

# House Symbolism and Ancestor Cult in the Central Anatolian Neolithic



**Christopher Fredrik Kvæstad**

M.A. thesis in Archaeology

Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion

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**To Bergljot**

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All misquotes and misspellings are solely my own.

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## Abbreviations

ECA:	Early Central Anatolian (period)
PPN(A,B,C/Final):	Pre Pottery Neolithic. Prefixes: E(early), M(middle), L(late)
LN:	Late Neolithic
Pers. com.	Personal communication by talking with given archaeologists on site
ÇRP	Çatalhöyük Research Project



## Chapter I: Introduction

*“...death hath ten thousand several doors for men to take their exits”*

*– John Webster, The Duchess of Malfi, 1612*

### § 1.1 – Introduction

The Central Anatolian Neolithic has long been seen as the intermediate horizon set between the initial articulation of the Neolithic way of life in the Fertile Crescent, and its adoption in Europe. Over the past 25 years of research it has become clear that the Central Anatolian Neolithic constitutes of a distinct centre of early neolithisation that diverges in some fundamental respects from that of the Levant, and can not be seen as an offshoot by the latter (Özdoğan and Başgelen 1999; Düring 2006). The settlements in the Central Anatolian Neolithic show to a large extent a common cultural horizon in configuration of space, burial practices, food production, and ideology.

The reason I chose Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük<sup>1</sup> in my thesis is that these settlements give a good insight of the material culture and ideology in the Neolithic of Central Anatolia. As they are amongst the largest settlements in the Near Eastern Neolithic, with populations reaching into the thousands (Moore et al. 2000:4; Hodder and Cessford 2004:17). They illustrate an intricate picture of the how culture and ideology manifested themselves in the material over time, resulting in a unique patterns of symbolism. This thesis is not meant to be a juxtaposition of the two sites, nor a comparative analysis of the Neolithic Central Anatolia and the Levant. The aim is to show how the symbolism of the house affected the ancestor cult and how it was incorporated within the private sphere. The sites are covering a significant time span of the Central Anatolian Neolithic - approximately 2200 years - constructing complex societies based on a unique system of belief manifesting itself in the material culture.

During my work with this thesis I experienced that the house and ancestor cult are more intimately linked than previously expected. Ancestors were not only buried within the house, but incorporated and became a part of it. I suggest the reader keep in mind the complexity of the material culture and that the symbolism and rites connected to it is radically different from

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<sup>1</sup> Was earlier referred to as Çatal Höyük (for instance by Mellaart works from the 1960's), but after the new excavations started in 1993, the official spelling changed to Çatalhöyük. The same has not been done with Aşıklı Höyük.

perceptions we have in present societies. Things that are at first glance appear to be separate entities, i.e. the *house* and the *ancestor*, become unclear as my symbolic divisions appear somewhat artificially constructed and unnatural. The ties are close between the house and the ancestor, so close that they in their time might have been seen as one unit rather than two separate entities.

## § 1.2 – Space and time



**Map 1.1 - Satellite photo and overview map of Central Anatolia (source: Google Maps / Wikipedia)**

The area of my research is Central Anatolia (marked red in lower left corner – map 1.1), mainly consisting of the Konya Plain to the west and Cappadocia to the east. The settlements of Aşıklı Höyük (25 km south-east from Aksaray) and Çatalhöyük (52 km south-east from Konya) (map 1.1), respectively located on the Konya Plain and in western Cappadocia, are located approximately 150 km apart from each other. I will present the sites locations more detailed when approaching the archaeological material in Chapter V.

All dates used in this thesis are calibrated BC. The occupational date for Aşıklı Höyük is 8200 – 7400 BC (Thissen 2002; Hodder and Cessford 2004), and Çatalhöyük (East mound) is 7400 – 6200/6000 BC (Hodder 2006:7; Cessford 2001; Hodder and Cessford 2004), respectively placing them in the periods ECA II and ECA II/III (see table 1.1). The research undertaken in Turkish Neolithic archaeology presents Neolithic Anatolia as a potential case of independent

neolithisation and emphasises the enormous cultural diversity found in the region, calling for a new Central Anatolian terminology (Özdoğan 2002). The principal assumption behind this classification scheme is that the ECA was a distinct geographical and cultural entity, characterized by internal cultural continuity until the end of the Middle Chalcolithic (c.4000 BC) (Asouti 2006:95).

The Anatolian Neolithic lasted in total from about 3000 years (ca. 8500-5500 BC) (Düring 2006), and produced numerous sites in the region (see ‘Associated sites’ in table 1.1). My thesis will only discuss the period from the beginning of the Aşıklı Höyük settlement (8200 BC) to the end of the Çatalhöyük East Mound settlement (6200/6000 BC); the ECA II/III periods.

ECA periods (cal. BC)	Correlation with the Levantine periods	Associated sites
ECA I (Younger Dryas-c.9000)	Epipalaeolithic, PPNA/EPPNB	Pınarbaşı rock-shelter Epipalaeolithic burial and hearths
ECA II (~9000-late eight millennium)	E/MPPNB-LPPNB	Pınarbaşı A, Aşıklı Höyük, Kaltepe, Can Hasan III, Suberde, Musular, Çatalhöyük East
ECA III (7000-6000)	LPPNB-PPNC-LN	Çatalhöyük East, Suberde, Pınarbaşı B, Erbaba
ECA IV (6000-5500)	Early Chalcolithic	Çatalhöyük West, Can Hasan I, Köşk Höyük
ECA V (5500-4000)	Middle Chalcolithic	Can Hasan I, Güvercinkayası, Köşk Höyük, Kaltepe upper

**Table 1.1 – Periodization and associated excavated sites belonging to the ECA (“Early Central Anatolian”) period (Asouti 2006:94; Özbaşaran and Buitenhuis 2002)**

### § 1.3 – Structure of the thesis

First I will present the problem formulations and research methods I have chosen for my thesis in chapter II. It consist of the main research question “*How did symbolism and ancestor cult manifest themselves in the house during the Neolithic of Central Anatolia?*” followed by four sub-questions. In the latter part of chapter II will discuss the methods of researched used to answer my research questions. In chapter III the general research history will be accounted for, giving an overview of what work has been done on the subject and the area. In chapter IV the theoretical framework will be presented through the use of multiple sub-categories: first clarify the word ‘house’, thereafter moving on several theories on the house, liminality, death

and ancestor cult. In the following chapter V the archaeological material will be discussed, first by putting the Central Anatolian Neolithic in a Middle Eastern context, then separately presenting Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük; discussing location, site history, dates, and material. In chapter VII will categorically analyse the theories and archaeological material, before moving on to the final conclusion in chapter VII.

## **Chapter II: Problem formulations and research methods**

Problem formulations and methodology is intricately linked together, and therefore I have chosen to present them in the same chapter. The research questions are set as the premises of the thesis, and all literature used is in regard to these questions as a base for the thesis. My research methods are to clarify the methods I have chosen to analyse the material remains, and which premises I am made to answer the presented research questions.

### **§ 2.1 – Problem formulations**

As the title of this thesis implicates, my research is mainly based on how ancestor cult and symbolism of the house manifested itself in the archaeological data. I have chosen to split up the problem formulations in two set of hierarchical questions:

Main Question:       How did ancestor cult manifest itself in the house at Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük?

Sub-questions:

What expression does the material have that can tell us something about ancestor rituals?

What role did the ancestors have in the structure and symbolism of the house?

What links can be made between the present ethnography and the archaeological material?

I have chosen to keep the problem formulations as a subtle basis throughout my thesis. The whole structure of this thesis has been constructed with the problem formulations as a foundation for both interpreting and collection of the theoretical approaches relevant to the archaeological material I have chosen.

### **§ 2.2 – Research methods**

Although I am dealing with a fixed geographical area of Central Anatolia, there is a need to distinguish between the two sites I have chosen. This thesis is substantially a theoretical

approach to the material, yet I chose to visit Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük to get a better understanding of the material I am working with, and talk to the archaeologist working on site<sup>2</sup>. This gave me a unique opportunity to comprehend the theory I am working with, and get a better understanding of certain aspects of the material which is hard to grasp by only reading the publicised material.

As material culture is loaded with meaning, the ideas and symbolism of prehistory can be understood through archaeological investigation. I have chosen to pursue the post-processual archaeological direction, fronted by scholars such as Ian Hodder (Hodder 2000, 1996, 1991, 1991, 1987, 1985), incorporating feminism, Marxism, structuralism, contextualism, etc. The idea that material culture could be a substitute for written sources in an effort to express meaning in times of danger or stress (Nistad 2005). In the Processual movement (also known as New-Archaeology) starting in the 1960s and 1970s, archaeologists tried to extend the natural science approach into all areas of the discipline (Rapoport 2006). Even cultural issues were thought accessible using a philosophy derived from natural science, emphasising general laws, hypothesis testing, and independence of theory and data. It paid little attention to the social, and even less, to the symbolic and ideological issues (Hodder 1996:11). Hodder's contextual approach is marked by the understanding of the totality in the relevant environment, analysing the necessity for discerning the object's meaning (Hodder 1991:139). The context contains all the relevant aspects the symbol interacts with; contextual archaeology is the recognition that social action and social meaning behind the material culture can best be understood in context, both cultural and material (Nistad 2005:10).

The use of ethnoarchaeology (formerly known as “action archaeology” or “living archaeology”) is essential to understand and comprehend the context the given object in terms of symbolism and ritual. Ethnoarchaeology is the combination of two disciplines; *archaeology* – recovering recording material remains – and *ethnography* – the study of human behaviour and social organization in living societies. Although the use of ethnographic by interpreting prehistory is not a new approach (e.g. de Jussieu 1723; Peake 1940), ethnoarchaeology is distinct in its approach by the means of planning an purpose in its study of the archaeological material (Stiles 1977; London 2000). I do refer to the ethnographic present to explain and clarify certain aspect of the theoretical approach and the illuminate the archaeological material I am working with. The use of direct analogy has to be avoided, due

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<sup>2</sup> First visit to Çatalhöyük was in September 2009. My fieldtrip to Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük was in August 2010; all my pers. com. references are from this trip.

to the great leap in both time and space between the present societies and the archaeological material. I have tried to use the ethnographic source with great caution, both pointing out similarities as well as dissimilarities to the archaeological material, to pursue a nuanced analysis of the material culture and its context.



### Chapter III: Pervious studies and research

I will in this chapter present pervious studies and research that is not directly connected to the sites, as I have chosen to present site history as a separate paragraphs connected to the specific sites (see § 5.1.1 and § 5.2.1).

In my thesis I have used a wide range of ethnographic sources to illuminate different characteristics about the house. In anthropology the house has been studied as a social entity by authors such as Bloch (Bloch 1995; Bloch and Parry 1982), Lévi-Strauss (1987, 1983), Rapoport (1980, 1969) and Bourdieu (1990b, 1990a, 1977). The book *About the house: Lévi-Strauss and beyond* (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995) gathers a collection of essays concerning the house not simply as a physical structure. The focus is on the interrelation on the buildings, people and ideas, through the means of ethnographic case studies to reveal some different ways the house come to stand for social groups and represent the world around them.

Hodder's *The Domestication of Europe* (1992) explains domestication as a discourse of power, and introduces the concepts *domus* and *agrius*, a theoretical approach to mans movement away from nature into culture. Rapoport's *House forms and culture* (1969) deals with the history of the built environment, an he noted how past history always played important role in architectural studies. He analysed the complex phenomenon that determine the form of dwellings, to deal with the broader aspects of house form and the habitat of man. *Architecture & Order*, by Parker-Pearson and Richards (1994a), incorporates a range of interpretation to social space in terms of both ethnography, history and prehistoric societies. Eliade (1987 [1959]) considered the 'founding of the world' to be an required revelation of sacred space in terms of a fixed point, an *axis mundi*, to acquire orientation in the chaos of homogeneity. Lewis-Williams (2004) uses the term *axis mundi* to interpret the possibility of shamanism at Çatalhöyük through its internal structural order.

Hodder has been one of the authors that has publicised an extensive line of works regarding Çatalhöyük in terms of symbolism and ritual in the archaeological material (2007, 2006; 2004; 2003, 2002, 2000, 1999, 1992). Hodder contextual approach has resulted in several works, one of the more recent being *Çatalhöyük: the leopard's tale - revealing the mysteries of Turkey's ancient "town"* (2006), discussing the symbolism and structure of the site. By using ethnographic sources, such as the Tikopia (Firth 1936), Hodder approaches the material culture in a way that would not be possible by solely keeping to the excavated material.

The social activities inside the house were of course marked by the daily activities performed within it (see Hodder and Cessford 2004). The processing and consumption of food, was indeed a vital part of the inner life of the house. The research on food in society is a rather new approach to in archaeology. Haaland (2007, 2006) has done some research on the subject in the context of the middle east, and the symbolism of food, such as the homology between bread and pregnancy, and the food as the manifestation of male and female labour as a source for reproduction of the household. Others have also pointed out the significance of food in both social life and structure of the house (Atalay and Hastorf 2006; Wright 2000), marking its importance in the archaeological material. Ethnographers, such as Delaney (1991) and Evans-Pritchard (1940), have also contributed to the understanding of the hearths symbolic importance as the centre of the household.

Hertz (1960 [1907]) described how the deceased stands as a threat to social order, and the arrangements made by society to triumph over death. The concept on death on society has been outlined by both Metcalf & Huntington (1991) and Humphreys (1981), as how death effect aspects of social life, and what reactions the loss of life has in society. Thomas (1975) introduced the terms 'good' and 'bad' death as how ideals relate to both time and place of death, and the deceased *post mortem* treatment. Both Middleton (Lugbara) (1982) and Bloch (Merina) (1982, 1981, 1971) describe these concepts in terms of ethnographic studies concerning this dichotomy of death. Bloch and Perry argue that this is a social control over death, dramatising the victory of order over death.

In regard to ancestor cult Parker-Pearson's (2009) *The Archaeology of Death and Burial* is actively using ethnoarchaeology to illuminate past societies view on death and afterlife, social organisation and world view. Through ethnography and historical documents Parker-Pearson investigates different interpretations of the burial, and how the body is seen in present societies in terms of pollution, fertility, liminality, etc.

Van Gennep's *Rites de Passage* (2004 [1909]) has been most influential in analysing the universality of rites, arguing that every rite is *un rite de passage*. Van Gennep identified a structure that underlies all rites of passage. Since then his schema has informed many cross cultural study of the initiation process. Turner (1988, 1967) took van Gennep's ideas further in his classic essay *Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites of Passage* (1988), describing the transitional period of initiation rites in a way that made the richness and

coherence of the transitional (or *liminal*) period become apparent. Metcalf and Huntington (1991) stand in opposition to this view, arguing that universality in behaviour (i.e. rites of passage) does not exclude lower level variation, something already argued by Rivers in the 1920s (Rivers 1999).

The research done in Central Anatolia is quite limited compared to the vast amounts of research that has been done in the Levantine area (Bar-Yosef 2004; Bar-Yosef and Valla 2001; Bar-Yosef 2001; Meignen et al. 2000; Bar-Yosef 1998; Schiegl et al. 1994; Bar-Yosef et al. 1992; Middleton 1982; Arensburg and Bar-Yosef 1973; Guerrero et al. 2009; Kuijt and Goring-Morris 2002; Kuijt 2000; Hole 2000; Cauvin 2000, 1979; Rollefson 2003; Bienert et al. 2004; Bienert 1991; Richard 2003).

After a pace in investigations of the Anatolian prehistory took place in the 1990s, the book *Neolithic in Turkey: the cradle of civilization* (Özdoğan and Başgelen 1999) was released with a detailed description of 15 sites in the region. It discusses evidence from a number of key sites as well as their wider significance in the progress of change throughout the Neolithic period through several sites in the region. I have used it as a reference to the Aşıklı Höyük settlement (Esin and Harmankaya 1999) since it is one of the more comprehensive works about the research of the site.

A significant conference published as *Proposal for a regional terminology for Central Anatolia. In The Neolithic of Central Anatolia. Internal developments and external relations during the 9th–6th millennia cal BC, Proc. Int. CANeW Round Table, Istanbul 23-24 November 2001* (referred to as Özdoğan 2002; Thissen 2002; Özbaşaran and Buitenhuis 2002; Gérard 2002; Duru 2002), were the most known archaeologist on the Central Anatolian Neolithic debated issues such as statistics, dating, regional terminology, transformation in society, architectural indications, cultural dynamics, symbolism, definitions, etc. This started a movement to analyse and identify specific trends for the regions Neolithic, also differentiating it to a greater extent from the terminology of the Levantine Neolithic.

The Ph.D. thesis Düring (2006) *Constructing communities: clustered neighbourhood settlements of the Central Anatolian Neolithic ca. 8500-5500 Cal. BC* is one of the most extensive studies on housing in the Central Anatolian Neolithic, and it has been often referred to in my thesis. Düring analyses chronologically a selection of the most significant

settlements in the Central Anatolian Neolithic (Aşıklı Höyük, Canhasan III, Çatalhöyük, Erbaba, and Canhasan I), in terms of stratigraphy, building units, internal features, population estimates, etc. Düring analyses how community and society was constructed, and how the constitution of society affected the household.

## Chapter IV: Theory of the House and Ancestor Cult

“In the social concept of the ‘house’, a single house is subject to a range of different perspectives” (Bailey 1990:19)

As the title of this thesis implies; the house and ancestor ritual are connected. As we will see; the perceptions on both the house and ancestor cult varies from one culture to another, depending a range of factors. Man’s vast spectre of culture, both in a physical and ethereal sense, suggests that it is difficult to identify patterns of universal behaviour. Still it is fruitful take in a position of inclusive observation, in terms of theoretical framework and ethnographic material, to analyse material culture and explore the incredible possibilities of human behaviour.

### § 4.1 – Defining ‘house’

The term house is difficult to define. It is more comprehensive than one might expect. When searching for the word ‘house’ in a common dictionary there are 15 definitions were the first five are ‘dwelling’, ‘occupants of house’, ‘building for animals’, ‘place for entertainment’, and ‘theatre’<sup>3</sup>. The word ‘house’ is in other words not just a word for a certain physical structure, but also a strong metaphor in other contexts. Bailey (1990:22f) argues that the word ‘house’ denotes to place of worship, eating, drinking, dwelling, entertainment, farming, education, legislation, economic activity, or astral observation. The word has a multitude of meanings depending on social and material context. There are two important aspects for social archaeologists to follow when working on houses. First one has to define the meaning of ‘house’, since its meaning is contextually dependent. The context, whether of social, material or other parameters, defines the meaning of a house. The contexts is material in that it is what the house contains, what it is constructed from, how it is ordered in the dimensions, and how that ordering relates to other houses. Secondly is continuity and repetition of action. To define the house outside the limits of three-dimensional space is to create a better understanding of the meaning of ‘house’(Bailey 1990:23). The experiences inside the house do highly differ from culture to culture. Rapoport (1969) argues that western notions of comfort, adequate lightening, heating, pleasant and negative odour, privacy, and hygiene may not be shared with other cultures. Regarding odour “the Eskimo accepts very

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<sup>3</sup> Microsoft Encarta, World English dictionary: ‘house’  
<http://uk.encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/dictionary/DictionaryResults.aspx?lextype=3&search=house>

high smell concentrations inside the Igloo, and the smell of the toilet is accepted in the traditional Japanese house”, while in some cultures “(...) smoke is sacred and is encouraged in the house” (Rapoport 1969:61-62). All these notions affect the form of the house. Lévi-Strauss (1987, 1983) characterizes the house as a social group, more comprehensive than the household itself. Groups referred to by the term ‘house’ are “corporate bodies, sometimes quite large, organized by their shared residence, subsistence, means of production, origin, ritual actions, or metaphysical essence, all of which entail a commitment to a corpus of the house property, which in turn can be said to materialize the social group” (Gillespie 2000:1). The house is an enduring social group that is materially represented by a physical structure, including the objects that rest within it (furnishing, curated heirlooms, and graves), resting within a designated locus in the landscape.

To take a look at the house in social archaeological terms implies that it is definable in a number ways, from an equally numerous range of perspectives, in many different social and material contexts. Houses do not only *reflect* the social structure and activity; they play an equal role in *determining* that structure and activity (Bailey 1990:26). Houses also contain multiple meanings. They may be defined in terms of production and consumption. A house can be interpreted as the centre of food production, containing the hearth, the grinding stone and other kitchen equipment. It can at the same time be seen as the locus for biological production through physical acts of conception, gestation, and birth. Bailey shows that considering houses as living entities would be a profitable approach in the task of interpreting the house, and see it as the physical nature of material culture (p.29).

A house is in other words more than just a structure serving a protective function against the elements and human and animal foes. Lévi-Strauss (1987, 1983) described the house as a specific form of social organization, a *groupe social*, both in terms of gender (i.e. the Kabyle house - Bourdieu 1990b) and social hierarchy (i.e. the Zafimaniry - Bloch 1995). Carsten and Hugh-Jones go further and view houses as “(...) an extension of the person; like an extra skin, carapace or second layer of clothes, it serves as much to reveal and display as it does hide and protect” (1995:2). *Domus* and *corpus* are intimately linked, and together with the mind they are in continuous interaction. The physical structure, furnishing, social conventions, and mental images of the house mobilise and create the ideas and activities unfolding within it (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995). *Domus*, as portrayed by Hodder (1992), “involves practical activities carried out in the house, food preparation and the sustaining of life. But it is also an abstract term” (p.44). It is particularly in the final stages of food transformation, from raw into

cooked, the *domus* (specifically its hearth) plays its role. Symbolic connotations are given to practical activities; making the house an arena for symbolic elaboration. The house may be used as a metaphor for both social and economic strategies, and relations of power. *Domus* includes the provision of shelter and the storage of food connected the house by the concepts of nurturing and caring, as well as it gains power from the exclusion, control and domination of the *agrios* (e.g. ‘the outside’ or ‘the wild’) (p.45). The house acted as a symbolic focus that domesticated people through the *domus* in terms of the idea and practice of domesticating the *agrios*. Bender (1978) outlines the process of domestication – the guarantor of social life against the wild was the house. It was where the wild was brought in and controlled, or where *culture* got separated from *nature*. The importance of the *domus* does not necessarily base on an opposition to the *agrios* (Parker-Pearson and Richards 1994a). Towards modern times the hearth and the house (or home) is still recognised as some of the most important symbols of security in our culture (Chapman 1998 [1955]:3). To put it in the words of Michael Balter: “the house [is] something more than just a shelter with walls” (Balter 2005:319).

#### § 4.2 – The house and the body

“Houses are built to live in, and not to look on (...)” Francis Bacon (1985 [1623]:193)

The house, body and mind are in continuous interaction. The physical structure, furnishing, social conventions and mental images produce a ‘ready-made’ environment fashioned by pervious generations and lived in long before it becomes an object of thought (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:2). As humans we are experts in classification and categorization: we divide and build structure around the world that surrounds us to *make sense* of it all (Humphrey 1984). Parker-Pearson and Richards (1994b) argue that “Through classification, order is imposed on the world, not simply an ordering of everything in its place, but an order of morality, social relations, space, time, and the cosmos” (p.10). The human body’s potential divisions, such as top/bottom, left/right, front/back, vertical/horizontal, male/female, provide a framework which is imposed on the world and projected on our surroundings. Various ethnographic studies show the vast spectrum on how the *domus* is linked to the *corpus*, and how the house then becomes a prime agent for socialization.

Houses are frequently thought of as bodies, sharing with them a common autonomy and life history (see Parker-Pearson and Richards 1994b; Lane 1994). If people construct the houses and make them their own image, they also use houses for to construct themselves as

individuals and groups. Environments are thought before they are built (Rapoport 1980:298), and we build *in order* to think and act. The relationship is in its essence dynamic and reflexive (Parker-Pearson and Richards 1994b:2). If the house is an extension of the person, it is also an extension of the self (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:3). At the Zafimaniry of Madagascar the house ‘hardens’ as the inhabitants themselves ‘harden’ their relationship over time (Bloch 1995): the inhabitants relationship have direct impact on the house and vice versa. Even in western-European societies children’s drawings of houses with two windows and a door – two eyes and a mouth – underlines the projection of the self in the house. The house is a significant category, a focus ritual elaboration and a point of reference of the inhabitants own understanding of the world (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:21).

Carsten and Hugh-Jones (1995) characterise houses as dynamic entities, getting their vitality for a number of sources: “most obviously from the people who live in them but also from the materials used in building, from life-giving rituals, or from the movement of heavenly bodies which often determine their orientation” (p.37). The house has a processual nature, since buildings themselves are not static and often have an interplay between permanence and impermanence. A house must not only be built and maintained, get modified to fit their occupants, get extended and rebuilt, and ultimately decay or get destroyed. One has to stress that the architectural processes are *made to coincide* with important events and processes in the lives of their occupants and are thought in terms of them (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995). In ethnographical terms one can refer to Carstens work on the Langkawi in Malaysia (Carsten 1995), where the house is continuously under construction. Bloch (1995) shows how the house among the Zafimaniry in Madagascar hardens and matures together with the people who occupy it. As the house building is begun, a couple embarks on marriage and is only completed when their first child is born. In Amazonian ethnography it is known from the Maloca community (Hugh-Jones 1995) that houses undergo rapid turnovers and are in constantly reshuffling of its occupants. It is a process that coincides with the careers of the leaders who built them: when the leader dies the house dies with him. Bourdieu (1990a) does in his study of the Kabyle house emphasise that as the Berbers cross the threshold and move from the *outside* to the *inside* of the house, their whole world is reversed. The external and internal world is associated with men and women respectively. The movement is strictly gender based: movement inside is intrinsically female, while movement outwards is intrinsically male. “The supremacy given to movement outwards, in which the man affirms his manliness by turning his back on the house in order to face other men, is merely a form of



categorical refusal of nature, the inevitable origin of man's movement away from nature” (Bourdieu 1990a:283).

### § 4.3 – *Habitus*

Bourdieu's paper on the Berber Kabyle house (1990b) prefigures the development of his re-elaboration of *habitus* concept (1990a, 1977); a term concerning a structure of the mind characterized by a set of acquired schemata, sensibilities, dispositions and taste. The interaction between the body and the house plays a key role on his analysis on the logic of practice where the *habitus* is seen as a product of history that produces individual and collective practices (i.e. more history) in accordance with the schemes generated by history (1990a:54). Daily routines in eating, sitting, sleeping, and moving in domestic space are possible mechanisms in which people are socialized into particular rules and orientations. As people go about their daily tasks they may acquire rules and constraints through movement of the body. Hodder and Cressford argue that the rules become *embodied* (2004:18). The house becomes an arena for daily practice. The inhabitants of a house would be aware of routinized domestic space, particular practices, movement, ways of holding oneself, deferential gestures, and more – knowingly using them in a positively valued manner. A child would have learnt the social rules in the practices of daily life within the house. “In this way daily practices become social practices [having] a dimension that relates to social structuring and restructuring” (Hodder and Cressford 2004:18). Eliade (1987 [1957]) argued that human dwelling required the revelation of a sacred space to obtain a fixed point, a *axis mundi*, and hence acquire orientation in the chaos of homogeneity. The *axis mundi* is a particular place and considered to be the centre of the world, and often located inside the house (as for instance a temple, basilica, or cathedral) (p.58).

### § 4.4 – *Transpatial solidarity*

Hiller and Hanson (1984) argue for a *transpatial solidarity* that lies in the local reproduction of a structure recognisably identical to the other members of the group. The word solidarity means in this case the reproduction of an identical pattern by individuals who remains spatially separated from each other and the surrounding world. In contrast a *spatial solidarity* works on the contrary principle: building links with other members of the group not by analogy and isolation, but by continuity and encounter. To realise this it must stress the

continuity of interior and exterior instead of the interiors separateness. “Movement across the boundary, which would undermine a transpatial solidarity, is the fundamental condition of existence for a spatial solidarity” (p.145). To use either transpatial or spatial solidarity forms the conditions of living and the structural integrity of the dwellings within a group, reflecting worldview and social practices.

Houses do not always inherent the female sphere and one should be cautious about describing the house as a structure of unchanging gendered oppositions (Marini 1990). Houses can be simultaneously *private* and *public*, and be associated with women, with men, or both. “They can provide models for the wider polity as well as being domestic entities” (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:41). Inside and outside may as well be associated with siblingship or marriage, with descent or affinity, with unity or difference, or with high or low rank.

#### § 4.5 – Houses as people

In certain contexts houses or settlements are spoken about as people, and people spoken about as houses. For instance can this analogy between houses and people manifest itself in the mapping of anatomy onto architecture, and vice-versa (Kan 1989:49). Houses do have a diverse aspect attached to them. In some contexts they are given living qualities with close association to the body, and the natural processes that are attached to people, animals or plants do apply to the house: they may be born, grow, mature, and die. They may move or walk, feed and get fed, get married and copulate (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:42; Carsten 1995; Bloch 1995).

The house and its occupants are fed in the sense that shared consumption often provides the basic ideas about cohabitation and kinship. The hearth itself may be the central image and focal point of the house (Hodder 1992), and “[it] is as much a defining feature of the house as eating together is a defining feature of kinship” (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:42). The hearth is not only centre, but also an instrument in the process of transformation. The different elements that enter the house (meat and vegetable, kin and affine, the like and unlike) may be said to be mixed together, blended, and veritably cooked together. In this way the houses do continually transform what passes through them, and the hearth is the location where these transformations take place; both figuratively and literally. There is a constant two-way mapping that goes on between the body and its direct daily environment. Houses are at times referred to as outer shells, skins, or garments. Carsten and Hugh-Jones (1995) refer to the

statement based on the intimate environmental relationship the body and the house share, that at times do make it unclear which is serving as a metaphor: “house for body or body for house” (p.43). Both the house and the body seem to be born, live, grow old, die and decay (p.45).

#### § 4.6 – The ambiguity of food

It is not only the transformation the hearth does, from raw to cooked, that possesses significant social and ritual power. The end product being *food*, and is highly valued and follow both social and ritual rules in terms of production and consumption. To quote Haaland (2007:169): “Cooking provides not only ‘food for the body’ but also ‘food for thought’”. Food is of fundamental importance as a medium for initiation and maintenance of social relations. There is a close and extensive relations between food and cosmological and ideological beliefs, and different food ways are associated with modes of feeling, thinking and behaving (Goody 1982). In a Christian context one has the ‘breaking of the bread’ and it representing (or in the catholic sense *transforming into*) the body of Christ. All major present religions; such as Judaism (*Yom Kippour*), Islam (*Ramaḍān*), Christianity (*Lent*), and Hinduism (*Maha Shivaratri/Navratri*), practice fasting as an act of willingly abstaining from some or all food, drink, or both, for a period of time. Haaland (2006) argues that bread was the staple food of the Middle Eastern Neolithic (see also Wright 2000), and it having a mysterious process similar to pregnancy. The importance of the hearth is manifested with it being the main symbol of the household, because it is “the meeting place where the male and female labour at which is created the source of sustenance for reproduction of the household” (Haaland 2007:169). “Food is coercive” according to MacClancy (1992:5). It has immense power in terms of identity, physical nourishment, ways of thought, sex, (political/social) power, friendship, time-controlling, and medium for magic and witchcraft. Food pervades culture and gives meaning to its consumers. It plays a central role in all societies, and provides as much intricate symbolism and metaphors as nutritional substance (Atalay and Hastorf 2006). Food marks identity, social status, and the differential status of the living and the dead (Parker-Pearson 2009). On the Pacific island Tikopia (often referred to by Hodder 2006) the mourner eat cooked food as a symbol of the social and domestic disruption of life by death. Raw food is placed on the grave as a symbol of the product of the deceased’s labours (Farb and Armelagos 1980:93). Delaney’s (1991) work present Turkish village societies that it is at the hearth the wife transforms the wheat seeds into bread, just as she

transforms her husband's seed into a child. Furthermore the wife is expected to assure the continuation of her husband's *ocak* (hearth) within the first year of marriage; by giving birth to their first child. If a man does not have any sons his hearth is in danger, meaning his hearth will extinguish and his patriline will die out (Delaney 1991:159). The hearth is in other words connected to producing food and producing offspring. The connection hearth and lineage is also known from the work of Evans-Pritchard among the Nuer of southern Sudan, where lineages are equivalent to 'hearths' or 'entrances to huts' (Evans-Pritchard 1940:195).

#### § 4.7 – The house as an *axis mundi*

Lewis-Williams (2004) argues that the structures can be constructed exemplars of a tiered cosmology, and that the *axis mundi* could be reached through the use of shamanistic practices inside the structures. Lewis-Williams further criticises scholars for focusing on dissimilarities instead of the puzzling similarities between geographically distant shamanisms. Shamanistic people throughout the world believe in a stratified cosmos, in its essence consisting of three levels: a subterranean realm inhabited by its peculiar spirits and spirit animals; an upper level situated in or above the sky, populated by its own spirits and creatures; and an intermediate level on which humans live and on which the lower and upper levels interfere in various ways (p.30). The shaman is a person with the ability to travel between the three levels of cosmos, and interact with the spirits and animals they encounter, making the shamans' mediatory route the *axis mundi*. The forms found in imagery; such as zigzags, crenelations, grids and diamond chains, are said to be forms that are wired into the human nervous system (Burke 2002; Eichmeier and Höfer 1974), and all *homo sapiens* have the potential to experience them regardless of cultural background (Lewis-Williams 1991; Lewis-Williams and Dowson 1988; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1978).

Lewis-Williams distinguishes between features in terms of *verticality* and *horizontality* as an expression and construction of a tiered cosmos within the house. Features such as posts and beams may have an appeal to either verticality or horizontality and therefore be an *axis mundi*. E.g. the Berber Kabyle House (Bourdieu 1990b) such as the forked tree trunk (*thigejdith* – feminine/vertical) is connected to the main beam (*asalas alemmas* – masculine/horizontal) being essential to the prosperity of the house and its inhabitants.

#### § 4.8 – Social implication of death

Durkheim famous study *Le Suicide* pointed out that although death itself is a supremely individual and personal act, it also has a social and non-individual aspect attached to it (Durkheim 2002 [1897]). It directly affects the relationship between the individual and the society that surrounds it. The tension between ‘the physical separateness of human organisms’ and the ‘individual’s identification with society’ becomes apparent by the occurrence of death (Metcalf and Huntington 1991:5). It becomes a social phenomenon, and can both occur in an instant or as a lengthy process, with wider social problems connected to it. Durkheim’s pupil Robert Hertz based his theoretical work on ethnographic studies of Mayo-Polynesian cultures. He claimed that the deceased is not only a biological individual, but a social being projected upon the physical individual whose “destruction is tantamount to a sacrilege” against the social order (Hertz 1960 [1907]:77). He argues that society had to meet this threat by recuperating from the deceased what it had given of itself and project it on to another host. There are thus two phases of mortuary rituals: a *disaggregational* phase (represented by the disposal of the corpus), and a *reinstallational* phase (represented by a secondary burial) from which the collective emerges triumphant over death. A transfer from one social order to another order is invoked to explain the parallels between the symbolism of mortuary ceremonies, initiation rites and marriages: each involving a transfer in whom a new social identity is grafted onto the individual. Death, one true universal, is puzzling enough not universal in its expressions since its not “everywhere regarded in essentially the same light” (Rivers 1999 [1926]:40). On the contrary, as argued by Metcalf and Huntington (1991:6), “life has a certain universal currency, and death appears only as its absence”. Humphreys (1981) argues that death as a social phenomenon is not necessary only reserved for human kind. There are several examples of particular plants and animals acquiring particular social and cultural significance juxtaposing them with humans: such as leopards and cattle amongst the Dowayo of northern Cameroon (Barley 1981), pigs for the Aré’Aré in the Solomon Islands (de Coppet 1981), a pet lamb in the Romano-British cemetery at Owslebury (Molleson 1981), cedar trees in ancient Mesopotamia (Cassin 1981).

#### § 4.9 – Rites of passage

Death is a transition, but only the last of a long chain of passages a human being goes through within its life. Van Gennep’s work *The Rites of Passage (Les Rites de Passage)* (2004 [1909]) set up a class of rites which accompany every change of place, state, social position and age,

described as 'rites de passage', and it is argued that it harbours "liminal period" as a subclass within it (Turner 1988, 1967). According to Turner's contribution to *Betwixt & Between* (Mahdi, Foster, and Little 1988); *rites de passage* are found in all societies but tend to reach their peak of their expression small-scale, relatively stable and cyclical societies, where change is bound up with biological and meteorological rhythms and recurrences rather than with technological innovations. *Rites the passage* are an "archetypal structure of the human psyche" (1988:3). In the eyes of Turner; van Gennep has shown that all transitional rites can be divided into three sub-phases: *separation*, *margin (limen)*, and *aggregation*. Separation comprises symbolic behaviour signifying the detachment of the individual or group, either through an earlier fixed point in the social structure or a set of cultural conditions. In the marginal (or liminal) intervening phase the state of the ritual subject is abstruse and ambiguous. The ritual subject is betwixt and between in a state that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state. The third phase of aggregation is when the passage is completed and the transition is fulfilled. *Rites de passage* do not restrict movement between specific statuses, and is not necessarily connected to a single persona. As they can accompany any change from one state to another, they might occur when a tribe goes to war, or a passage for scarcity to plenty by performing a harvest-festival. The 'liminal persona' (p.6), as the person is described which undergoes *rites de passage*, are accompanied by a set of symbols and defined by a name. An example is the Ndembu people of Zambia, where the name *mwadi* has multiple meanings: "a boy novice in circumcision rites", "chief-designate undergoing his installation rites", or "first ritual wife". The symbolism is attached to the liminal persona is both complex and bizarre. In many societies these symbols are drawn from the biology of death; featuring decomposition, catabolism, and other physical processes harbouring negative stigmas (e.g. menstruation: frequently associated with the absence or loss of a foetus). As liminal persona is structurally dead, he or she may be treated as a corpse, according to the customs of the given society the person is a part of. This person "may be buried, forced to lie motionless in the posture and directions of customary burial, may be stained black [often seen as the colour of death], or may be forced to live for a while in the company of masked and monstrous mummers representing, *inter alia*, the dead, or worse still, the un-dead" (p.6). Its status is unclear and contradictory; nor a part of the living or the dead, and tends to be regarded as ritually unclean. As the *unclear* is regarded as the *unclean*, the person is particularly polluting. This is also in respect to food, and especially its preparation. They are nor one thing or another, and yet both at the same time. These transitional beings have no

status, property, insignia, secular clothing, rank, or kinship position – nothing that define them structurally from their fellows.

Turner (1988, 1967) claims that van Gennep's work can be seen as an appeal for an universal symbolism of the liminal. In this sense it is very difficult to explain a ritual (or anything else) that is not in some way a rite of passage. On the other hand it is with great care one should handle an expression as 'universal symbolism'. As human kind is geographically wide spread, exposed to different environment and cultural influences, and including the factor of time, one can only with great hardship argue for any cultural universality (Metcalf and Huntington 1991). One should rather look at specific rituals, without pre-branding them as "universal", incorporating them in a greater concept.

#### **§ 4.10 – The 'good' and 'bad' death**

Bloch and Parry (1982) argue there is an impulse to determine the time and place of death, and a dissociation of social death from the termination of bodily functions meant to represent an attempt to both control deaths unpredictable nature, and hence dramatise the victory of order over biology (p.15). Death is here represented as a cyclical order. This has led to the concepts of 'good' and 'bad' death. The 'good' death is one suggesting a degree of control over the arbitrariness of the biological occurrence by replacing a prototype to which such deaths conform, and thus can be seen as an instance of a general pattern necessary for the reproduction of life. The 'bad' death, by contrast, is one with absence of control and therefore not resulting in regeneration (Thomas 1975:192).

A 'good' death among the Lugbara of Uganda (Middleton 1982) is one which occurs inside the home, where the shrines of the ancestor are located, and a legitimate authority is represented by the symbol of speech. A dying man must speak to his heir so the proper order of lineage is maintained in the locality where the lineage anchored and continuity is guaranteed by the smooth transfer of authority. The 'bad' death, on the other hand, occurs away from home and therefore away from the ancestral shrines, making it difficult for the deceased soul to return. As a result the speech to the heir cannot occur; losing the regenerating element of the dead man in his antithesis, the disorganised wild. Another example of the dichotomies of death is found among the Merina of Madagascar (Bloch 1971, 1982, 1981). Here the 'good' death is to place the deceased in the communal tomb. The secondary burial of the corpse does not only recharge fertility of the group and land of the

decease, but also saves the deceased himself from complete obliteration. Hence the 'bad' death is one where the deceased is not entered into the communal tomb. Without the reburial not only a potential source of regeneration is lost to the collective, but the death of the individual is truly terminal. There is in other words an ideal connected to time and place of death in all societies, and they may be substantially different. As there is an ideal in Western Europe to depart life with family close by (Nuland 1994), there is in some Native American tribes to *die in peace*; alone and undisturbed. Death is undoubtedly one of the most ritually elaborate and mythical powered aspects of existence. In contrary to birth, *death* is a transition from physical to the ethereal. The faith of this transition to the ethereal afterlife may be altered through different rites to either assure an ideal transition, an ideal afterlife, or both (Metcalf and Huntington 1991). This affecting the treatment of the dead in a number of ways: grave structure (built, incorporated, cremated) and orientation, body arrangement, and grave goods (or the lack of it). Orientation is significant, and also known from most major present religions. Muslims burials are aligned so the corpus is facing Mecca and the Qibla. Christian burials are laid west-east with the heads to the west so that they may arise on the Day of Judgement to face God in the east. Pagan religions of post-Roman England and Viking Scandinavia are broadly orientated east-west and north-south, copying the two orientations for the longhouse dwellings in this period (Parker-Pearson 2009:6).

#### § 4.11 – The dichotomy of death

“(…) man has not basically changed. Death is still fearful, frightening happening, and the fear of death is a universal fear even if we think we have mastered it on many levels.” (Kübler-Ross 1997:19)

There is a central dichotomy connected to death: pollution versus purity (or perhaps dead versus living). According to Parker-Pearson death is the situation “(…) *par excellence* where the living are confronted by the danger of a torn social fabric and the physical contamination of a putrescent corpse” (p.24). The mourners are at constant risk of getting symbolically polluted, especially during the liminal stage of the rites of passage of death. As the corpse and material goods overwhelms the living, it must be contained by rites of purification and by acts of transference which attach the pollution on to specific people and items. The decaying corpse must be separated from the living as time passes by; incessantly or until the decarnation is complete. The *fear of the dead* (p.25) is a regular feature of liminal time prior



to the rites of incorporation. Universally the dead are a source of fear, especially during the putrefaction of the corpse. Over time *fear* may transform into *reverence*, pacifying the corpse as it completes decomposition (or decarnation). This fear may be based on confrontation death creates in human on their awareness of their own transience, to which they react with attempts to salvage out this disrupting experience by clinging some residue to which permanence can be attributed (Humphreys 1981:5) Overcoming this fear may be done in several ways. One example is to mimic or include familiar daily activities and impressions. The Berawan, an ethnic group from central Borneo, have a custom to make noises at funerals (Metcalf and Huntington 1991:64f). There is a large drum that can only be played during funerals, that is played day and night, producing rhythms that are proscribed at other times. The pounding of the drum is similar to the motions of woman washing cloth; rolling the together to a ball and pounding them against a rock or any other suitable object. One can also compare it to the pounding of rice, or perhaps logging. By mimicking these aspects of daily life, one includes the funeral as a part of life; reducing the awkwardness of the situation and making it more anodyne.

#### § 4.12 – Individuality and its problems

As it has been claimed that human kind has a universal belief in the immortality of the dead existing in all cultures (Lehmann and Myers 1997), and that that ancestor worship is a universal aspect of religion (Steadman, Palmer, and Tilley 1996), this may be a result of an eagerness for permanence all human kind is looking for. Tomb monuments in western culture are made to individualise those they commemorate. As with the Greek attitude, presented by Vernant (1981), life is heavily associated with individuality. Death threatens to put an end to differentiation unless there is a possibility of preserving the memory of the deceased as an individual. The construction of a structure assures memory among the living, preserving the deceased as an individual to prevail the memory of the person. Archaeologists may analyse grave-goods and skeletal data to reconstruct as many of the individual features of the dead as possible may be seen as a desire to concretize the individual. This approach can be problematic when working with cultures that deviate from the ideology of the individual. If we again turn to the Merina of Madagascar (Bloch 1971, 1982, 1981) they seem to reverse the ideology. They crunch up the bones of the dead all together in order to make the tomb into an ideal representation of group unity. The collective is favoured prior to the individual, assuring eternal life through becoming part of the collective tomb (Bloch 1981). Other cases, such as

the Krahó Indians of Brazil, see the image of the dead as lacking individualising ties created by affinity, becoming steadily less differentiated, until they end as stocks and stones (Da Cunha 1981).

#### § 4.13 – The symbolism of the human body

The human body is itself often used as a symbol, and corpse symbolism is a special type of this symbolism. In most cultures through history the human body has been used to represent moral and social verities. Rituals such as circumcision and scarification at initiation shows that the body gives a wide reservoir of moral representations, and the same body carries its own possibilities for symbolic expression after death (Metcalf and Huntington 1991). Following Turner (1967); the process of rotting, with the dissolution of the body's form, provides a metaphor for a social and moral transition. Further Turner, following Van Gennep, argues that the corpse is associated with death because its decay is a metaphor for liminality. This direct connection between the two seems quite obvious. However, whether death or liminality is seen as primary ultimately depends upon whether one begins with funerals or rites of passage. Pursuing the symbolism of the corpse by focusing upon the process of dissolution is in many ways fruitful. Nonetheless, "(...) like percussive sound, corruption is a nearly universal symbol, it varies greatly in its metaphorical significance" (Metcalf and Huntington 1991:72).

#### § 4.14 – Material culture and ritual

To interpret material culture without any data on ideology or any other source of information on social structure (e.g. ethnography) one is liable to end up with the false conclusions. Between historians, social anthropologists, and archaeologists the conceptual barrier is based on the antithesis between *objects* and meanings people attach to them. Producing examples of burial forms or artefact patterns would be next to impossible if it was not because of the help there is in ethnographic or written sources. On the other hand it is attractive for some archaeologists to look for a solution stressing the materiality of their data, associating themselves with science rather than anthropology, arguing for that the facts should speak for themselves (Humphreys 1981).

There is no simple universal explanation for the forms of funeral rites and the symbolism connected to it. Metcalf and Huntington (1991) argue that there may be a general psychic

unity of mankind, although the identification of vague quasi universal behaviour does not exclude variation at levels lower than the whole species. Only when placed in the context of a particular ideological, social, and economic system, rituals of death may begin to make sense that would not be possible by perusing cultural universals. Conceptions of death are not only elusive, but highly variable.

“Death is so striking and unique an even that if one had to choose something which must have been regarded in essentially the same light by all mankind at all times in all places, I think one would be inclined to choose it in preference to any other, and yet I hope to show that the primitive conception of death (...) is different, one might say radically different, from our own” (Rivers 1999 [1924]:40)

The moment of death is not only related to the afterlife, but also on the process of living, aging, and producing offspring. Death relates to life; it relates to the recent life the deceased was living, and the life the person procreated and leaves behind. The continuity of the living is a more parable reality than the of the dead, and as a result it is common for life values of sexuality and fertility to dominate the symbols of funerals (Metcalf and Huntington 1991:108)

#### **§ 4.15 – Moving on to the archaeological material**

If we look at both Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük, and their setting in the greater Neolithic interaction sphere in the Levantine area, one can see traces of a house structure and internal order that may show some form of social control and a domestication of space. I urge the reader to see the archaeological material presented in light of the presented theories and perceptions presented in this chapter. Do not to analogical project it to the material, but to see it in the light of a broad cognitive dimension other than the universal bias there is on the interpretation of ancestor cult and the house.

## **Chapter V: Material remains from Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük**

In this chapter I will first set Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük in the context of the Levantine area, both in terms of time and space. I want to illuminate how certain behaviour, such as the repetitive practices, may have been practiced long before the material seen in the Central Anatolian Neolithic. Thereafter I will present the two settlement separate in terms of the given material culture.

### **§ 5.1 – Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük in a Levantine context**

The process of sedentism was closely related to ritual and started as early as the Late Natufian period in the Levantine area. Certain landscapes could have been used as ritual centres for initiations, feasting, marriage, exchange, burial, etc. (Schmidt 2000). In the north of Syria and southeast of Turkey, at sites such as Tell ‘Abr 3, Jerf el Ahmar, and Göbekli, there has been found larger buildings from the PPNA. These buildings were widely accepted as ritual buildings due to their circular form and subterranean positioning (Hodder 2007:107). These large communal buildings have elaborate internal furnishing, as seen at Tell ‘Abr 3 were these buildings had a diameter ranging from 7-12 metres (Yartah 2005). Building B2 at Tell ‘Abr 3 was dug 1.55 metres into virgin soil and had a bench within its circular walls, with Bucrania deposited in a bench. Yartah (2005) argues that large early PPNA communal buildings at Mureybet and Jerf el Ahmar are not ritually or symbolically elaborate and were probably used for storage. Towards the end of PPNA Yartah suggested less evidence for economic functions and more decoration and ritual. At Çatalhöyük forensic work on the floors showed that the “shrines” were actually used as domestic houses (Bull et al. 2005; Matthews 2005). The monthly replasterings, elaborate symbolic remains and the rebuilding of houses led to the hypothesis that social life was organised partly through the routines and practices of domestic socialization (Hodder 2006; Hodder and Cessford 2004). As the house itself was embedded within a complex symbolic world, the daily activities within houses formed and reformed the social world (Hodder 2007).

At Çatalhöyük there is evidence for continuities in practices and functions within houses, and very specific house-based continuities in art and symbolism (i.e. plate 6.2) (Düring 2006; Hodder 2006). Evidence for feasting in connection with symbolical power and prestige exchange in the PPNA both from southern Anatolia and the core Levantine area may partly be

evident at Çatalhöyük. Nonetheless the majority of evidence “suggests that status and power were very much based on the control of people and their socialization within domestic units” (Hodder 2007:109).

Repetitive practices can be traced back to Middle Palaeolithic. The Kebara Cave is located on the western escarpment of Mt. Carmel in modern day Israel and has occupational deposits spanning the Middle Palaeolithic and Natufian periods (aprox. 60,000 – 10,000 B.C.) (Bar-Yosef et al. 1992). The Middle Palaeolithic deposits show repeated use of the cave for hearths, while the inner part of the cave was used as a dump area (Goldberg 2001; Schiegl et al. 1994). There is evidence for deposits of overlapping hearths, although the placing of the hearths was not exact (Meignen et al. 2000), and far from the extent found for instance at Aşıklı Höyük (see § 5.1.4). Evidence may show a ‘hearth zone’ in the cave were people over a extended period of time made hearths, without a specific backward reference (Hodder 2007:110). A focus of continuity has also been suggested for some of the other Kebaran sites<sup>4</sup>, such as Ohalo II (Nadel 2006, 1990), Kharaneh IV, and Ein Gev (Bar-Yosef and Valla 2001:111-122). At the Ein Gev 1 (Jordan Valley, Israel – fourteenth-millennium B.C.) a hut was fund dug into the slope of a hill. This hut was periodically occupied with six successive layers which accumulated within it (Arensburg and Bar-Yosef 1973:201). Subfloor burials probably occurred both at Ein Gev and Kharaneh IV (Bar-Yosef and Valla 2001:111-122). The first use of lime plaster can traced back to the Kebaran, but it is not before the Natufian that there is evidence for its use in architecture (Kingery, Vandiver, and Prickett 1988:241).

In the Natufian there is some degree of sedentism indicated by finds of animals and birds from all seasons (e.g. ‘Ain Mallah), vermin (such as the house mouse<sup>5</sup>) (Hodder 2007) and indications for food processing (Wright 2000). The use of a broad spectre of resources made sedentism possible. At ‘Ain Mallah there has been found traces of superpositioning of buildings; both in form of succeeding each other at the same spot (“ancient level”), and sequences of houses dug into each other (“recent level”) (Perrot 1966). The Younger Dryas climatic deterioration towards the end of the Natufian resulted in a dispersal of many hamlets and a more mobile lifestyle in the Levant (Bar-Yosef 2001). In the Taurus and south-eastern Anatolia the Younger Dryas had the opposite effect; resulting in a greater degree of sedentism at sites such as Hallan Çemi (Bar-Yosef 2004). Toward the end of the Natufian there is some

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<sup>4</sup> The Kebara Cave has led to the derivative *Kebaran*; referring to Epipalaeolithic groups in the Levant prior to the Natufian.

<sup>5</sup> *Mus musculus domesticus*

evidence indicating post-mortem skull removal, but no evidence for circulation or reuse. This does not by itself indicate construction of historical links to the ancestors (Hodder 2007:111). Boar heads, a child skeleton with necklace were found in a houses at Mallaha (Perrot 1966), which could be an indication for ritualized abandonment processes.

In the following PPNA the settlements grew 3 to 8 times larger than those in the Natufian (Bar-Yosef 2001), and houses were often oval shaped and partly subterranean, with internal hearths and plaster floors (Hodder 2007). The sites became more structured, and got a higher extent of delineated use of space in comparison to the prior Natufian culture. There is also more evidence for repeated use of space or housing in throughout the region. Both at Quermez Dere in northern Iraq (Watkins 2006, 2004), and Phase II at Mureybet (Cauvin 1979) in the Middle Euphrates show good evidence for rebuilding in the same space. At Jericho a large amount of very repetitive surfaces adjacent to the tower, and inside the settlement there is residential continuity in both the PPNA and PPNB deposits. Houses could last through several phases, but usually with rebuilding almost from the base of the wall (Kenyon 1981:268f). It must be said that the walls were cut further down than at Çatalhöyük (Hodder 2007).

In the PPNB the rise of huge sites such as ‘Ain Ghazal show frequent floor replasterings , and at Jericho “(...) numerous floor levels suggest a prolonged period of use” both in buildings and courtyards (Kenyon 1981:295; Hole 2000). At PPNB Beidha in Jordan the plaster layers in some buildings exceeds 5.5 cm (Kirkbride 1966) – making it tempting to draw parallels to Çatalhöyük. At Abu Hureyra 2 houses were often constructed on top of each other; up to nine times in sequence. Floors had an average of 2-3 renewals, and sometimes up to 10 (Moore et al. 2000:262ff). Hearths were at a great extend built on top of each other suggesting that “(...) the builders of a new house often remembered not only the plan but also the internal arrangements of its predecessor, and considered it appropriate to replicate both” (Moore et al. 2000:265). Özdoğan and Özdoğan (1989) describe Çayönü in south-eastern Turkey as being focused on horizontal homogeneity rather than vertical continuity. But the homogeneity in building types could have an element of vertical continuity, since every newer building layer rested on the foundations of the predeceasing one without disturbing its structure (Özdoğan and Özdoğan 1989:73). A similar pattern can be seen in the deep soundings at Aşıklı Höyük, were multiple sequences can be seen build exactly on top of each other (see §5.1.5).

The material indicates that repetitive practices in houses and memory construction took place in the PPNB and related groups in the Middle East and Turkey. One could argue for a cultural contact between some groups in Central Anatolia. Cauvin (2000:29) argues that Çatalhöyük is a product of a diffusion coming from the Near Eastern Neolithic. On the other hand there are archaeologists, claiming there is not enough evidence to verify that the Central Anatolian Neolithic was a product of the Levantine Neolithic (e.g. M. Özbaşaran – pers. com.). Özbaşaran does not deny a degree of cultural contact between the regions, but not to the extent of a mono-channelled diffusion going from the Levant and towards Central Anatolia.

Nonetheless the majority of early Middle Eastern Neolithic hearths and ovens are located inside houses, while some are placed outside close to roasting pits (Byrd 1994). The same location patterns can be seen in the Central Anatolian Neolithic. In the Levant, as the importance of housing became more eminent, there was a change in shape and spatial division of the house: from an oval shape with few rooms in the PPNA, to rectangular with multiple rooms in the PPNB (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003; Bar-Yosef 1998; Steadman 2005; Kuijt and Goring-Morris 2002). The material remains indicate that the house is becoming much more important as a sign for who is living there, possibly about relations in the social world as well as relations with the divine world (Haaland 2007:176). Increased use of lime plaster in the PPNB may be a result of an increased focus on the house, as it is labour intensive to produce (Gourdin and Kingery 1975; Kingery, Vandiver, and Prickett 1988). To produce the lime plaster in sufficient amounts requires heating for three or four days at temperatures of 800-900 °C (bright heat) with constant fuel additions (Kingery, Vandiver, and Prickett 1988:221). These efforts were made all over the greater Levantine area during the Neolithic (Cauvin 2000; Goring-Morris and Horwitz 2007; Kingery, Vandiver, and Prickett 1988), implementing that the house was of great symbolic and social importance.

These efforts were made in Central Anatolian Neolithic as well. Çatalhöyük is well known for its multiple plastering sequences. At Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük the intramural burial of the ancestors, the multiple rebuilding sequences of both the house as a whole and the hearth and ovens within it, do indeed refer to the house as a structure of great ritual and symbolic importance. Just as there are clear distinctions between Central Anatolia and the Levant, one might see the astonishing similarities on how the ancestors play a crucial role in the perception of the house as a social and symbolic entity.

Hodder and Cessford (2004) underline the importance of the house as a social unit at Çatalhöyük. Houses often contained burials of a range of individuals, with a broad representation of all ages and both genders. These individuals were placed below during its use, suggesting a possible relationship with those buried beneath the floors and those occupying the building. All houses have traces of ritual and art (Last 1998), sometimes so elaborate that they at the time of their discovery got interpreted as ‘shrines’ (Mellaart 1967). The placement of the platforms, with raised edges and changing in height into 1.0-1.5 m squares, and the size of the main rooms rarely exceeding 5-x-5 m, meant that movement inside the house was both conscientious and restricted (Hodder and Cessford 2004:22). The different areas had different social meanings. There is a tendency for different categories of people to be buried under different platforms. All these factors summed together give us a vague picture of what social importance the house and the dead had in their days of occupation. Hodder and Cessford argue that daily practice and social memory are inseparable, since societies without a written language a important mechanism of social reproduction is through construction of social memory (2004:31). Community-wide memories may be imbedded in daily practices and rules, such as the inhabitants knowing that the hearth belonged in the south of the main room. This does not necessary mean that there was any specific memory of an individual house in which the hearth was in the south. Continuity of houses in the exact of one house on the walls of the preceding one may arguably indicate that memory was used to reproduce regulatory codes through the practices in the house. This may also be underlined by certain burials that is was “clearly permissible for later interments to disturb earlier burials” as there are “clear indications that the precise locations and nature of earlier burials were remembered years or even deceased later” (Hodder and Cessford 2004:34). In a society that buries its death within the house, it seems there is an ideal of keeping the deceased within the immanent cosmos of the structure. This practice is also known from the Tikopia buried their dead under or around houses as perhaps an indicator of ancestral veneration or a more generally desire to maintain perpetuated links to the deceased members within the house (Kirch 1996; Kirch and Yen 1982; Firth 1936). In contrast are the of graves are the Batammaliba graves in Togo and Benin; instead of intramural burial the graves themselves are mimicking houses (Preston Blier 1987). The graves of the household heads are closed with a flat round stone, the *kubotan*, which in life is used to seal the hole which links the ground floor and the first floor in the house. Funerary and birth rites take place underneath this hole, which embodies the house’s life force and the continuum between birth, death, and rebirth (Parker-Pearson 2009:5). Still, even though the grave has its own



house, it is directly connected to the deceased pre-mortem residence and the rites connected to the house.

With this in mind I will separately present Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük and their respective locations, history, dates and archaeological material. This is to bring forth the similarities and differences of the material culture at the sites, and nuanced view on the symbolic manifestations of the house and ancestor cult.

## § 5.2 – Aşıklı Höyük

The site of Aşıklı Höyük is located in the province of Aksaray, 25 km southeast from the province capital with the same name, on the south western fringe of the volcanic plateau of Cappadocia. It is situated 1119.5 metres above sea level; a little higher than the regions average being ca. 1000 metres. The site itself is about 4 ha (Esin and Harmankaya 1999:118), considerably smaller than the well known site of Çatalhöyük (13 ha - Hodder 1996) (Hodder and Cessford 2004:17). The surrounding landscape is formed by erosion of river valleys into tuff deposits. The Melendiz Valley, where the Aşıklı Höyük is located, constitutes a favourable, fertile, and diverse habitat. The proximity to an obsidian source did become the base of a trade with the material supplying areas as far away as today's Cyprus and Iraq (Esin and Harmankaya 1999; Düring 2006:72). The site is close to the mentioned site of Çatalhöyük; located approximately 150 km northeast from Aşıklı Höyük.

### § 5.2.1 – Site history:

Aşıklı Höyük was investigated by Professor Ian A. Todd when he first visited the site in the summer of 1964. Todd emphasised the importance of the obsidian in the area, based on over 6000 obsidian pieces collected from the surface layer alone (Todd 1966; Singh 1974:78). The site was classified as *medium sized mound* and partly destroyed the river situated next to it. On the basis of the lithics and animal bones located in the surface layers the site got known as a contemporary to the Palestine PPNB, which later got reinforced by C<sup>14</sup> dates (based on five unstratified radiocarbon dates going from 7008 ± 130 to 6661 ± 108) (Mellaart 1975:94).

The first comprehensive excavations took place relatively late: first when the government launched a plan that would result in the rise of the waters of the Mamasın Lake located close to Aşıklı Höyük, Professor Ufuk Esin (University of Istanbul) started the salvage excavations

in 1989 (Esin et al. 1991). There have been altogether undertaken nine excavations to the year 2003; uncovering approximately 4200 m<sup>2</sup> on the horizontal plain, making it one of the largest scale excavations in the region (Düring 2006:73).

### § 5.2.2 – Dates

The newest dates for Aşıklı Höyük show that the occupational period was from 8200 – 7400 BC (Thissen 2002; Hodder and Cessford 2004), extracted from 3 layers with a total of 13 phases (see Table 4.1. in Düring 2006:73); which places it in ECA II (correlating with the E/MPPNB in the Levant). This makes it older than the settlement of Çatalhöyük (Steadman 2004:530; Mellaart 1975:98; Hodder 1999, 2006, 2007). It is known as one of the earliest Aceramic Neolithic sites on the Anatolian plateau, and the prior mentioned extraction of the obsidian source was likely to be frequented as far back as the Paleolithic nomadic hunter-gatherers. Due to its date and structural organization Aşıklı Höyük is known to be “(...) a prime example of a first foray into sedentism” (Steadman 2004:537).

### § 5.2.3 – Burial customs

After more than 400 rooms have been excavated the total number of individual buried within the settlement did not surpass 70 individuals (Esin and Harmankaya 1999:126). All these burials were located sub-floor inside buildings. The dead were placed in pits cut through the floor during the occupation of the building. The buried are people of both sexes and all ages. There is a variety of skeletal body postures; from burials in a *hocker* (fetal) position to extended skeletons facing upwards. Others are lying on one side, occasionally with the legs bent at the knees (Esin and Harmankaya 1999). The orientation of the burials varies within the buildings, likewise does the number of individuals inside them (Düring 2006).

The male population had individuals up to the age of 55-57 years of age, while the majority of females died between the ages of 20-25. The skeletal remains of these women show spinal deformities indicating that they had to carry heavy loads. This does not itself prove that there was a division of labour between the sexes. The fact that the men seem to have outlived the women might be interpreted as sign that the women were subject to more strenuous physical labour than their male counterparts (Esin and Harmankaya 1999:130). From Natufian Abu Hureyra there are similar osteological signs; such as pathologies in metatarsals, phalanges, arm, and shoulder joints - being specific to females resulting from habitual kneeling in the use

of saddle querns (Molleson 1989:357f). The Neolithic evidence show indications of increased physical workload in the osteological material on both genders, were the male skeletons show signs of joint disease and trauma arguably caused by cutting timber and tilling (Wright 2000:115).

Children represent 37.8 % of the deceased, with 43.7% of them passed away within the first year after birth (Esin and Harmankaya 1999). The skeletal remains are complete and with articulations intact, indicating that the burials have been primary. The graves contain either single or double burials. On one occasion two graves were found under the floor of room AB, belonging to an adjacent court (HG) with a large domed mudbrick oven paved with blocks of basalt. In one of the graves the skeletons of a young woman and an elderly man; in the other a young woman buried together with her baby. The young woman had apparently undergone trepanation and survived only a few days after the operation. All skeletons were in the hocker position (Esin and Harmankaya 1999:124). From a different grave a woman shows signs of being scalped immediately after her death, according to the cut marks on her skull. A remarkable high number; as many as 55% of the skeletons show signs of being burned. The burial under the floor AB is accommodated by walls with the interior side were painted in a purplish red colour. The oven in HG indicates that this was indeed “special individuals of an elite class”; claiming it can be compared to the “Terrazzo” Building at Çayözü and the “Temple” Building at Nevalı Çori and therefore have been a shrine used for religious ceremonies (Esin and Harmankaya 1999:124). Many of the burials contain burial goods consisting of necklaces and bracelets made of beads of various sorts (Düring 2006:86f).

70 burials in over 400 rooms suggest that some form of selection took place of who was buried at the site, implementing that AB indeed could be the residence or resting place of people influential in terms of both economy and political power (Esin and Harmankaya 1999).

Rooms containing hearths are more likely to contain burials; as many as 77% (Düring 2006:89). Düring (2006) argues that the number of burials could be an underrepresentation inherited at the site, since a large part of the settlement remain unexcavated beneath the baulks. On the other hand: later excavations which have been published suggest that burials were not a general feature at Aşıklı Höyük (Düring 2006:88) and therefore the suggestions given by Esin and Harmankaya (1999) of burials being a privilege of the elite class do seem plausible.

There has not been found a cemetery or any other sign of where the rest of the population might have been disposed of *post mortem*. This issue is not only limited to Aşıklı Höyük:

there is also a lack of cemeteries on the PPNB “mega-sites” in the Levant, such ‘Ain Ghazal in the Jordan Valley (Bienert et al. 2004). According to Rollefson (2001:75) on the case of ‘Ain Ghazal: the total occupation span divided by the total amount of burials show that there was one burial every decade (see also Bienert et al. 2004:158). Doing the same with the material of Aşıklı Höyük shows the same pattern: one burial every 11.4 years (based on numbers in this text). The interpretation that there was a cult of the elite in the greater Levantine area does not seem farfetched according to these numbers. It seems that in Aşıklı Höyük, as in the rest of the Anatolian and Levantine area (see Bienert et al. 2004:162), the burial and any other *post mortem* treatment was arguably an “upper class” phenomenon. Bongofsky opposes this view, referring to the diverseness of individuals in both sex and age in the graves (Bongofsky in Bienert et al. 2004:163). The burials including such a wide range of individuals do not directly coherent with the image of an “upper class” phenomenon. Gebel (Gebel in Bienert et al. 2004:166) underlines this criticism by calling Rollefson’s calculation a generalisation of a “snapshot” in time. Burials could have been removed or replaced over time, giving a wrong image of the burials as belonging to the elite. Kuijt suggest an alternative perspective: “(...) the Neolithic dead are not under-represented: rather, it is the architecture in PPNB settlements that are over-represented” (Kuijt in Bienert et al. 2004:167), meaning that in many cases archaeologists have drastically overestimated the extent to which all areas of PPNB sites were occupied simultaneously. As for Aşıklı Höyük and other sites in the area: low numbers of burials in comparison with occupation span does not directly indicate a cult of the elite.

#### § 5.2.4 – Hearths

At Aşıklı Höyük the hearths are rectangular and usually placed in one of the corners of the rooms, ranging in size from 2.97 m<sup>2</sup> to 0.48 m<sup>2</sup> (Düring 2006:84). Large stones with a suitable flat shape were used to create an upright edge that stood approximately 20 cm above the level of the floor. On the short side of the hearth the upright edge is missing to make a fire mouth. It is also here the ash is the most concentrated. Pebbles along the edges and base of the hearth seem to have been covered by a thin layer of plaster. Only in a few cases there is a trace of something recognized as a flue (Özbaşaran 1998; Esin and Harmankaya 1999:122; Sey 1999:12).

An estimated 30-40% of all the rooms at Aşıklı Höyük have hearths (Düring 2006:84f; Steadman 2004:537; Özbaşaran 1998:556; Esin and Harmanakaya 1999). This estimate is based on partially damaged and eroded structures possibly giving a number lower than accurate. Based on a limited group of fully exposed buildings 54% of single room units contained a hearth, while only 29% of the multiple room units. The average percentage on base of these building units is 47%: probably a more realistic estimate for the site in total (Düring 2006:85).

Hearths do not occur in a courtyard context, and are more represented in single room dwellings than multiple room units (Steadman 2004). Still: multiple room units do have a substantial number of hearths (Düring 2006:86). Steadman suggests that the “multiroom dwellings may have functioned as “incomplete” houses for new families still heavily dependent on the larger extended group” (Steadman 2004:539). The buildings containing the hearths do not show particular characteristics that distinguish them from structures without hearths; neither do they differ in size or special orientation. Even the hearth itself does not follow an apparent norm in terms of size or location. The position varies considerably, but it always has one side to the wall. The positioning of the heart does not seem to be determined by general macro-ecological factors, such as prevailing wind directions, nor determined by cultural norms regarding spatial features within buildings (Özbaşaran 1998:556).

The hearth does not seem to be subject to a random placement inside the buildings: it is consistently located at the same spot throughout a very long building sequence. This indicates that their positions were not chosen arbitrarily. When a location for the heart was chosen it was important that the placement did not change in later rebuilding sequences of the structure (Düring 2006:86). Unlike Çatalhöyük; the hearths did not follow an internal order that necessarily placed them below the rooftop entrance. There is no evidence for ladderpost scars due to the assumed use of freestanding ladders, making the location of the entrance uncertain. Aşıklı Höyük does not seem to have any evidence for ovens.

## § 5.2.5 – Structures



**Plate 5.1 – Stratigraphy of the deep sounding at Aşıklı Höyük (Photo: Kvæstad, 2010)**

Similar to Çatalhöyük; Aşıklı Höyük had a tradition to reconstruct or rebuild earlier structures. It followed a pattern where the structures were built “exactly on the same spot and with the same alignment as earlier buildings, using older walls as a foundation” (Düring 2006:93). The structural continuity at Aşıklı Höyük is outstanding, but there is no information how long the use-life of a building was. If one estimates the same lifespan for a structure at Aşıklı Höyük as it was in Çatalhöyük, one could look at an age of 30 to 60 years before reconstruction occurred (Mellaart 1964:64). If this assumption correct; the deep sounding 4H/G from phases 2I up to 2B (eight layers in total) (see Plate 5.1) show that the time span of a structure could be from 240 to 480 years. Looking outside of Central Anatolian Neolithic,

this type of building continuity is unparalleled both in ethnography and archaeology (Hodder 1998a; Düring 2006:93). This remarkable structural continuity may suggest a social system in which buildings were not privately owned, since one would expect them to be modified on a regular basis. It can be assumed that the rooms were distributed amongst the community members according to the change in both needs and statuses (Düring and Marciniak 2006:175).

The building practices maintained their characteristics throughout the centuries. It has been claimed that the building continuity is a self-evident feature, since it is deriving from a particular set of foundation practices that can be explained in a functionalistic way (Esin et al. 1991:130). Düring (2006) claims on the other hand that the extreme degree of continuity is inadequately explained by functionalism alone, since the structures located adjacent to open spaces could easily be expanded or shrunk according to the specific needs, but instead remained identical (ibid 2006:95). These functionalist parameters can also not explain the continued rebuilding of the hearths, which always are built on the same spot. Individual hearth sequences are often separated with 40 cm of soil, and therefore there is no apparent reason (unlike the buildings) why the hearths should consistently be constructed in the same corner as in the successive buildings. In many cases neighbouring buildings do place their respective hearths in different corners. As mentioned before; micro-cosmological special codes or wind direction does not seem to be decisive for the positioning of the hearth (Özbaşaran 1998). The structural and material remains indicate that the buildings were continuous entities with some form of fixed special identity where the special organization could not be changed by the temporary occupant.

Clearly structural continuity was important of great importance for the inhabitants of Aşıklı Höyük. The reason for this has partly been explained because they [the people] had a rigid adherence to traditions in terms of structural reproduction (e.g. Özdoğan 2002). Düring (2006) resents the “traditional view” since it is “[In short,] labelling a society as conservative does not answer the question why the people under consideration were conservative” (Düring 2006:96). As an alternative approach, Hodder (1998a) refers to a *historical dimension* of the building to be of such great importance that “people came to be bound between walls, metaphorically domesticated (...)” (Hodder 1998a:89). Hodder interprets the walls as giving historical associations to the people living within them: giving a collective conscience lasting through time. The difference between this interpretation and the ‘conservative approach’ is the potential explanation to *why* structural reproduction could have

been important for the inhabitants of Aşıklı Höyük. The identities of the inhabitants were projected to the structural outcome of the buildings. The generality of this position is not meaningful on its own. It is not certain that the inhabitants of Aşıklı Höyük were aware of the total amount of building there was in the sequence in total. Perhaps the history of a building did not concern them in the same way as archaeologists like to think. Düring gives a third interpretation: the outcome of the reproduction of buildings could be a result of a series of episodes in which buildings were constructed along lines of their direct predecessors. In this view the inhabitants may not have been aware of the numerous earlier structures below, but only the building on the surface (Düring 2006:96). This still does not explain the reproduction of the hearth; indicating a cultural attitude towards rebuilding, unaffected by pragmatic views concerning rigid economic and spatial factors. The lack of change over time suggests that the inhabitants of Aşıklı Höyük had a view of the past as a precedent for the present: a vital part of society that was 'reborn' in each reproduction, manifested in its building continuity. The structural reconstruction is a regional feature for Central Anatolia. With the exception of Jericho, most of the evidence from PPNB sites in the Levant indicates that structures were not reconstructed in the same loci, and some location structures differ in dates by several hundred years (Kuijt in Bienert et al. 2004:168).

The buildings at Aşıklı Höyük are clustered into what has been interpreted as *neighbourhoods* (Düring 2006:97; Esin and Harmankaya 1999:125; Steadman 2004:537). As this is a vague perception of the structural outlay of the community, Steadman (2004) describes them as clustered single and multiroom houses forming compounds, apparently sharing courtyard space for production activities and practicing joint cooking and food consumption. Little can be said on the food storage, since there were no remains after storage bins (Steadman 2004:539), although storage rooms may be identified due to comparing structures on other sites (e.g. Çatalhöyük) (Bogaard 2009). The average room size is 12 m<sup>2</sup>, with from two or three up to five or six clustered dwelling forming a 'neighbourhood' or compound (Steadman 2004). The interpretation of the borders of these 'neighbourhoods' are problematic, since much of the site still lies under the baulks, is *in situ* or eroded (Düring 2006).

The distribution of single and multi room buildings does not seem to follow a pattern other than that the residential clusters seem to be divided by narrow alleys 0.5 – 1.0 m wide (Esin and Harmankaya 1999:125), or open courtyard areas up to Ø 4 m (Düring 2006). The interior of multiroom buildings had openings in the partitioned walls, providing access to the individual rooms. Between the one building and the next there seems to be no



communication, since there was no indication of doors in the exterior mudbrick walls. Since the buildings themselves do not have an entrance that can be traced archaeologically on the base of the walls; access had to be provided either through window-like openings high on the walls or from the flat roofs (Esin and Harmankaya 1999:125). Roof access is also known from Çatalhöyük (Hodder 1999, 2006, 2007), making this entrance more plausible.

Aşıklı Höyük does also have buildings that are bigger in size but without hearths. These are interpreted as public buildings (Steadman 2004:539) or ‘building complexes’ (Düring 2006:101). These are seen as some of the most enigmatic buildings found at the site, and diverge both in size and spatial organization. One of them (complex HV) being at up to 20 times larger than the largest loam buildings (*i.e.*  $25 \text{ m}^2 \times 20 = 500 \text{ m}^2$ ) (Düring 2006:101). They have a multitude of rooms and encompass elaborate and large internal courts; something that is not found in any other buildings. The walls are more robust and massive than other buildings, in some cases being referred to as “monumental walls”, accompanied by parallel outer walls with relatively narrow space in between (Düring 2006:102fff). Steadman (2004) argues that Court T (see Düring 2006:102fff) could be a relation with public building with plausible ritual nature due to its elaborate painted floors. Thus may indicate an existence of a village leader, as proclaimed by the work of J. Yakar (2003).

The interpretation of these buildings is difficult. The fact that they clearly differentiate from the domestic loam buildings indicates that they had special value in the society. They also do not incorporated into the clustered ‘neighbourhoods’; indicating that they served several neighbourhoods or the local community at large (Düring 2006). With  $500 \text{ m}^2$  the range of activities that could have taken place in this space could easily incorporate several hundred people. Yet: given that the estimated population of Aşıklı Höyük may have run into the thousands (Düring 2006:101); only a selected group in the total population could have used the building at a given occasion. There is a variety of hypotheses regarding the nature of these monumental structures. There are other examples of these restricted monumental spaces on other sites in the Levantine PPNB (such as Nevalı Çori, Behida, ‘Ain Ghazal), suggesting that they were used by an elite or for practicing different social initiation rites (Rollefson 2001:82fff; Verhoeven 2002).

### § 5.2.6 – Other material

There are no finds of any artefacts carrying religious connotations, symbolic or imagery, at Aşıklı Höyük. Not in the buildings, courtyards, dumps or open-workshop areas (Esin and Harmankaya 1999: 129). The only finds include flint tools, counted as imports. Other than this there is found one single animal figurine made of clay that can hardly tell us anything of the religious belief of the inhabitants. The limited amount of burials compared to the estimated population makes it very likely that there may have been a cemetery where the deceased have been buried, but it is not found (Esin and Harmankaya 1999). There is also an absence of storage bins making the distinction on autonomous households difficult (Steadman 2004).

### § 5.3 – Çatalhöyük

Çatalhöyük is located 52 km south-east of Konya city, and 11 km north of Çumra situated on the Konya Plain in south-western Anatolia c. 1000 metres above sea level (Singh 1974; Mellaart 1967, 1978). The main mound itself stood originally 17 metres high in the flat landscape; making it visible from great distances (Mellaart 1967, 1978). Site itself covers 13 ha (Hodder 1996; Hodder and Cessford 2004:17).

It is located on the former course of the Çarsamba Çay River, which flows from Lake Beyşehir onto the Konya Plain (Düring and Marciniak 2006). This made the area mound appear as marshy wetlands, providing a fertile environment for the people of that time (Atalay and Hastorf 2006:288). Çatalhöyük is in reality two mounds. The East Mound is the biggest and most known, dated back to the Early Neolithic period. The West Mound, also referred to as Küçük Höyük (“small mound”) is located on the other side of the river and is considerably smaller, dating back to the Late Neolithic and Early Chalcolithic times (Atalay and Hastorf 2006:285; Mellaart 1967). It is assumed that the East Mound was abandoned and relocated to the West Mound c. 5700 BC (Mellaart 1967:12).

Excavations by the Çatalhöyük Research Project have taken place in five areas in and around the East Mound, including South, North, Bach, KOPAL and Summit (including TP) areas (Atalay and Hastorf 2006:285; Hodder, Cessford, and Farid 2007).

### § 5.3.1 – Site history

The name Çatalhöyük, meaning “fork mound” in Turkish, presumably got its name from path leading from the nearby town of Çumra to the south that divides into three individual paths at the mound. Naturally it was known long before any archaeologists first surveyed, and was a place surrounded by superstition into modern times (Hodder 2006:13f).

James Mellaart first discovered the prehistoric settlement mound of Çatalhöyük (then referred to as Çatal Hüyük) in November 1952 in the second season of a three-year survey (1951-1953) in southern Turkey, originally for trying to find evidence for the mysterious “Sea-Peoples” who invaded the eastern Mediterranean 1200 BC (Mellaart 1978:7). The first further analysis of the mound was done by Mellaart joined by some friends in November 1958. The year before excavations at Hacilar, a site in south-western Anatolia, were dated to 7500 BC; 4500 years older than scholars previously had believed possible for the area. Making this as old as anything known in Mesopotamia at the time, it proved that Anatolia was no cultural backwater (Mellaart 1964, 1964, 1965, 1967, 1975, 1978; Balter 2005). Hacilar had an absence of occupation for almost millennium, making a cultural gap that became filled with the excavations at Çatalhöyük (Singh 1974:85).

The mound of Çatalhöyük was estimated to cover 32 acres; 600 meters long and 350 meters wide, with 17 metre height above the alluvial plain surface divided into fourteen successive building levels resulting in an occupational period from 7100 to 6300 BC (Singh 1974:85; Mellaart 1978:13). Later excavations lead by Ian Hodder show some adjustments: 33.5 acres (16 ha), 21 metres in height and an occupation dated 7400 – 6000 BC (Hodder 2006:7; Hodder and Cessford 2004:20).

Çatalhöyük was one of the biggest Neolithic sites at the time: with a population estimated to be up to 6000 people made it at least four times larger than Neolithic Jericho, known to be the largest and oldest settlement at the time (Singh 1974:85). Mellaart described it as representing “(...) the earliest cradle of civilisation we know of” (Mellaart 1978:14). The entrance through a shaft from the roof was said to be a characteristic of Çatalhöyük (Mellaart 1965, 1967, 1975, 1978; Singh 1974), but has later been recognized as a tradition observed on predeceasing sites (i.e. Aşıklı Höyük) (Esin and Harmankaya 1999; Düring 2006). Prior to the 1960’s there was little evidence to suggest an early development of the first farmers outside the Fertile Crescent; the idea of the first farmers cultivation wild cereals from at the hills of the hilly flanks and domesticating wild sheep seemed as the most preferable area for early

domestication (Hodder 2006:14). “The extreme cold of the Anatolian winter”, as the later Director of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara Seton Lloyd noted in 1956 (Lloyd 1956:53), would not make the transition from hunting and gathering to a *domestic* way of life.

Apart from the size; the elaborate wall decoration and a variety of graves embedded in what was seen as sleeping platforms, superimposed bull’s heads with horn, figurines and general structural orientation of the community gave Çatalhöyük international publicity. The European archaeologists at the time talked about archaeology as being the “recovery of rubbish” and hardly ever yielding evidence of man’s thought. This had to be revised due to many of the one-roomed houses curious internal decoration, thus in plan and construction no different from other houses (Singh 1974). In Mellaart view serving the special purpose as shrines or sanctuaries (Singh 1974:89; Mellaart 1967; 1978:19; Steadman 2004:542). The excavations led by Mellaart proved that the Neolithic produced massive settlements also outside the Fertile Crescent, giving a new view of the spreading of sedentary societies, and the later transition into Europe (Hodder 1992; 2006:15).

After the extensive excavations led by Mellaart that started in 1961 and ended in 1965, the site was not further excavated until Ian Hodder started the Çatalhöyük Research Project (ÇRP) with excavations in 1993 (Hodder 2007; Hamilton 1998:7; Hodder 1996, 2000). Hodder acknowledged the potential of further investigation in terms of symbolism its possible connection to economic domestication of plants and animals (Hodder 1992:16; Steadman 2004:542). The excavations led by Mellaart excavated quick and removed a lot of material, so only a limited amount remained *in situ* (Hodder 2006:17). Hodder, known to be one of the founders of Postprocessual Archaeology (Hodder 1985, 1991, 1996, 2002), changed the approach to the remaining material: from Mellaart *extensive* (quantitative) to an *intensive* (qualitative) analysis of the remains. Since the 1960s the understanding of the Neolithic of the Middle East has changed dramatically: pushing back dates and for early sedentary life and showing how diverse the process of early settlement life really was and thereby making Çatalhöyük less unique (Hodder 2007:106). New techniques also conducted in further studies of Mellaart excavations, throwing further light on the large-scale material previously obtained. The use of residue analysis analysing what people ate, and geological analysis evaluating lithics and obsidian trade and exchange are only some aspects of newer research. Hodders approach also gave room for asking new questions about social life within the Çatalhöyük community based on the elaborate symbolism on the site. One of the most remarkable things is that there is little reference to domestication “despite the fact that

Çatalhöyük occurred well after the initial domestication of plants and animals, and despite the economic dependence on plants and animals; symbolism focuses on wild animals” (Hodder 2006:18). Getting to know *how people lived* in all aspects of life remains as one of the key questions for continuing analysis of the site.

The site of Çatalhöyük is said to provide a unique window on the societies of the Central Anatolian Neolithic (Düring 2006:130). There are findings of rich symbolic imagery in the form of wall paintings, mouldings on interior wall surfaces, and figurines. A large number of intramural sub-floor burials with variable grave goods give a good indication on the treatment and great importance of the *corpus mortem* and its value to society. One of the clear differences to Aşıklı Höyük is that the settlement found at Çatalhöyük lacked a public domain, such as courtyards and other structures (Düring 2006, 2001). Later excavations revealed many mudbrick buildings abutting each other, each with interior features such as ovens, hearths, and alternating platforms; giving inspiration to various theories on spatial symbolism (see Lewis-Williams 2004). Also found is complex art, mouldings, and architectural features said to attribute the house-like architecture to expressions of an active system of ritual beliefs. As with Aşıklı Höyük: detailed excavations reveal that the plastered floors in the buildings had been cleared of most artefacts before the systematic and ritualized abandonment, making many of the mobile artefacts (i.e. figurines) *ex situ* (Atalay and Hastorf 2006:285).

### § 5.3.2 – Dates

Çatalhöyük is often referred to as the 9000 year old settlement in the middle of the Konya Plain (e.g. Hodder 2006, 2007). The site was established at the end of the Aceramic Neolithic also known as the ECA periods II and III; concurrent with the PPNB periods in the Levant (Asouti 2006; Özbaşaran and Buitenhuis 2002; Rollefson 2003). The four earliest levels (Pre-XII) at Çatalhöyük appear to be aceramic (Hodder and Cessford 2004:19). The levels XII-VI (7000 – 6600 BC) and V-I (6600 – 6000 BC) respectively belong to the Early and Late Ceramic Neolithic period (Düring and Marciniak 2006:176). The Neolithic East Mound settlement was initially established roughly 7400 BC and occupied for nearly one and a half millennia (7400 – 6000 BC) (Hodder 2006:7). Other estimates the East Mound occupation to last from 7400 – 6200 BC (Cessford 2001; Hodder and Cessford 2004), within that time growing to over 13 ha (Atalay and Hastorf 2006:285; Düring 2006:130).

### § 5.3.3 – Burial customs

The excavations at Çatalhöyük gave an impressive testimony of intramural traditions on a scale that was unprecedented in the study of the Near Eastern Neolithic at the time of their discovery (Mellaart 1964, 1965, 1967, 1975, 1978). A burial at Çatalhöyük normally consist of a complete individual buried below the house floors. These *intramural sub-floor* burials were for the most part placed in a pit constructed by digging through the floor while the building was occupied. After the body was placed, the pit was closed and the floor was patched. Given that the floors were replastered up to 450 times in houses that had a estimated lifespan from 70 to 100 years (Hodder 2007:108); the precise location and extent of a burial would arguably have been less obvious as time passed on (Düring 2006). On the other hand by digging the grave one also had to dig into the past, obtaining what Hodder and Cessford refer to as *specific memory* (2004:33f). Some intramural burials were placed after the occupation of a building being associated with the foundation deposits of a building, or placed during their abandonment (Düring 2006). “While in some instances it was clearly permissible for later interments to disturb earlier bodies, there are clear indications that the precise locations and nature of the earlier burials were remembered years or even decades later” (Hodder and Cessford 2004:34). Pits were dug down to retrieve sculptures as well as heads of selected humans. Both Building 1 and Building 6 a skeleton was found buried beneath the house floors with the head removed and with cut mark traces on the upper vertebrae, denoting that there had to be at least some knowledge of the skeletons locations.

Wall art portraying decapitated humans are a well frequently used motive, but not as common in a burial context. Until 2004 there was only found two headless skeletons. Removal and reuse of human crania may imply an attempt to construct link between a given social group and specific ancestors. The heads had been removed from the body after about a year of excarnation. The headless bodies got treated in special ways at death, giving the impression that specific individuals were chosen for this treatment in advance, and these particular locations were remembered (Hodder and Cessford 2004).

Contrariwise Düring suggests that given the constant replastering of the floors and no apparent permanent physical reminders of a graves presence, the precise location and extent of the burials were not directly obvious in later phases of occupation (Düring 2006:201). This differs from the intramural sub-floor burials found at Tell Halula – located some 320 km southeast of Çatalhöyük: clay plugs sealed the burials located near the entrance, making their location highly visible over time to both visitor and resident (Guerrero et al. 2009).

Most burials are placed in individual primary internments, but multiple individual graves are found as well. The new burials often disrupted the remains of earlier burials (e.g. Building 1 – see below), either pushing them aside or rearranging them, resulting in an anarchic displacement of the osteological remains (Hamilton 1998:8). Seemingly having little concern for the integrity of the individual deceased person (Düring 2006). On the other hand a series of burials assigned to the sub-phase B1.1B was excavated 1997 did not get disturbed by later activities. In these cases, the grave cuts for these burials were ambiguous to define and seemingly all the burials in any event placed within the foundation deposits as they were being laid. Whether hollows were scooped out to hold the body or the body was laid as the material was dumped in, is difficult to assess. Perhaps this is less significant than the fact that the bodies were placed in more or less contemporaneously with the deposits which themselves were dumped in *en masse* and fairly rapidly (Lucas 1997; Cessford 2007b:415).

The location of the burials are often, but not as a rule, found beneath the compartments located at the north-eastern part of the living room. Mellaart (1962:47) interpreted these compartments as sitting and sleeping areas. This intimate relationship between the living and the dead may show the close ties people had to their departed ancestors. As Düring pertinently portrays:

“a relation in which some group members were resting temporarily, whereas others ‘rested’ on a more permanent basis” (2006:202).

Human remains are also found outside the intramural context: Two burials were found in midden areas, and it is not longer possible to determine how many burials were located in midden areas (if any) during Mellaart excavations in the 1960’s (see Mellaart 1967:204). Fragments of human bones were found among animal bones that are described as being discarded in a similar way as other bones. Most of these human bones show evidence on bite marks by dogs (Düring 2006:201), indicating little or no *post mortem* treatment and seemingly being dealt with as household waste.

The ‘vulture scenes’, in combination with the fact that many skeletons were found incomplete and therefore seen as secondary burials, has been interpreted as a account for post mortem excarnation (Mellaart 1962; 1963:97f). These scenes are enigmatic paintings interpreted as charnel houses in which the bodies of the deceased were excarnated (Mellaart 1964:93; 1967:204). Newer research concludes that excarnation was not a common practise at Çatalhöyük (Russell and Düring 2006:75; Hamilton 1998:7). Physical anthropologists have

showed that the majority of skeletal remains were subject to primary burials (Düring 2006:203). There are no physical signs of exhumation, although secondary burials do occur (Andrews, Molleson, and Boz 2005:274f). Some would argue that the ‘vulture scenes’ might have been practiced on people not buried in situ sub-floor: portraying a mythical event rather than something physically happening on a regular basis.

Building 1, also known as ÇRP 1 (Çatalhöyük Research Project - Düring 2006), is where most burials are found and counts just under 60 buried individuals<sup>6</sup>. This exceeds the highest number reported during the excavations led by Mellaart, and is unparalleled during in recent excavations. The building has been excavated in its entirety and presents a rich picture of an extraordinary complex structure. The structure is though incomplete, due to removal of features and artefacts and later erosion (Cessford 2007b). Burial is limited to the main space and occur during construction and in all of the main occupational phases and sub-phases. The internments manifest themselves over several layers and there is a frequent disturbance of earlier burials (Cessford 2007c).

Returning to the burials found in sub-phase B1.1B - a short lived phase probably lasting only days or weeks having high concentrations of burials, and neonates in particular. It is suggested that the burials had a connection to the structure: three neonates were buried in the southwest; an adult female, who past away during childbirth, and a neonate were buried together in the north-central part, and an older male was buried in the central-west area. These burials generally occur in locations not later utilized for burials; mainly linked to death at the time of birth. Neonates are not found in later burials in the building, making them distinctive for B1.1B. Taking the lifespan and the high concentrations of burials in to consideration, one could argue that there is a link between the birth of the building and the birth of people. The old man aged over 60 may have represented a link to the death of the predeceasing Building 5, which was occupied for approximately 70 years (Cessford 2007c:541).

Some burials are related to transitional stages (e.g. B1.1B). The burial of the old male gives the impression to relate to the abandonment of the previous Building 5, and the neonate burials and the female burial seem linked to the following Building 1. Transitions seem to have their place in the ritual world at Çatalhöyük, being important features in both abandonment and rebuilding. It has to be said that many more burials do relate to transitional

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<sup>6</sup> Düring (2006:205) counts the grand total to be 64 buried individuals referring to Cessford (2007a); a work in preparation at the time. Later Cessford himself counts in the overall discussion “a total of just under 60 individuals represented” (2007c:541).



phases. Why the deaths of particular individuals correspond to transitional phases is unclear. However; there seems to be significant connection between the demise of old males and transitional phases (e.g. B1.1B, B1.2B, B1.2C, B1.3, B1.4 - Cessford 2007c:543).

The general picture of the numerous burials in Building 1 shows that they were interred in a restricted area of the building; namely the compartments in the north-west, north-central, and east-central locations. They are not found in other parts of the building or in the ante rooms (Düring 2006:205), with the exception of the neonates buried in B1.1B in the south-western part of the main room, who are interpreted as *foundation burials* (Cessford 2007c). Hodder and Cessford see “a tendency for different categories of people to be buried under different platforms” (2004:23); arguing that more young people were buried beneath the northwest platform F. 13 and more older individuals under the central east platform F. 37 in Building 1 (Cessford 2007b).

Building 1 had almost 60 burials and seemingly implement that it interred close to 60 individuals in the structure during its construction and occupation, of which at least 30 had to be alive at the same time. This is too many to actually lived in the building daily basis, as it is unlikely that Building 1 could house more than 10 individuals simultaneously based on the size and probable sleeping arrangements (Hodder and Cessford 2004:31). All other buildings excavated by the ÇRP have fewer burials. One remarkable find was located in Building VIII.10/6 and (among others) contained an adult male burial with skull removed, due to the cut marks on the upper vertebrae (*Feature F.492*). The absence of the skull has fronted the idea that the skull itself may have been processed to be incorporated into the successor building (Hodder and Cessford 2004:35). Most burials were primary, although many were later disrupted, but a number of bones have been placed in secondary contexts, particularly skulls (Hamilton 1998:8). An example of skull removal and further treatment is the exception rather than the rule at Çatalhöyük. One remarkable exception was the intentional deposit reported by Mellaart for building VII.21; containing four human skulls set on the floor (1967:84; 1964:21). In general the Central Anatolian Neolithic is in contrast to the Levantine PPNB: where the removal of skulls from graves and later replastering was a more common practice (Bienert 1991; Kuijt 2000; Talalay 2004; Goren, Goring-Morris, and Segal 2001; Verhoeven 2002).

An outstanding feature was found under the floor of VII.9/B50 that contained burials of seven adults, four children, two infants, two neonates and one sheep. The lamb was co-buried with

an adult male in the north compartment. This is unique for Çatalhöyük: even though sheep are by far one of the most common species at the site, they are almost non-present in the elaborate animal symbolism at the site, including paintings, reliefs, and incorporation of animal parts into architecture (Russell and Düring 2006).

At all of Çatalhöyük grave goods is not ubiquitous: many burials contain none, while others contain rich assemblages. Most are ornaments or components of clothing such as tiny stone beads (for necklaces), pendants, rings, and belt hooks. Occasionally burials include tools or weapons. Generally grave goods was not a common custom (Hamilton 1998). Contrary to earlier suggestions (e.g. Mellaart 1967:207f), burial goods does not seem to be related to the gender of the deceased (Russell and Düring 2006).

Total	685 (100 %)	
Adults	344 (50 %)	
Adults specified	Males	133 (39 %)
	Females	173 (50 %)
	Indeterminate	38 (11 %)
Adolescents	20 (3 %)	
Juveniles	174 (25 %)	
Age indeterminate	147 (22 %)	

**Table 5.1 - Minimum numbers of skeletons excavated at Çatalhöyük (Table 6.4 (ÇRP data column) - Düring 2006:206)**

The database of Düring (2006:206) present 685 burials, of which 580 can be assigned to specific buildings which again are located to a total of 76 rooms. Of these 76 rooms the majority were classified as living rooms (63 or 84 %), making the average burial per living room 3.8. There are other buildings with a large number of burials such as VI.7 (29 burials), VI.1 (32), F.V.1 (33), VIB.34 (43), VII.31-east (49); giving the impression that non-resident people were buried there as well. This interpretation can be further confirmed by the fact that many buildings contained no sub-floor burials at all. The majority of the uncovered living rooms at Çatalhöyük, 74 out of 137 (54 %) did not have any sub-floor burials (Düring 2006:207).

The estimated population size range between 3500 and 8000 individuals (Hodder and Cessford 2004:21), with a minimum estimate around 1500 – 2700 (Atalay and Hastorf 2006) and the equivalent maximum being 10 000 (Balter 1998). Each household, thought to be associated with a building, had between 6 and 8 people associated with it (Cessford 2005). Looking at the numbers it seems unlikely that every person connected to a building got buried under its floor; a similarity is shared with Aşıklı Höyük. Thus the broad representations of ages and sexes of the individual persons placed below the platforms of a building during its occupation suggests a possible relationship between those buried beneath the floors and those occupying the building or a group of related buildings (Hodder and Cessford 2004:22).

Unlike previous studies (e.g. Mellaart 1967:206; Todd 1976:67) one can in terms of the demographic data not argue for any pattern concerning burial location; neither age nor sex seems determining factors for deciding who was buried on-site. Even if this text mainly deals with intramural burials and the foci of ritual and art is in house (see Last 1998), one still has to bear in mind that burial activity took place off site and symbolic activity did occur outside the building compound, as the case with bucrania (plastered cattle skulls) found on some house roofs (Stevanovic and Tringham 1999).

#### § 5.3.4 – Hearths and Ovens

At Çatalhöyük there are two types of fire installations dominating, *hearths* and *ovens*, with occasional fire pit occurring in exterior areas. *Hearths* tend to be freestanding rectangular or circular features lacking an elevated structure. They were reconstructed more often than ovens. *Ovens* are larger domed oval structures built adjacent to, or at times partly within exterior walls (Düring 2006:184). They are in most cases quite distinguishable and often coexisted in the same buildings. Although their features served different purposes they shared some key similarities: both features often had stone or clay balls included into their floors, and loam was their main constructional component.

The vast majority of hearths and ovens occur in living rooms. Düring (2006) found that 132 of 149 hearths (89%) were located in living rooms. Likewise did 99 out of 125 ovens (79%). The minority, 17 out of 149 hearths (11%) and 26 out of 125 ovens (20%), had loci outside of a living room context. Their size is on average 0.73 m<sup>2</sup> for the oven, and 0.42 m<sup>2</sup> for the hearth (Düring 2006:185). One may consider these averages of being too low, since many of these features were incompletely preserved. The largest oven (Feature F.501) found in the

ÇRP excavations measure over 1 m<sup>2</sup> in size, while the largest hearth (Feature F.96) measured 0.56 m<sup>2</sup>. Both these seem larger than average in their class, and commonly these features seem to be somewhat smaller.

The orientations of the hearths and ovens have a clear concentration to the southern part of the living room (Düring and Marciniak 2006). This corresponds well with the *kitchen area* of the Çatalhöyük living rooms: they rarely occur in any parts of the building except occasional hearths placed towards the centre of the room. The ovens are often placed in the southern corners due to their dependence on support for their domed structures. Since hearths do not have an elevated structures they tend to be feely positioned. Still; 64% of the hearts do occur in the south-central area, positioned directly under the ladder entrances (Düring 2006:185f). This suggests that the draft from the ladder entrance was important; implementing that it may have been more frequently used than the ovens. This could again explain central positioning as being related to its purpose of heating the living room. It has been argued that the heart was the centre of the household and therefore both practically and ritually significant. From this area a person could have the a complete overview of what is happening in the house at all times, and it is suggested that the central platforms near the southern wall of the living room were the focus area of daily activities (Atalay and Hastorf 2006:291). The hearths and ovens were as much part of the repetitive practises as the building itself: In Building 17 a hearth in the south eastern corner was rebuilt several times (Hodder and Cessford 2004:32f).

### § 5.3.5 – Structures

One of the remarkable features at both Çatalhöyük and Aşıklı Höyük are the structural repetitive practices that occurred over many generations. Rebuilding occurred on top of previous rooms throughout most of Çatalhöyük's occupational history (Atalay and Hastorf 2006; Hodder and Cessford 2004; Cessford 2007c, 2007b, 2007a; Hodder 2007; Cauvin 2000). The buildings are at large not stable entities that are built and thereafter inhabited to the end of their uselife. They are in what Düring (2006:160) refers to as “always in a state of flux” and transformed substantially on a regular basis; giving away only a partly view of our knowledge of rather complex reality that was in place at Çatalhöyük. In the soundings of both at Çatalhöyük and Aşıklı Höyük buildings can be traced though centuries of occupation, involving up to seven complete rebuilding episodes together with many minor renovations (Düring 2006:161). The lack of stones for building walls can not alone explain the structural

reproduction, since the internal features also were subject to the continuous rebuilding. Plaster was present on all wall and floor surfaces, and most certainly occurred on a regular basis (Mellaart 1964:60; Matthews, French, and Cutler 1996; Hodder 2007). Matthews, French, and Cutler (1996:306) refer to a micro-morphological selection revealing up to 160 layers (80 couplets) of wall plaster. More recently Matthews (2005:367) refers to replasterings with associated residues occurring up to 450 times with fine white plaster layers in the living room of building 5 (North Area). This must have occurred on a monthly or yearly basis in a house that had an estimated use life of 70 to 100 years (Hodder 2007:108; Cessford 2007c:541; Matthews 2006:368). Other rooms; such as the adjacent spaces 155 to 157 to the living room in Building 5, have only three or four orange and brown silty clay plaster layers and were probably used primary for storage purposes (Matthews 2005). Such differences in plaster practices from one room to another may provide important clues for “the reconstruction of relative importance and functions of spaces” (Düring 2006:165). The construction, maintenance, and alternation of the structures and internal features were in other words constant and ongoing processes at Çatalhöyük.

Repetitive patterning at Çatalhöyük is seen not only in the buildings itself: location of art, burials, obsidian, hoards, ovens and ladder-entries has been identified in over 200 houses excavated by Mellaart in the 1960s as being of a repetitive nature. Repetitive patterning as being a product of daily practice and social memory has been argued by Hodder and Cessford to be “inseparable in that regulation is not simply imposed at Çatalhöyük but is constructed through the habituation of practises” (2004:31). The lack of writing forced different mechanism of social reproduction, as for instance construction of social memory.

The dismantling of a house it was often done with great care: undergoing vigilant cleaning and placing of objects, filled with clean soil, and the new house was built on the stumps of the walls of the pervious house (Düring 2006). Upon the platform constituted by the truncated walls and the intermediate fill, the successor structure was subsequently erected, with its wall usually exactly replicating the earlier walls (Düring 2001, 2005), with the first floor constructed on top of the fill. In some cases people were buried before construction of a new building was begun (Cessford 2007a). There are also cases of mouldings being retrieved from a building that had already been infilled (Hodder and Cessford 2004:33), pointing to the fact that practices associated with abandonment did not always take place as previously expected.

Some places with up to six rebuildings in the same place (Hodder 2007:108). This shows that the repetition of arrangement in the social space is remarkable and has led to the hypothesis that social life was organised at least partly through the routines and practices of domestic socialization (Hodder 2006; Hodder and Cessford 2004). In some cases fixed features in the dismantled building were stabilised so that they could be integrated in the foundation of the new building, for instance the domed ovens were filled in and portholes were blocked (Cessford 2007a; Farid 2007; Matthews 2006). This could be entirely for functional purposes; as it simply may have been a way to assure a strong foundation of the building. Alternatively it could have a symbolic purpose: it may have been of great importance to preserve the structural integrity of the building that was abandoned (Düring 2006). The infillings are also coherent with the treatment of moulded features on the walls that will be discussed later.

Building 5 (Cessford 2007c, 2007b) was deliberately dismantled in this way, both in terms of structural elements and destruction wall reliefs. After the dismantling process Building 1 was constructed on top of the dismantled building. The interpretation used by Cessford states that “(...) it may represent a deliberate symbolic act which ‘closed’ the lifecycle of one building and ‘opened’ the lifecycle of another” (2007b:408).

The division between shrines and houses proposed by Mellaart at Çatalhöyük is no longer seen as valid. Equally problematic is the term ‘ritually elaborate building’ as used by Düring (2001). There are clearly different scales of architectural and artefactual complexity (Düring 2005, 2001; Düring and Marciniak 2006), but how building complexity is assessed is a difficult issue (Cessford 2007c). Mellaart claimed that the shrines were the frequently, but not always, the largest building in the quarter (Mellaart 1967:77). Cessford claims therefore that on that basis both Building 5 (50.5 m<sup>2</sup>) and Building 1 (48.6 m<sup>2</sup>) as unlikely to be shrines, since the surface scrape shows larger buildings in the vicinity (2007c:538). Both buildings would belong in the middle and upper part of the size spectrum based on Mellaart's estimates from the 1960's, where the mean overall size was 35 – 52 m<sup>2</sup> (Düring 2001:5).

### § 5.3.6 – Building 80



**Plate 5.2 – Upper left: wall installation on F.2533 (N. wall). Upper right: Space 373 in the back with oven and ladderpost marks on wall (space 135). Lower left: The hearth in space 135. Lower right: profile of wall plaster layers on F.5014 (eastern wall) (picture: Kvæstad, 2010)**

On my fieldtrip in August 2010 visiting both Çatalhöyük and Aşıklı Höyük, I got a particular interest for Building 80 located in the South Area of the East Mound of Çatalhöyük. Building 80 has many of the features discussed in this paper; making it a good example to clarify the structural orientation of a normative building at Çatalhöyük. According to personal communication with archaeologist Roddy Regan excavating Building 80 revealed that it corresponds with layer VI-a. The building consist two rooms where the main room (Space

135) is oriented to the north, and a possible storage room (pers. com. Roddy Regan) (Space 373) to the south, both linked by an access hole or crawl hole (Farid 2009:14).

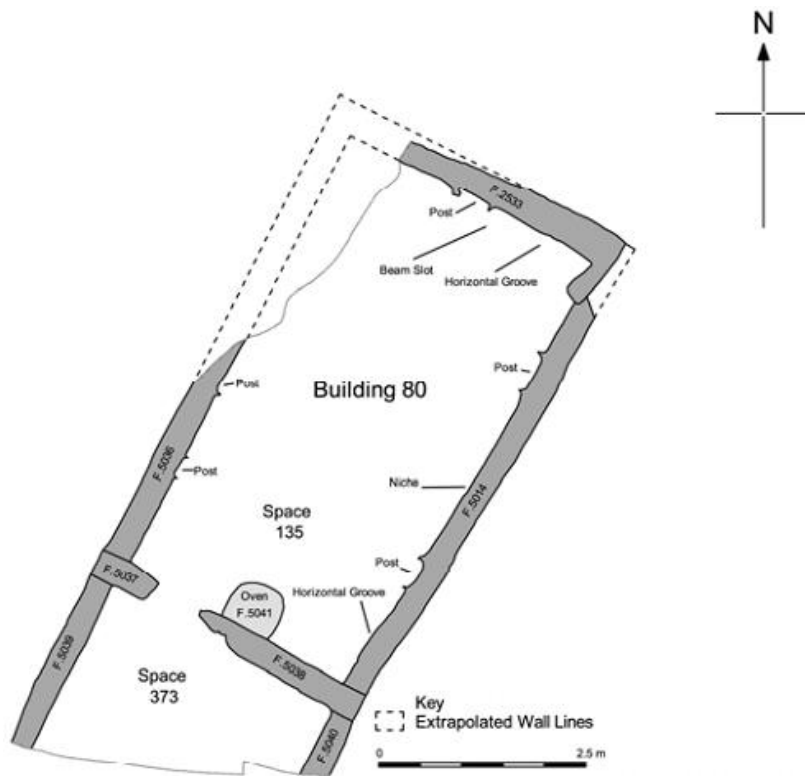
The northern room Space 135 includes all the features found at Building 80. The room is delineated by the northern (F.2533), eastern (F.5014), and western (F.5036) walls. The southern side consists of two walls (F.5037, F.5038) separated by the crawl hole into southern room Space 373. The best preserved feature is the northern wall standing over 2.1m in height consisting of at least 18 courses of mudbrick and incorporates a post, a beam slot and horizontal grooves. The grooves were of a purely decorative nature and stretched horizontally between the post settings on the northern and eastern walls. All walls in Space 135 show multiple plaster layers (see lower right – plate 5.2) with traces of red pigment apparent within some plaster layers on the eastern wall. An oven (F.5041) is placed against the southern wall (F.5038). There are signs of a ladderpost scars on both F.5038 and the floor indicates that the entrance to the roof must have been in the area above the oven. The hearth is approximately 1m from the oven towards the central-west of the room<sup>7</sup>. Post scars line the eastern and western walls, while another pillar lies in the centre of the northern wall. There is also a small, deep-set oval niche within the eastern wall (Farid 2009).

The southern room Space 373 shares walls F.5037 and F.5038 that divide it from the northern room. Respectively F.5039 and F.5040 form the western and eastern walls. The southern room has not been plastered in the same extent as the northern room. This may be due to the fact that this building was partly burned, or that it was a storage room and therefore needed less plastering. Space 373 had a relatively homogenous deposit in comparison with Space 135 that appears to represent a well sorted dump or roomfill, rather than collapsed building material (Farid 2009:15).

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<sup>7</sup> The hearth and ladderpost scars were uncovered during the 2010 season and have yet to be published in an archive report. They are described through personal presence at site.





**Figure 5.1 – Plan of Building 80. Plan Cordelia Hall (Farid 2009:13)**

The northern part of the main room has a raised floor sector that could have been used as a *sitting-* and *sleeping area* (pers. com. Roddy Regan). A further raised floor sector along the eastern part of the room could contain burials, but this remains a conjecture due to the lack of excavation. The southern room Space 135 does not appear to have any elevated floor sectors.

### § 5.3.7 – Paintings

Paintings, as well as moulded features and installations, are rarely found in the southern area of the house, and large relief sculptures are most common on the west walls of main rooms. In Building 1 there is a possible spatial and temporal link between geometric art and burial, especially of younger people and children (Hodder and Cessford 2004:24).

According to Düring (2006:191) the fame of Çatalhöyük rests on; other than the sub-floor burials, are the presence of *wall paintings* and *moulded features and installations*. The imagery at the site is complicated to classify, as for instance the moulded features were also

painted; making the distinction between wall paintings and mouldings somewhat difficult to draw.

In total there are listed 187 wall paintings in the Çatalhöyük database, of which 164 were found during Mellaarts excavations in the 1960s. The paintings derive from 437 rooms and include monochrome painted panels and many fragments that can not be adequately understood. The 187 wall paintings can be subdivided into the following groups: There was found altogether 59 wall panels, floor compartments, or other building elements painted in a single monochrome colour. 21 paintings were of an indeterminate nature and could not be classified due to bad preservation or being too small to make sense of. 84 of the remaining 107 wall paintings (78%) are predominantly of geometric motifs; these include a variety of stylized hands, crosses and squares, honeycomb motifs, and 'kilim' motifs<sup>8</sup>. 24 figurative scenes were found; counting for 22% of all the identifiable non-monochrome paintings. These figurative paintings are relatively famous in comparison to their small corpus of scenes. There are two motives reoccurring in a number of scenes; often referred to as 'vulture scenes' and 'hunting scenes'. The prior mentioned 'vulture scenes' are vulture like –like birds pecking at headless humans that are drawn on a much smaller scale. They are drawn in building VII.21, VIII.8, and the following VII.8. (Mellaart 1967, pl. 46, 48, and 49; 1964:64,70). The 'hunting scenes' illustrate a multitude of humans wearing leopard skins interacting with wild animals; such as bulls, stags and wild boar. The animals are represented on a much larger scale and are surrounded by the human figures. This motive was found in the buildings F.V.1, IV.1, and A.III.1. (Mellaart 1967:151, 170-176; 1962:59f). Other motives listed by Düring (2006:193) are the *city plan* in building VII.14 (Mellaart 1964:55), an animal silhouette on the north wall of IX.8/ÇRP.16 (Mellaart 1964:70), an abstract animal head in VIA.66 (Mellaart 1963:54), birds in VIB.34 (Mellaart 1967:150), various human figures in VIA.27 (Mellaart 1967:150) and IV.1 (Mellaart 1962:59f), stylised humans in VIA.66 (Mellaart 1963:54), goats in building VII.44 (Mellaart 1966:176f), scenes with human and animals in A.III.1 and IV.A.1 (Mellaart 1963:49f), and a possible 'splayed figure' (Mellaart 1964:42).

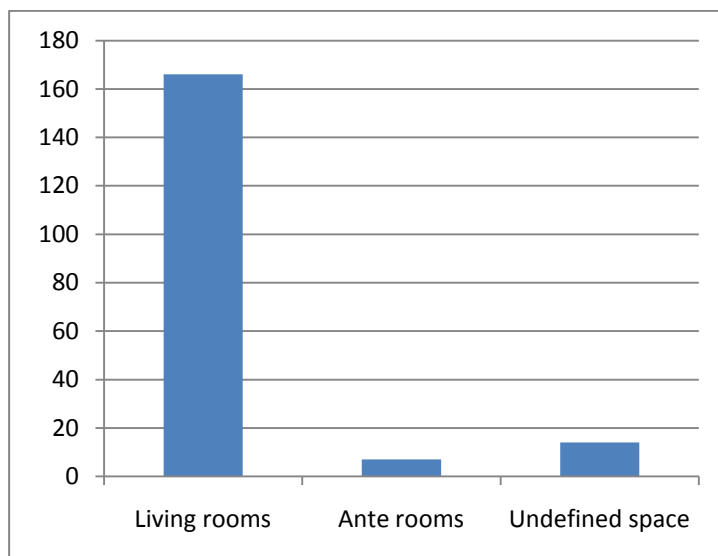
The distribution of these wall paintings seem partially clustered in both time and space (Russell and Meece 2006). The 'vulture scenes' are only found in the lower levels VIII-VI.

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<sup>8</sup> 'Kilim' motifs consist of triangular patterns superficially resembling tapestries in which complete wall panels were painted in a coherent geometric design (Düring 2006:193). Mellaart argued that these wall paintings represented actual 'kilims': slit-tapestry weaves that were commonly produced at the site, and hung on pegs along the walls (Mellaart 1967:152ff; 1984). Mellaarts use of analogies from recent Anatolian practices to the distant past is controversial, and there is no archaeological evidence backing them.

‘Kilim’, hands and honeycomb motives are generally found in levels VII-VI (‘kilim’ also occur in level VIII). The ‘hunting scenes’ are only present in the upper levels V-III, so neither ‘vulture-’ nor ‘hunting scenes’ are present in level VI and are not produced simultaneously (see Düring 2006, table 6.2). Stylised hands and honeycombs occur within a few neighbouring buildings in the South Area. The ‘kilim’ type of motif is more widespread, and also occur in ‘outlying buildings’ such as VIB.65 and VIA.50 (Düring 2006:194) The ‘hunting scenes’ do not seem to cluster, but occur in various in all areas of the mound.

Some motives recur in later building sequences. Building VII.8 and VI.8 contain stylised hands arranged in horizontal rows. Both building VII.1 and VI.1 contain ‘kilim’ motifs, and building VIII.8 and VII.8 contain ‘vulture scenes’. It can be argued that some motifs might have been associated with particular buildings.



**Table 5.2 - Location of paintings (Düring 2006)**

Of the 187 paintings 166 (89%) were located in living rooms, 7 in ante rooms, and 14 in undefined spaces. The paintings located in the living room are predominately located along the north and eastern wall, both walls account for 72%. In many cases they occur on both the eastern stretch of the north wall and the northern stretch of the east wall (Düring 2006).

Some have argued that wall paintings might have been associated with burial practices (Hodder 1998b; Last 1998). This seems unlikely since of the 187 paintings only 51% (95) were located in a building with a sub-floor burial. For instance; Building 2 had two wall

paintings, but no burials beneath any of its floors. “It remains possible that some paintings were applied as a part of a burial ceremony, but it is likely that they could be used to mark other occasions and events as well” (Düring 2006:195).

At Çatalhöyük there is evidence for deliberate deposition of a range of items in different contexts that show evidence of fragmentation, enchantment and accumulation. Essentially all material at tell sites are deliberately deposited through human actions, were “the tell itself forming a single massive cultural artefact” (Cessford 2007c:543). Deliberate deposition occurs in a wide range of housing contexts; from its construction, the occupational phase and to its destruction. Materials represented are lithics, groundstone, pottery, clay balls, figurines, architectural fragments, shell, worked and unworked animal and human bone. Material was not just discarded as waste at the end of its use life, but often deliberately placed inside part of the buildings. Building 80 had clay balls deliberately deposited in postholes (pers. com Roddy Regan).

#### § 5.3.8 – Moulded features

Plaster, faunal elements, and sometimes paint were often used to create vibrant three-dimensional sculptures and installations classified as *moulded features*. The most known features are moulded animal figures represented in profile, plastered animal heads with inset horns, and benches and pillars with inset horns. Sometimes faunal elements were incorporated in the fabric of walls, compartments or other features. Many of the reconstructed moulded featured proposed by Mellaart are highly imaginative and seem to be based on little factual evidence. A example was Mellaarts seemingly interpretation of *wavy lines* in the wall plaster as stylised horns attached to moulded animal heads, of which no evidence has been found (Mellaart 1964).

Different problems do occur when convincing documentation exists but for which the factual basis and evidence for many reconstructed examples are not available, as is the case for the cattle heads with onset horns. Animal heads may be reconstructed on basis of a vague scar in the wall plaster that in theory could be interpreted in other ways (Düring 2006:196).

Together Mellaart excavations in the 1960s and the ÇRP list 149 moulded features and installations attached to the walls. Of these 45 are documented in photographs and slides and can be indentified with certainty. An additional 9 that can be identified in photographs, but

they are too fragmented to be certain of their original form. The remaining 95 do not have documentation, apart from reconstruction drawings and references to the preliminary reports and 1967 volume. 37 of the 45 are known from both excavations and are reliable enough to count as evidence. I set the total number of moulded features to 186, based on total count made by Düring including verified and unverified findings.

The main categories for moulded features are leopards of high relief, animals in profile with in sunken relief, ‘splayed figures’, moulded animal heads, embedded horns and installations, round plastered protrusions containing faunal elements, and incorporated bones (Düring 2006:196).

Category (count)	Description	Location (unverified)
Leopards of high relief (4)	All leopards, in profile head twisted towards the room, occasionally juxtaposed, often several layers, regularly repainted, periodically refashioned, present for a considerable period of time	juxtaposed: VII.27, VII.44 single: VI.44, VI.80
Animals in profile with in sunken relief (4)	Undefined animals, in profile, deep relief, carved through older plaster or treated differentially during plastering	VI.8, VII.8, IX.8/ÇRP.16
‘Splayed figures’ (8)	Among the most famous, also known as ‘the goddess motif’, arms and legs extending horizontally from the body and bending up 90 degrees for the lower limbs, invariably mutilated, navel-like circular feature at stomach level, no marked female organs	VII.23, VII.31, VII.45, VIB.12, VI.8 (VII.1, VI.10, VI.7)
Moulded animal heads (81)	Plastered, with or without inset horns, may occur singly or in horizontal or vertical configurations, occasionally frequently replastered and painted with geometrical motifs <sup>9</sup> , present for a considerable period of time, periodically refashioned	VI.7, VI.10, VI.14, VI.31, VIA.6 (X.1/ÇRP.23, VII.31)
Embedded horns and installations (13)	Horns embedded into walls, horns set into ovens, horns set into benches, horns set into loam pillars,	ÇRP.1, VII.19, VIB.70, VI.61, VIB.70, VI.10, VI.61 (ÇRP.44, VI.14, VIA.50, VIA.66)
Round plastered protrusions containing faunal elements (15) <sup>10</sup>	Applied to walls, plastered protrusions, often containing faunal elements, often described as ‘breasts’ <sup>11</sup> , covering up animal parts they enclose, part of the abandonment process of a building <sup>12</sup> , faunal parts visible during at least part of their use-life <sup>13</sup>	VI.8, VI.10 (VII.1, VII.21, VII.35, VI.1)

<sup>9</sup> (Mellaart 1963, fig. 13)

<sup>10</sup> The 1960s archives mention 30 protrusions in total, but only 15 have positive evidence (Düring 2006:198).

<sup>11</sup> (Mellaart 1967; Hodder 1987; 1992:5)

<sup>12</sup> (Russell and Meece 2006)

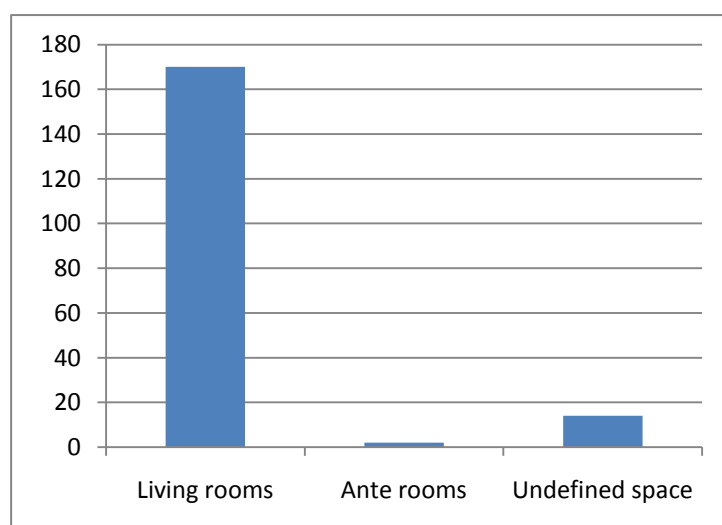
<sup>13</sup> (Mellaart 1963:69, fig. 10)

Incorporated bones	Faunal elements intentionally placed in fabric of walls, floors and features; difficult to recognise in the archaeological material <sup>14</sup> ; often portraying <i>dangerous</i> animals	-
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**Table 5.3 – Categories for moulded features (Düring 2006)**

These features cluster in the levels VII-VI period of time at the South Area of Çatalhöyük, where they all are represented. Taking a closer look at the lower levels X – VIII, they only contain the leopard *leopards of high relief* (only in VIII) and *moulded animal heads* (only X). None of these listed features can be dated to the Late Ceramic period, except a horn bench found in level V (ÇRP.44). This feature concentration in level VII-VI do suggest that these features were serialized, associated with a possible change in costumes and worldview (Düring 2006:199).

There is some reoccurrence of similar features in a building and its successor, as one can find leopards in both VII.44 and VI.44, and animal figure in deep relief on the north wall of VII.8 and VI.8. A moulded feature seems to have been present in a room for a considerable amount of time. The leopards, animals in deep relief, ‘splayed’ figurines, and plastered animal heads have multiple plaster and painting episodes on them. This distinguishes the moulded features from wall paintings; that were visible only for a short while before getting covered by later plaster layers.



**Table 5.4 – Location of features and installations (Düring 2006)**

<sup>14</sup> Thus known from the ÇRP excavations.

As with the paintings the vast majority of the features and installations are located in the living rooms: 170 (91%). 2 features are located in ante rooms and 14 undefined spaces. Their orientation is concentrated along the west (23%), north (21%), and eastern (46%) walls, but appears to be scarce in the south (9%)<sup>15</sup>. These do seem to follow a specific distributional pattern: moulded animal heads occur predominantly on western walls, clay protrusions only on eastern walls, benches with inset horns predominantly in the eastern walls, horned pillars in the north-eastern area, and leopards and animals in sunken relief primary on north walls (Düring 2006:201). Of the 137 living rooms used by Düring (2006:201), only 38 are reported to have contained moulded features and/or installations (28%). Of these 38 only 18 do have reliable evidence by photographs and slides to prove their former existence. Even in the levels VII and VI, during which the mouldings were the most prominent, one can see that of the 73 living rooms found in these two levels only 30 (41%) are reported to contain moulded features and/or installations. Almost half of them (16) can be sufficiently verified. At first it may seem like these features are a curiosity, but moulded features have been removed prior to a building's deliberate destruction, making the count significantly lower in the archaeological material at Çatalhöyük (Hodder 2007; Hodder and Cessford 2004; Cessford 2007a).

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<sup>15</sup> Calculations based on the 56 certified moulded features and installations (Figure 6.23 in Düring 2006:200).

## Chapter VI: Discussion

In this chapter the main goal is to see how the archaeological material can be related to the theoretical framework presented in this thesis. By comparing material culture and the theoretical approaches presented, I will see how both Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük can be seen in light of house symbolism and ancestor cult.

### § 6.1 – The house

As discussed earlier the term “house” is a concept that has immanent cultural connotations, charged with a meaning derived from our own conception of this social and physical structure. Düring (Düring 2005, 2001, 2006), amongst others, argues the use of ‘building’ or ‘structure’ and ‘society’ rather than ‘house’ and ‘town’. This is due to the work of Tilley (1994) on the opposition between space/place (see table 6.1), where certain ideas are opposed to each other, distinguishing *spaces (etic)* from *places (emic)*. While space is seen as having an *etic* quality (sterile, quantifiable, extension), place is seen as an *emic* one (local, specific, meaningful) (Ingold 1993:154). “The quality with the concepts of *space* and *place* is not so much their content, but the manner in which they have been related to each other” (Düring 2006:31). *Space* is seen as untouched, *tabula rasa*, awaiting cultural signification, transforming it to *place* (Tilley 1994).

Space	Place
Extension	Meaning
Quantity	Quality
Container	Medium
Universal	Specific
Global	Local
A-historical	Biography
Abstract	Experience and knowledge

**Table 6.1 – Space/place opposition according to Tilley (1994) (Düring 2006:30)**

In this thesis I use the term “house” as more than just an empty space. I believe that I have clarified the immanent cultural significance and implications of the word, giving it a defined



meaning in social life and society. In Hodder's *The Leopard's Tale* (2006) both uses the terms *house* and 'town' (Hodder emphasises that Çatalhöyük was not a town due to the lack of public spaces, administrative buildings, elite quarters, or any specialised functional spaces except those on the edge of the mound – p.95) in describing the settlement, and emphasises on the autonomy of the house and their similarity to houses at contemporary sites in the Middle East. I approach these terms in the same way as Hodder: avoiding making them into sterile *spaces*, still being cautious padding them with baseless qualities.

### § 6.1.1 – Aşıklı Höyük



**Plate 6.1 – Reconstructed (top) and remains (bottom) of houses at Aşıklı Höyük. Observe how close the separate walls were built next to each other (lower right) (picture: Kvæstad, 2010)**

As mentioned in Chapter V one of the most remarkable features at Aşıklı Höyük is the continuity in building sequence. Maintaining their characteristic throughout the centuries implies that the design could not be easily changed. Although buildings were built right next to one another, it was somehow not accepted to share walls between buildings. Keeping houses separate entities may reflect the inhabitants view on the dichotomy private/public. Assuming that the houses were not privately owned (Düring and Marciniak 2006) does imply

that the collective had some control inside the house, directly affecting the private sphere. The thorough cleaning prior to the buildings dismantling does not leave enough material remains giving us information on what might have happened inside the individual structures. The clustering of buildings in *neighbourhoods* and community buildings may give an indication to what social structure was present, but in lack of internal features or any objects that may give an indication of ritual life makes it increasingly difficult to determine the values and ideals the house may have possessed. If we accept Rapoport's premise that are thought before they are built (1980:298), that dwellings are not made involuntarily, but build after an ideal, the structural reproduction seen particularly at Aşıklı Höyük may refer to an worldview that favour acts of repetition. As people reproduce, their dwellings do to. Still; humans duplicate, while the dwellings replicate. This act of repetition may not refer to fertility, but to continuity. As the hearth, in many societies seen as the centre of the household (Bourdieu 1990b; Hodder 2006, 1992; Bloch 1995; Bloch and Parry 1982), was reproduced and did not change position within the building, I would agree with Hodder (1998a) on the *historical dimension* of the building as a whole. The house could be seen as something constant and never changing. The contrast between nature and culture; were nature is intermittent in terms of temperate, light and seasonal climate, is opposed to the culture of the house – a safe haven from the elements and a constant protector of its inhabitants. Often seen as the focal point of the household; the hearth does not restrict itself to the transformation from raw to cooked, but it also gives a controlled source of light and heat (Özbaşaran 1998). Here I would emphasize Hiller and Hanson's (1984) argument for *transpatial-* and *spatial solidarity*. The inhabitants of Aşıklı Höyük followed an identical pattern in their approach to building and maintenance of the house, and still (as seen in the lower right picture in plate 6.1) remain spatially separated from one another and the surrounding world. There was not a norm for how buildings should be built, but the structural integrity of the predeceasing building was kept perfectly intact. In this way a constant environment was kept over several generations, a product of society's eagerness to maintain itself. The 'deliberate' choice of conservatism made by the inhabitants of Aşıklı Höyük was determined by social conventions and influenced by social strategies, which are expressed particular in architecture, settlement pattern, and burial practices (Gérard 2002:106). It seems like the inhabitants did not give up their traditions and their houses for hundreds of years, and the intramural burial tradition may also be accepted as an indication for a conservative, fixed way of thinking – firmly relating to the ancestors (Duru 2002:172).

It is tempting to see the centre post, a feature included in the reconstruction of the house at site (see upper right, plate 6.1), in the light of Lewis-Williams' (2004) *axis mundi* interpretation. It will be unreasonable to apply this hypothesis to a material that is as scarce as Aşıklı Höyük. Moulded features, incorporations and paintings, do not occur at Aşıklı Höyük. Thus, the lack of material might hold symbolic connotations itself. Assuming that the house at Aşıklı Höyük would have objects used inside for both religious and everyday (i.e. food processing) practices, the absence of any objects might reflect on a practice of absolute closure of the predeceasing building. Seen in the light of *rites de passage*; as a building had to be physically and ritually 'closed', it would have been a part of a bigger scheme focusing on the significance to remove the living in the process of abandonment of the building. Through van Gennep's sub phases (Turner 1988) the cleansing of the building prior to abandonment may in this way relate to the *separation* that comprises symbolic behaviour signifying the buildings detachment. The building, if seen as a symbolic entity, gets removed from the group, either in terms of the other structures surrounding it or relating to processes relating to its immediate inhabitants, it may reflect to a "ritual subject" that has none of attributes of the past or coming state. Still this does not have an apparent affect the hearth itself, since it kept its structural integrity and location from one sequence to another.

The *rites de passage*-approach presented is questionable in several ways, since it is not based by any other evidence than the buildings (and their sequences) themselves. Projecting the *liminal persona* (Turner 1988:6) on to the building as a further argument for a presence of *rites de passage* may not be fruitful since the subject presented is a built structure. Still: this ritual of closure, as here seen as the cleansing and refilling of the house, is only the first step in building the following house. If one follows Turners argument that rites of passage is immanent to the structure of the human psyche (1988:3), one also has to acknowledge its universality. This generalisation may not acknowledge the full potential of the vast leap in time and culture the present and the past, one may have to agree with During (2006) that the rebuilding process seen at Aşıklı Höyük is more than social conservatism and a pure practical solution.

### § 6.1.2 – Çatalhöyük



**Plate 6.2 – Painted hands and bucrania with horns (installed on platform) from building 77 (picture: Dorthe Nistad, 2010)**

Çatalhöyük has been more extensively excavated than Aşıklı Höyük, resulting in an uneven amount of publications and researched material. I have therefore been recommended by Prof. Özbaşaran (pers. com.) to avoid making a comparative study of the two. Indeed my objective of this thesis is not to make a comparative analysis between the two sites, but to show some nuances in the Neolithic material of Central Anatolia. At first sight the sites may have some similarities: there is structural reproduction, and the entrances were (*assumed* at Aşıklı Höyük) located on the roof of the building. A distinct difference between the two sites is the outstanding inner features of Çatalhöyük: in my view underlining the importance of ritual and symbolism in site. The Çatalhöyük house was in a constant transformational process. The numerous replasterings occurring within a buildings life span (Matthews 2005; Matthews, French, and Cutler 1996), as I have first hand experienced in building 80, could partly be explained in a functionalistic way. White walls make the room brighter; soot from the hearth and the oven makes the white walls grey; more white plaster is needed (pers. com. Roddy Regan). Yet the use and reuse of wall plaster, with the workload and energy consumption considered, may also refer to the house being treated as a body (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995). The house gets repaired, treated and dressed just as a living entity. It may incorporate the same ideals and thought as the humans, as it is built as a protector against the elements. To a great extent one could argue that the core meaning of the house may not be so different at Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük. There is no physical evidence for cultural contact between the sites (pers. com. Mihriban Özbaşaran), the houses reflect an ideal that can be seen in the

whole region (Düring 2006). Much can be said on the similarities between the two sites I have chosen, and the analysis made in terms of context and symbolism by Hodder (Hodder 2007; Hodder and Cessford 2004; Hodder 1992) may to an extent be valid for both settlements. The argument for *rites de passage* previously used at Aşıklı Höyük can to a great extent be used in the context of Çatalhöyük: it is underlining the existence of the rites of passage, since the closure of a building did not only involve the cleaning and deposit of certain objects, but also the dismantling of some features as a part of the closing ritual. As some features were retrieved from one building to the next (Hodder and Cessford 2004), one could argue for a *symbolic continuity* as well as for continuity of the structures. If some elements were left behind and some brought in to the next house, one could argue for the symbolic importance of these objects. To use a familiar phrase; they could be used to ‘harden’ the house (Bloch 1995). As the new house is built on top of the abandoned one, these features could be seen as a part of legitimizing the new house, giving it a status or symbolic value accumulated from the predeceasing structure. Previously I used the perspective presented by Carsten and Hugh-Jones (1995:37) as the house being a “dynamic entity” through a symbiosis between the people that live in it and the materials used to build it. Materials are not only used to part *culture* from *nature*, but also create *permanence* from *impermanence*. I argue from the homology between culture and permanence (and their negatives nature and impermanence), implementing that the culture was secured by the internal features. Bringing previous features into the new structure and using them could refer to an endeavour for permanence; an eager to maintain culture and oppose nature. This is partly in opposition to Lewis-Williams (2004) argument that the Çatalhöyük building partly was experienced as a limestone cave, connecting the living to the underworld. In my thesis I have tried to argue for the multivocality of the house may have, and how very different it can be perceived in comparison to my own present cultural perception. Both at Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük one can only guess what types of rituals and symbolism there is behind the material culture we find at the given sites. What is certain is that it was most certainly very different from our understanding of the world. I do agree with Hodder and Cessford (2004) that the construction of social memory must have been a valuable part daily life, and that this in many ways was connected to the house. Both Lewis-Williams (2004) and Eliade (1987) emphasise that it is inside the given structure the *axis mundi* is located, even though they refer to respectively shamanism and modern ritual buildings (i.e. temple, basilica, cathedral). The aim is not necessarily to argue *what* happened inside the building, but that it happened inside the house. In general I argue for the conclusion that ‘the house is housing more than shelter’.

## § 6.2 – Ancestor cult

The ancestor cult is considerably more elaborated in Çatalhöyük than in Aşıklı Höyük. In general Çatalhöyük has arguably a more representative collection of burials, since they represent a broader spectre of locations and grave goods. The intramural sub-floor burial is the most striking similarity between the two sites. Connecting the dead to the house by burying them below the floor could be caused by several social and religious rites, assuring both an afterlife for the dead and social verification by the people who bury them there (Humphreys 1981; Metcalf and Huntington 1991).

### § 6.2.1 – Aşıklı Höyük

The burial material at Aşıklı Höyük is as scarce as the rest of the material remains at the site. All burials were intramural, but with 70 burials in 400 rooms it is not possible to determine a definite ritual pattern were the dead are connected to the house (Esin and Harmankaya 1999). Esin and Harmankaya (1999) claim this is a sign for a privileged group of to be buried intramural. Düring (2006) refers to the wide range of ages and the occurrence of both sexes to be an indicator that this might be a ‘snapshot’ of the population, and there might be more to be found when excavating further down. If this shows to be valid, it might also refer to a possible collective ownership of housing. Connecting the burials to Bloch and Parry’s (1982) concept of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ death is not possible due to the limited amount of burials. A possible argument could be that the home, similar to the Lugbara (Middleton 1982), is where the ‘good’ death should take place. But due to the limited amount of burials divided amongst the rooms (0.17 per room), the intramural burials are presently not representing the population as a whole. It is questionable if all the rooms were occupied at once, and one could emphasise the liminal aspect of both the burial and the house. How far they were connected is uncertain, but a burial was always carved through the floor of the building; meaning that burial took place after the structure was built.

55% of the skeletal material shows signs of burning, I would argue for a rite that reduces the mourner’s risk of contaminating the house by burning the skeletal remains. The use of fire as a symbolic act of transformation may contribute to *render harmless* the body of the deceased, limiting the symbolic pollution and reducing the risk of contaminating the living. Parker-Pearson (2009:25) argues that the fear of the dead is a regular feature causing a liminal period

of separation prior to the rites of incorporation. Arguably it could be a purification ritual, but it does not account for the remaining 45% of the skeletal remains that were left untreated by fire. How far burial intramural burial is a connection to the house in terms of ownership is questionable, since the dead are not only adults, but to a great extent also children. If it relates to ownership, then children would play a transcendent role compared to their usual social status. I argue that this rather resonates to the belonging to a house than general ownership or ancestry. The modest grave goods found at refers to what is claimed to be an universal belief of the immortality of the dead in all cultures (Lehmann and Myers 1997). How far this can help us distinguish social status is uncertain, since the material is to a certain degree homogenous and rather refers to a one general burial rite rather than specific rites connected to the given social class. This also connects to Vernant (1981) work on the focus on the individual. Most graves are individual, and some consist of woman and child, one could argue that being placed in a communal grave was not an ideal. Although one might argue that only certain people were selected to become an ancestor buried inside the house, it is not possible to determine a pattern where the individual manifest itself in other ways than the intramural burial of its corpus. There are no markers or other objects found that may clearly indicate the location of the burials inside the house, as one for instance have found at other sites in the greater Anatolian area (e.g. Guerrero et al. 2009). To what extent death had on the social structure is, as with so many other aspects of social life, not known due to the limited material culture on site.

### § 6.2.2 – Çatalhöyük

Although the buildings were cleared in a similar manner as Aşıklı Höyük, the symbolic imagery at Çatalhöyük is to a great extent intact. In general the whole site is bigger and more elaborate and more works published than the on Aşıklı Höyük settlement, including wall paintings, mouldings on interior wall surfaces and figurines. The minimum individual count of burials is 685 individuals<sup>16</sup> – almost ten times the Aşıklı Höyük material. The grave goods is hence more varied and gives a better representation of the post mortem treatment of the bodies and their social significance. The ‘typical’ intramural sub-floor burial consisted of a complete corpus buried below the house floor. Similar to Aşıklı Höyük the body was buried while the house was occupied. The variations observed among the burials may indicate a

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<sup>16</sup> Please note that these numbers are based on the total amount until the 2005 season (Düring 2006)



complex social structure. Most burials do not contain any grave goods, but some contain rich assemblages of objects such as necklaces, pendants, rings, and belt hooks.

Interpreting a clear pattern of post mortem treatment is difficult. As some burials were elaborate, and others were found deposited in midden areas, one could argue that there it might have been connected to social status. The impact of death on society is as complex as the material itself. The tension between the physical separateness of the deceased and the individuals identification with society (Metcalf and Huntington 1991) may have resulted in how the dead was treated post mortem, by the practice of disaggregational and reinstallational phase (Hertz 1960). Even if secondary burial was exception, the retrieval of bones from sub-floor graves does occur. As a 'triumph over death', certain individuals had an effect on social order through their skeletal remains, achieving a new social identity grafted into the sphere of the living. The intramural burials may reveal some instance of liminality in terms of the few exceptions found of secondary burial. *Rites de passage*, as portrayed by van Gennep (2004), does seem to be a plausible essential part of the reinstallational phase of the secondary burial at Çatalhöyük. The *separational*, *liminal*, and *aggregational* phase may be a plausible link to understand how people used their dead inside their houses as a tool in transitional rites. As the majority of the burials are located inside houses, the argument on 'good' and 'bad' death (Bloch and Parry 1982) may be more reliable at Çatalhöyük due to the greater material. The majority of burials are intramural and below the floors, indicating that this might be the ideal place of burial. The burials found in the midden areas can on the other hand not directly be described as 'bad', since it is not the disposal of the deceased that is considered, but the time and place of death itself. Middleton describes the 'good' death amongst the Lugbara as one occurring inside the home where the shrines of the ancestors are located. The placement of the dead, both in Çatalhöyük and (to a certain extent) Aşıklı Höyük, is inside the house and under the floor area interpreted as the place for sleeping. The act of sleeping next to the dead shows the close the ties were to the ancestors.

Burials connected to transitional stages may show how the burial can be used in the construction of a new house, such as the burials relating to the closure of Building 5 and the following construction of Building 1. Transition seems to be a key element in the Çatalhöyük society. The dead had a direct connection to the house; as 60 burials in Building 1 do indicate. The dead seem to be ultimately connected to the house: perhaps not as former residents, but as a collective having an ideal to be buried intramural and under the floor. To be incorporated into the house could be a way to assure afterlife and gain the living within it.

In Anglo-Saxon burial rites children below the age of 2-3 years did not receive burial rites since “high child mortality may have prevented parents becoming emotionally attached to their offspring until an age when it was considered that their chance for survival had risen” (Stoodley 2000:459). Children and infants (25%) seem to be as incorporated in the ritual world as their adult counterparts (50%) at Çatalhöyük. The connection between death of mother and child during labour in the burial is explainable due to natural causes, but one can see that children themselves had their own place in the burial as an individual (e.g. below the floor VII.9/B50). Lewis-Williams (2004) refers to the brick burial S.E.VIA.14, incorporating a premature born child in a brick set in the wall. The child itself seems to be part of a rite as an object rather than a person. Yet it belonged to the house and became a part of its structure, benefiting the ritual life inside the house. It seems that all inhabitants of Çatalhöyük were equally represented in the symbolic and ritual sphere, and that social status did not depend on age.

### § 6.3 – The hearth



**Plate 6.3 – A hearth inside structure at Aşıklı Höyük (picture: Kvæstad, 2010)**

The hearth and/or the oven must to be considered as one of the main features of the household, both in terms of practicality and rituality. The hearth arguably fulfilled the same purpose at both Çatalhöyük and Aşıklı Höyük, even if it might have been a separation between food processing and heat/light source at Çatalhöyük.

### § 6.3.1 – Aşıklı Höyük

The hearth in Aşıklı Höyük seem to accomplish both food preparation as well as serving as an intramural source for light and heat (plate 6.3). Since the hearths do not follow ideal patterns in connection to the settlement as a whole, but follows an internal reproductive ideal, one might argue that there is not an external force that socially controlled the houses internal features (Esin and Harmankaya 1999; Özbaşaran 1998). As almost half of all building units contained a hearth, and the concentration is higher in single room than multiple room units. It seems likely that the small rooms were more likely to be living quarters, hence playing a role for the importance of the hearth as a medium for initiation and maintenance of social relations. Yet again the rather scarce material at Aşıklı Höyük does limit the direct approach from a theoretical level in terms of analysing the material remains. Still the presence and reproduction of the hearth's themselves do imply that the social organisation was very much reliant on this feature as a central element of the building, and its plastered base may indicate that it was used and maintained with great care (Özbaşaran 1998).

### § 6.3.2 – Çatalhöyük

Çatalhöyük has two main types of fire installations (see plate 5.2), and the hearths are more frequently constructed than the ovens. Reconstruction of the hearth was more frequent than of the oven. I assume that since both were often present inside the living room, the hearth was primarily used as a source for light and heat, while the oven might be connected to the production of food. The symbolism of food production would hence be divided amongst the two, with distinctive rites connected to either the hearth or the oven. Hearth (89%) and ovens (79%) were mainly constructed inside living rooms, and together with the burials under the floors must be seen at the centre for ritual activity confronting nature with culture.

The hearth and ovens follow a lenient pattern, reflecting a collective ideal of the internal order based on a shared understanding of the private sphere. When knowing the position of the oven or hearth, one can more or less guess where the other features of the living room are located

(pers. com. Roddy Regan). The hearth and ovens are as much social units as they are food processing. The hearth is a particular focal point in many societies, in respect to rites of continuity and passage. The Nuer show that there might be a homology between lineages, entrance to huts and hearth; all interconnected through the house (Evans-Pritchard 1940). The food processing southern area of the living room, with its overlooking internal positioning, might reflect on the importance of this area. As the burials are more located to the north, there seems to be an intention for separation between the two areas, nonetheless as they do coexist inside the same space. How far one of them was considered ritually *clean* or *pure* is uncertain, but it is clear that the resting place of the dead and the area for food processing might reflect on an idea of the separation between the two.

## Chapter VII: Concluding remarks

The house in the Central Anatolian Neolithic was both an arena for social life and ancestor cult. The connection between houses and ancestors was not one solely consisting of ownership and status. The material presented in this thesis shows that the ancestors impact on the house in terms of how they got incorporated with its boundaries. At both settlements there is a particular ideology of getting the ancestors' bodily remains inside the house as a last resting place. I argue that this has to be seen in connection to the reproductive pattern of the whole domestic sphere itself. The house can be seen as a living entity, and as its inhabitants go through several transitional phases during their life, the house itself does take part in a similar process. As people get born, grow older, and at the end pass away, it is always connected to the house. In the presented ethnography I discussed how liminality affects the given person and bizarre and unidentifiable situation. If the house is seen as a living organism then it will be a part of the same processes as the people inhabiting it. The house is in other words becoming a part of a transformational process. Just as an inhabitant's life circle, the *life* of house is marked by construction, maintenance and destruction. Its rebirth; the act of rebuilding the structure, with its former features intact, may relate to the ancestors as a symbol of fertility. The process closure reflects a ritual of transition, a ritual that incorporates the past into present structure. The previous structure becomes a part of the new house, just as the ancestor becomes a part of the house.

The house, perhaps most evident at Çatalhöyük, is harbouring such elaborate symbolism that the whole meaning of it never will be fully comprehended. The ancestors, or at least their bodily remains, played a crucial part inside the symbolic universe of house. As they were not likely to be placed inside the hearth and oven area, it is likely that there might be a symbolic opposition between the hearth – the centre of the household – and the ancestor – the link to the past. I have used ethnographic material suggesting that the dead are concerned dangerous, that they are a universal source of fear. Decomposition, contamination and impurity are qualities projected onto the decaying corpse. These qualities are apparent not to be combined with the qualities connected to the food producing hearth or oven, yet it was more favourable to place the burial inside a house with a hearth.

There are apparent connections between the house, the hearth, and the burial. The ties that bind them are strong; seen in the acts of reproducing them over an extended period of time.

The symbolic affiliations inside the house can be illuminated by a vast numbers of ethnographic studies, manifesting the importance of the hearth in terms of fertility, transformation and nourishment. The cosmology that is connected to the inner features of the house may hardly be explained in other ways than referring to ethnographic material. The links I made between present ethnography and the archaeological material from the Central Anatolian Neolithic are intended to show possible aspects of the non-materialistic sides of life. Although there are some apparent problems with the use of ethnographic sources, it is inevitable in attempting to analyse the cognitive motive power behind the symbolism of material culture. The links are made in terms of an attempt to reproduce a pan-human symbolic structure, outlined by the theoretical framework used in this thesis, to illuminate the archaeological material in terms of acts of ritual and symbolism.

## Summary

Utgangspunktet mitt for denne masteroppgåva er å sjå korleis huset og forfedrekult manifesterte seg sjølve på buplassane Aşıklı Höyük og Çatalhöyük i det sentral anatoliske Neolittikum, avgrensa til periodane ECA II/III (8200-6200/6000 f.kr). Huset var her ein sentrum for det daglege liv, samt ein hovudarena for både kult og rituell praksis.

Eg har argumentert for at huset i seg sjølve var eit symbol som gav referansar til menneskekroppen. Sambandet mellom huset, forfedrane som vart gravlagde under husgolvet, samt eldstadens kvalitetar, er så tydelege at ein må rekne med at det dreiar seg om eit symbolsk univers som er tilknytta bygningen. Neolittikum i sentral Anatolia er kjend for sine repeterande byggesekvensar, som reproduserte nesten identiske bygningar oppå kvarandre i ein periode som strekk seg over fleire hundre år. Eg tolkar dette som ein skikk som vart halden for å behalde forbindinga mellom huset som eit *levande* objekt, og personane som budde i det. Det blei gjort ved å gravlegge forfedra innandørs, for å binde saman fortid og nåtid. Omnen og dei gravene vart plassert på separate område inne i huset. Dei kunne ikkje plassert på same areal, men samstundes blei ikkje dei ikkje plasserte i kvar sitt hus. Dette illustrerar kor viktig forfedra var i huskonteksten, og at huset må bli tolka som meir enn berre fire vegger under eit tak.

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The motivation behind this thesis is to see how house symbolism and ancestor cult manifest itself in the Central Anatolian Neolithic settlements of Aşıklı Höyük and Çatalhöyük, limited to the period ECA II/III (8200-6200/6000 BC). The house is the centre in daily life as well as a being the focal point for cult and ritual practices.

I have argued that the house itself was a symbol reflecting on the human body. The connections between the house, the ancestors buried beneath its floors, and the transformational qualities of the hearth, are so apparent that they might be perceived as a symbolic cosmos within the built structure. The Central Anatolian Neolithic is marked by the multiple building sequences, reproducing almost identical structures on top of each other over several centuries. In my opinion this practice was used to maintain a connection between the house as a living entity and the people inhabiting it, through the means of burying the ancestors inside; connecting the past to the present. The hearth and the burials, located in separate spaces inside the house, could on one hand not be located in the same area, yet placed in the same building. This illustrates how interconnected the ancestor was to the house, and how the house itself must be reflected on as more than just four walls with a roof.

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