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**Ethnography, Engagement, Evaluations, and Endings: The Achievements and Limitations of Community Outreach at Çatalhöyük**  
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# Ethnography, Engagement, Evaluations, and Endings

## The Achievements and Limitations of Community Outreach at Çatalhöyük

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A view of the agricultural fields surrounding Çatalhöyük. Photograph by Allison Mickel.

**O**ver the twenty-five years of community engagement at Çatalhöyük, local community members played integral roles in the production of knowledge about the site. As workers, as cooks and housekeepers, as ethnoarchaeological consultants, as museum exhibit collaborators, men and women living around Çatalhöyük supported the research team in creating the archaeological record of the site.

Still, while local community members were involved in so many dimensions of the excavation process, community involvement initiatives at Çatalhöyük saw both successes and limitations. Many individual community engagement programs achieved their targeted aims, but at the same time were just that—individual and targeted. Most were driven by particular organizers and took place only while these specific people were involved in the project. Moreover, the degree to which such initiatives accomplished their goals was shaped by broader conditions at the local, regional, and national scales.

Here, we offer a comprehensive and contextualized view of community engagement as a continual component of the work at Çatalhöyük. Our analysis proceeds chronologically in order to illustrate the diachronic changes in defining what community engagement meant at Çatalhöyük over the course of the project. Our aim is both to describe the goals, strategies, and outcomes of the many community engagement initiatives at Çatalhöyük, and to draw out the broader social, political, and material realities that shaped program outcomes.

### The Community at Çatalhöyük

The varying scales of people and politics that came into play with regard to community engagement initiatives are evident in attempting to define who “the local community” is at Çatalhöyük. This is a problem for public archaeology in general (Pyburn 2011) and Çatalhöyük is no exception. Çatalhöyük is owned by the state of Turkey. Any research, community engagement, or educational

activities concerning Çatalhöyük must obtain official permission from the Turkish government. In addition, all archaeological work undertaken by foreign teams and institutions is tightly supervised; a Turkish government representative must be present at the site at all times during research seasons.

Turkey is divided into eighty-one provinces. Çatalhöyük is located in Konya Province, a largely rural and conservative province and a stronghold of the ruling conservative party AKP (Fox 2017). Seventy-five percent of the two million residents of Konya Province live in the city of Konya itself, 40 km northwest from the site of Çatalhöyük. There are a number of towns and villages within the immediate vicinity of Çatalhöyük. The town of Çumra, 12 km away, has about 42,000 residents (Brinkhoff 2018), where the archaeological team lived until the construction of the dig house in 1996. The closest village to Çatalhöyük is Küçükköy (fig. 1), with a population of around seven hundred (YerelNET 2018). The villages of Karkın, Abditolu, Dedemoğlu, and Hayroğlu are all within a 10 km radius. With all of these different communities in the area, it is difficult to draw simple geographic limits around who belongs to the “local” community at Çatalhöyük and who does not. In addition, even the smallest villages are composed of individuals of various ages, genders, socioeconomic and political positions, and backgrounds. For example, within these villages there are people who have worked on the site once or twice, some who have worked year after year, and others who have never worked at all.

Furthermore, unlike some archaeological sites, the people living near Çatalhöyük today are not the genetic inheritors of the Neolithic residents of the site, nor do they generally view the Neolithic population as their ancestors. In contrast, the international Mother Goddess community *does* claim a deep affiliation with the Neolithic peoples of Çatalhöyük (Andersson 2003; Hodder 2003; Rountree 2007). So the community at Çatalhöyük cannot easily be categorized either according to residence location or feelings of kinship.

Therefore the core term in this discussion resists easy definition; what is the “community” that the research project should





Figure 1. A house in Küçükköy. Photograph by Allison Mickel.

engage? Is it at the village level, town level, provincial level, or national level? Is it based on proximity, involvement, control, or affinity? Different social engagement initiatives at Çatalhöyük targeted different communities, raising the question of whether these projects are truly part of the same program or agenda. Our analysis focuses on the initiatives that aimed to engage some group of the people living in the vicinity of the site. Still, all scales of community relevant to the site—concentric, complementary, or cross-cutting as they may be—were always in play, affecting one another and shaping each other's relationship to the excavation and the archaeological record.

### The 1990s: Ethnography

The goal from the beginning of the Çatalhöyük Research Project was to undertake systematic research such that in the end, Turkey would have an archaeological site ready to welcome visitors. By all accounts, politicians from the nearby cities supported this goal. In 1998, the mayor of Çumra gave a speech in which he said:

There is an international team of scientists excavating at Çatalhöyük. We are making every effort possible to be able to display the artefacts found there in a museum here in Çumra rather than in Ankara or anywhere else. We should be proud of this contribution of the Turkish nation-state to European civilization. We are aware of the importance of having such a site in our region. (after Bartu 2000: 101)

But David Shankland, a social anthropologist, interviewed residents of the villages near Çatalhöyük to understand their beliefs and attitudes beginning in 1995, and he stated that he found the site played little role in the life of the village (1996: 351). Shankland (1996: 355) attributed this in part to what he called an “anti-intellectual” sentiment in Küçükköy.

Despite this initial finding, Shankland and others in the 1990s continued to study the meaning that Çatalhöyük held for those living near it. During the first ten years of the project, the community acted as ethnographic subjects, providing information about the site's cultural and symbolic importance. After three summers and one full year of fieldwork, Shankland identified several ways that the mound did in fact hold significance for the inhabitants of Küçükköy. Archaeological remains acted as field boundaries, cemetery sites, and picnicking places (2000). Shankland (1999) also documented folklore and mythology which circulated about the site.

Shankland's research furthermore revealed a shared view among villagers that Çatalhöyük would likely generate substantial income from tourism in the near future (Shankland 2000). The role the Küçükköy residents envisioned themselves having, though, was to sell their property for restaurants and hotels rather than to create such ventures themselves. Shankland characterized this sentiment as stemming from the power politics around the archaeological site; since the site is controlled by the state, any investment must go through official permission procedures involving various different government departments opaque to community members. The people Shankland interviewed felt



unprepared to enter these complicated bureaucratic procedures, in contrast to the mayor of Çumra and other politicians.

Bartu and Candan's ethnographic research, beginning in 1998, investigated further the different relationships that various groups and individuals had toward the archaeological remains at Çatalhöyük (fig. 2). Bartu's multisited ethnography involved fieldwork not only in geographically disparate locations (Istanbul, Küçükköy,

Çumra, Washington, DC) but also with people as diverse as Goddess worshippers, regional governmental officers, and fashion designers—as well as the residents of the local villages (Bartu 2000). This approach allowed Bartu to view the different levels of access to the site from many angles; she was accordingly able to recognize the international flows of ideas and resources between institutions, organizations, villages, social classes, and offices shaping Çatalhöyük.

Bartu found that many of the women working at the site, in particular, expressed enthusiasm and pride for Çatalhöyük. Because of this, Bartu spearheaded a number of projects designed to enhance their sense of investment and empowerment over those interactions and flows. One involved establishing a community exhibit at the site's Visitor Centre with photographs taken by local women. The initial success of projects like this laid the groundwork for the next phase of community engagement at Çatalhöyük, which moved away from relating to the local community as a subject of anthropological inquiry and more toward capacity building and outreach.

Even during the 1990s, though, local community members acted as knowledge co-producers in ethnoarchaeological and experimental research projects. Beginning in 1995, architectural ethnoarchaeological research was conducted by Nurcan Yalman, David Shankland, and Mirjana Stevanovic. In 1998, Wendy Matthews and Begum Ergenekon initiated a concerted ethnoarchaeology program at Çatalhöyük involving weekly meetings of researchers who visited the village to study the practices of living people. In the end, this effort coordinated eighteen separate ethnoarchaeological projects consulting with the local community covering topics including architecture, settlement organization, soil chemistry, ethnobotany, dental wear, posture and bodily movement, faunal remains, ground stone, and uses of clay (Matthews, Hastorf, and Ergenekon 2000). Through these ethnoarchaeological and experimental research endeavors, the community members again acted as sources of information—not about the modern mound this time but about the Neolithic people who lived there.

In addition to acting as the subjects of sociocultural anthropology research, the local community participated as knowledge



Figure 2. Ayfer Bartu and Can Candan conducting ethnography with the women employed onsite in 1998. Photograph courtesy of the Çatalhöyük Research Project.



Figure 3. The Çatalhöyük Archaeological Summer School in 2004. Photograph by Jason Quinlan; courtesy of the Çatalhöyük Research Project.

co-producers alongside the archaeological team. Nevertheless, the findings of the social anthropologists during this early period generally reveal a feeling of disempowerment among local residents and a lack of both knowledge and control over the archaeological site. And while the development of the research project (like the archaeological site itself) resists clean delineation of chronological phases, during the 2000's community engagement activities at the site turned primarily toward addressing the power disparities identified during the 1990's ethnographic research.

## The 2000s: Engagement

In 2003 Ian Hodder recommended “the training of indigenous participants” as a major means by which community members might be more fully engaged in the archaeological process. Some had already taken this on at Çatalhöyük; by the end of the 2000 field season, Çatalhöyük research team members were developing new curricula for the grade schools of the Konya region to teach more about Çatalhöyük (Çatalhöyük Research Project 2000). In 2001, Ayfer Bartu, and Can Candan completed a multiyear effort when the Küçükköy Library opened in the village. Archaeologists working on site aided in the effort by fundraising for the library and in the end, the library was opened with around 500 texts (Bartu and Candan 2001).

The European Union-funded TEMPER project at Çatalhöyük hosted a daylong workshop for seventy Turkish schoolchildren in 2003. This program was expanded in 2004 to carry on for a full month and include five hundred students. The activities the students enjoyed included a slideshow, a guided tour of the site, Çatalhöyük-related arts and crafts, and the chance to reexcavate spoil heaps from James Mellaart's excavations. This program, run by Gülay Sert, was later named the “Çatalhöyük Archaeological Summer School” and operated continuously from 2003 to 2017, educating around 600 students each summer (fig. 3). One year, the summer school even welcomed civil servants from Konya and Çumra. Sert also coordinated the project's involvement in the 2009 construction of a playground in Küçükköy, and authored Turkish children's books about life at Çatalhöyük (Sert 2009).

The emphasis on teaching extended to women when a craft education initiative began in 2004. For a few seasons, women from Küçükköy set up looms in the visitor's center and started learning how to translate designs from the art of the site into *kilims*. A school, though, was never fully established and Hodder (2011: 24) has acknowledged that the success of this initiative was limited.

A more effective element of the move towards education and expanding opportunities were the scholarships offered beginning in 2000 to Turkish students to complete university degrees in the UK or the USA. This practice continued until the end of the project and ultimately enabled dozens of Turkish students to pursue their educational goals.

For those hired from the local community to work on the site, to some extent the potential to continue to act as knowledge co-producers still existed. For example, in the years leading up to the publication of Çatalhöyük volumes 3–6, locally hired site

workers participated in group research discussions about topics including social memory, art, foodways, domestication, and waste management (Bartu 2000). Çatalhöyük vol. 6, *Çatalhöyük Perspectives: Themes from the 1995–1999 Seasons*, quotes locally hired site workers directly and alongside excavators and other specialists—all discussing their experiences working on site and their interpretations of the archaeological remains (Hodder 2006).

But sharing expertise was not the primary way in which most community members from the surrounding area related to the research project, as exemplified by Sonya Atalay's findings when she began implementing Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) methods at Çatalhöyük. Describing her initial goals, Atalay states:

I originally aimed to put together a collaborative team with local community members ... by involving the local community in designing some of the research questions to be investigated by archaeologists on the Çatalhöyük excavation project. (Atalay 2006: 364).

But Atalay was compelled to redirect her goals when she “found that community members felt they knew far too little to contribute to a community collaboration as the one I initially had in mind” (Atalay 2006: 364)—echoing earlier ethnographic work.

Atalay then planned and implemented many educational programs in accordance with what community members expressed wanting. Much of what the community members desired involved the intensification of previous efforts related to education. Women requested classes in wintertime that would teach them how to make kilims and other crafts, along with a place to sell their works (Atalay 2006: 372). Atalay reported as well that “children in the village are particularly interested in Çatalhöyük and the archaeology taking place there” (2006: 369).

In response to the broader desire among community members of all ages to increase their knowledge about the site, Atalay and Burcu Tung held a community dinner in 2006 where Küçükköy residents shared a meal with archaeologists. The project had hosted several “open days” in previous seasons, sometimes hosting as much as 70 percent of the village population (Çatalhöyük Research Project 2004). The 2006 dinner, however, was specifically designed to foster a two-way learning process between the local community and the research team. The dinner transformed into an annual community festival where laboratory heads and excavators held tours, workshops, and discussions for members of the local community. In addition, Atalay started writing an annual newsletter for adults in the community which was delivered to public gathering places in the villages. She held meetings each year in Küçükköy to share findings and elicit ideas about future directions from village residents. And in 2009, she instituted the internship program, which was designed “to build research capacity so that members of the community [would] feel confident as partners in developing collaborative research projects with the archaeologists who work on site” (Atalay 2010b: 424). The first two interns, Rahime and Nesrin Salur, were women, and the first Küçükköy residents to graduate from



university. Rahime and Nesrin facilitated the CBPR project by being both members of the local community—to whom especially women felt uniquely comfortable in sharing their opinions—as well as increasingly knowledgeable about site management and research.

During the 2000s the site guards also emerged as especially capable and confident in taking on a more collaborative role within the research project. Residents of Küçükköy recognized the site guards' particular expertise, saying "if we have any questions [about Çatalhöyük] we ask the site guards. We wouldn't know who else to ask" (Tecirli 2014: 43). Perhaps the most illustrative evidence of this privileged insight is that former site guard Sadrettin Dural authored and published two books (Dural 2007, 2015).

The distinction between the expertise and initiative of the site guards versus other site workers and local community members was only one division within the community that became identifiable during this time. Atalay's sustained CBPR work also further drew out the kaleidoscopic concepts of community for whom Çatalhöyük matters. For instance, Atalay found that residents of the local community referred to even Turkish archaeologists on the excavation as *yabancılar* (foreigners), based on their level of education and class difference (Atalay 2010b: 422).

It was always the case that the "community" or even the "local community" as it related to Çatalhöyük was complicated and included people with various perspectives, priorities, and power positions. But such community divisions became even more distinct as the project moved into its final years in the 2010s, and ultimately fragmented the community engagement initiatives themselves.

### The 2010s: Evaluations

The start of the new decade did not mark a radical change in community engagement practices. The archaeological summer school run by Sert for both children and adults continued, as did the CBPR project's annual community festival, village meetings and the internship program. However, several evaluative studies began on the successes and limitations of Çatalhöyük's community engagement programs.

One of these was completed by Madeleine "Bear" Douglas, who conducted archival research, surveys, and interviews in Konya, Çumra, Küçükköy, Çatalhöyük, Istanbul, and London. Douglas aimed to calculate in both material and symbolic terms the "value" of Çatalhöyük (Douglas 2014). Her research ultimately showed that the site provided minimal economic benefit to the people living at Çatalhöyük. The people she interviewed expressed happiness that roads had been repaired as a result of



Figure 4. Allison Mickel interviewing Hüseyin Veli Yaşlı, a former site worker at Çatalhöyük and expert in mudbrick construction. Photograph by Tunç İlada.

interest in the site, and that the project had helped them build the school library and a new water tower in the village (Douglas 2014: 54). But many also felt the archaeologists had benefited from the site much more than those living in the Konya region.

Beliz Tecirli's contemporaneous study underscored the community's real and perceived exclusion from the potential benefit of the archaeological site. Tecirli's 2008–2011 fieldwork involved interviews with local residents, site visitors, team members, and state personnel from various institutions responsible for managing the site. Overwhelmingly, the residents of Küçükköy felt that Çumra had co-opted all financial gain from the site. Residents of Çumra felt that Çatalhöyük simply had no economic potential (Tecirli 2014). Both groups felt excluded from site administration, for which the state had taken responsibility.

Tecirli and Douglas's research became more pertinent when Çatalhöyük was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list in 2012, a process which further disenfranchised local residents. Helen Human, an ethnographer involved in the process of UNESCO inscription process at Çatalhöyük, has shown that despite official calls for Turkish bureaucrats to engage community members in discussions about Çatalhöyük, any attempts at such were superficial (Human 2015). At a major meeting led by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, for instance, "not a single resident from Küçükköy ... was present to represent that community's interests" in relation to the development of Çatalhöyük. When the mayor of Çumra began to raise concerns, he was cut off (Human 2015: 161).

World Heritage inscription—while influential—was not the only challenge of this period. Other obstacles came from local relationship dynamics and contestations. Atalay, for example, had spent years working with women from the village to build the long-requested craft initiative at the site. But in 2010, women

who had previously been interested in selling crafts said they no longer wanted to participate. Initially, the women said it was because of a lack of startup capital, then when Atalay suggested starting a micro-loan program, the women suddenly said it was because they lacked transportation to and from the site. Ultimately, Atalay recognized that

the women had been strongly discouraged from participating in the project and it seemed that the choice wasn't really theirs to make. They eventually described that their fathers would not allow them to continue. (Atalay 2010a: 167)

These gender dynamics were by no means new; indeed, Hodder faced backlash from the first moments he decided to hire women on the excavation, in a context where women had not previously had many opportunities for their own independent earned income (2003). But the impending possibility of the craft initiative brought these expectations and roles to the fore, where they clashed head-on with the goals of the CBPR project.

Local residents were not the only ones contending with fragmentation; the archaeological researchers too were hardly united in the aims of community engagement. In 2010, Atalay reflected that up until that point, Duygu Çamurcuoğlu was the only team member from the broader Çatalhöyük Research Project to become involved in CBPR (2010b: 426). Community engagement remained something that occurred largely separately from the activities of the core research project. Allison Mickel's research on the role of locally hired community members in knowledge production echoed this. Mickel interviewed over 40 current and former site workers during 2012–2015 and performed Social Network Analysis on the team lists and coauthorship practices over the years at the site to illustrate collaboration or lack thereof statistically (fig. 4). This analysis revealed a dense network of teamwork from which site workers were almost entirely disconnected (Mickel 2015b). This meant that two of the primary ways in which ideas and new information might be shared—by working together and writing together—had not really involved locally hired community members.

Mickel also found that even site workers from the local community who had been involved in the fieldwork on the site largely denied having any expertise about the work itself, yet they claimed intimate knowledge of Neolithic lifeways (Mickel 2015a). Current and ex-team members mentioned their understanding of mudbrick house construction, grinding grain, and using ovens like those found on the archaeological site. Mickel has argued that this common phenomenon among those employed to work at the site from the local community stems from the early ethnoarchaeological and experimental archaeology projects (Mickel 2015a). The ethnoarchaeology studies promoted the comparison between contemporary and ancient people, and the experimental projects were the closest that locally hired workers came to being full research partners in the knowledge production activities at the site.

The most significant challenge to community engagement at Çatalhöyük occurred in 2014. In this year, the Turkish government started to require a special permit for researchers to even

enter the local village, much less conduct any sort of ethnography or outreach. This restriction was related to a growing trend toward nationalism in Turkey. Non-Turkish archaeologists were widely reporting increased difficulty securing excavation permits, with Turkish officials stating that “Turkey has enough archaeological experience” (Erbil 2016). Such restrictions meant that for the first time since 2006, there was no community festival and this was the end of sustained community engagement at Çatalhöyük.

During the final research season of 2017, the children's Archaeology Summer Workshop took place and Turkish student interns from various universities worked at the site. The site guards and kitchen staff took part in an organised trip to Istanbul in order to see *The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük*, an exhibition celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Çatalhöyük Research Project (curated by Turkish team member Duygu Tarkan, Hodder 2017). Still, the study of communities, efforts at capacity-building, and the reflexive studies of community engagement at Çatalhöyük were over.

## Endings

Community outreach was an explicit priority of the Çatalhöyük Research Project since its earliest seasons in the 1990's. When the project began, though, there were no stated benchmarks or metrics for assessing the efficacy of the community archaeology program. Indeed, excavations at Çatalhöyük began—and were a part of—early academic conversations on archaeologists' responsibilities to descendant and stakeholder communities. Therefore, rather than following a predetermined agenda, the beginning of the Çatalhöyük project was characterized by gradually feeling out the ways in which the archaeological research project could have something to offer to the contemporary residents of the region.

Through this process, a number of community outreach programs were carried out, with particular and focused aims. Ethnoarchaeology and experimental archaeology research initiatives resulted in novel insights about Neolithic life at Çatalhöyük. A new children's library was built and stocked in Küçükköy. Thousands of adults and children learned about Çatalhöyük through the archaeology summer school. The CBPR project held meetings and distributed accessible publications for years to respond to the community members' feelings of being uninformed about the site. In the short term, these projects set out goals and attained them.

But after two decades of work, a number of scholars carried out studies to evaluate community engagement at Çatalhöyük. As the community engagement work at Çatalhöyük took form, so too did discourse, theory, and practice on community archaeology. Scholarship on public outreach in archaeology since 1993 has offered numerous means of assessing archaeology's contribution to the concerns of resident and stakeholder communities, and through several of these different lenses (Tully 2007; Chirikure and Pwiti 2008; Simpson and Williams 2008; Nevell 2013; Coben 2014; Burtenshaw 2015; Baker et al. 2019). This literature informed the studies carried out in the final years of the

project, which ultimately revealed the limitations of community outreach at Çatalhöyük. Community members still expressed a lack of power over the management of the site, and a lack of scientific knowledge about Çatalhöyük. The project, moreover, did not make much difference financially in the region, either through wages paid or by generating tourism to the site. Even though community members had expressed since the beginning of the project that they cared about the site and wanted to invest in its development, in the end the project did not create such opportunities for community members to participate in decision-making about the site or to benefit financially.

One reason for this is that community engagement was generally conducted as a series of individual initiatives, rather than as fundamental infrastructure shaping the work done in every trench and every lab. When interested people were members of the project, when they had the will and the language abilities, community engagement initiatives moved forward. But community collaboration was not central to the design of the Çatalhöyük Research Project—shaping decisions about where and how to dig, how to record, and what to publish. The Çatalhöyük databases, for instance, remained in English for the duration of the project, and locally hired site workers were co-authors for one set of volumes alone. This stands in contrast to work such as Lightfoot's (2006, 2008) consultation with native Californian communities to design archaeological field methods that respect their beliefs, or Smith and Burke's (2007) "practical guide" to doing archaeology in Australia that weaves in guidance on collaborating with indigenous communities at every stage of the process.

Perhaps one of the clearest examples of a transformative collaborative archaeology comes from Dowdall and Parrish (2003), who describe the collaborative work done by the California Department of Transportation the Kashaya Pomo tribe in excavating a site known as Ch'itibida•qalli (CA-SON-1661), located in Kashaya Pomo territory. The excavation methods on this project transformed standard, noncollaborative archaeological practices, adding not only consultation with paid tribal scholars but also incorporating prayer ceremonies into the excavation procedure, taking dreams seriously as a source of information about methodological decisions, and having all excavation team members observe traditional k'ela rules surrounding the activities in which menstruating women may participate. Unlike at Ch'itibida•qalli, at Çatalhöyük the community engagement initiatives were instituted in addition to the excavation process, which could viably continue with or without these initiatives.

Another reason for the shortfalls of Çatalhöyük's community outreach work, which has been suggested in several evaluative studies, is the fragmentation and dissent among the many communities involved in "community engagement." From the beginning, residents of the local area held conflicting visions for the site. For example, men in the community did not want their wives and daughters to participate in the craft initiative the women had discussed and begun to build. At the state level, the involvement of international NGOs and growing nationalism

damaged and halted many relationships between archaeologists and the local community at Çatalhöyük. The entire period of excavation at Çatalhöyük was characterized by contestations for power and influence over the site and its future.

Much of the conversation and activity around community engagement at Çatalhöyük has been framed in terms of pursuing multivocality, encouraging dialogue between the different perspectives of diverse individuals and groups (Andersson 2003; Bartu 2000; Hodder 2000). This was evidently achieved at various points in the project (i.e., publications presenting the voices of local community members and museum exhibits designed in partnership with site workers). At the same time, however, the outcomes of the community engagement initiatives at Çatalhöyük illustrate how entrenched power hierarchies, language barriers, gender politics, international policies, national laws, and economic realities prevent equitable dialogue between diverse voices. These circumstances unite subgroups of stakeholders on certain questions, but create antagonism and competition on others.

Community archaeologists have often reflected that communities do not always respond to "engagement" in the ways that archaeologists anticipate or would prefer (McDavid 2002; Singleton and Orser 2003; Dawdy 2009; Agbe-Davies 2010). This issue has particular valence in the Middle East, where there is a long history of foreign archaeologists characterizing resident communities as disinterested in archaeological remains (Abu El-Haj 2001; Bernhardtsson 2005; Colla 2007; Silberman 1982). At Çatalhöyük, however, the challenge was different—and perhaps more broadly relevant to community archaeology as a whole. The various versions of "community" at Çatalhöyük reflect structural realities that enabled the achievements and constituted the hindrances of the community engagement programs over the years. The ways in which these communities not only differed but often worked directly against each other fundamentally determined when and how community members were involved at the site. The impossibility of defining the community at Çatalhöyük—and elsewhere—is not something that can be acknowledged and moved on from. It illustrates the need for an explicit understanding of intracommunity dynamics, and intentional consideration of the archaeologists' position in relation to these tensions and hierarchies. This understanding must then inform the design of a total community archaeology endeavor, from trench to text.

Accordingly, the greatest successes in community engagement at Çatalhöyük were when outreach initiatives built on previous work, when the specific insights and priorities of diverse community members were taken into account, and most especially when individuals from across the research team collaborated in designing and implementing community engagement programs. The experiences at Çatalhöyük illustrate that community engagement requires the alignment of "community"—creating and pursuing interests in common—more than even a productive dialogue on difference.



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