



Tourists visiting the site. Photo by Jason Quinlan

# Çatalhöyük, Turkey

## A 9,000-year-old Anatolian Town

### Site Significance

Çatalhöyük is a 9500-year-old town, one of the earliest in the world, with rich art and sculpture in its houses. The site has revealed some of the world's earliest mural art and is often seen as central to the origin of civilization in Turkey and the Middle East. However, the houses at Çatalhöyük are made of unfired mud brick and so offer a major challenge for conservation and site presentation. Additionally there has also been much change in land management in the area over recent decades leading to a major drop in the water table and changes in runoff and erosion, factors which are also affecting the site negatively. Çatalhöyük was added to Turkey's World Heritage Site Tentative List in February 2009.

### Project Goals

The focus for GHF at Çatalhöyük has been on conservation training, site protection, preservation of the archaeological remains and improving the visitor experience. Building on the successes so far achieved in these areas, the following will be the focus in 2009:

### Preservation by Design®

#### Planning

The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism is working with the Çatalhöyük project to revise the existing Site Management Plan, which is already being used as a model for other sites in Turkey.

#### Project Partnerships

##### Sponsors

- YapıKredi
- Boeing
- Merko
- Thames Water
- Turkish Cultural Foundation
- Royal Dutch Shell

#### Collaborative Universities & Institutions

- Stanford University
- Turkish Cultural Foundation



#### Threats

Natural: high winds, heavy snow and erosion.

Agricultural encroachment on West Mound.

#### Completed Date

2009

- Institute of Archaeology, University College London
- British Institute at Ankara
- Istanbul University
- Selcuk University
- UC Berkeley
- Adam Mickiewicz University
- SUNY Buffalo

### Conservation Science

The major work that is planned and needed is to conduct conservation in the large area under the new shelter over the 4040 Area, constructed in 2008. In 2009 the walls of all the 20 buildings under the shelter will need maintenance and treatment. There will also need to be grouting and consolidation of walls,

and conservation of wall paintings in the area. There will be some need for similar treatment in the South Area.

### Community

New display panels are needed in the South Area shelter to keep pace with the excavations there. There is also a need to add to the display in the 4040 shelter and to provide other signage on the site. There will also be meetings between the community and the project members to discuss the heritage development of the site, and the provision of a regional Heritage Park around Çatalhöyük. Members of the community will continue to be involved in conservation on site and in the presentation of the site.

### Recent Accomplishments

- Completion of a permanent protective shelter over the 4040 Area of excavations.
- Installation of walkways and interpretative panels in the 4040 Area.
- Preparation of 14 buildings throughout the 4040 Area for permanent display.
- Continued training of local community members and Turkish university students in wall-painting conservation and site preservation.
- Planning for the construction of a new onsite museum.



New Site Shelter, 4040 Front View. Photo by Jason Quinlan



Conservation work at Çatalhöyük. Photo by Jason Quinlan



South Area, before renewed excavation work began. Photo by Ian Hodder

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Global Heritage Fund

625 Emerson Street, Suite 200  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

t 650.325.7520 f 650.325.7511  
globalheritagefund.org