

THE JOINT PREHISTORIC PROJECT

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Our last year's report on the Joint Prehistoric Project's work at the early village site of Çayönü in southeastern Turkey outlined major staff changes. Our Turkish colleague and co-director, Prof. Dr. Halet Çambel, of Istanbul University, our associate director Prof. Dr. Wulf Schirmer of Karlsruhe University, and we two Braidwoods had agreed that 1988 would be our last "earth moving" field season at Çayönü. We all had far too many post-excavation responsibilities, especially those concerned with the detailed description, interpretation, and publication of reports on our thirteen seasons of work at Çayönü.

An additional complication, also mentioned in our last report, is that Turkey does not allow the export of antiquities. In our earlier excavations in Iraq and Iran, we had been allowed to bring back to the Institute large samples of excavated materials. Thus processing towards publication could take place in Chicago and, in fact, various graduate students were able to use these materials for their Ph.D. dissertations. Now, work towards publication is bound to take place in Turkey. For this reason, part of our present concern (albeit a pleasant one) is the development of a core of young Turkish colleagues as effective analysts, artists, and interpreters. The actual publication of the volumes can be done in Chicago, but their preparation must be done in Istanbul. This accounts for the Prehistoric Project's ongoing archeological and financial responsibilities, so that the Çayönü job may be adequately finished.

As we mentioned last year, our concentration on publication does not mean that actual excavation at Çayönü is finished. Assoc. Prof. Mehmet Özdoğan, a most effective younger Istanbul University colleague, has taken over the field directorship. Mehmet's greatest enthusiasm for years has been with the next several cultural phases of development following that of "our" Çayönü — how did a primary village-farming community way of life then proceed to



Çayönü: Mehmet's restorations, earliest phase, main area, looking northeast — the earlier "grill plan" sub-phase foundations in the foreground, the later "cell plan" and the terrazzo floored plan sub-phase in the background above.

develop into more advanced ways of village and town life styles? For this reason he was interested in shifting from our research focus at Çayönü to the somewhat later one of his own. (However, his wife, Asli, a Ph.D. candidate at Istanbul and a long time Çayönü staff member, is still concerned with the earliest aspects of Çayönü.)

Further, as we suggested might happen last year, an impressive University of Rome colleague, Dr. Isabella Caneva, joined Mehmet for the 1990 field season. She also brought a group of bright young Italian colleagues as archeological assistants, and her husband, Alberto Palmieri, led a small group of geologists. We are most happy to say that she has agreed to take over the study and reporting of "our" Çayönü chipped stone, which she is highly qualified to do.

The 1990 field season at Çayönü was thus ready for change, and changes really happened. The ca. 7500 B.C. catalogue of "our" Çayönü materials marked a time before portable pottery vessels were being made, but there were — especially in the northern portions of the Çayönü mound — surface scatters of potsherds. Given our own research focus, we had, understandably, carefully stayed away from these areas. In 1990, Mehmet began excavating them. The result is that Çayönü is now a "new" site. Mehmet's new trenches exposed some later surface materials, then pottery of the handsome Halafian painted pottery style of ca. 5000 B.C. This was preceded by at least two earlier pottery bearing levels (Mehmet's trenches were still too small to assure full details) before the materials of 'our' pre-pottery Çayönü phase was reached. These pre-pottery materials were about two meters deeper than our deepest levels in the southern part of the mound, and already in ground water.

There is even evidence, with meanings not yet clear in detail, that the whole geomorphology of the Çayönü situation has changed radically over time. The river, which now runs south of the present mound, may have originally been

to the settlement's north. At one time, also, the mound must have been much higher than it is today. There are many new things to learn that we — of the first thirteen field seasons — didn't imagine. And so Çayönü is indeed a "new" site.

Our "old" Çayönü has its own fame, however, in offering clues to understanding the early changes toward an effective village-farming community way of life. Mehmet has been active in inspiring the Turkish Government's Antiquities Service in directing attention to the site and its archeological yield. Much of



Çayönü: Mehmet's restorations, earliest phase, main area, looking south — the later "cell plan" and terrazzo floored plan sub-phase foundations in the foreground and left, the earlier "grill plan" sub-phase foundations.

the exhibition in the provincial museum in the city of Diyarbakir is built around Çayönü (up to now with materials from "our" Çayönü — surely now there will need to be additions), and the old "county courthouse" in Ergani town (the nearby center for shopping, the post office, etc. for the Çayönü staff) has been given by the government to Mehmet as a near-at-hand museum and storehouse. Mehmet also received government Antiquity Service funds to fence in the whole Çayönü area and to make restorations of the foundations of a series of our characteristic early Çayönü phase buildings.

Some of the University of Rome students that Isabella will bring may in the future be involved in testing a nearby mound with later materials (and even later Roman remains).

We have a sneaking suspicion that before too many years pass, our pleasant little Ergani valley and Çayönü may well become one of the customary stops for tourists in southeastern Turkey.



Small test trench in northern square G24, through at least three later phases, into — at ground-water level — the Çayönü earliest village phase.

Yet again, our many thanks (and also those of our Turkish colleagues) to those who have been so generous with their interest and support of the Prehistoric Project. And our special thanks for the extremely helpful volunteer services of Diana Grodzins and Andree Wood, and the invaluable advice of Carlotta Maher.