

Helga Vogel:  
'The Goddess is alive!' – Goddess Feminism and Archaeology: the  
Case of Çatal Höyük

The question of egalitarian, peaceful, ecological, non-patriarchal, women- and goddess-centred societies in prehistoric Europe and Asia Minor is still as passionately and controversially discussed today as it was in the 70s and 80s. Back then, second-wave feminists founded women's history study groups, and for the first time presented archaeological artifacts, which until then were known only a handful of specialists, to the general public – particularly, prehistoric statuettes that served as evidence for a matriarchal prehistory. This contribution will first examine the political and socio-political context of the emergence of matriarchy studies and Goddess movement, especially in West Germany. Using the example of the Neolithic site of Çatal Höyük in Turkey, I will subsequently discuss the positions of members of the goddess movement and their criticism of current archaeological patterns of interpretation, and more generally the power structures and biases of the scientific apparatus "Archaeology." Then I will review the reactions of archaeologists and other scientists to the goddess-feminist's challenges and, in a broader perspective, their worldview and goals. It will turn out that the debate is still mined with mutual distrust, suspicion, vilification, exclusions, dogmatism and sectarian attitudes, signs that there is actually much more at stake in this argument than simply a "right" or "wrong" interpretation of some "old figurines" that were produced a very long time ago.

Keywords:

[Archaeology](#), [Feminism](#), [Germany](#), [Goddess-worship](#), [Turkey](#)

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