



Overleaf: The Apadana (Audience Hall) at Persepolis, Iran. Joseph Lindon Smith, 1935. Oil on Canvas. 205.7 x 133.3 cm. Oriental Institute digital image D. 17477. Picturing the Past Catalog No. 19. Photo by Anna Ressman

ÇADIR HÖYÜK

Gregory McMahon

July and August 2011

The last year has seen a great many changes come to the Çadır Höyük project. Çadır Höyük is located in the Yozgat province in the north-central area of the Anatolian plateau. The survey and excavations at the site, whose occupation, as we currently understand it, spans six millennia (ca. 5200 BCE to 1170 CE), began in 1993 under the direction of Dr. Ronald Gorny of the University of Chicago. A team has worked at the site all but seven of the intervening nineteen years. With the retirement of Dr. Gorny from archaeology in 2010, I began the long process of transferring the permit from Ron's name to mine. Dr. Gil Stein was exceedingly gracious in providing the opportunity for me to become a research associate of the Oriental Institute, thereby providing a sense of continuity for the "home" of the Çadır Höyük project; its institutional home was in fact the Oriental Institute while the project was under Ron Gorny's direction. I received my PhD from the University of Chicago in 1988 in Hittitology, and it is wonderful to once again be associated so closely with the Oriental Institute.

The 2011 season consisted mainly of administrative activities associated with transferring the permit to my name. While all of the appropriate paperwork had been filed well before the deadline months before, the wheels of bureaucracy proceed slowly in these circumstances, and by the time my two colleagues Sharon Steadman (SUNY Cortland, Çadır Höyük Field Director) and Jennifer Ross (Hood College, Çadır Höyük Associate Director) and I flew to Turkey in July, the permit had not yet been issued. A number of visits to the General Directorate in the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, including with the head of Excavations and Research Department Mr. Melik Ayaz, were very productive, resulting in the information that our permit would issue "very soon." However, the final step for the permit, since it was viewed as being issued for a brand-new project under new direction, required the signature of Prime Minister Recep Erdoğan, who had just been reelected in a general election and was in the process of forming a new government. It was this final signature that held up the issuance of our permit for the entire time (one month) that we were in Turkey. The lack of permit, however, did not keep us from accomplishing a great deal.



University of Chicago graduates and current students: (left to right) Bruce Verhaaren, Joshua Cannon, Stephanie Selover, Sarah Adcock, and Gregory McMahon. Photo by Sharon Steadman

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After securing the information that our permit was well on the way to being finalized, we departed for Istanbul to take part in the Avkat Archaeological Workshop, held at the Research Center for Anatolian Civilisations, Koç University, from July 21 to July 23. Çadır's Byzantinist, Marica Cassis (Memorial University, Çadır Höyük Assistant Director), was unable to attend, and thus the presentation was offered by Sharon Steadman and me. This workshop was dedicated to understanding the Byzantine rural community settlements on the Anatolian plateau. Given that Çadır Höyük had a substantial Byzantine settlement apparently dedicated to an agrarian lifestyle, the Çadır report featured prominently at the workshop, second only to Avkat itself. In fact, the gathered participants agreed that the next workshop, tentatively scheduled for the summer of 2013, will focus its discussions on the Çadır settlement. We look forward to presenting the results of our 2012 season at the workshop next year.

Following the Avkat workshop, we traveled to our dig house in Peynir Yemez, only one kilometer from the site, where we spent the rest of the season working out an excavation plan for the 2012 season, processing some of our data analyses from previous seasons in preparation for a large publication following the 2012 season, and undertaking some house maintenance. We built the excavation house in 1999, and after twelve years it required some moderate work to ensure that it was ready to house a team of at least twenty-five in the 2012 season. Even without our permit, we were very productive for the final two weeks that we spent in Peynir Yemez. As promised, our permit was issued about a month after we returned to the United States, and we were told that the issuance of the 2012 permit would be very easy, and this was indeed the case.

June 2012

The 2012 season started extremely well. We are very fortunate to be working with exceptional Turkish colleagues, including Hasan Şenyurt, director of the Yozgat Museum, the regional museum that oversees our work, and İsmail Sarıpınar, who is serving as our government representative. Our Assistant Director, Sinan Ünlüsoy, currently constrained by other responsibilities, will join the project later in the season. In addition, our field director, Professor Sharon Steadman, has once again demonstrated her unique understanding of the site by developing an exceptionally successful strategy for new and continuing trench placement, as the following makes clear.

We opened excavations on June 21 and are now well into our third week of work on the mound and on the northern terrace. Çadır Höyük has revealed a substantial Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age occupational area on the southern side of the mound, and a very significant second- and first-millennium occupational sequence spanning the entire mound above the prehistoric periods. On the mound's summit and out on the terrace north of the mound, we have over 700 years of well-stratified Byzantine occupation. Our excavation strategy in 2012 will allow us to investigate all of these periods in at least nine, possibly ten, 10 x 10 meter trenches located all over the mound and terrace. The placement of these trenches offers a combination of further investigation of already open and partially excavated trenches, and strategic opening of several new 10 x 10 meter trenches designed to yield maximum data.

As we approach the mid-point of our third week in our seven-week season, we can positively state that the season has already begun to be a success. We have reopened two 10 x 10 meter trenches on the lower southern side of the mound in order to continue our investigation of the Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age settlement. One trench (SES 1) has



Çadır Höyük mound showing east slope Step Trench excavations (left side of mound) with Gellingüllü Lake behind the mound. Photo by Sharon Steadman

been under investigation since 2004, and the other (LSS 3) has seen no work in it since 2001. Our goal in SES 1 is to carefully and stratigraphically excavate the Late Chalcolithic to Early Bronze Age transition to attempt to answer some of the niggling questions regarding ceramic sequences, technology change or lack thereof, and the nature of possible changing economic circumstances from the Late Chalcolithic to Early Bronze Age periods (e.g., did settlements suffer economic change for the worse, and if so, why). Up to this point the trench has yielded a wealth of data on the Early Bronze I and Transitional period (the one or two centuries at the end of the fourth and beginning of the third millennium), and as of close of excavations today, a mudbrick wall that correlates with a Late Chalcolithic wall in the neighboring trench had emerged. We are on the cusp of establishing our desired sequence.

Trench LSS 3 was reopened because of its potential to offer a Late Chalcolithic to Hittite period sequence. In 2001 the last few days of the season allowed us to establish that the two stone walls in the upper reaches of the trench were in fact part of a Hittite wall. Meanwhile the lower (southern) region of the trench was producing Early Bronze II pottery. Underlying this, based on remains in the neighboring trench, is the Late Chalcolithic occupation. A Hittite house, while somewhat dilapidated, is still visible, and as of this week, all of the eleven years of erosion have been removed, and stratigraphic excavations are proceeding. We are very hopeful that our Late Chalcolithic to Early Bronze sequence not only will be demonstrated in this trench, but also may indeed stretch into the second millennium.

In 1994 we opened a “step trench” that was 2 x 20 m on the east side of the mound. We undertook this strategy due to the supposed imminent inundation of the mound by a lake

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Çadır Höyük east slope Step Trench from ground. Photo by Sharon Steadman

created by the completion of the Gellingüllü Dam. However, by the late 1990s, it became clear that the lake would not reach the mound, and we therefore continued work in the step trench, widening it to 5 meters in some areas. We recovered an Iron Age to Early Bronze III sequence in this long and narrow exposure. In 2012 we have decided to widen the initial two 2 x 10 trenches to their full 10 x 10 m extent. We therefore hope to reveal a significant second- and late third-millennium exposure in this area. We have only just opened these trenches and will be able to report on them in more detail in a future report. At present the westernmost trench has already revealed an extensive mudbrick wall that is likely Middle Iron in date. It rests on a Hittite Empire occupation (demonstrated by our initial excavations in 1994), and thus we should reach solid Hittite occupation within the week.

We are continuing our work in our main 10 x 10 m trench that has demonstrated pure Iron Age occupation, located on the upper southern slope. The importance of this trench cannot be overstated, as we are poised to expose the Early Iron levels over the next several weeks. One very substantial question plaguing archaeologists on the plateau is the nature of the post-Hittite collapse on communities at settlements demonstrating solid Hittite occupation. Was there abandonment, chaos, or business as usual? We are poised to investigate the occupational sequence from the Early Iron back to the Hittite Empire period in the coming weeks. Not only will we be able to establish a secure ceramic sequence for this several-centuries-long period, but we will also be able to add to the literature on architectural and economic practices during this transitional period on the plateau.

Finally, we have opened two Byzantine trenches; one was previously opened in 2009, and the other is newly opened this season. The 2009 trench, only reopened a few days ago, currently displays architecture from what is our middle Byzantine phase, dating roughly to 900 CE, including a large room and external plastered courtyard. In previous years other

Byzantine trenches on the northern terrace have allowed us to phase the sixth- to eleventh-century CE farmhouse occupation into three periodizations. The initial building in the sixth century shows a well-provisioned community with large rooms with large worked wall stones and flagstone floors; by the ninth century, rooms were being partitioned with unworked and smaller wall stones and packed mud floors. By the last century or so of occupation, walls were being repaired with whatever came to hand, and parts of the large farmhouse were in some disrepair. In the trench just reopened, we hope again to find the earlier two phases of occupation to check our ceramic and architectural phasing. The new trench is positioned on the summit of the höyük at the southern edge. Here we have revealed a substantial defensive wall and outer platform or tower associated with the eleven-course defensive wall. Metal objects abound, including crosses, plates, boxes, and some tools. This defensive wall can be connected with other parts of the same wall that encircled the summit, most likely built in the eighth or ninth century CE. This new trench, however, has offered us our first good view of external architecture (such as floors and platforms) just outside the perimeter/defensive wall.

We are at present only in the first third of our season, and the final group of excavators, including our Byzantinist, Marica Cassis, arrive in just a few days. At that time we will be opening at least one, if not two, more trenches. We have a very large team, numbering twenty-four, hailing from the United States, Mexico, Canada, Europe, and Turkey. We are extremely pleased to have three University of Chicago graduate students with us this year, including Sarah Adcock (Department of Anthropology), Josh Cannon, and Stephanie Selover (both NELC). All have proven to be talented field archaeologists. We are fortunate to have them with us this year and look forward to welcoming them back in coming seasons.

We will be presenting the results of this year's excavations at the American Schools of Oriental Research Annual Meeting in November 2012, to be held in Chicago. We look forward to that opportunity, after some months of reflection and analysis, to present a synthetic and complete report on the 2012 field season.
