

Anglo-Turkish Society / Royal Anthropological Institute lecture, 20 February 2019, 6.00 pm

Speaker: Ian Hodder

Venue: Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy St, Fitzrovia, London W1T 5BT

Title: The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük

The UNESCO World Heritage site of Çatalhöyük is a unique example of a well-preserved Neolithic settlement and for decades has been considered one of the key sites for understanding human prehistory. A major exhibition celebrating the site and the science of archaeology, 'The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük', was recently held at the Brunei Gallery, SOAS University of London, Russell Square, from 12 October to 15 December 2018. The exhibition revealed the 'behind the scenes' of a pioneer excavation and research project of one of the most complex societies of its time.

Çatalhöyük is a Neolithic settlement located in the Konya plain of central Turkey. Since 1993, under the supervision of British archaeologist Professor Ian Hodder, the Çatalhöyük Research Project has been shedding light on how one of the world's earliest societies made the transition from hunting to farming and how it was organised socio-economically.

'The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük' was developed to celebrate the 25th and final excavation season of the Çatalhöyük Research Project. Known for its fascinating, cutting-edge archaeological research methods and laboratory collaborations, the exhibition presents the Çatalhöyük excavation through various experiment-based display features, including 3D prints of finds, laser-scanned overviews of excavation areas, and immersive digital displays that bring the 9000-year-old settlement back to life.

'The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük' narrates the reflexive methods of the excavation through all its phases, starting from the moment the trowel touches the soil to the documentation of the finds, the laboratory analysis, and the sharing of information. Although traditional excavation remains the primary form of investigation at Çatalhöyük, digital, experimental, and visual reconstruction methods are increasingly employed to aid research and interpretation. This experimental legacy is reflected in exhibition displays and is complemented by incorporative artistic interventions, which underline how the site has been subject to various artworks.

Booking essential: <https://ian-hodder-lecture.eventbrite.co.uk>

Contact: contact@angloturkishsociety.org.uk



Ian Hodder and co-workers in 'building 80' in Çatalhöyük



Ian Hodder leads the Çatalhöyük Research Project, shedding light on the development of one of the world's earliest societies, the social and economic organization of the settlement, and the transformation from hunting and gathering to agriculture and civilization. In recent research, he has built theories about how human entanglement with material things draws humans down certain evolutionary and historical pathways while at the same time constraining choices that can be made. Since 1993, Ian Hodder has been directing the international team of archaeologists that is excavating Çatalhöyük, a 9,000-year-old site in Turkey and one of the world's first urban centres.

[More info:](#)

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