

GÖBEKLI TEPE World's Oldest (12,000 years old) and Biggest Temple

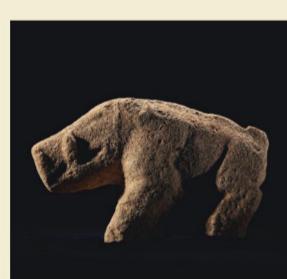
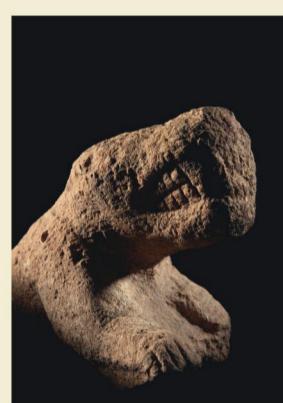
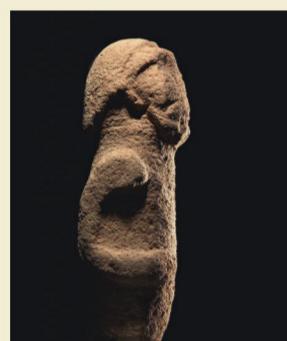


Excavation area of Göbekli Tepe:

Göbekli Tepe, the nomadic people's spiritual center is 1.5 km away from the nearest village, Örencik, and 18 km from the nearest city, Urfa, in southeastern Turkey. Göbekli Tepe's symbol is a T-shaped pillar. The pillars are in the first and second archaeological layers dating to the Pre-Pottery Neolithic Age (9600-8000 BCE). The ritual site on the hill – what is visible of it so far – is nearly 15 meters high. The Göbekli Tepe excavation area contains about 90,000 square meters (larger than 12 football fields).

The hill, which protects Stone Age ruins inside, as can be seen from its name (göbekli/bellied), is round-shaped and situated in the highest place on a limestone plateau.

Excavations at Göbekli Tepe started under the direction of Klaus Schmidt (1953-2014) and the German Archaeology Institute in 1995 and now are continued by the German Archaeology Institute and the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism.



Some sculptures excavated from Göbekli Tepe



Circular Enclosures:

The circular enclosures at Göbekli Tepe were designated A to H according to when they were discovered rather than when they were built/created. The enclosures' walls were made from small limestones. Diameters of enclosures are between 10 and 20 meters. The biggest one is enclosure D.

Floor:

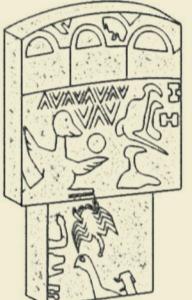
The floors of the enclosures are smoothed, monolithic bedrocks. The pedestals of the pillars were cut out of the bedrock.

Central T-Shaped Pillars:

There are two huge, parallel pillars in the center of the enclosures. The smaller ones are located around the larger pillars. The central pillars of the largest enclosure D have arm and hands engravings; all the pillars in Göbekli Tepe are interpreted as anthropomorphic. The horizontal part of the pillar symbolizes the head and the vertical part, the body. The height of the central pillars in enclosure D is about 5 meters.

Noncentral and Smaller Pillars:

Smaller pillars around the central pillars (10-12 on average) are in the surrounding wall. Central and noncentral, all the pillars were cut out of monolithic limestone. The pillars of Göbekli Tepe number more than 100. They are between 1.5 and 5 meters in height.



Figures on T-shaped Pillars:

T-shaped pillars at Göbekli Tepe are covered by semi-relief animal figures.

Birds, serpents, foxes, boars, and aurochs are the most depicted figures. A gazelle and a wild ass are among the animals more rarely depicted.

In addition to the animal figures, there are some symbols in the form of an H motif, crescents, rings, and some lines which express contariness.



The Plan of Göbekli Tepe

Plan: By K. Schmidt and his team



Monumental Buildings Since the Stone Age

