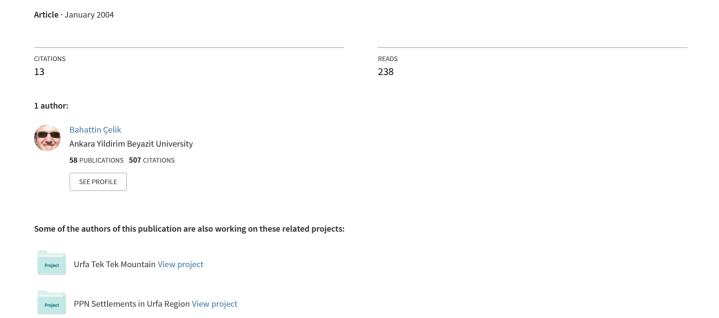
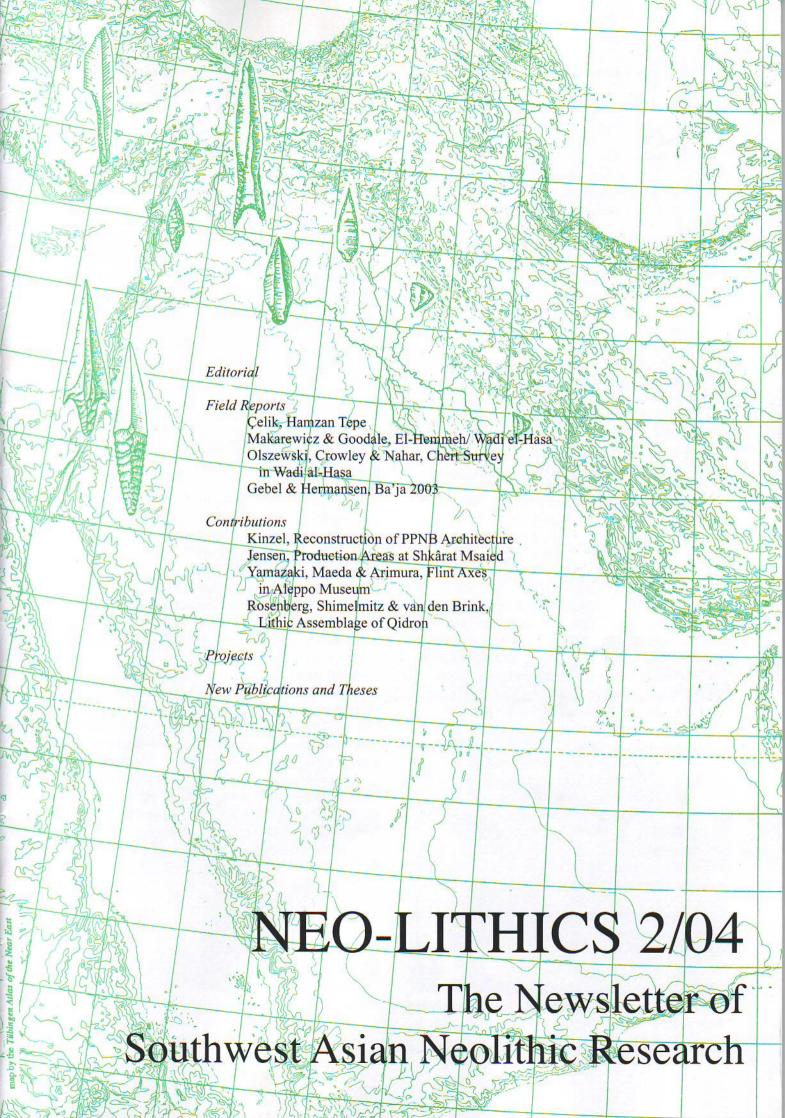
# A New Early Neolithic Settlement in Southeastern Turkey: Hamzan Tepe.





## A New Early Neolithic Settlement in Southeastern Turkey: Hamzan Tepe

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Hamzan Tepe is located approximately 10 km south of the city center of Şanlıurfa in southeastern Turkey. This settlement is named after a hill bearing the same name on 1:25.000 scale topographical maps which contain no habitation. The Hamzan Tepe settlement lies atop virgin rock with an incline of 30° east to west. The region of the settlement, approximately 600-700 m in altitude, has characteristics of a steppe and is called "Fatik Dağları" on maps. It has no water resources and has the appearance of calcareous bedrock that has suffered heavily from erosion. The preserved part of the settlement covers an area of roughly 5000 m<sup>2</sup>. It is unfortunate that the garbage dump of the Şanlıurfa metropolitan area for the last 20 years is located 30 m to the east of the settlement. covering a large area of it. The most important plain of the region, Harran Plain, is located approximately 1 km to the east of the settlement. An incresting aspect of the Hamzan Tepe settlement is its location near a fault line that cuts through the Fatik Dağları, for it appears that because of this fault line masses of flint have surfaced. These flint sources are very close to the actual settlement and provide important resources together with basalt blocks 400 m west of Hamzan Tepe. A similar situation can be observed at Göbekli Tepe (Beile-Bohn et al. 1998: 59).

The most striking characteristic of the Hamzan Tepe settlement is the inclusion of two different phases: the first one is Lower Paleolithic, the other is Pre-Pottery Neolithic (Çelik 2003: 48). The close proximity of the settlement to the fertile Harran Plain and the existence of vast flint

sources in the vicinity must have played an important role in the selection of the site.

Flint artefacts in the Hamzan Tepe settlement are abundant; the number of artefacts discovered is approximately 250 per m<sup>2</sup>, whereas architectural remains are scarce. The thickness of the habitation levels above the bedrock is 20-60 cm, thus partially leaving architectural elements in the open. The existence of several pits, 40-50 cm in diameter and 8-10 cm deep, is proof for the former presence of architectural remains, among which the stelae seem to represent an important group.

On the settlement at Hamzan Tepe where the bedrock was exposed by the local people (Fig. 1) there are cuphole sized depressions. The diameter of these depressions is roughly 10 cm and their depth 5-8 cm (Fig. 2). Next to these are three round pool-like pits with varying diameters of 1.5-3.0 m and depths of 40-60 cm carved into the bedrock (Fig. 3). Similar pool-like pits are already known from Göbekli Tepe (north and southwest sections: *cf.* Beile-Bohn *et al.* 1998: 47-50, Fig. 20; Hauptmann 1999: Fig. 32) and Karahan Tepe (east and north sections: Çelik 2003: 44-45).

The only architectural remains so far discovered at Hamzan Tepe are a section of a wall constructed of several stone layers and a stele of T-shape (Fig. 4). Stelae of the similar type have been unearthed at Nevalı Çori, Göbekli Tepe, Adiyaman-Kilisik (Hauptmann 2000: Fig. 8-10; Verhoeven 2001: 9, Fig. 1 a-d) and Karahan Tepe. Our stele is smaller in scale and is reminiscent of the stelae on the side walls of the temple at Nevalı Çori



Fig. 1 General view of pool-like pits and area of cup-hole depressions carved into the bedrock.

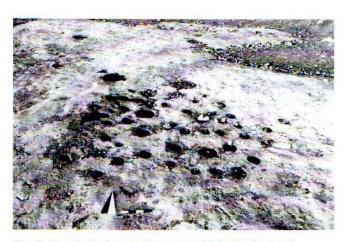


Fig. 2 Cup-hole depressions carved into the bedrock.



Fig. 3 Pool-like pit carved into the bedrock.

(Hauptmann 1993: Fig. 7) and the stelae of the second phase at Göbekli Tepe (Schmidt 2002: 24-25, Fig. 1). The stele from Hamzan Tepe also shares certain characteristics with those from Karahan Tepe (Çelik 2000a: 7) and indicates that the temple worship tradition as evidenced at Göbekli Tepe, Nevalı Çori, Karahan Tepe, and Adiyaman-Kilisik also existed at Hamzan Tepe.

The section of Hamzan Tepe settlement that is visible today is similar to two areas that have been excavated in the southwestern section of Göbekli Tepe. There the earth above the bedrock is 10-40 cm thick. In the first area were found a stele with a crouching animal and its base *in situ* (Beile-Bohn *et al.* 1998: Fig. 30). The second excavation area contained a temple and pool-like pits carved into the bedrock and smaller round depressions forming a circle (Beile-Bohn *et al.* 1998: Fig. 20). Both areas have also produced numerous flint artefacts (Schmidt 1997: 77). Flint artefacts found on the surface, pool-like pits and depressions carved into the bedrock at Göbekli Tepe are close parallels with those from Hamzan Tepe.

A close study of the small finds unearthed at Hamzan Tepe reveals that the settlement had two habitation phases. The first phase which is believed to date to Lower Paleolithic period is characterized with "triedrique pics" (Taşkıran 2003: Çizim 4) and "bifacials" of the Middle and Upper Acheulian phases. "Triedrique pics" were found in abundance which, according to Taşkıran, were used to dig up the roots of plants (Taşkıran 2003: 248). Parallel finds in great numbers are known from Northern Syria and Southeastern Anatolia (Taşkıran 2003: 247, Cizim 4; Hours 1981: Fig. 4.3).

The second phase at Hamzan Tepe is represented by points of Byblos and Nemrik type, datable to the beginning and middle of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B period. Other finds include obsidian blades in small numbers, flint blades with silica sheen, fragments of stone vessels and hand axes made of river pebbles. Other characteristics of this period in this region are the lack of Çayönü tools and the small scale of the T-shaped stele (Schmidt 2002: 24).

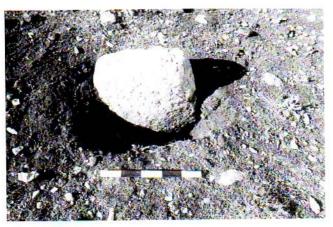


Fig. 4 T-shaped stele.

Şanlıurfa-Yeni Mahalle (Çelik 2000b: 6) 10 km to the north and Göbekli Tepe (Schmidt 2002:24) 25 km east of Hamzan Tepe are contemporary Pre-Pottery Neolithic settlements, which is also evident in the typology of small finds (Çelik 2003: Lev. 37, 53; Schmidt 1998: Fig. 5.4, 6.4).

#### Note

A more detailed study of the Hamzan Tepe settlement is in progress within the scope of a doctoral dissertation.

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Field Report

# Results from the First Excavation Season at el-Hemmeh: A Pre-Pottery Neolithic Site in the Wadi el-Hasa, Jordan

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## Introduction

The site of el-Hemmeh is a LPPNB-PPNC settlement approximately 1 hectare in size located in the Wadi el-Hasa, Southern Jordan (35° 43' 52" E, 30° 58' 00" N, Fig. 1). El-Hemmeh was originally recorded by G. O. Rollefson, P. Wilke, and L. Quintero in a survey of the area to be inundated by the construction of the Tannur Dam (Rollefson 1999). Cultural deposits attributable to both the LPPNB and PPNC periods were recorded including architecture constructed from flat limestone slabs built to c. 2 m in height and plaster floors laid over flat slabs that cover sub-floor channels. Sub-floor channel construction is similar to LPPNB occupations at Basta (Nissen et al. 1987), es-Sifiya (Mahasneh 1997), and 'Ain Ghazal (Rollefson et al. 1990). Lithic material recovered from surface collection included cores, non-naviform blades/bladelets, Byblos points ("PPNC type") and scrapers. Based on these promising findings, a first excavation season was conducted during August 2004.

#### Excavation

The 2004 excavation season at Hemmeh began an initial assessment of 1) site chronology, 2) architectural construction techniques, 3) subsistence strategies, and 4) lithic reduction sequences. Three excavation areas were opened for a total of 62 m<sup>2</sup> exposed during the 2004 season including two 5 x 5 m units, one of which was extended an additional 2 x 3 m, and a 2 x 3 m unit (Fig. 2). Excavation units were not randomly placed, but chosen according to exposed architecture and horizontal position across the site.

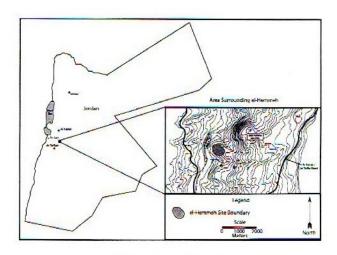


Fig. 1 Location of el-Hemmeh in the Wadi el-Hasa, Jordan.

## Unit 464E / 230N

Unit 464E / 230N is characterized by several different construction phases that include the LPPNB and perhaps the PPNC. The tentative PPNC designation is based solely on the presence of poorly consolidated architectural construction techniques that re-uses pre-existing LPPNB walls. Future radiocarbon dating will clarify this chronological issue. The possible PPNC building phase at Hemmeh is represented by a somewhat flimsy NE-SW wall, a two-stone wide and one-course tall wall that intersects with a loosely organized curved N-S wall two stones wide, two courses deep and an earlier LPPNB stone slab wall to form a large, enclosed space (Fig. 2). A hard packed mud floor containing limestone inclusions was uncovered inside this space. Abutting two intersecting walls is a curvilinear arrangement of small stones and

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The subsequent two chapters detail the stratigraphy and chronology of the early Neolithic village, and examine the built environment and architecture focusing on the construction, remodeling, and use life of individual buildings. The next two chapters explore by phase architectural patterning, continuity and change, and then community organization and the utilization of space. The book concludes with a broader consideration of emerging organizational trends expressed in the remarkable built environment of early Neolithic settlements in Southwest Asia.

The results reveal that the successful establishment of sedentary food-producing villages was marked by novel social and economic developments and the autonomization of households, and formalization of corporate bodies represented important trends during this transition. These two organizational trends then formed the foundation upon which later, more complex social constructions were built.

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