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The early settlement of Aşıklı Höyük resolves a long-standing question about PPN community origins in Central Anatolia. The traditional narrative has been one of colonization, with Central Anatolia being an early bridge between the Fertile Crescent heartland of first farmers and herders and Neolithic expansion westward into Europe. Central Anatolia was considered, at best, a first extension of the pre-existing core area, and not a formative part of Neolithic emergence.

Recent data from the Konya Plain and Cappadocia puts this notion to rest, testifying instead to a more complex history with diverse developmental trajectories. At least one early Central Anatolian community—Aşıklı Höyük—engaged in behaviors that ultimately led to local domestication of native crops and livestock in the Holocene, whereas others communities persisted for some time as semi-mobile cultivating foragers.

Today, Aşıklı Höyük is one of the most intensively studied early pre-pottery Neolithic sites in Southwest Asia.

This case has forced a reconsideration of the early explanations and geography of neolithization. The compilation of studies presented here honors the memory of Prof. Ufuk Esin and provides a rigorous footing on which to build a fuller understanding of the early evolution of the PPN in Anatolia and the larger Neolithic world.