</p> <p>Hacılar VI</p>
<p>5700</p> <p>Early Neolithic</p> <p>Çatal Hüyük II III VI</p>
<p>6000</p>	

Fig. 2 Twin-idols and Mother-and-child figures
(from Çatal Hüyük to Kültepe)

A REINTERPRETATION OF THE FIGURINES FROM ÇATAL HÜYÜK

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

Fig. 7-a

Fig. 7-b

Fig. 8

Fig. 9