

DAVID FRENCH

A LIFE IN ANATOLIAN ARCHAEOLOGY



Edited by
STEPHEN MITCHELL

British Institute at Ankara

Electronic Monograph 11
2020

Front cover: David French, Harald Hauptmann, and members of the Aşvan excavation team at Norşun Tepe 1969.

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Contributions to the commemoration of David French, held at
the Erimtan Museum, Ankara, on 30 September 2017

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Typeset by Abby Robinson

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1. David French

30 May 1933 to 19 March 2017

Stephen Mitchell



Fig. 1.1 David French with Mustafa Yergök, former muhtar of the village of Şar (Comana Cappadociae), taking a break on the Roman highway from Caesaria to Melitene.

Born in 1933, David Henry French was the son of an East Yorkshire policeman. His mother and elder brother were killed on 8 May 1941, during the blitz on Hull. David was pulled alive from the wreckage. He was brought up by his father, with whom he was close, and an aunt, and became a funded pupil at Pocklington School. The support of a committed teacher helped him gain a place to study Classics at St Catharine's College, Cambridge, where he graduated in 1955.

After graduating, he travelled in Europe, ending up in Athens in the winter of 1955/1956, but did not live at the British School at Athens (BSA), preferring to lodge with a Greek family to acquire modern Greek. Through the BSA, he met a diverse range of students and senior scholars, notably for him Dick Hope Simpson with whom he travelled further, particularly in the islands and in Laconia, and also Alan Wace for whom his wide interests and acumen were a delight. He was thus invited to join the

study season on Mycenae material that summer. Here he worked with Wace's daughter Elizabeth (Lisa) who had already taken part in several seasons of excavations with her father and had trained in archaeological conservation and photography. They married in 1959, establishing a long-lasting cooperation in both fieldwork and research.

In 1957, he returned to Cambridge to take the diploma in Classical Archaeology before becoming senior fellow of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara (BIAA) in 1959. He excavated widely, not only at Gordion and Hacilar in Turkey, but also at Pylos and Aghios Stephanos in Greece, Nimrud and sites in the southern marshes of Iraq and in Jordan, as well as carrying out field surveys in both western Turkey and in northern Greece.

In 1961, he embarked on two new enterprises. At the suggestion of Michael Gough, then director of the BIAA, he undertook a PhD at Cambridge on *Anatolia and the Aegean in the Third Millennium BC*, as well as beginning the excavation of Can Hasan in the southern half of the Konya plain, a site with a heavy coverage of distinctive Early Chalcolithic pottery, which he, Jimmy Mellaart and Alan Hall recorded in 1957, the same year as they discovered Çatalhöyük. His time in Cambridge brought him into contact with the young generation of 'new archaeologists' from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, including Sebastian Payne, who joined the Can Hasan team. From 1967 he collaborated with the British Academy Early Agriculture Project, which was based in Cambridge, and developed techniques for recovering environmental material. He introduced flotation to retrieve grain samples and experimented with an air dome, to maintain moisture levels and to avoid fluctuation of temperature. These techniques were adapted to enhance the rescue work in the Keban Project.

Earlier, in 1966, he and his friend and colleague Harald Hauptmann had prospected sites on the Aegean coast of Turkey with the aim of starting a research excavation to answer the questions relating to the Early Bronze Age which had been worrying both of them. However, by 1968 when he took over as director of the BIAA after Michael Gough's move to Canada, both the BIAA and the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, where Hauptmann was now director, had accepted the invitation of the Middle East Technical University to assist in the Keban Project. Thus rescue excavation had to take precedence over research excavation. To that, David was never able to return.

David French's field research on prehistoric Anatolia during the late 1950s and the 1960s was groundbreaking. His systematic work in Balıkesir, Manisa, İznik, Konya and Karaman introduced a consistent standardised methodology for survey and pottery classification that is still in use today. This early work not only

demonstrates his detailed knowledge of the material cultures of prehistoric Anatolia, but also a striking ability to identify broader, underlying patterns of regional diversity and exchange. David had a vivid interest in the archaeological and natural landscapes beyond the excavated trenches, and in the relation between human communities and their natural environments. He had an extraordinary ability to relate sites to their environment by observing and making sense of barely perceptible details, which provided clues to understanding the larger picture. It is no surprise that his sport at Cambridge had been rifle shooting, for which he won a half-blue. A keen eye and absolute precision of execution were the hallmarks of his archaeological field skills.

The excavations at Can Hasan were designed as a complement and in some respects a corrective to the more famous excavation of Çatalhöyük, directed by his older colleague James Mellaart. Both scholars were tenacious field workers but fundamentally different in their temperament and intellectual approach. In sharp contrast to Mellaart, French combined his brilliant skills of field observation with an ascetic style of publication, in which he rigorously distinguished between the accurate and precise recording of primary data and the articulation of interpretative hypotheses.

He became director of the British Institute at Ankara at the age of 35 in 1968 and held the position for 26 years. In the same year, he became involved in the international efforts to carry out rescue excavations of sites that were due to be flooded by the Keban Dam in the Firat and Murat valleys. Four separate mounds, covering a timespan from 5000 BC to AD 1400, were excavated at the village of Aşvan on the southern bank of the Murat river. David's multidisciplinary concept for the Aşvan project drew inspiration from Robert Braidwood's excavations in northern Mesopotamia and the work of Eric Higgs' early agriculture team at Cambridge. Specialists carried out detailed studies of the contemporary village and its environment, including work on architecture and settlement planning, agriculture and animal husbandry. Samples of cereals, cultivated crops and the wild flora were collected by a botanical team, led by another great field scientist, Gordon Hillman, and the excavators used water-sieving (flotation) to collect carbonised grain samples on a large scale for the first time on an Anatolian site. The final archaeobotanical results have been published as a BIAA monograph in 2017.

The Aşvan project finished in 1973, and was followed during the 1980s by another rescue excavation on the western bank of the Euphrates at Tille Höyük near Adıyaman. The conditions at Tille, including tense relationships with a largely Kurdish village, were not so favourable for a comprehensive environmental study,

and the excavations concentrated on reconstructing the architecture and material history of the settlement mound, beginning in the Early Bronze Age and ending in the Medieval period. The most important discoveries related to the first millennium BC. Stuart Blaylock's recent monumental publications demonstrate the role played by Tille as a regional centre in the Assyrian and Achaemenid periods, and provide a bedrock for understanding the chronology and material culture of the Euphrates border region during the Iron Age.

French's high standards as an excavator attracted younger archaeologists to work with him. The care and accuracy of his excavations were legendary. The trench digging that he supervised was as immaculate as the crisp outfits that he wore amid the heat, dust and sweat of excavation in a blazing Anatolian summer. His site directors and other team members, including Anthony McNicoll and Stephen Mitchell at Aşvan, John Moore, Geoffrey Summers, Stuart Blaylock and Shahina Farid at Tille, took responsibility for publishing the rescue projects and subsequently developed important careers of their own in field archaeology.

From the early 1970s French's own research interests took an unexpected new turn. Following an encounter near Beypazarı with a villager who told David that the track he was on led to Istanbul, he investigated the whole length of the so-called Pilgrim's Road, from Istanbul to Antakya. This hobby interest grew into a comprehensive study, based on fieldwork in every corner of Turkey, of all aspects of the Roman roads of Asia Minor: milestones, road surfaces, bridges, the imperial road stations and military installations. He combined his classical training with his archaeological experience and his intimate knowledge of Turkey to acquire a more profound understanding of the topographical history of Anatolia than any other scholar past or present. His passion for roads and routes extended from the Roman Empire back to its Hittite and Persian predecessors, and forward to the Ottoman period. At the start of his project, about 450 milestones were known from Asia Minor, by 2016 his own discoveries had raised this number to more than 1,200. The research, carried out single-handed in the company of a series of Turkish representatives, was a perfect match for his skills and character.

David French had a deep affection for Turkey and its people, above all in the villages and small towns of the Anatolian hinterland. A fine linguist, he mastered modern Greek and Turkish at the start of his career, and Turkey for much of his life was not merely an adopted but his real home. It is a matter of good fortune that he carried out much of his fieldwork before the accelerating developments of modern Turkey erased many traces of its historical heritage.

Internally, the BIAA had much to thank him for in these years. David conducted relationships with Turkish officialdom with candour, caution and old-fashioned politesse that were universally respected. His main appointments in Ankara – of Ülge Göker and Gülgün Girdivan as managers of the Ankara office, of Yaprak Eran as librarian and the photographer Tuğrul Çakar – proved indispensable to the BIAA's stability. He was also an omnivorous and learned scholar, and the library was at the heart of his vision for the BIAA. Aided at the start by his first assistant director, Richard Harper, he transformed the library from being a modest adjunct to archaeological field expeditions into one of the two finest research collections for archaeology and related subjects in Turkey. The research collections of pottery from surveys, epigraphic squeezes, botanical specimens and animal bones were also largely his creations.

David French's long tenure of the BIAA directorship was more controversial than his reputation as a field archaeologist. He was a private man who did not court publicity or popularity. His preference for concisely establishing the facts as he saw them, rather than offering long explanations, was a feature of his correspondence as well as his academic publications, and could lead to misunderstandings. The loyalty and devotion that he won from his close associates were counterbalanced by his more abrupt style with those who knew him less well. The veteran archaeologists on the BIAA Council of Management did not hide their lack of sympathy for David's avant-garde Aşvan project, and subsequent relationships with some members of the Council were challenging. He did not cultivate close relations with British university archaeology departments, and this hampered the development of an overall excavation strategy for the BIAA. On the other hand, David enthusiastically supported the survey projects relating to historical periods by Clive Foss, Stephen Mitchell, James Coulton, Mark Whittow and others, which marked a major new departure in BIAA fieldwork. In this he owed much to the consistent support of a close friend, the epigrapher Alan Hall, BIAA honorary secretary from 1970 to 1985.

David's difficult relationship with the BIAA Council led him to take a year's study leave from the directorship in 1993 and then to stand down from his position. As a result, David, until the late 1990s, engaged little with the Institute. He was, however, now able to address the challenge of retirement with undiminished vigour and energy, enjoying his lifelong passions for early English music, birds and cricket as well as focusing on his academic interests. He recognised that he needed to publish the results of the Can Hasan excavations, and these duly appeared as three BIAA monographs between

1998 and 2010. He wrote many articles, the majority making known Greek and Latin inscriptions which he had recorded during his work on roads and routes. David's short book on the inscriptions of Ankara in 2003 led to renewed epigraphic collaboration with Stephen Mitchell in Ankara itself between 2004 and 2008, and the publication of the full corpus of Ankara's Roman and Byzantine inscriptions in two large volumes. However, the culmination of his life's work and his main published legacy takes the form of ten volumes (fascicules, as he always referred to them) in the series *Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor*, produced in a phenomenal burst of energy between 2012 and 2016, and published online by the BIAA. Here too he could rely on devoted support from the draftsman Brian Williams and the IT and publication skills of Abby Robinson.

During these later years, he resolved his differences with the BIAA and was a regular visitor, usually *en route* in spring or autumn to the much-loved house near Anamur that he and his second wife Pamela had bought, at the suggestion of his Turkish friend and colleague İlhan Temizsoy. These were also working visits, which enabled him to undertake the cataloguing of the BIAA epigraphic squeeze collection and to bring order to the Institute's photographic archives.

His first marriage to Elizabeth Wace, daughter of A.J.B. Wace, who herself became director of the British School at Athens from 1989–1994, ended in divorce in 1976, but they remained closely connected by their shared commitment to archaeology and in particular to continuing Wace's varied work in Greece. Near the end of his life, David completed a report on the pre-Mycenean pottery from Mycenae. David's second marriage was to Pamela Pratt, who had worked as conservator on the Çatalhöyük wall paintings and provided much appreciated expertise to the Ankara Museum. Although she did not engage in David's later field archaeological projects, her support, both before and after his retirement, was inestimably important to him. Both survive him, as do Ann and Catharine, the two daughters by his first marriage, John, his son by his second marriage, and four grandchildren.

I am grateful to members of David French's family and to Michele Massa for help with this obituary.

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David French continued to work until the end of his life on Roman roads and milestones, on Greek and Latin inscriptions from Asia Minor, and on prehistoric pottery from Greece. He left several manuscripts in an advanced state of preparation, and it may be possible to publish these in due course.

3. David French at Mycenae and Can Hasan

Elizabeth French

David's early career is difficult to trace as he hardly ever spoke about it except anecdotally and notebooks, if any, are not currently available. I am fairly certain that he had hardly any exposure to archaeology when he took his degree. At that time the Classical Tripos at Cambridge included a general paper only in the first-year preliminary examinations. His college, St Catharine's, records:

From the file I can see David French received a 2:2 in each part of the Classics Tripos but he seemed to show an aptitude for languages. He decided to go to Greece after he graduated to improve his modern Greek and perhaps teach English as a way of making some money. The College provided him with a reference for the British School of Archaeology at Athens in 1955.

The British School in the winter of 1956 was not only a research centre but it served as something of a club. Many people used it as a postal address; there was of course the library and at afternoon tea in the Finley Library or on its capacious balcony one could meet scholars and visitors of all generations. David was not allowed to live at the School as he was supporting himself to learn modern Greek by teaching English. He was extremely lucky in where he lodged at this time – with the Gavros family. The eldest son, Kostas, the now well-known film producer, was already in France but the next brother, later to become a notable doctor, was much of David's age and the resulting long discussions did wonders for his Greek. He was a frequent visitor to the British School and made many friends both there and across the garden at the American School.

Two people whom he met early on were to have a profound influence: Dick Hope Simpson, an Oxford graduate, who speedily enlisted David to travel with him, notably to Ikaria where they recorded a Greek tower and David caught infectious hepatitis, and my father, Professor Alan Wace, who, having moved to Athens from Cyprus and Egypt, found the library and the scholarly fellowship of the School particularly enjoyable. He invited both Dick and David to join a small group to work on finds from the Mycenae excavations in the Nauplion Museum the coming summer (as further excavation was forbidden because of the Cyprus situation). Another new recruit who was to

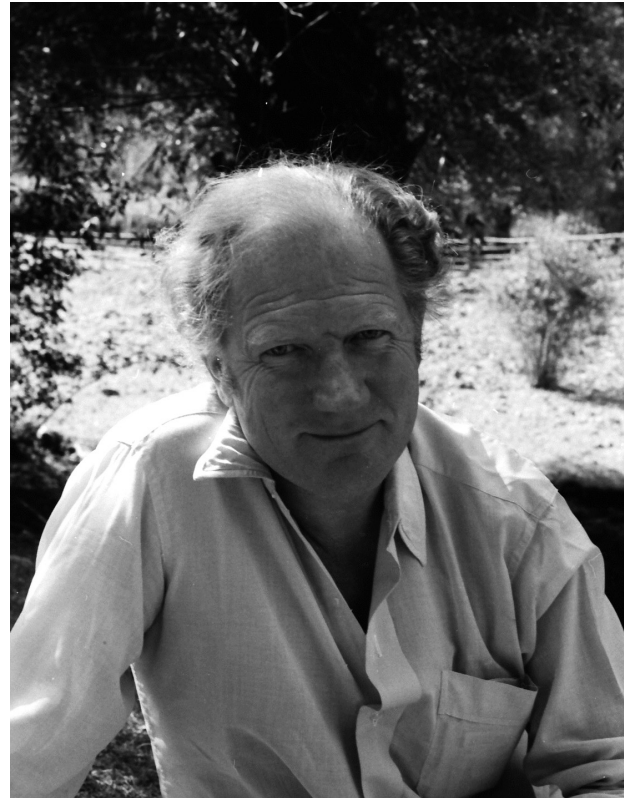


Fig. 3.1. David French.

become a Mycenae stalwart was Barbara Craig, a pre-war Oxford First, whose research in Sicily had been interrupted by the war and who was now married to the British Council representative in Baghdad. Living there had reawakened her research interests and Somerville had just awarded her the first Woolley Fellowship for further work. In late June, I arrived to join the team. After graduating from Cambridge in 1952, I had chosen practical training in conservation and other excavation skills offered by the Institute of Archaeology in London before registering for a part-time PhD at University College, London. This was made possible by my obtaining a teaching post in Latin at the Royal Masonic School for Girls at Rickmansworth.

The four of us thus formed a very diverse group when we finally faced the pottery deposit my father wished us to study for publication. It had been excavated in 1950 in the Prehistoric Cemetery Area which lies to the northwest of the Lion Gate. It was not an easy task as the context was complex – my father retained that part of the

report for himself I am glad to say – and the sherds were small and belonged to a chronological period only relatively recently redefined by Furumark. Furumark himself had been faced by a similar but greater problem when set to work on the sherd evidence from the Swedish excavation of the settlement of Asine, sent by cargo ship back to Sweden for study. In the absence of other data from which to work, particularly during the isolation of World War II, he had to form a new system and terminology, which was published in a vast volume. This was viewed with considerable misgiving by the ‘old guard’ – I had been present at the rather prickly meeting between my father and Furumark in person in Sweden in 1951. In retrospect, I think we did quite well, considering how little we knew, and certainly the influence that this summer – both the work and the informal archaeological ambience – would have for David was significant.

A fascinating diversion was the presence, alongside our work area on the top floor of the Nauplion Museum, of all the whole pots from Grave Circle B, still with their original labels. Barbara and David were so impressed by the amazing diversity that they made a detailed catalogue to which I added the photographs (this is now in the Mycenae Archive of the Classics Faculty at Cambridge). A devotion to the Middle Helladic remained with each of them. Indeed, one of David’s proudest moments when making his study of all the unstratified Middle Helladic pottery from Mycenae, was when he was able to announce that he had found examples of every one of the multitude of diverse wares so strikingly present in GCB among the sherds from the site.

By the end of the summer, when we returned to Athens to attend the opening of the Stoa of Attalos as the Museum for the Athenian Agora, David had succumbed to hepatitis. This was to dog him through the early winter, which he spent in Munich, but German medicine finally brought it under reasonable control, though it remained a niggle throughout his life. In the spring of 1957 he undertook further travel with Dick Hope Simpson – work which included Laconia where the site of Hagios Stephanos was discovered.

Following this he had the opportunity through, I assume, his contacts at the American School to join Rodney Young’s excavation at Gordion and was lucky enough to be there when they opened the great burial mound. Not only was this David’s first dig, as far as I can work out, but two things from this trip had far-reaching effects. He formed a firm friendship with Burhan Tezcan, the government representative that year, with whom he shared a room. Then after the dig he visited Ankara and the BIAA. There he met Jimmy and Arlette Mellaart and was invited to join the next Hacilar excavation season.

The summer saw David and me back in Nauplion with my parents and Charles Williams, who was making a series of drawings. We completed the pottery study from the previous year and went on to catalogue the material from the ‘Atreus Bothros’. These topics interrelated significantly and David later told our daughter Ann that ‘the Atreus sherd’ was a turning point for him. It all concerned the dating of the tholos tomb known as the Treasury of Atreus. The Bothros was a rock cleft on the hillside into which domestic pottery had been thrown. It was cut by the dromos of the tomb and the debris in it was covered by a layer of chips from the cutting of the rock. The pottery could thus be used to give a *terminus post quem* for the construction of the tomb. The pottery was almost exclusively of the LH IIIA1 period. Found in the same deposit were many very interesting terracotta figurines which were to form an important section of my PhD thesis and for which I needed to establish a firm date. However, during the very first days of my father’s excavations at Mycenae in 1920 he had made tests under the threshold of the tomb and found, with a few other items, a single sherd. This sherd had been taken – and still on occasion is taken – to give evidence of the date of the tomb. This sherd was of a type abundantly represented in the material from the Prehistoric Cemetery which we had been studying the year before: it comes from what we term a Stemmed Bowl FS 305, decorated in the Panel Style FM 74 and assigned to a pottery period some 125 years later than the Bothros pottery. We had long and obviously very stimulating arguments with my father starting from this. He did not completely accept our ideas about the later material, although he allowed us to put them forward in the final report. David was, however, absolutely ‘bitten’ by this kind of thought processing.

An immediate result was that my father suggested that David return to Cambridge and do the Diploma in Classical Archaeology, recommending him to Professor Jocelyn Toynbee – as this would give him some form of paper qualification on which to build.

Thus it was that David was in Cambridge during the winter of 1957–58. I was still teaching at Rickmansworth but my great friend Linda Witherill (from the conservation course at the Institute of Archaeology) was back in London after working with Kathleen Kenyon at Jericho, living in a small flat at the top of the house which belonged to the V&A librarian, James Wardrop. Early in the autumn term we took to meeting there on Saturdays to talk archaeology and to listen to her excellent record collection of early church music – it was (or became) David’s delight. In early November my father died in Athens: David and Linda provided me with support through that autumn and winter, and in February David and I became engaged.

The excavation season of 1958 saw David working at Pylos with Carl Blegen, in charge of the wine magazine, and then going off to Hacilar. Meanwhile the British School had appointed Lord William Taylour to take on the completion of my father's work at Mycenae, now as a direct cooperation with the Archaeological Society of Athens. A preliminary study season in Nauplion was arranged to work out excavation plans for the coming year.

That winter luckily Linda was again in London to help mitigate a grim period of time while David waited to hear if he had been received a grant from the BIAA. At last, when the news came through, we were able to make plans. We used a small legacy from my godmother to buy a short wheelbase diesel Land Rover ('Little Blue') and David went off on the owner/driver's course that was offered. We married in June at my half term. He then drove David Stronach, his then girlfriend and his mother to Greece, while I obtained my driving licence and finished the term at Rickmansworth.

I reached Athens in time to join David, who was excavating at Hagios Stephanos in Laconia with Billy Taylour, Dick Hope Simpson and Crystal Bennett. Then he went off to Hacilar and I worked at Mycenae for the first season of the renewed work. Immediately that was over I went to Turkey for the first time.

It was a considerable culture shock, but the Mellaarts gave me a warm welcome at the Institute. After Jimmy had left to join Seton Lloyd at Beycesultan, we took a trip to Midas City accompanied by Arlette and by Clare Goff. It was for me a fascinating introduction to the country and its ways. Arlette amused herself teaching us useful Turkish, like 'Where does this road go?' instead of 'Does this road go to ****?' to ensure a true rather than a polite answer, and wickedly suggesting that Clare try one of the green peppers which arrived with our meal in Şehitgazi. Later we visited the Beycesultan dig before I went back to Athens and my own thesis work while David went on to survey.

Just before Christmas David brought the Mellaarts to Athens in the Land Rover, leading to some amusing moments as Arlette tried to rediscover her Istanbul Greek in obtaining a spoon for Alan. Early in January David and I went off to Sparta to work on the Hagios Stephanos material (Taylour included this work in the preliminary report published in the Annual of the BSA). It was chilly and we would have a morning break with a hot drink and lovely oranges in the sun sitting on the steps of the Museum and discussing vital issues like how to dig a chamber tomb! We became good friends with the Ephor, Dr Christou, who allowed David to draw a surprise find from the German excavations at Amyklai, several handsome sherds of a Close Style Deep Bowl. David then spent a long evening

reconstructing the pattern – only to find another joining sherd the next day which proved him wrong. We returned to Athens the long way visiting Pylos and Olympia, which was beautiful, without tourists and carpeted in anemones, a memory which has spoilt all later visits in other conditions.

David was to join David Oates for a season of work at Nimrud. We took the opportunity, on the way to Beirut to collect David's visa, to visit Cyprus, where the Megaws showed us all over. Once in Lebanon, the visa was delayed – or rather filed under his first name. However, the delay gave us lots of time for trips and to call on the venerable Henri Seyrig at the French Institute. There I had to translate between them and found dealing with a lengthy discussion about 'Troie trois' rather challenging. After Nimrud David went on to dig with David Stronach in the heat of southern Iraq before returning to Athens, where he found the summer weather distinctly chilly.

The actual summer passed as so many did, with me working at Mycenae and David in Turkey, but we did manage at some point to spend some time in Nauplion together to work with the Ephor Nikolas Verdelis on the interesting deposit from Tiryns known as the Epichosis. This was a vast mass of debris thrown over the West Wall at various times, which had been discovered when the Wall was being restored. Verdelis had excavated one section carefully by strata and this he allowed us to help him prepare for publication.

The early autumn of 1960 saw the beginning of yet another new interest and once again I do not know its immediate source. David had throughout been interested in all of my father's work, but when he realised that it might be worthwhile to retrace that in Thessaly is unclear. I was given instructions to meet him in Larissa at a certain hotel on a certain day. (We later noted that it seemed to be the local place of assignation, but it was cheap and very tolerant of our eccentric ways.) As proved normal over the years, David arrived much later than expected having stopped on route to visit the sites of Photolivos (better known now as Sitagroi following the excavations by Colin Renfrew) and Dikili Tash. The car was weighed down with sherds – which then, when washed, filled the room drying for some days. Our trips finding the various sites listed and described in *Prehistoric Thessaly* were great fun and we learned much, both practically – one cannot take a thermos of hot milk such as we enjoyed with added coffee for breakfast out in a Land Rover to enhance lunch, as it turns to a rather nasty yogurt – to archaeological – where on a magoula to find the best sherd spread after the autumn ploughing. Harald Hauptmann's memoir highlights a high point: the day the guard in the then rather sleepy small museum in Larissa introduced us to the young German scholar working in the back room.

Later that autumn we set out in the Land Rover, taking Clare Goff with us to join David Stronach digging east of the Caspian at Yarim Tepe near Gumbad-i- Kabus, a memorable trip which requires an account all of its own. From that dig, however, where we were in charge of the finds, we learnt a great deal which was to influence several of our decisions of the following year when we started at Can Hasan.

That winter is a blur, probably because I was in the final stages of producing my thesis, but I remember also working on our Tiryns notes at one end of the big library and dining table in the BIAA. But we also made the preparations for David's latest initiative: digging the chronologically middle of the three hüyük just outside the village of Can Hasan near Karaman. This had produced sherds of red on white Chalcolithic pottery (like that found on Çatal West) with obvious potential links to Hacilar and possible links to Sesklo in Thessaly.

Before this could happen though I had to go to the UK, get my thesis finished off and undergo a viva. While there, I received a letter from David saying that Michael Gough was urging him to register for a PhD himself. The vision of doing it all again was not very inviting. During my time in London there was the chance to spend some time in the London office of the BIAA with the redoubtable Mrs Rudoi. Ferdie de la Grange had taken over from Arlette Mellaart at the Ankara end and the wording of the accounts he sent in was causing some difficulty. In particular, the frequent reference to 'laundry water' was puzzling. Was this some kind of additional 'water rate'? It proved to be his unique translation of 'çamaşır suyu', which is really bleach.

I imagine that David had had the idea of working at Can Hasan ever since he first visited the site in 1958. Can Hasan started, as did many other prehistoric excavations at that time, as a simple 'sondage'-type piece of work on an interesting site. The mound was relatively low, the village conveniently adjacent, and the villagers, relatively recent settlers moved down from the mountains of Pisidia, welcoming (fig. 3.2). Michael Gough who was appointed to succeed Seton Lloyd as Director was himself working on a monastic site at Alahan on the pass from Karaman to Silifke, but the BIAA were interested in continuing the important prehistoric work of the previous few years.

There was much to plan as much of the expendable equipment as well as some supplementary food had to be brought from elsewhere. We were able also to borrow things like a dumpy level from Mycenae. We had to take with us all the equipment for every-day living but luckily the Institute had all this – left in store by Woolley after his work at Atchana, and much used since by Garstang and Seton Lloyd. A notable item was the medicine chest labelled from the Survey of India.



Fig. 3.2. David French with workers at Can Hasan.

I went with David on one visit to the site and I remember well sitting around in Ilyas's house and being stuffed with melon while the details of accommodation were worked out. To start off the actual dig, David had asked the Beycesultan foreman, Veli, to come and to bring two 'ustas' (skilled workmen) as well as a cook and cook's boy.

Unfortunately, the politics of that summer mean that the actual permit, though issued, had to wait to be signed. We decided to go down and set up in the village with our team. While waiting we went on long trips getting to know the surrounding region. Maureen Barry (Lady Merrison) has vivid memories of one excursion when two tyres had punctures and had to be vulcanised on the spot by David and Nick Kindersley.

The dig itself went smoothly with structures of mud brick preserved to a considerable height. These were heavily tunnelled, a feature which we mistakenly interpreted as a form of elaborate wooden timbering. By the next season we understood it to be the work of the ubiquitous gophers.

It so happened that an excavation in Macedonia at Nea Nicomedia was also initiated in 1961 under the aegis of the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge, then directed by Professor Graham Clarke,

by Bob Rodden, a Harvard scholar, who was doing research at Cambridge. This site also produced pottery of Red on Cream which is called Early Neolithic in Greek terminology. There the remains were much shallower and near the surface and new techniques for surface scraping were developed – on I believe a Dutch model – to bring house plans to view before deeper work was undertaken. Professor Clarke had visited Turkey beforehand, particularly to see the work going on at Çatal Hüyük. What was to develop into the British Academy Project on Early Agriculture was beginning.

A work pattern emerged during the following years in which early autumn at Can Hasan followed my seasons at Mycenae, mixed with surveys by David in both Greece and Turkey. This meant that we met those working on both sides of the Aegean area (and beyond, as Ankara with its excellent Land Rover service facility was a stopping point for many) and in many disciplines. We could recruit helpers widely and enjoy stimulating discussion in the many newly emerging theoretical disciplines.

I can no longer remember the detail of where we found the money to subsist, though I remember that my mother was horrified when we decided to have a child, as we had no settled source of income. As well as research grants, we were able to earn some money by translations – a task which could prove very enlightening. In particular, translating Museum Catalogues like those of the National Museum in Athens and the Herakleion Museum required us to revisit them to clarify our interpretations. Luckily, we had a roof over our heads in Athens thanks to my mother having taken advantage of Greek tax laws and giving me the small top floor of her two-storey flat in Athens as a dowry. We could also commandeer space in my family house in Cambridge on occasion when the house was not rented out. Food in both Greece and Turkey was cheap, but doctor's and dentist's bills caused severe problems on various occasions.

We had two children, Ann born in 1963 and Catharine in 1966.

The winter of 1965/6 was particularly crucial to our archaeology. We were back in Cambridge: I was pregnant and David working hard on his PhD after a year as a Greek Government Scholar at the University of Thessaloniki (under Professors Bakalakis and Andronikos). We already had many contacts in Cambridge, with those excavating comparable sites and developing new practical approaches to the problems of the retrieval of environmental materials. I spent some time consulting with my former teachers from the Institute of Archaeology about conservation procedures to match these new methods of excavation and contacting suppliers of the

necessary products. All this began to be put into practice at Can Hasan in the 1966 season, though it only came to full fruition in 1967 when a long and well-staffed season took place.

Along with all this idea crunching we were working full out to get David's thesis finished and submitted. He shut himself off from the intrusion of wife and small daughter in my father's old study – an ideal situation surrounded by shelves of relevant books, when he was not cycling frantically between the Ark, Haddon and University libraries comparing pictures of stone axes and other artefacts found many years earlier and published in very poor photographs. In such intervals as were available I typed away at the early drafts, rendering them at least legible to the professional typists. We left Cambridge at the beginning of May. David borrowed David Winfield's house in London to complete the final work. A real problem had been the bulk of data with its detailed referencing, for at that time the Classics Faculty at Cambridge included the bibliography within the permitted word limit. This presented an almost impossible hurdle, which required considerable ingenuity of presentation. Alas the examiners 'referred' the thesis, largely because of the alleged lack of statistical evidence to prove the EBA dating of the multitude of sites in Turkey identified only by surface survey. It was a severe blow, as David felt strongly that the criticism was based on a lack of understanding of the nature of the sites concerned. Nick Postgate remembers the whole dig team from Can Hasan that autumn being taken to a large site in the neighbourhood and being set to sherd it minutely all over. The vast quantity of sherds found were then meticulously washed and sorted but only three EBA sherds appeared from a site heavily occupied in the later periods. What use statistics?

Thus, once again I found myself spending many hours typing lists – many new sites had been found requiring new maps – as well as devising new systems of getting round the word limit. Eventually, though not till autumn 1968, David's thesis was handed over to the typists and binders and the doctorate was finally awarded in July 1969.

At Can Hasan in 1967, however, the whole enterprise was a great success. We even imported an air dome to see if humidity control might help the preservation of environment materials, though it was never actually used. The big water sieves were built and the village grandmothers hired to run them. The drying racks for both bone and 'flot' were commissioned and put into use. The young village girls were set to sorting the residues in the well-lit rooms of the dig house under the supervision of the sober married ladies of the staff, like myself and Rosemary Payne.

In the following winter a further retrieval stage was concocted: the elutriator. This, devised by Martin Weaver of the Middle East Technical University, could by centrifugal force extract pollen from the excavated soil in bulk. After many trials a working model was produced but alas the whole idea had to be abandoned as the quantities retrieved proved too great to be processed. When water sieves were used elsewhere, even the lesser quantities of material were too much. The young Turkish girls who were accustomed to such tasks from their everyday lives, at a time when bulk bought food stuffs had always to be similarly sorted before cooking, could manage, but their contemporaries working at the Franchthi cave site in Greece became bored and careless.

The decision of Michael Gough to resign the Directorship in Ankara to take up a professorship in Canada caught everyone by surprise, as did the decision of the London Committee to choose David as his successor.

They had, however, also decided that the BIAA would take an active part in the incipient Keban Project.

For David, the Keban Project meant that he had to abandon his own research excavation work completely, not only the programmed environmental work of Can Hasan (there were two more seasons on Can Hasan III the pre-pottery site, but largely the work has remained uncompleted) but also the targeted study of the EBA Aegean interface which he was plotting with Harold Hauptmann on the West Coast.

The transformation of the theories and methods behind the work at Can Hasan, developed for a research programme, into a rescue programme, though undertaken as a necessity, was a major achievement and, in my view, should be considered his fundamental legacy. That he may be more easily appreciated as the expert on roads and milestones is fortuitous – this started as a useful but intriguing means of weekend escape.

4. With David French from the Peneios to the Euphrates and beyond

Harald Hauptmann

It is a special honour for me to be invited by the British Institute at Ankara to speak at the event held in Ankara at the Erimtan Arkeoloji ve Sanat Müzesi to commemorate the achievements of its former director, David French. Our scientific careers were linked for many years by common interests and by our shared preferences in studying the ancient Aegean and Anatolian worlds, in which each of us worked for more than four decades.

Our first meeting took place in 1960 in the Yeni Cami in Larisa, which served as a small archaeological museum, when I, assisted by another student, was recording Neolithic and Chalcolithic finds from the German excavations in Thessaly for my dissertation. That summer David French had almost finished his ground-breaking survey of prehistoric settlements in the

vast Thessalian plains, which he had begun in 1959. We were fascinated by the young couple, David and Elizabeth, as well by the rich materials that they had collected. After finishing my work in the Larisa Museum, I had the opportunity to meet them again in Athens, and a closer relationship developed out of this second meeting. In those years, access to archaeological finds from Greek or foreign excavations, stored in museum depots, was particularly difficult. The findings of the British excavations of Alan J.B. Wace and Maurice S. Thompson, conducted in Thessaly between 1907 and 1910 (Wace, Thompson 1912), were particularly important for my study. David had asked his mother-in-law Helen Wace to compile a letter of recommendation for me, which finally gave me access to this important reference material in the museum of Volos.



Fig. 4.1. David French, Harald Hauptmann, and members of the Aşvan excavation team at Norşun Tepe 1969.

With his systematic field survey in Thessaly, David French had been able to resume and build on an earlier tradition of British research, the work of his father-in-law Alan Wace (1879–1957), who had revised the chronology of the Thessalian Neolithic and Bronze Ages through a series of stratigraphic investigations at different mounds. David increased the number of settlement mounds (magoules) to a total of 530 sites. Unfortunately, he never himself published the maps that he created at that time, showing the settlement distribution of the various Neolithic and Bronze Age habitation periods. However, his survey formed the basis for further studies of the early history of settlement in Thessaly by Dimitrios Theocharis (1919–1977) and, above all by the later Ephor at Larisa, Kostas Gallis, who published an atlas of the prehistoric sites of the East Thessalian Plain in 1992. The results of David's fundamental survey were also incorporated into Paul Halstead's 1984 Cambridge PhD dissertation entitled *Strategies for Survival: An Ecological Approach to Social and Economic Change in the Early Farming Communities of Thessaly, N. Greece*. A suggestion had been made in Heidelberg that David's important survey should be published in the series of 'Beiträge zur ur- und frühgeschichtliche Archäologie des Mittelmeer-Kulturräume' edited by Vladimir Milojević. That planned volume would have presented the rich ceramic material and thus illustrated the material culture of the prehistoric periods, which were now understood in the new light cast by the Heidelberg University excavations. Unfortunately, this idea was never realised because David's painstaking and meticulous pottery drawings were mysteriously lost in the British School of Archaeology at Athens. Only a small collection of characteristic ceramic examples from his survey representing the Late Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age sequence are published in *Anatolian Studies* (French 1961: 100, 108–111, fig. 14–15). In addition, after taking over the directorate of the BIAA in Ankara in 1968 at the age of 35, David turned towards new horizons.

As Stephen Mitchell outlined in his obituary of David French, published in *Anatolian Studies* 2017 (reprinted at the beginning of this memorial publication), the future archaeologist, after graduating in Classics at St Catharine's College of Cambridge, came to Athens for the first time in the winter of 1955/56. Here he joined several archaeological surveys under the guidance of R. (Dick) Hope Simpson, to whom we owe the exemplary *A Gazetteer and Atlas of Mycenaean Sites* (1965). He was invited to take part in a study season at Mycenae, where he was not only introduced into modern documentation techniques, but also won the young daughter of Alan Wace, Elizabeth, his first great success in archaeology. I

know that some colleagues deeply envied him for that. In the following years, he was able to undertake his own independent surveys in other regions of Greece. In 1959 he recorded and catalogued prehistoric sites in the Phthiotis, and in 1961 and 1962 he completed his survey in Central Greece, summarising also all earlier explorations in the different plains. A privately circulated typescript entitled *Notes on Prehistoric Pottery Groups from Central Greece* (Athens 1972) has retained its worth as an important reference work until today. In 1961 he also started to work on his comprehensive PhD thesis for the Archaeology Faculty at Cambridge University, on *Anatolia and the Aegean in the Third Millennium BC*, an ambitious undertaking to summarise the different developments of the Bronze Age cultures across the Aegean Sea. The thesis was completed in 1969.

Another important enterprise during his Aegean phase was the survey of Macedonia and Thrace, which he began in 1959. He was able to extend the fieldwork and evaluation of the material thanks to a Greek Government post-graduate Research Scholarship, awarded in 1964, 'for the purpose of completing the Macedonian section of his doctoral thesis'. This study was undertaken under the auspices of Georgios Bakalakis (1908–1991) of the Aristoteles University at Thessaloniki, a keen supporter of David's fieldwork, himself a scholar who had been born in Şile on the Black Sea coast, and member of a group of liberal-minded archaeologists and historians. A small summary of the sites that David had visited in the North Aegean area was published in *Anatolian Studies* 11 (1961) and in *Prähistorische Zeitschrift* 42 (1964). In these publications David for the first time presented the wealth of black-on-red and graphite painted ceramics, whose designs resembled those of pottery from the Bulgarian and Romanian Gumelnitsa Culture, which he had found in 1961 in the Plain of Drama, at a site listed as Photolivos and also known as Toumba Alistrati. His recording of these prehistoric sites emphasised how little we knew about the pre-Bronze Age development of the North Aegean area. Until then, knowledge of Macedonian prehistory was based on the work of M. Léon Rey's 'Observations sur les premiers habitats de la Macédoine' (Rey 1917), carried out during the First World War, and the excavations of W. A. Heurtley, which began at different sites in 1924 and were published in *Prehistoric Macedonia* (Heurtley 1939). David visited nearly all the sites named by Rey, Heurtley and others and brought the documentation of prehistoric habitation up to date in his 'Index of Prehistoric Sites in Central Macedonia and catalogue of sherd materials in the University of Thessaloniki, Athens 1967'. This unpublished, privately circulated study again showed his mastery of exact mapping and characterising prehistoric habitation. He recognised

that the Thessalian sequence of the Neolithic could be partly applied to sites in Western Macedonia, such as at Nea Nikomedeia or Servia, but the other parts of Macedonia and Thrace were to be interpreted as ‘important crossroads between the Balkans, the Aegean and Anatolia’, revealing several locally different Neolithic pottery phases. Only stratigraphic excavations at Dikili Tash and other sites could answer questions about the chronological relations of eastern Macedonia and Thrace to the Balkan prehistoric sequence. I still remember how the experts of Balkan and Aegean prehistory Milutin Garašanin and Dimitrios Theocharis, who at that time were excavating at the famous site of Dikili Tash, were attracted as if by magic to David’s discoveries at Photivlos near Drama in East Macedonia. Colin Renfrew, then at the University of Sheffield, in cooperation with Marija Gimbutas and Ernestine Elster of the University of California at Los Angeles, devoted themselves to resolving the critical dispute over Balkan chronology on the basis of firmly established stratigraphical evidence. Excavations between 1968 and 1970 at the key site now known as Sitagroi, at the ‘northern limit of the Aegean basin and in contact with the cultures of Balkan Europe’, provided this evidence in the form of five main habitation phases covering a time range from Middle Neolithic to the Early Bronze Age (Renfrew et al. 1986).

During the following years until 1964, when I graduated at the Heidelberg University, it was a privilege to be in contact with David French, particularly when he interrupted his Land Rover journey from London to Karaman and Can Hasan with a stop in Heidelberg. During these visits we discussed different aspects of Aegean prehistory and he showed me the results of his surveys in Greece. Vladimir Miložčić (1918–1978), one of the established authorities of Aegean and Balkan prehistory during this period, represented the traditional prevailing trend in European prehistoric archaeology. The chronological systems of the Neolithic and Early Bronze Ages were constructed by the comparative stratigraphic method, built on representative sequences such as Vinča on the Serbian Danube, Karanovo in Bulgarian Thrace and Troy in Northwest Anatolia. These chronological sequences were supported by typological analysis of the pottery with similar shapes and decorations, such as the spiral – maeander motifs. Miložčić was also an opponent of the newly developed Radiocarbon dating method, and I remember long and controversial discussions with David about the traditional comparative stratigraphical method. Against Miložčić he insisted that besides C14 dating, only clearly identified imports could help to establish the far-reaching connections and chronological synchronicity of different cultural groups.

On the other hand, Miložčić was deeply impressed by the dramatic exploration of Anatolia’s prehistory inaugurated by the BIAA. When David presented his first discoveries at Can Hasan, where he had started excavations in 1961, at our Institute at Heidelberg University, Miložčić expressed his enthusiasm with the words ‘das ist echte Architektur, und das zu dieser Zeit’ (‘that is real architecture, and at this early date!’). We followed the exploratory steps of the British Institute of Archaeology in Ankara with admiration, and eagerly studied the prompt reports about the systematic surveys and excavations published in the journal *Anatolian Studies*, which had appeared annually since 1951. Roger Matthews in his editorial introduction to *Ancient Anatolia. Fifty Years’ Work of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara*, was right to point ‘at the wealth of first-class research that has been conducted in Turkey since the late 1940s under the auspices of the BIAA. Almost every corner of Turkey has been subjected to critical enquiry by archaeologists and historians working under the banner of the BIAA’ (Matthews 1998: xix). In contrast to the activities of other foreign institutes, which were mainly engaged in long-term projects at classical centres along the Aegean coast, or in promising Hittite, Phrygian and Lydian central places, the work of BIAA brought a ‘wind of change’ to Anatolian Archaeology, a success story as Seton Lloyd aptly stressed in his short history of this institute ‘Twenty-Five Years’, published in *Anatolian Studies* (Lloyd 1974: 197–220).

You will excuse me, therefore, when I recapitulate these well-known steps in the study of early Anatolia. The name of David French played an important role in this enterprise, after the early emphasis of his work on the Aegean regions. We admired the clearly planned programme, first to list the most important sites in southwest Anatolia, then to select a promising site for an excavation. This survey of mounds was completed by James Mellaart, then a student at the Institute, before the start of the main operation, a large-scale and long-lasting excavation which began in 1954 under the BIAA’s director, Seton Lloyd. Six campaigns at the large mound of Beycesultan in the upper Maeander Valley, probably a central place of the historical state of Arzawa and opponent of the Hittite Empire, delivered complete 25m stratification through the Late Chalcolithic and the entire Bronze Age. The site revealed not only an enormous Middle Bronze Age palace, but the definitive West Anatolian pottery sequence, equivalent to the sequence in Troy. In 1957 Seton Lloyd suggested to James Mellaart, his chief assistant at Beycesultan, that he should start the subsequent excavation at Hacilar near Burdur. Between 1958 and 1960 Mellaart traced the prehistoric sequence back to earlier periods of the

Chalcolithic and Late Neolithic period. He even claimed to have found aceramic Neolithic layers at Hacilar, a previously unknown period, but doubts were uttered about the existence of this by David French and others. In 1961 Jimmy Mellaart made his first extraordinary discoveries at Çatal Höyük, which transformed the whole conception of human life and behaviour in the Neolithic period. These new insights into an autochthonous Neolithic development were then supplemented by David French at Can Hasan in the Karaman Plain, where, on the suggestion of Michael Gough, he started his excavations in the same year, 1961. In seven seasons the stratigraphy of the Middle and Late Chalcolithic layers of Can Hasan I, the main mound, helped to supplement the sequence of Çatal Höyük West, where an early Chalcolithic phase had been found. Finally, Can Hasan III proved the existence of aceramic Neolithic habitation in this part of southwest Cappadocia. However, new developments in Turkish archaeology were to cut short the continuation of the Canhasan project in 1967.

David's field research in early Anatolia proved to be as ground-breaking as his work in different provinces of Greece during the late 1950s and early 1960s. His first systematic survey as BIAA scholar in Northwest Anatolia in 1959 covered two previously almost unsurveyed areas, the fertile plains of Balıkesir and Akhisar-Manisa. He proved that there had been Late Chalcolithic habitation in these regions with pottery equivalent to all four Beycesultan Late Chalcolithic phases, followed by one of Kumtepe Ib which led in turn to an Early Bronze Age culture, similar to that of Troy I. According to the geographical situation around the Marmara Sea, where influences from the major archaeological areas of the Aegean, the Anatolian Plateau and the southeast Balkans meet, different ceramic groups reflect this 'confrontation'. The region thus formed at all prehistoric times one of the most important cultural contact zones in Anatolia between these major archaeological areas – a far-sighted observation. In the autumn of 1959 and summer of 1960 David visited sites in the Gediz and Büyük Menderes valleys with the intention of finding early pottery cultures of Anatolia, which could help to connect Hacilar with Sesklo in Thessaly (French 1965a). A main result of his survey was to find early occupation in the river valleys leading from the western plateau down to the Aegean coast. These routes apparently were used as early as Hacilar VI, that is, by the second half of the sixth millennium BC. The coastal area is more heavily oriented to the west, that is, the Aegean, than to the east, the plateau region of southwest Anatolia. It should not be included in the area of the Hacilar Culture and may represent its own centre of diffusion, in the sense of Schachermeyr's 'Kulturtrift aus Vorderasien'.

Stimulated by the earlier work of Kurt Bittel and James Mellaart on the routes and alluvial plains around the Marmara Sea, David French's surveys in the areas of Iznik, Balıkesir and Manisa from 1959 to 1961 and in 1965, published in *Anatolian Studies* 17 (1967) and 19 (1969), helped to separate different cultural zones from the Late Neolithic period onwards. The region southeast of the Marmara Sea was defined as a meeting place for the major pottery zones of Anatolia, the Aegean and the Balkans (*Anatolian Studies* 17, 1967). He identified 22 separate pottery zones during the third millennium in Western Anatolia, which merged at the end of Early Bronze Age into a single large zone with a pottery assemblage, 'West Anatolian Red Slipped Ware', which was distributed over the whole of Western Anatolia. During the second millennium, with several principalities or kingdoms documented by Hittite texts or Luwian inscriptions, French showed that there were at least four differing pottery zones in Western Anatolia: Iznik; The Troad with the off-shore islands, the Akhisar/Manisa plains and Balıkesir (Grey ware-Troy VI/VII); southwest Anatolia (Beycesultan III-II); and the Western plateau.

The extensive mound survey carried out in October 1958 by James Mellaart in the company of Alan Hall and David French was especially important for the exploration of the prehistory of the Central Anatolian plateau. The discovery of the main Neolithic site Çatal Höyük and the Early Chalcolithic Çatal Höyük West, together with the three mounds of Can Hasan in the Karaman Plain (the site was first noticed by Mellaart in 1951–52), was to transform the traditional view of Central Anatolia as a thinly inhabited area before the Early Bronze Age. The observation that 'The plain of Konya with its alluvial soil ... is the granary of Turkey', has been confirmed by the identification of the highest number of great mounds in Anatolia that show a cultural continuum from the Neolithic period. It now became clear that since the Neolithic period the plateau as a geographical unit linked the cultural development of Syria and Cilicia across the West Anatolian Lake District with the Aegean Sea. Thus, Central Anatolia emerged as the third core area in the 'Neolithic Formation process' alongside Upper Mesopotamia and the Levant.

French's more intensive survey of a restricted region, in the Çumra area, which combined observation of soil conditions and the distribution of ancient sites, gave more detailed evidence of land use and increasingly dense occupation since the early Holocene (French 1970: 139–48). Using the available survey data and the stratigraphic sequences, he constructed a model of settlement development for the Konya Plain within the limits of existing food resources (plants and animals) and basic technology. Finally, in 1963 and 1964 he investigated the

Göksu Valley (ancient Calycadnus) ‘to verify its relationship to the two culture-areas of the Konya Plain and the plain of Adana from the Neolithic to the Iron Age’ (French 1965b: 177–201).

With his early fieldwork David French had introduced a new standard for a systematic survey and pottery classification. As he noted, ‘It was until the late 1950s unfortunate that in Anatolia scant attention had been paid to the accurate compilation of basic information’. For that reason, he developed ‘a framework to expound the sequence and nature of cultural assemblages in geographically separate regions’ (French 1969: 41). He had an ability ‘to relate sites to their environment by observing hardly perceptible details’, as Stephen Mitchell’s obituary notes. I already had admired his remarkable knowledge of material cultures and ceramic techniques in prehistoric Middle and Northern Greece. He also demonstrated this new approach in Anatolia by precisely recording and identifying different pottery groups and interregional relations. His ability and the range of his observations as a keen field observer contrast strikingly with the telegraphic style of all his publications, which rigorously focused on reporting his findings and avoided speculative hypotheses. In the preface of *Can Hasan Sites* vol. I (1998a) he re-emphasised the reasons for this approach, explaining why he retained the terseness of the preliminary reports also for the final publications.

During our encounters at Athens David and I formed the idea of undertaking a research project in Aegean Turkey to answer the questions relating to the relations between the earliest cultural developments of Central Anatolia and the Aegean region before the Bronze Age. Since both Milošević and Theodoridis had proposed the existence of an aceramic Neolithic phase in Thessaly, Milošević, supported by his Greek colleague, launched a discussion of controversial ideas about the expansion of the new Neolithic lifestyle from the Near East to Greece by migration or techno-cultural transfer, and the view of an autochthonous emergence of sedentary life based on farming and animal husbandry. As I had become assistant at the German Archaeological Institute at Istanbul in May 1966, we had the opportunity to put our dream into effect and to take our first steps in this direction. We prospected sites in Thrace, in the southern Marmara region and on the Aegean coast. I personally learned to appreciate David’s remarkable knowledge of the region and his ability to understand an ancient site in its natural setting. During this reconnaissance I was able to see for myself important places such as Salhane and Toptepe in Thrace, as well as Ilıpınar, Limantepe and Ulucak in West Anatolia, which in later years have been investigated and excavated, mainly by Turkish colleagues. During our

visits to German excavations in Ionia we were amused when we were sometimes eyed up suspiciously as prehistoric archaeologists by the excavation directors, since prehistory or even environmental history did not necessarily belong to the traditional programme of a Graeco-Roman research centre.

Our aim of starting a research excavation in the west could not be attained, although David had even selected a promising site with a long stratigraphic sequence. Already during 1966 new developments in Turkish archaeology occurred which were to change the course of our future activities. The decision by the Turkish government to stimulate the economic and industrial development of East Anatolia by the construction of hydroelectric dam projects on the Euphrates-Tigris river systems made it necessary to conduct urgent investigation of the regions now threatened by future dam reservoirs, which were archaeologically virgin territories. By 1968, when David took over as the fourth director of the BIAA in the line of his outstanding predecessors John Garstang, Seton Lloyd and Michael Gough, the BIAA and other foreign Institutes of Archaeology in Istanbul had accepted the invitation issued by the Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi (ODTÜ), under its president Kemal Kurdaş, to participate in a first programme of emergency excavations, the Keban Project.

To gain an impression of the dam reservoir region, David French and I set out on a short reconnaissance trip of the widely unknown but historically important region on the Upper Euphrates, accompanied by Richard P. Harper and Ian Todd. We first gained an impression of the Roman Frontier on the Upper Euphrates, by a view of the frontier road running down towards Körpinik Höyük, which was obviously an important lookout and signalling position. The southern portion of the Cappadocian limes had been investigated in 1963 by Timothy Mitford, and Richard Harper, Assistant Director of the BIAA, logically saw it as a privilege to follow in Mitford’s footsteps by starting an excavation at the small Roman fort on the west bank of the Euphrates near Pağnik, southeast of Ağın. Already during our visit to the fertile Altınova-Uluova in the province of Elazığ, which contained more than 30 big mounds, and of the smaller settled areas in the area to be flooded by the dam, it became clear that David would not apply for one of the more prestigious target sites in the Altınova. He wanted to concentrate BIAA’s active contribution on a more remote area beside the Murat River northeast of Elazığ, the Aşvan Region with its central Aşvan Kale and related sites including Kurupınar, Çayboyu-Köyüstü, Taşkun Mevkii and Taşkun Kale – ‘to work a little in splendid isolation’, as Halet Çambel joked. The results of the Aşvan operations established a complete archaeological

sequence for this region from the sixth/fifth millennium, the Neolithic period, through all periods even to modern times. The first volume of the final publication of the Aşvan Kale operations, about the Hellenistic, Roman and Islamic sites, was published by Stephen Mitchell in 1980.

From 1969 David French initiated a multidisciplinary concept for the Aşvan Project which was designed to provide an environmental background against which the archaeological evidence from the excavated sites could be interpreted. For the understanding of subsistence and subsistence-patterns the environmental studies included physical geography of the area, the agricultural resources and productivity, crop husbandry and food production, and an intensive architectural survey with its household structures. Apart from exemplary village studies undertaken by Alpaslan Koyunlu at Munzuroğlu, Eckhart Peters at Alişan and by Hamit Zübeyr Koşay, the doyen of Turkish prehistory, at Pulur-Sakyol, no other team engaged in the Keban Project tried to start similar comprehensive environmental studies.

Thanks to the splendid organisation by Başkan Kemal Kurdaş and the project's executive committee members, Halet Çambel, Cevat Erder, and Robert Braidwood, who were fully supported by the Director-General of the Department of Antiquities, Hikmet Gürçay, the Keban Project evolved as an exemplary international cooperative endeavour, which was to initiate new interdisciplinary standards for the future development of Anatolian archaeology (fig. 4.1 at the head of this contribution). The generous allocation of archaeological sites to the foreign and national teams, which included the British Institute at Ankara and the German Archaeological Institute, as well as the Universities of Ankara, California, Istanbul and Michigan, stimulated this atmosphere of cooperation from the beginning. I repeat the characterising words of Kemal Kurdaş:

Since 1968, archaeological, folklore, architectural and ethnographic studies have been taking place in the region of the Keban Dam flood-zone. These fourfold studies taking place in one region, carried out both by Turkish and International groups, present an example, rare in the history of science, of a unified enterprise.

The years after the Keban Project had been ended by the final flooding of the Keban reservoir were furthermore dominated by this new factor in Turkish archaeology: rescue excavations. After the implementation of the Lower Euphrates Dam Projects by the Devlet Su İşleri, the Middle East Technical University had to extend its rescue operations downstream. By mutual agreement David French and I had to abandon the idea of starting an

excavation in Western Anatolia once and for all, in favour of further participation in the 'Southeastern Anatolia Project', known as GAP (Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi). Based on our experience with multi-layered sites in the Keban region, we looked for appropriate mound sites along the Euphrates in the future Karababa basin, later renamed the Atatürk Reservoir. Again, the interested archaeologists were invited in late autumn 1977 by ODTÜ and the Department of Antiquities to take part in a tour of the regions endangered by the Karakaya and Karababa dams. The archaeologists were of course fascinated by the magnificent mound of Samsat. I vividly remember the lively competition among several participants, as we stood on top of the big mound – who would be able to excavate ancient Samosata – Sumaisat? David French, on behalf of the BIAA, selected Tille Höyük on the western bank of the Euphrates near Adiyaman, while I myself, now assistant professor at the Free University Berlin, was allocated a mound further downstream, Lidar Höyük. The excavations at Tille started in 1979 and came to an end as the water rose around the site in 1990. Both mounds revealed a habitation sequence from the Early Bronze Age to the Middle Ages. In contrast to the Keban Project there were fewer intense scientific contacts between the different missions, and the local conditions were not so favourable for comprehensive environmental studies. During our last encounters, at the annual 'Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı' and when David visited Lidar Höyük, I gained the impression that his interests had turned away from excavation, especially the rescue programmes, to quite different research, partly motivated by his classical training, in which he could connect his brilliant skill of field observation with his unique knowledge of the Anatolian topography. The new field research project was to emerge as the culmination of his life's work as an explorer: the Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor – a milestone in the long history of the historical and archaeological exploration of Anatolia. As a by-product of this exploration, he even made a new proposal for the course of the Persian Royal Road as described by Herodotus (French 1998b: 15–43).

I would like to return with affection to a very personal experience with David. In his sensitive obituary which aptly acknowledges David's special personality as well as his lasting role in his study of Turkey's past, Stephen Mitchell describes the tragedy that David's family suffered during his childhood, when he was eight years old. During a German air attack on Hull in May 1941 both his mother and his elder brother were killed – a profound event which he had never mentioned to me. But I remember a small experience during our tour in spring 1966 in Western Turkey. On the Gallipoli peninsula we had lost our orientation, something which, thanks to

David's phenomenal knowledge of the terrain, happened only once during all our time together. He therefore turned to a dignified older local man, wearing a worn-out old military coat – evidently a war veteran. After giving directions, the man asked David if he was a German. David said no, but pointed to me. The old man went painfully to the other side of the Land Rover to knock me on the shoulder. I had not really understood this touching gesture, as I had almost no idea of the Gallipoli battle of 1915. In my school days, the 20th century was not a subject in history lessons. On the way to the hotel David was silent, speaking hardly a word, so I thought there was again one of the famous football matches at Wembley between England and Germany. David loved football, while I at that time was not so interested in that sport. Then, in the evening David spoke to me of the battle at the Dardanelles, catastrophic for the allies, at the beginning of the Great War in 1915. So, for the first time we were talking about the dreadful years of the last war, the horrible past of the European continent. He found moving words for a future common Europe, in which our two countries could build a peaceful future: an equally distant and beautiful dream, as we are now experiencing again. We remembered that in 1961 the United Kingdom for the first time applied for membership of the EEC, but had been rejected because of the opposition of the French. The final accession to the EU would not take place until 1973. David spoke of his father, a sturdy Yorkshire policeman, but not of the terrible family loss. Not for a moment did I have a feeling of any animosity towards my country, although that would have been very intelligible. For us, the common idea was to find a place on the Aegean west coast, whose exploration would contribute to understanding its connections to the Greek mainland since the spread of the new Neolithic lifestyle in Central Anatolia. Our personal relationship and our later careers as colleagues in Ankara and Istanbul also contributed significantly to both of us developing a deep affection for Anatolia, its unique cultural heritage and its people. I will keep him in my memory as a colleague and friend, whose modesty and elegant restraint I especially appreciated. His diplomacy paired with a special sense of humour facilitated his access to Turkish colleagues. As an internationally highly respected scholar he never sought publicity for his activities, nor did he demand or expect general recognition by official academic institutions of his country. We will miss him.

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5. David French, Cambridge and the 'New Archaeology': breaking new ground at Aşvan

Stephen Mitchell



Fig. 5.1. Aşvan Kale and village and the Murat river from the south (Stephen Mitchell 1972).

This memoir of working with David French begins at the time of our first meeting, when I, newly graduated from Oxford University and about to embark on work for my doctorate, joined his team during the third season of excavations at Aşvan. I quote from my diary, written in the village of Aşvan, province of Elazığ, on Tuesday 28 July 1970:

4.15 pm. Lecture from DHF on the site about his aims for the project. New light on environmental archaeology. These are almost certainly the methods of the future and will be remarkable for improving our techniques, but at present these are hopelessly impracticable. Until all the sieving etc. can be carried out at a much faster pace (mechanized?) no site will ever get finished. Having enough mechanized sieves to cope with (say) 6 trenches simultaneously, as would be necessary to finish a medium-sized site in five years, would be very expensive. Still DHF should be able to achieve his limited aims here (examination of Medieval and Roman levels) efficiently enough. He had some strong words to say about the American and German teams working

elsewhere in the Keban region (and stronger ones about the Italians who had declined to work on the project at all). Given his methods, the large team he has brought here seems justified. It is also extremely professional and competent.

Two days earlier I had arrived in Elazığ on an overnight coach from Ankara, caught a decrepit local bus heading north along the gravel road to Çemişgezek, dismounted at an anonymous and unsigned dirt road intersection, and hitched a lift on a tractor to Aşvan, where the British Institute's rescue project was taking place. The director, David French, was having his siesta, after a day's heavy and exhausting excavation. For the summer months over the next three years Aşvan was to provide my most important archaeological education.

Those first diary impressions reveal several things about David French the archaeologist. As project director, he was a commanding personality (my later diary entries simply refer to him as 'the boss'). He laid terrific emphasis on field methodology. Precise and accurate stratigraphical digging was taken for granted; at the time, sieving (to ensure standardised, not random



Fig. 5.2. *Aşvan Kale from the flood plain, north* (Stephen Mitchell 1972).

material recovery) was at the top of his agenda. He had clear strategic objectives for the site – to excavate the Medieval and Roman levels. The Bronze Age was being thoroughly investigated on several other Keban sites, especially at Norşun Tepe (by the German Archaeological Institute, under Harald Hauptmann) and Tepecik (by Istanbul University, under Ufuk Esin). David's prioritisation of the later levels was to be the major bone of contention between him and senior archaeologists (notably Dame Kathleen Kenyon and Sir Max Mallowan) on the British Institute's management council, who thought that he should be carving a massive deep trench in the cone-shaped Aşvan mound, down to bedrock. A Turkish equivalent might be a stand-off between the young Mehmet Özdoğan, who was working for the Keban Project at Tepecik in 1970, and the old guard of Tahsin Özgüç and Ekrem Akurgal. But such an approach to digging the site would have been incompatible with rigorous material recovery, and David stuck to his guns. He was demanding and critical of the standards of other teams. But the people who had chosen to work with him, or who he had chosen, were impressively capable.

For the first two seasons in 1968 and 1969 David had directed Aşvan as a traditional, site-focussed dig. There had been some good finds – an accurately dated late Hellenistic farm house which produced coins, bits of furniture, bronze vessels and other pottery – and the stratigraphic accuracy of the excavation was impressive, but essentially the results were not surprising or ground-breaking (Mitchell 1980). David had come to the Keban rescue project from his already sophisticated Neolithic and Chalcolithic excavation at Can Hasan, where he had been developing new recovery techniques, and from survey work in prehistoric western Anatolia. A dream, which never left him, was to excavate a major site that he had identified near Akhisar, which he anticipated would provide the links

between Anatolia and the Aegean between the Neolithic period and the Bronze Age that he had postulated in his Cambridge doctoral thesis. Aşvan needed to offer something more than a late Hellenistic farm house.

His vision for Aşvan was reflected in the first words that my diary records: 'new light on environmental archaeology'. In order to make intellectual sense of his contribution to the Keban rescue project, and to meet his own aspirations to do something new and important in archaeology, Aşvan was transformed from an excavation to a project. David's approach was deliberately and consciously holistic. Evaluate, assess and take the measure of the environment and settlements of the Aşvan micro-region from earliest to modern times. Establish a base-line of modern Aşvan's population levels, settlement type, agricultural and other economic activity where the data can be observed and controlled (in fact this meant studying the period that began with a cadastral survey of 1938 and continued to the time that the project was active in 1970), and then collect relevant data from the archaeological sites – Çayboyu (Chalcolithic, c. 5000 BC) to the late Medieval period (Aşvan Kale and Taşkun Kale, 14th century AD) – which would allow rigorous and objective comparisons to be made. The work of Claudio Vita-Finzi and Eric Higgs on site catchment analysis, which had developed out of fieldwork in Greece during the mid 1960s, was a fundamental influence on the modern Aşvan project (see Vita-Finzi 1969). The result, in an ideal world would be the entire environmental and settlement history of the Aşvan region, as far as it could be recovered.

In practice, especially in the context of time-limited rescue excavations, this was more easily said than done. But David in any case was clear that a project should not be judged by fixed results and material discoveries ('the British Academy expects a steady stream of good finds' was a wonderfully revealing quote from a British academic dignitary of the time), but by the ideas and intellectual energy that it could generate. He shaped the research that we did at Aşvan intellectually from start to finish. I quote from the words written by my colleague, the Australian Dr Tony McNicoll, who took charge of the excavation at Taşkun Kale, in the preface to the Taşkun Kale publication:

David French was the motive force behind the excavations at Taşkun Kale. The Aşvan Project was his project and he inspired it in all its elements, whether by convincing the unconvinced in London or by rousing the troops with supper-time harangues over the DDT-soaked grapes – harangues which ranged from the pure Kritik of Lewis Binford, to David's vision of the first multi-disciplinary expedition in Turkey (McNicoll 1983: i–ii).

David's large Aşvan team in 1970 included many more specialists than was usual for an excavation at the time, especially one in a remote Turkish location. They included the geographer Malcolm Wagstaff, three urban and settlement planning experts from Belfast (who appealed to David's wilder side), Patrick and Ann Dick, experts in the organisation of information, genuine futurologists in the pre-computer age, the prehistoric archaeologist and animal bone expert, Sebastian Payne, later to be head of scientific archaeology at English Heritage, and my own wife-to-be Matina Weinstein, studying the village ethnography.

However, as David himself acknowledged, the major transformative influence came from a charismatic archaeo-botanist, Gordon Hillman. Gordon Hillman, who had trained at Kew Gardens, would doubtless have made an outstanding career as a field botanist, and his skills as a field worker, seeking, identifying and collecting plants, as well as documenting environmental and climatic conditions, were exactly a match for David French's similar skills as a survey archaeologist. Better still, Gordon Hillman was already half way into archaeology, as he was researching for a PhD in early agriculture at Reading University. At Aşvan he developed techniques for assessing environmental processes which have set a benchmark for the practice of archaeobotanical research ever since. Archaeobotany was the key discipline for unlocking Aşvan's environmental history. Only in 2017, after grotesquely long delays, have the results of the archaeobotanical work finally been published (Nesbitt et al. 2017).

The Aşvan team could be divided into the excavators, and the project scientists. The excavators who took responsibility for the actual digging and recording on site, Tony McNicoll (Australian), Svend Helms (Canadian), Steven Diamant (American), and myself (British), were competent, experienced, but all empirical in approach (fact gatherers). The excavators' input into the project was essentially conservative and traditional; in the style of Oxford, not Cambridge. The project team, by contrast, consisted of ideas people: theoretically minded, speculative, impatient of practical problems but also rigorous and demanding to the point of exasperation – especially in matters such as sampling methodology. How do you replicate scientific laboratory conditions in the heat, sweat and confusion of the archaeological trenches? The mixture was highly stimulating. Aşvan, in my experience then and in my memory now, became the location for some of the most intense debates and discussions about archaeology in theory and in practice – and David French never separated the two – that I have been involved in.

What led David French to the ideas behind the project? We have to go back to his own intellectual formation, and above all to his university, Cambridge. David came to archaeology from an unexpected background. The son of an East Yorkshire policeman, who had lost his mother and elder brother in a war-time air raid, but won a scholarship to a Direct Grant School (in the UK system of the period these were private, fee-paying schools, which received a direct state grant to enable them to admit talented pupils whose families could not afford the fees), where he could get an outstanding secondary education. He excelled academically, and was steered by a very supportive schoolteacher to gain a place to study Classics (ancient Latin and Greek) at Cambridge. To achieve such access to the academic elite from David's background was not unparalleled but highly unusual. He was grateful to Cambridge throughout his career. After his retirement, living half way between Cambridge and London, he was a regular user of Cambridge libraries and donated many books to them from his own collection.

Cambridge Classics surfaced again in the second half of his career, in his 45 years of research on Roman roads and milestones, but Cambridge Archaeology was the formative influence at Aşvan. A decisive early career moment came in 1955, when he arrived in Athens and was taken on by the veteran Classical and Prehistoric Aegean archaeologist A.J.B. Wace to help study the pottery at Mycenae. That was David's first field experience. His qualities and potential were immediately recognised by Wace, Laurence Professor of Classical Archaeology at Cambridge from 1934 to 1943, excavator of Mycenae, who was then in his 70s. More important, David worked with and in 1959 was to marry Wace's daughter Elizabeth – Lisa French – also a Cambridge Classics graduate, who had gone on to specialist training in excavation and conservation. The marriage ended in divorce in 1976, but the partnership with Lisa has



Fig. 5.3. David French, 1987.

endured up to and beyond David's death in 2017. One of the last manuscripts that he completed in his incredibly productive final years, was a final report on the Middle Bronze Age pottery from the Mycenae excavations.

The partnership with Lisa was immensely important for David. At Mycenae, and subsequently at Can Hasan, she 'ran the house', insisting on extraordinarily high standards for documenting the finds, and developing recording systems which reached their final form in the first two Aşvan seasons. The consistent rigour of David's work is due in no small part to the almost competitive relationship between him and Lisa: his own rigorous and critical methods of fieldwork; her equally uncompromising approach to conservation, recording and documentation. Discoveries, and the recording of discoveries, that fell short of these standards were dismissed as being unusable for scientific purposes. This in fact was the basis of many of David's criticisms of other field archaeologists, even those who he admired and from whom he learned much. I recall his exasperated remarks about two valued colleagues and pupils of Robert Braidwood, passing through Ankara from the Çayönü excavations near Diyarbakir. Certainly they were at the forefront of theoretical speculative work on the Neolithic agricultural revolution, but what was the use of that if they could not draw potsherds and flint tools accurately? Sound hypotheses could not be developed from flawed data.

By the time of those conversations in 1970, David had already a decade of excavation experience, having dug the Chalcolithic and Bronze Age deposits of Can Hasan I, and the Neolithic levels of Can Hasan III. It was the Can III excavation, which promised to throw light on the earliest phase of settled agriculture and stock-rearing in Turkey, which most excited David and his mainly Cambridge-based excavation team. Also in this time he was writing his doctoral thesis for the Cambridge Classics Faculty, albeit on a prehistoric archaeological subject. Fieldwork must have consumed most of his time and energy during the 1960s. He was not only running his own excavation in the south Konya plain, but also carrying out surveys in western Turkey, Thessaly and Macedonia. David was from first to last a fieldworker.

He spent relatively little time during those years in Cambridge itself, but was intensely influenced by the Cambridge archaeologists of that generation. Three names stand out. One is that of David Clarke, four years younger than David French. Clarke's book, *Analytical Archaeology*, published in 1968, was a landmark in theoretical archaeology, a 500-page declaration of war against the lazy thinking and methodological unclarity which were impeding the development of archaeology as

an independent academic discipline. Modern prehistoric archaeology, at least as taught and practised in the UK, can probably be said to have been born with this book. Clarke's rigorous and uncompromising thinking, which was resisted and even ridiculed by an older generation of archaeologists, appealed directly to David's own academic temperament. At Aşvan there was almost obsessive discussion of models, of sampling methods, and of testing hypotheses. David was quite clear – you did not dig a site in the hope – or even the expectation – that something interesting would be found. You dug a site to test a hypothesis.

The second major Cambridge point of reference for Aşvan was Eric Higgs' Early Agriculture project. This ambitious enterprise, funded by the British Academy, involved archaeological and anthropological fieldwork around the world, from Africa to the Arctic. Rather surprisingly, the Higgs project did not pay much attention to northern Mesopotamia and the Middle East, the traditional cradle of agriculture. I think there was a clear expectation that this gap would be filled by David's work at Can Hasan. David had already recruited several young Cambridge students to the Can Hasan team, including Sebastian Payne, who later undertook work on the Aşvan animal bones and on the retrieval techniques required for reliable sampling methodologies. But here it must be said that Aşvan interrupted the cooperation with the Higgs project, and Can Hasan III never received the attention that it deserved. At Aşvan, Payne conducted a methodologically rigorous investigation into kill-off patterns in sheep and goats, but neither the Can Hasan III animal bones nor the botanical material have been comprehensively studied. Three student members of David French's 1968 and 1969 Aşvan teams, Geoff Bailey, Ian Davidson and Robin Dennell, stepped up to take important roles in Eric Higgs' project, before going on to notable careers in prehistoric archaeology. However, their work at Aşvan took place in the first two seasons of relatively conventional excavation, before the broader project was fully launched in 1970. Consequently, the theoretical Cambridge link-up, which looked so promising, was never properly realised.

A third major personality of this era in Cambridge was the young Colin Renfrew, who was doing his PhD at the same time and under the same supervisor as David. Renfrew was a supporter and ally of David French when he became director of the BIAA in 1968, and his books *The Emergence of Civilisation: The Cyclades and the Aegean in the 3rd Millennium BC* (1972), and *Before Civilisation, the Radiocarbon Revolution and Prehistoric Europe* (1973), attracted even more attention than Clarke's *Analytical Archaeology* (1968), which had appeared four years previously.

Renfrew became Professor of Archaeology at Southampton University in 1972, and his department provided the venue for a full-scale workshop on Aşvan, whose papers were published as the 1973 number of the journal *Anatolian Studies*.

I think that you can see from this brief sketch of the names of some of David's major contemporaries at Cambridge and of the work that they were undertaking, what linked David's work at Aşvan and at Can Hasan to the new methodologies, and the new objectives that these methodologies were setting for archaeology. This generation of Cambridge scholars formed the avant-garde of Old World archaeology, and David's work at Can Hasan and at Aşvan placed him exactly in this company. However, it is also clear that David's work did not have the impact or achieve the influence of their research and scholarship. David was not a writer on a large scale. His extraordinary standards as a field worker, and his sceptical, rigorous intellectual approach set a limit to the claims that he was prepared to make for archaeology, in print or in lectures. He insisted from first to last on the primary duty of a field scientist to distinguish between establishing the facts, collating trustworthy basic information, and then developing large-scale (or even small-scale) explanatory hypotheses. In this, as I have said in my obituary for *Anatolian Studies* 67 (2017), his intellectual approach was at the opposite pole to that of the other great British explorer of prehistoric Anatolia in the 1950s and 1960s, James Mellaart.

David was certainly aware of this limitation in his work. He had enormous respect and admiration for scholars who attempted large scale explanations – provided they respected the rules of evidence – but made no attempt himself to emulate them. This was something that I myself regret, as I can recall very many conversations in which he offered a vision of how he understood Turkey's prehistoric and more recent past, which was both convincing and highly evocative. But both at the end and throughout his career he stuck with his judgement that this was a job that could be left to other well-qualified and talented researchers. His task and his talent was to conduct fieldwork which was as ambitious and as rigorous as the speculative and innovative archaeological theorising of his ground-breaking Cambridge contemporaries. He set standards that were designed to keep archaeology honest and true to the data. Aşvan was a laboratory for a major scientific experiment. The value, as with all experiments, lay not only with the results but with the methods that were developed and applied. In this respect, his work has an enduring value and much that it can still teach us.

It remains, nevertheless, a tragedy that the Aşvan project generated such a level of mistrust and conflict between the BIAA's then relatively new director and the senior figures of the archaeological establishment who dominated the Institute's council of management. In hindsight, it is easy to see fault on both sides. The BIAA council, still highly cautious and uneasy after the Mellaart scandal, was indecisive and attempted no serious rapprochement with the director in Ankara. David French took the criticism and lack of support for his Aşvan initiatives as a final judgement on his approach to excavation. His strategy at Tille, as Stuart Blaylock's memoir makes clear, was quite different, and many of the disciplines and methodological ideas of the Aşvan project, especially those that would have tied the Institute's work to the new archaeology that had now established itself in the mainstream of most British University archaeological departments, were no longer pursued. That was a serious lost opportunity. Rather than achieving a resolution that might have led to a more dynamic and integrated excavation strategy for the BIAA, the two sides drifted away from one another. David French redirected his energies towards survey archaeology and epigraphic work, not only to pursue his research on Roman Roads and Milestones, but also as the animator of a series of major survey projects (directed by Clive Foss, Alan Hall, James Coulton, Stephen Mitchell, Geoffrey Summers, Christopher Lightfoot, Mark Whittow and others) mostly dealing with post-prehistoric periods. These became the major part of the BIAA's fieldwork for the next 20 years. The BIAA as a source of major new prehistoric discoveries stagnated in the 1980s, and high-level British work on the earliest cultures of Anatolia was only revived after David's retirement by the fresh start of excavations at Çatal Höyük, directed by Ian Hodder, a younger product of the same Cambridge environment from which David French himself had emerged.

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6. Reminiscences of David French at Tille Höyük, 1980–1990

Stuart Blaylock

My contribution comes in two parts: first a presentation about David as an archaeologist at Tille; and then some personal reminiscences.

Tille was on the west bank of the Euphrates in Adıyaman province, 75km or so upstream of the site of the Atatürk Dam (arrowed on fig. 6.1), and about 50km northeast of Samsat. For orientation, the figure shows a satellite image of the area between the Syrian border, along the lower edge of the image, and the Taurus mountains, running diagonally across the top-left corner. The work commenced in a preliminary season in 1978, and continued until it was flooded by the rising waters of the Atatürk Dam in 1991. The ‘before’ and ‘after’ pictures (figs 6.2–3) encapsulate the nature of the process, the scope of the work and the extent of the loss.

David, like all of us, was formed by his previous experiences as an excavator, and the rather bruising experience at Aşvan, related here and elsewhere by Stephen Mitchell (above, chapter 5; Mitchell 1998: 85–100), formed the immediate background to Tille. As David himself has said (in his Foreword to my monograph on the Iron Age at Tille; French 2009: vii): ‘The Aşvan project [...] had not found favour, and in 1972 a return to more traditional objectives was desired both by the British Academy and the BIAA.’ There was to be no repeat of the multi-disciplinary environmental approach which David had developed there until a later archaeological generation.

Tille (fig. 6.4) was chosen in the bidding process for sites that had taken place in the winter of 1977–78. This was still the age of the telegram, and there exists somewhere in the excavation archive the telegram sent by David Williams, then assistant director of the BIAA, to David to announce the result of the bidding for sites, in which the name of the site had been mangled (as words often were), so that it read ‘WE HAVE TOILE’, perhaps presciently, for toil there we did over the succeeding 12 years. The Council of Management of the time never viewed Tille with much favour or enthusiasm (they would have liked another Sultantepe; but might have been content with a few tablets), and were at times very critical of what we were doing in the early years (every bit as much as they had been at Aşvan). In an early season I remember the whole team being asked by David to list their credentials and experience in field

archaeology, to provide material for a response to some criticism or another. But David took the opportunity provided by a manageable mound to do something rarely, if ever, attempted before: to excavate the whole of the top of the mound, in order to recover all of the surviving architecture. Of course, this would be impossibly ambitious in many mound sites, but the quality of architectural plans recovered from Tille fully repaid this strategy, as we will see shortly. As I found when studying the Iron Age levels of Tille, one can say something with confidence about the plans and architecture of these buildings in a way that is rarely possible with the partial exposure of trench-bound plans.

To continue in David's own words (as above):

To meet this continuing desire an alternative strategy for the excavations at Tille was devised and tactics suitable to the adopted strategy were introduced, such as the chequer-board grid for trenches. The essential aims were basic: speed and control, i.e. to reveal multiple structures layer-by-layer by excavating as rapidly and on as wide an area as possible, while maintaining stratigraphic control. Some recovery procedures, such as sieving, and the non-excavational research and investigations which had been rudimentarily developed at Canhasan and then coherently expanded at Aşvan, were now abandoned. Collection of materials was confined to complete artefacts, such as pots, in situ within structures, although some non-artifactual materials – objects and sherds which caught the eye as specimens – were retained (French 2009: vii).

This rigour in collection was matched (as Stephen Mitchell has also observed) by an ‘ascetic style of publication, in which he rigorously distinguished between the accurate and precise recording of primary data and the articulation of interpretative hypotheses’ (Mitchell 2017: vi).

In my own treatment of the Iron Age material from Tille I was a little less prescriptive than this, in accepting more material as valid supporting evidence, and employing a more expansive written style, but I must acknowledge that David's rigour in insisting on absolute

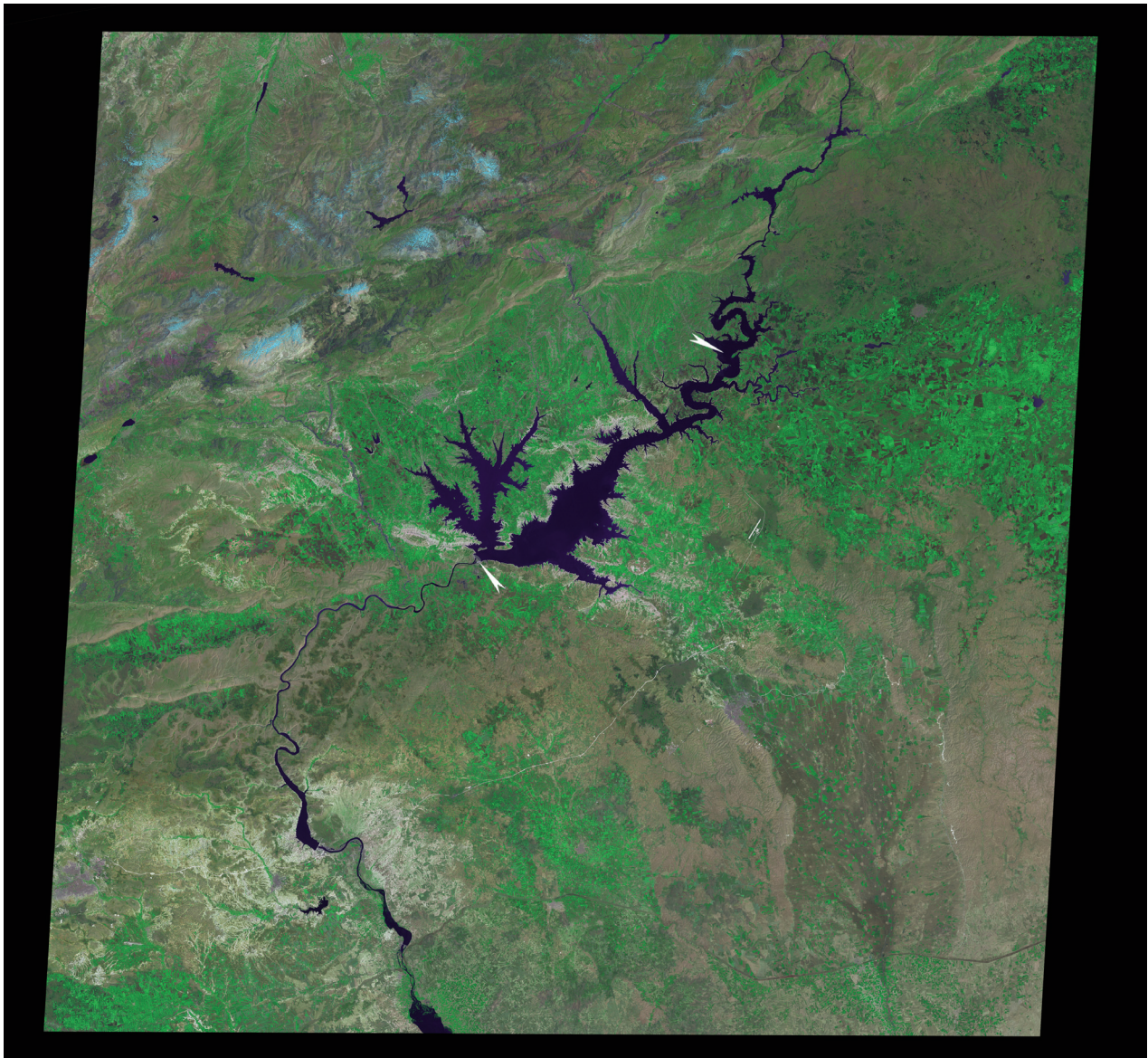


Fig. 6.1. Satellite image of the course of the lower Euphrates in Turkey in 2002, showing the Atatürk, Birecik and Carchemish Dams, with the upper part of the Tishrin Dam in Syria on the bottom edge. The position of Tille and of the Atatürk Dam are arrowed. The Turco-Syrian border runs across the bottom of the image; the Harran Plain occupies the lower right corner; and the Tauros Mountains run diagonally across the top left corner. Landsat imagery courtesy of NASA, Goddard Space Flight Center and U.S. Geological Survey (http://glovis.usgs.gov/ImgViewer/Java2ImgViewer/html?mission=LANDSAT_Archive&sensor=TM&lat=37.4&lon=38.3, accessed 27.ix.2007).

reliability in the material that could be accepted as primary evidence has stayed with me and greatly influenced my own approach to assessing reliability in all subsequent work.

David did have formidably high standards as an excavator, and could be intimidating to work for, as many new team members found. In my early days at Tille I was ticked off pretty severely for working on a section and incising lines into it with my trowel where I saw layer divisions, in preparation for later drawing (a

sensible precaution against drying out, or so it seemed to me): ‘prejudices the eye’ was David’s comment. We worked fast but David still expected accuracy, *and* tidyness, *and* straight sections, *and* workmen under control, *and* an understanding of stratification, *and* notes up to date and in order... the list goes on (and as our excavation manual [the ‘Tille Notes’] for newcomers stated tersely: ‘... secretaries are not provided.’!). But this rigour was tempered with a realism, and acceptance of mistakes, which was heartening: he saw it as far more



Fig. 6.2. The mound of Tille Höyük before excavation, looking southeast (David French, November 1978).



Fig. 6.3. The mound of Tille Höyük as an island, October 1991, after the conclusion of excavations in 1990, looking northeast (Tuğrul Çakar, BIAA slide archive no. 9045).



Fig. 6.4. The mound of Tille showing village houses dug into its southern slopes, the dig house in the foreground, looking north (Stuart Blaylock, October 1983).

important to recognise, admit to, and record mistakes than to cover them up, and in consequence we tried to operate a culture in which honesty about cock ups was welcomed rather than blamed: ‘everyone makes mistakes, only God is perfect (with apologies to James Stephens)’ was one of David’s interjections in the Tille notes, a typically obscure Frenchian literary reference to the Irish novelist’s *The Crock of Gold*, of 1912.

David’s vision for a team of highly efficient specialists was transferred in some ways to the Institute at this period, albeit focused more directly on field archaeology than with a multi-disciplinary emphasis: illustrators; conservators; plant and bone specialists; epigraphers, and above all the photographer, Tuğrul Çakar (of whom more in due course).

In the early years, when I was styled ‘site manager’, I ran the day-to-day excavation, and looked after the team, both in advance and during the season. More and more, in the later years, David was a remote presence at Tille, choosing to spend the time on his roads research and other work, and leaving Tille to Geoff Summers and myself. So from about 1988 onwards I found myself administering the excavation as well as digging, and shouldering the recruitment of workmen (aided by Mehmet Nuri, our *çavuş*), and doing the paperwork, the pay roll, the tax, the social insurance, and pretty much anything else that came my way. But David was a wise counsel and I used to find myself seeking advice on many mornings from the nearest effective telephone in Kahraman the grocer’s *bakkal* in Kahta, 30km away: our local base.

Tille became something of an exemplar for the later periods in the region of the Atatürk Dam: this was an unintended effect of David’s choice to excavate full plans from the top of the mound down. Agatha Christie writes in *Come, Tell me How you Live* (1946: 40, 42) of the disdain with which a site that turned out to be Roman or

Hellenistic was dismissed, and we should remember that even now an emphasis on supposedly ‘late’ periods remains unfashionable among excavators, especially Near-Eastern ones, many of whom still see only the virtues of prehistoric and proto-historic excavation. There were questions about the selection of a site with such an ‘overburden’ of late-historic period levels (‘criticism was levelled at the very choice of Tille for a BIAA excavation...’: David’s *Tille* ‘Foreword’ again). It follows with such a strategy that one has to take what comes and, in turn, we had medieval levels, a little Roman and significant Hellenistic occupation on the mound, going with an extensive lower settlement, sampled in the last two years, once the fields had been expropriated; then numerous Iron Age levels, formally ten in all, but more complex than that, and similar sequences of Transitional, Late Bronze Age and Middle Bronze Age occupation that were sampled in the last two seasons (1989–90), but never exposed to the same degree because of shortage of time.

As the 80s went on, and as other teams who had been working from as early as 1978 began to complete their work, it started to become apparent that the strategy of excavating whole plans was having almost by accident the valuable result of filling a gap in the overall results from the Lower Euphrates’ rescue excavations, as they were called at the time (with blissful disregard for the two-thirds of the river that extends into Syria and Iraq). In retrospect, then, despite the disfavour in which it was viewed in some quarters, Tille emerges as a much more effective and important site than it was judged at the time. The major mid.-first millennium architectural plans, particularly those of the Persian, Assyrian and Neo Hittite levels (Levels X, VIII, and IV/V in the terminology of the final report: Blaylock 2009: chapters 6–8), were distinctive in their architecture and then largely unique in north Mesopotamia, although there are now newly excavated parallels for the Neo-Hittite plans at Arslantepe, and a growing number of Neo-Assyrian buildings with pebble mosaic pavements in southeast Turkey and north Syria. The stratigraphic and architectural continuity across the Late Bronze Age, Transitional period and Early Iron Age is also a result of long-lasting significance and usefulness.

I would like briefly to turn to the Adiyaman Survey: again this was innovative and visionary and largely, if not entirely, of David’s creation. He saw that in our condition, as one of the last teams still in the field in the area, we were coming to be in a unique position to make final use of the time available for formal survey work as well as informal exploration. Here the driving force was, as Stephen Mitchell has put it in his obituary of David, his ‘vivid interest in the archaeology and natural

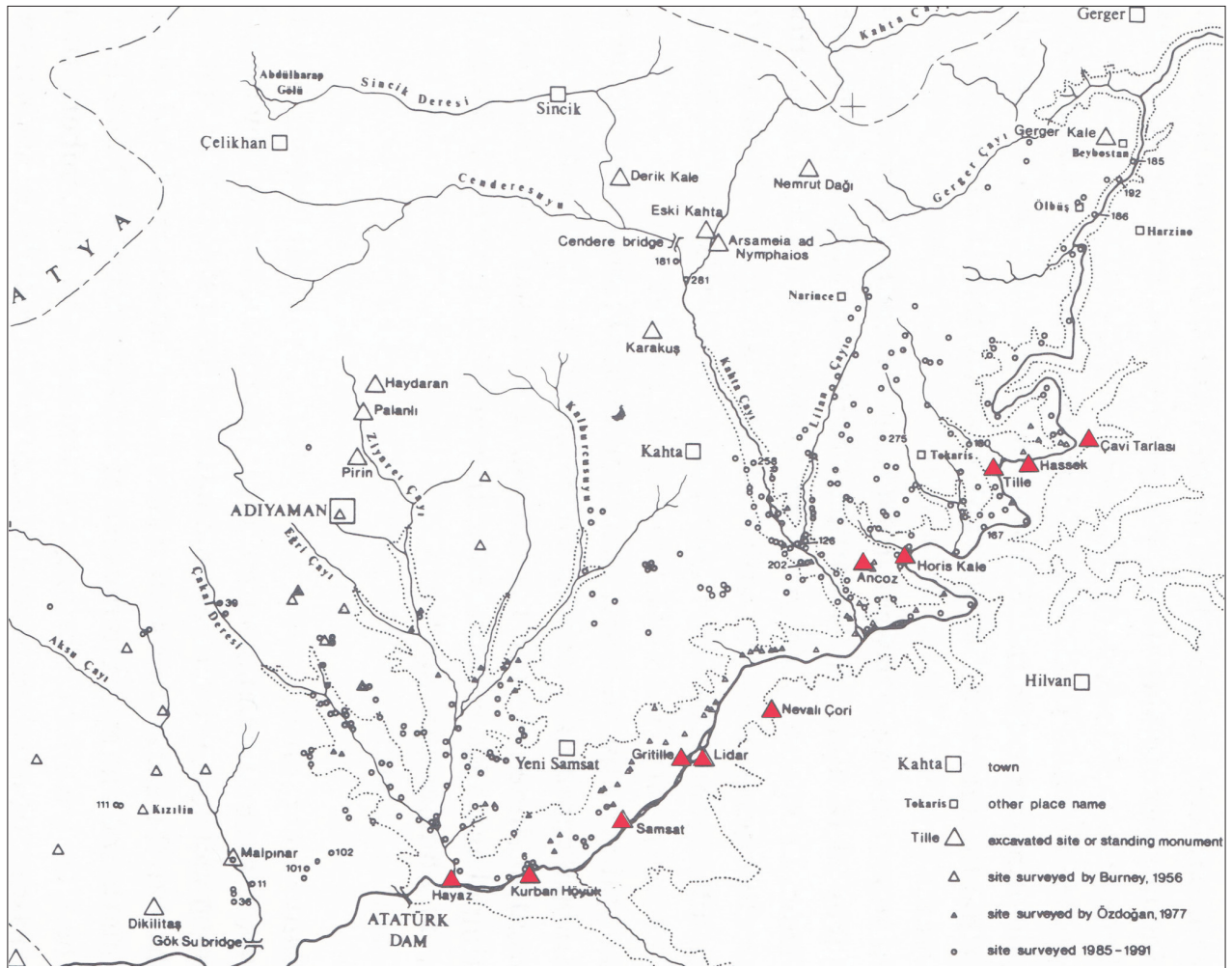


Fig. 6.5. The Adiyaman Survey. Map of the Ataturk Dam area showing archaeological sites, specifically those known from survey (small dots) in relation to excavated sites (red triangles) (Blaylock 1998: fig. 11.1, with additions).

landscapes beyond the excavated trenches' (Mitchell 2017: iv). This was amply repaid by the large number of sites that we recorded in the years 1985–1990. Necessarily we concentrated on the river valleys that were about to be flooded, although selected upland areas were sampled as well for context and balance, and in those years recorded almost 300 previously unknown sites. Although, for most of these sites, all that survives is a written description, some photographs and a bag of pot sherds, the inestimable value is the information that they provide about the context for and setting of the handful of excavated sites. These, of course, provide the detail and the dozen or so excavated sites in the region of the Ataturk Dam (shown in red in fig. 6.5) will have to stand for the hundreds of unexcavated sites now destroyed by the waters of the dam.

With surveyors Pervin Bilgen and Brian Williams added to the core team, the survey also carried out architectural recording of selected buildings and standing monuments in Adiyaman province, including two Syriac

monasteries, a medieval castle, a possible late Roman tomb tower, a Roman road-side station, a church, rock-cut tombs and dwellings, a rock-cut hermitage, and an Ottoman caravansaray. Collectively, these provide some indication of the richness of standing monuments still surviving in the region. Collection and recording of epigraphic material was another dimension of the project. One epic enterprise (and a number of photographs happen to exist to document the process) was the demolition of a village spring at Zerguz Çeşme, the site of a road-side station with a number of surviving ruined buildings, near the well-known Cendere bridge, where an inscription, face-down, of course, was said to be built into the flanking wall. Men with picks and crow bars were summoned and the inscription duly extracted (fig. 6.6) and a squeeze taken, before the spring was re-assembled. We also did a lot of informal survey and exploration by walking around the area. Sundays were our day off, and many saw an excursion with a drive and a walk to reach some inaccessible site or location; in the



Fig. 6.6. Zerguz Çeşme, a spring near the well-known Çendere Bridge, David cleaning a Roman inscription in preparation for making a squeeze (Tuğrul Çakar, BIAA slide archive 07677).



Fig. 6.7. David inspecting a section of the Samsat aqueduct channel, Euphrates river bank Autumn 1989 (Stuart Blaylock, 22 October 1989).

early years often connected with the Roman road or frontier system. David was especially proud of the 1981 discovery of the point where the Roman road along the west bank of the Euphrates cut through the promontory rock of Karababa Dağı jutting into the river, just below the site of the Atatürk Dam, a spectacular causeway and cutting immediately dubbed by him the ‘Euphrates Gates’ and published in his 1983 article on the Euphrates Frontier (French 1983: 91 and pls 7.2a–b). Sadly, soon afterwards this structure was destroyed by blasting and bulldozing to create a new road associated with the dam along the west bank of the river. I should add here that the point made to me by Harald Hauptmann on the day that both Freya Stark and Jörg Wagner had previously visited and published details of the ‘Gates’ cannot be substantiated. Both did indeed publish photographs of road cuttings in the region, but Stark’s is of a section ‘near Zeugma’ (1966: 92); Wagner’s of a section on the ascent to the Taurus near Besni (1987: 21; 2000: fig. 186).

For me some of the most memorable walks happened in the later years, when we set out to follow the river and walk much of its course between Tille and Samsat. One aim here was to get to see the surviving built portions of the aqueduct which carried water from the Kahta Çayı to Samsat, and to follow the underground conduits that carried the water for the most of its route (fig. 6.7). There were memorable walks in the autumn of 1989 (and to a lesser extent 1990), when most of the villages on the river were already abandoned, and the valley was peaceful and virtually depopulated. The knowledge that we were seeing these scenes for the last time gave added poignancy to the experience.

Raft trips on the river using an adapted version of the traditional kelek craft of the Tigris and Euphrates,

supported on inflated goatskins (replaced by inner tubes in the updated version), became one of the staples of our leisure time, again imagined and driven by David. We evolved a type and size of raft platform that could be carried on the roof rack of a minibus for the upstream journey (rafting is a one-way process, of course, traditionally used for taking firewood, and structural timber, downstream to Mesopotamia, the deflated skins being either sold or brought back by mule). There is very little more restful than being carried by the river current, often in a slowly rotating trajectory, and watching the scenery go by (fig. 6.8). In this way, between 1984 and 1988, we saw most of the valley from the river between Gerger in the Taurus to the north, and Samsat downstream, missing only the section between Samsat and the dam site, which had become out of bounds because of the real or imagined dangers of construction work and security.

In these years David also took small teams to Antakya after the dig season in December to study the distinctive late Neolithic and Chalcolithic painted pottery excavated by Leonard Woolley at Tell es-Sheikh in the Hatay. The opportunity to work in this most civilised of cities was always a very welcome antidote to the privations of places further east, and did much to aid recovery from the rigours of a long excavation season. Similar museum work on Garstang’s material from Sakçegözü took place in Gaziantep in the spring with Geoff and Francoise Summers, Tuğrul Çakar and illustrators from Ankara.

Above all, I think, David loved Turkey, and loved Turkish people; the fact that he and Pamela chose to continue to live in Turkey after retirement was testimony to this (as is shown by İlhan Bey’s tribute, below). A love of the country, and deep knowledge of and curiosity about its people, landscape and past, of course, all rank

highly among the qualities necessary for a successful director. And David, as we know, was widely loved and respected in return. He was also one of the ablest and most knowledgeable field archaeologists of his own, and any other, time. Stephen Mitchell has remarked that David had ‘a more profound understanding of the topographical history of Anatolia than any other scholar past or present’ (obituary, Mitchell 2017: 4; above, chapter 1). In August 1990, after the Iron Age conference in Van, we travelled together on a drive south and then west from Van through the Hakkari mountains to Beytüşşebap and Cizre (this was a rare time of relative peace and settled conditions in the far southeast, which made such a journey possible, although we were never quite sure whether the battle-dressed and gun-toting Kurds manning road blocks were village guards or peshmerga fighters; and it was probably just as well that we remained in ignorance). We saw some spectacular scenery and dabbled in the River Zab, before going on to fulfil the ostensible purpose of the trip: a visit to Tille to haggle over rents and wages with the village prior to the start of the excavation season. But the real purpose of the journey, by such a roundabout route, was to permit David to stay the night in two of the 67 vilayets (provinces) that he had not previously visited: Hakkari and Siirt (transient visits did not count: one had to stay overnight there!). I cannot now remember whether these were the last two on his list, but they probably were; I do recall that neither town offered very prepossessing facilities.

Much has rightly been said about David's devotion to the Institute library, and the care and attention which he devoted to building it up. I would just like to add to this that the esteem in which this resource is held by users should never be underestimated. There is hardly a practising archaeologist in Turkey who has not at some

time benefitted from this wonderful library, and who values it accordingly, and many were brought up using it. I myself speak as one of those here described: for a large part of the time I was working on Tille the library was my mainstay. This is one of those things that simply cannot be assessed in actuarial terms, but rather in terms of the long-term esteem and goodwill which it has engendered, and this is of literally incalculable benefit to the BIAA.

David was in some ways a very private person, and was sometimes misunderstood as a result. He gained a reputation as remote, even boorish, quite at odds with the individual known to those who were privileged to know him closely. This presented me with a dilemma in preparing the second half of this talk: should I reveal personal matters from conversations we have had; should I use material I know he would have liked to keep private. In the end I have chosen to keep the personal personal, but taken the wider activities of the excavation and its team as fair game, and used some of these as anecdotes here.

Mention of privacy gives rise to another matter of topical relevance: David was not easy to photograph (and I gather from the comments of others that my experience was far from unique in this respect). Out of all the time we spent together, I have relatively few photographs of him, still fewer that are any good as images; most of those I have I have used in this presentation. A picture of David at Van Kale in 1990 (fig. 6.9) worked because he was far enough away not to notice me pointing the camera until it was too late, and also too far away to remonstrate! Similarly, I have found that there are more photographs of David with his back to the camera (such as Tugrul's very evocative photograph of the site in the early morning mist seen here as fig. 6.10), than face-on.

I was fortunate in getting to know him at an early stage in my time with the Institute, and the ice was broken within a day or two of my arrival at Tille in what in retrospect was a funny way, although at the time David thought he had killed me! I had first come to Turkey in early October 1980, in time for the Tille season that was scheduled to run in that autumn. The time was not auspicious, being just after the September 1980 coup, and the various larger events which prevented the season from happening that year, and David was away for much of the time I was in Ankara. But having started to get to know the country, learn a bit of basic Turkish, and with a feeling that I was under an obligation to the Institute after my free introduction to Turkey the previous autumn, I went back to work at Tille for the spring season in 1981. We worked from dawn, about 5 am until 1 pm, then rested after lunch before returning to work in the late afternoon. We were still exploring the extent of the site at that stage, and



Fig. 6.8. Rafting on the Euphrates, 1985, note the rubber tyre tubes for flotation and the shovel used as an oar and/or rudder (Tuğrul Çakar, unnumbered image).

particularly the possible extent of the Roman and Hellenistic occupation off the mound. On one of the first afternoons four of us (David, Ann Murray, John Moore and myself) went to walk one of the fields on the slopes opposite the mound, behind the village school and one of the village springs. David and Ann were walking the top of the field, John and myself, lower down. I remember hearing David shout 'here, look at this' and looking up, straight into the westering sun, was thus blinded to the lump of Roman mortar David had lobbed in our direction. It hit me on the left forehead and I went down like a pole-axed ox. I remember nothing more until I woke up at the nearby spring, having been carried there to be swabbed down and generally revived and cleaned up. John told me later that David had crashed to his knees with his hands over his face, thinking I was down for good. I must have a hard head, because despite concussion for a few days, and a lasting dent which I bear as a reminder of the event to this day, no long-term harm seems to have been sustained. But the event did have the side-effect of eliminating any initial restraint there might have been with David at the outset, and I like to think I got on well with him from that day onwards.



Fig. 6.9. David French at Van Kalesi, Summer 1990 (Stuart Blaylock, 8 August 1990).

David taught me a lot, both explicitly and by example and for this I will always be in his debt. I have to admit that the lessons did not always come in an easy or, at the time, welcome way. As his lieutenant in the field, it often fell to me to carry out the more uncomfortable or unpleasant aspects of leadership, and more than once was I sent to sack someone, or otherwise to convey unwelcome news, while David waited in the Land Rover outside. The best that can be said of this is that it was 'character-building'.



Fig. 6.10. David French surveying the site in the morning mist, Tille Autumn 1987 (Tuğrul Çakar, BIAA slide archive 4651).

Speaking personally once more, and edging towards my conclusion, the privilege of working in this part of the world at that time is more and more apparent to me as the years go by and with changes that have come to pass. Looking back from southeast Turkey today (I am working somewhat further east in Batman province, in an area that was largely *terra incognita* to us in the 1980s) it seems almost like a different world. In 1980 none of the villages had electricity; the school and health centre were newly constructed, with immediate effect on the survival and prospects of the village children. The main road between Siverek and Kahta that crossed the Euphrates at Tille was less than ten years old. Before the bridge and the road were constructed, villagers told of a walk of eight hours or more to either place, starting with crossing the river on an inflated inner tube, the contemporary equivalent of an inflated goatskin, if the destination was Siverek. We were privileged to be working with villagers who were still in touch with the material culture of their past, some aspects of which had not changed from the times of the periods we were excavating. For example, although no one then still dug pits to store grain, their fathers' generation had, and they knew all about how to do it; excavated roof rollers and mortars that were surplus to requirements were hotly competed for to be re-used in current village houses; and tandır ovens were constructed and used for bayrams and other special occasions.

Before I finish I would like briefly to pay tribute to Tuğrul Çakar, whose death we have also mourned in 2017. We started together at Tille in the same week, in April 1981, and from then on he was an integral part of the excavation, of course as photographer (fig. 6.11), but also a close confidante of David, and a sort of liaison officer between David and the village. Over the ensuing years he continued as a close ally of David, participating in much of David's fieldwork elsewhere, as well as in many other Institute projects. Tuğrul's legion of evocative photographs ornament and enhance the final reports, as well as forming a unique archive of village life in the southeast before the displacement. His many other attainments: the exhibitions, the teaching, the books of photographs he published himself (*Suya Çağrı*, 1990; *Fırat'ı Beklerken*, 1992; *İnsanlık Halleri*, 2016), as well as the books of stories and fiction, much of it semi-autobiographical, all testify to his many talents and interests. Tuğrul was an unusual and original person, who will really be much missed by those who knew him, and I believe his contribution will be lasting and that he will come to be seen again as a leading member of the Institute of its day.



Fig. 6.11. Tuğrul Çakar at work on the photographic tower at Tille Höyük, Autumn 1990 (Stuart Blaylock).

In conclusion, I can do no better than quote Mehmet Özdoğan who, but for a prior commitment, would also have been speaking here today. Mehmet is an old friend and colleague of David's, and was one of the first to recognise the potential of the site at Tille (fig. 6 of his obituary, cited below, shows the site in 1977). The words with which he concluded his own tribute to David (Özdoğan 2017) are incomparable, I think: 'Burada söyleyebileceğimiz tek söz kendisine çok şey borçlu olduğumuzdur.' Translated this means something like: 'Here we are able to say one thing, that there are many ways in which we are in his debt.' We are all mourning his passing, and condole with his family in their loss, but chiefly we are here today to remember and celebrate the life and work of a great archaeologist, and a great man.

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7. My first excavation teacher: David French

Altan Çilingiroğlu

I enrolled in the Prehistory and Classical Archaeology Department of Istanbul University Faculty of Letters in 1964. In the first year – I guess because of the irresponsibility of my youth – I did not go to classes, but in 1966 I got a grip on myself, passed the exams successfully and became a second year undergraduate. During the first year in the department, I had acquired some basic knowledge of archaeology. However, I did not know what kind of techniques were used in excavations or in archaeological investigations. Also, I had no idea about the people digging and researching in Turkey or in nearby regions. For example, I had never heard the name of the young British archaeologist, who worked in Gordion with another archaeologist, named Rodney Young, in 1957, and did not know that the same archaeologist was working at a mound called Hacilar with James Mellaart, whose name even I, as an undergraduate, knew in those years. We were not told in our classes that this young archaeologist called David French worked in Iran at Yarim Tepe, and in Iraq at Nemrut. I had no idea that David French did research in 1965 in Jordan, and in 1968 at Pylos in Greece with Carl Blegen, whose name was also familiar to me then. It was only after many years that I learned that David, born on 30 May 1933 at a place called Bridlington in England, studied as an undergraduate at Cambridge University between 1952 and 1955 and did doctoral studies at the same institution.

During my years as an archaeology student, I had not heard of the existence of an ancient settlement called Can Hasan in the Karaman District of Konya. I only learned in the summer of 1967 that David French had been excavating this site since 1961. Oddly enough, Ulucak Höyük, where I conducted the first Neolithic excavations of Western Anatolia in 1995, to illuminate the unknown cultures of the coastal West Anatolian Neolithic Period, was actually discovered by David French in 1960, and published in 1965.

I was a 22-year-old archaeology student, and this information was not given to me during my education, and I had not had the curiosity to read about it. But ought one to be surprised and amazed at the story of a young archaeologist, now 27 years old, travelling through western Anatolia step by step, identifying ancient settlements and publishing them in a scientific magazine a few years later? A love of Anatolia, I think, seizes a place in

the hearts of people, just like David French, after they have carried out their arduous research explorations, full of hardship, with the passion and enthusiasm of their youthful years.

Following the directions of my professor, the late Halet Çambel, I had the chance in 1967 to participate in a survey conducted by the Turkish State Planning Organization. This was my first fieldwork experience. The research, conducted by a lady named Güler Huner, was a preliminary study of the impact of tourism investment being made on the Mediterranean coastline. The coastline from Antakya to Antalya was visited and archaeological sites were discovered and recorded. We stayed in official guesthouses in different cities, exploring the area and doing research. One of these guesthouses belonged to the State Water Works (Devlet Su İşleri) in Mersin. It was very difficult to communicate by phone and letter in those days. We only received letters from our distant families every two or three months. The telegraph was usually only used for emergency communications. One day I received a telegram. At first I was afraid that something had happened to my family. Thankfully, this was not the case. The telegram was composed of four words: ‘*Altan Can Hasan’a git... Halet.*’ ‘Altan go to Canhasan ... Halet.’

Halet hanım’s message to me to go to Can Hasan was not just a request but an order. I knew that my dear classmates, the late Ülge Göker and Behin Aksoy, were then in Can Hasan, and I learned that the archaeologist in charge of the excavation was David French. But I had never met him. I do not remember how and by what means I went to Konya from Mersin and from there to Karaman and Can Hasan. I do recall that around 1967, a very famous American film was showing in Turkey and influenced many young people. The velvet jackets and purple ribbons worn by several of the actors in the movie were very fashionable. I was young too and I was impressed by the heroes of *West Side Story*, so I also had a black velvet jacket on my back and a purple ribbon in my shirt collar.

I walked through a door in the wall that surrounded the Can Hasan excavation house, with my black velvet jacket thrown over my shoulder as if I were a ‘karagümrük’ punk. My Turkish colleagues on the excavation were close friends and they introduced me to



Fig. 7.1. David French with Richard Bayliss and Jeremy Baker. Afternoon iftar in a Hatay village, March 1993 (B. Claasz Coockson)

the team members. I also met David French. He looked nothing like we did. His hair was blonde and his eyes were not at all dark. He did not laugh at all, and was not too talkative. David looks at me and asks Ülge Göker, 'who is this bum?' Ülge replied, as she told me later, 'He is a good lad, David'.

The next day one of the British archaeologists took me to the hill and began to tell me about the mound. However, I hardly knew English at all. The only thing I understood from what he told me were the words 'Chalcolithic' and 'Early Bronze Age' that I had heard in college classes.

David gave me four workers, and he indicated that he wanted me to work in a trench. I remember that one of the workers was called Hasan. I asked him what they did in the trench. The answer was, 'we dig'.

However, I had not participated in any excavations. I had no idea how to excavate, or how to record the artefacts. I sat down next to the trench, and sat there a little longer. The trench was about 4–5m deep, but the trench walls were very irregular. I thought that the least damaging thing I could do was to cut the trench walls to a vertical angle, and that is what I did. After the afternoon tea-break, Ülge Göker approached me, 'Altan, David approves of you very much'. This remark surprised me. However, in the excavations that I made in the following years, I always attached importance to cutting the trench walls as straight as possible. In the following days, I learned about excavation techniques and how to draw

trench plans from David French himself. In those years, there were no theodolites or total stations. The drawings were made with a triangulation technique, using a string attached to a nail at fixed point in the trench. David worked hard to show me how to record on paper the work that had been done in the trench. He showed how the sections of the trench sides should be drawn. Measurements were taken and drawings were made with the help of strings stretched parallel at fixed intervals along the trench sides. This is why he personally was my first excavation teacher. He did not talk much during the excavation, he always remained very serious and did not make jokes, but he taught me and he made me trust myself.

I do not remember any of the other team members in the Can Hasan excavation in 1967, but I have never forgotten the genuine sincerity of Cressida Ridley, who presented me with a book on minerals and rocks. I also always remember in every detail how I learned to cut a breakfast egg with a sharp knife.

Of course, a Land Rover is used for transport in a British excavation. It is a good off-road vehicle, but the seating areas at the back are very uncomfortable for the passengers. On a rest day we went on an excursion as an excavation team with two vehicles, and had to drive along a new, unfinished and muddy road. I naturally sat in the back seat of the Land Rover. Some of the team, including Cressida Ridley, were in the other car, which was not an off-road vehicle. It was raining and the car

began to slip in the mud, sliding dangerously from the road into a deep ditch. No-one else intervened to stop this, but I took off my shoes and socks, jumped out of the back of the Land Rover and ran to prevent the sliding car from slipping further. This reaction matched the meaning of the name *Atılgan* 'Dashing', used in our family. I think the episode sealed David's affection for me.

As I learned more about archaeology, I learned that David French excavated between 1968 and 1973 at Aşvan Höyük, which was to be flooded by the Keban Dam Lake near Elazığ. Rescue excavations of a similar kind continued in the area above the Karakaya dam, where he began to excavate at Tille Höyük near Adıyaman in 1978 and made important discoveries. I was working at Erzurum Atatürk University in 1978 as an assistant. In the same year Tomris Bakır and I started an excavation in at Kaleköy in Elazığ province, another settlement in the Karakaya dam area, where I tried to apply some of the methods and techniques that I had been taught at Can Hasan, and I was proud of being able to lead an excavation in the same cultural rescue area as his Tille project. David French's work is not limited to these successful excavation projects. All our colleagues know the work on the Roman Roads and Milestones of Anatolia, which started in 1974 and his publications on this topic which appeared between 2012 and 2017.

I was delighted to hear that he had become the director of the British Archaeological Institute in Ankara in 1968. After all, my *hoca* in Can Hasan, even if he was my excavation director for only one season, was now the director of the Institute. He continued this task successfully until 1994. If this term had been longer, he could have continued to make contributions to Anatolian archaeology for many more years. But unfortunately this was not to be.

In 1984 we organised a symposium, on the Anatolian Iron Ages, at the Protohistory and Near Eastern Archaeology Department of Izmir Ege University. I typed the Iron Age symposium papers on a typewriter equipped with a screen, one of the 'Word Processors' that came on the market in those years, and only 300 copies were printed. The second Symposium was again held in Izmir, in 1987, with many more scholars in attendance and making presentations. We really wanted the book to be published by a foreign institution. This is where the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara and its director David French came to our aid.

The third Anatolian Iron Ages symposium took place in Van on August 1990. The collaboration of the British Institute of Archaeology in the previous symposium, and David French's contribution, was one of the basic factors in ensuring success and broad participation at the Van symposium. He himself participated in this symposium

and gave us moral support. Important scientists from Anatolia and neighbouring countries, with interests in Iron Age Anatolia, came to Van and presented papers. I would like to mention, as far as I remember, the names of these researchers, some of whom have sadly died: Earl Ertman, Dominique Collon, Little Gonnet, David Hawkins, Wolfram Kleiss, Oscar White Muscarella, Olivier Pelon, Andrew and Nancy Ramage, Julian Reade, Lynn Roller, Karen Robinson, Mirjo Salvini, Kenneth Sams, Geoffrey Summers, David Ussishkin, Veli Sevin, May Tadmor, Taner Tarhan, Mary Voigt, Robert Henrickson, Peter Calmayer, Ursula Seidl, and my dear PhD supervisor, Charles Burney.

David French and I acted as co-editors of *Anatolian Iron Ages* 2 and 3, and the books were published by Oxbow publications in the BIAA series (Çilingiroğlu, French 1991, 1994). David was my main supporter in ensuring that the articles by these scholars were duly published. *Anatolian Iron Ages* 4 and 5 were also produced and marketed by the efforts of the Ankara British Archaeological Institute, the fourth book being edited by Roger Matthews and myself (1999), and fifth by Gareth Darbyshire (2005). I confess that between them David French, Roger Matthews and Gareth Darbyshire had done much of the joint editorial work.



Fig. 7.2. David French at Damlacık in 1994.

My first excavation teacher's assistance continued in these years. It is not possible to forget how the conversation with Turkish colleagues in the common room of the building in Istanbul University, where a symposium was being held, bubbled and babbled, *kaynatmamızı*, according to the Turkish expression. Taner Tarhan, Veli Sevin and my wife Mukadder Çilingiroğlu also took place in the hubbub of talk. We cannot forget that David, known as a serious person, made childish jokes and laughed uproariously. During our conversation he told us, 'Be alive my friends; I am happy to have friends like you.' I never really understood why he was saying that.

I remember visiting the British Institute of Archaeology a few times in the next few years and drinking tea with biscuits, sometimes with David and sometimes with other friends. In October 1994, David came to us in Izmir, and stayed in my village house, three kilometres from the Ulucak mound. We visited the plateau of Damlacık Village, the surroundings and Ulucak Höyük itself. We had done our first preliminary work in the summer of 1994, but the excavation had not yet begun. This was David's first chance to visit the site since 1960. Years after that, while the Ulucak excavation continued, we found an English penny, which was dated 1953, in a 2m-deep trench. My students' first thought was that this was proof of David French's original visit to Ulucak.

We spent a few days in Damlacık Village. David was more subdued than usual, a bit upset and a little sad. I wanted to learn why, without insisting; he did not say much, but only said, 'I cannot stand the injustices that have been done'. I realised then that his eyes were wet (Fig. 7.2).

These are the things I recall about David French. I remember Shalmanasar, Tukulti-Ninurta, Ishpuini and even Uadkun, Bargun, Saluha and Rusa-i -Uru-Tur. I even remember the mountains smelling of cherry blossom in the records of Sargon's eighth campaign against Urartu and the horse-raising Sangibutu Country. But there are gaps in my memories of the old days and there are many things in the past that I cannot remember. However, I have never forgotten that dear David French was a well-equipped and talented archaeologist, a great lover of Anatolia and a very good friend.

Please forgive my remarks. The event today, which shows that even his own country has made time to appreciate his life and achievements, has made me and David's friends very happy.

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8. David French, founder of the BIAA Research Centre

Lutgarde Vandeput

The speakers at the memorial colloquium on 30 September 2017 in the Erimtan Museum have highlighted many different aspects of David French's life and personality, both as a scholar and as an individual. As the third director of the BIAA after David, I want to try and concentrate on David as director of the British Institute at Ankara or, as it was called in his days, the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara. In Turkish, people referred to the institute mostly as 'İngiliz Arkeoloji', and that is still the case today. It was in his role as director of the BIAA that David was probably in contact with the largest number of people, both in Turkey and in the UK.

Being his third successor entails both advantages and disadvantages for this task. Quite a few years passed between 1994, the year that David left the BIAA, and 2006, when I took over from Hugh Elton. I am at a disadvantage, because, as Gina Coulthard, the long-term editor of *Anatolian Studies*, remarked when she heard about the memorial event for David, 'It can't be easy putting together a public event about such a private man!'

However, the fact that quite a few years have passed since 1994 also means that many years have passed since the end of his directorship. When we sent out requests to contribute to the memorial event by submitting personal memories of David, we had many reactions, and also reactions of very different natures ranging from very positive to equally negative. The varied negative reactions tended to come from UK colleagues and are based on events long past. They mostly referred to David's sometimes brusque manner towards those he knew less well, or to difficult relations with the council of the BIAA in London. A proverb we have in Flemish comes to mind, that can be translated as, 'High trees catch a lot of wind'. Of course, there is a similar Turkish proverb, this language being so rich with them: 'Meyve veren ağacı taşlarlar' – 'They throw stones at trees that bear a lot of fruit'. I think that combined, these perfectly relate the situation. David French did touch many people's lives in his role of director of the BIAA.



Fig. 8.1. David French at the BIAA in 2013.

I had the chance to work with Stephen Mitchell and David French on the Temple of Augustus in Ankara in the early 2000s. What struck me then was the respect with which he approached Turkey, Turkish people and Turkish culture, a respect that was also apparent in his use of the language, which he spoke really well. It was therefore totally undeserved that his Turkish was classified as ‘Tarzanca’ by somebody working at one of the many museums David visited for his research. This is a story, by the way, that David himself told me with a smile on his face. His respectful attitude towards Turkey and its inhabitants has been acknowledged by many of his colleagues and is reflected in his own acknowledgements to *Canhasan I: Stratigraphy and Structures*. He writes:

The Turkish authorities always looked on the case of Canhasan, both during and after the excavation, with the utmost patience and dealt benignly with a wayward director who chose to abandon the site in favour of rescue archaeology on the River Euphrates. Certainly during my thirty-six years in Turkish archaeology I received not one word of reproach for my decisions, though I did hear the gentlest of regrets, that I had not done more at Canhasan. I respect the privilege which was given me and I honour the forbearance which the host extended to the guest. In dedicating this book to my many Turkish hosts I wish to acknowledge the hospitality, the *misafirperverlik* (French 1998: vi).

David started coming to the BIAA long before he became the Institute’s director, more specifically in the late 1950s, when he was appointed senior fellow. Shortly afterward, he started his PhD at Cambridge University and, during these years, he excavated widely in Greece, Iraq, Jordan and – of course – in Turkey, first at Gordion and Hacilar, and between 1961 and 1968 at Canhasan. It is during these years that he undertook his main research excavations on prehistoric Anatolia. His ground-breaking research introduced standardised methodologies for survey and pottery classification still in use today.

In 1968, he became involved in the international efforts to carry out rescue excavations of sites that were due to be flooded by the Keban Dam in the valley of the Euphrates. That also meant the end of his research excavations, to which he never managed to return.

In the same year (1968), David became director of the British Institute at Ankara at the age of 35 and held the position for 26 years. As such, he played a major role in the policy development of the Institute. The title of this contribution reads: ‘David French, founder of the BIAA

Research Centre’, because the BIAA owes its standing as a research centre in Ankara largely to David’s vision. During his directorship, the Institute enjoyed its heyday, with a large staff at Ankara and a wide range of projects.

For a start, we owe the current BIAA premises to David. When he took over from Michael Gough in 1968, the institute was housed in a villa-like structure, Tahrân Caddesi 25, on the opposite side of the crossroads of Tahrân Caddesi and Bülten Sokak. After a brief period when the Institute was crammed into flats in Bülten Sokak 22, David moved it to Tahrân Caddesi 24, a property on a totally different scale, fit to accommodate the transformation of the BIAA from a place with a modest library where British scholars had a base for fieldwork, into a true research centre. It served the Institute excellently until the very recent move, in 2018, to new premises at Atatürk Bulvarı 154.

As mentioned before, David is very often recognised for the rigorous methodology and meticulous recording at the excavations he led. I again quote from the first volume that was published on his excavation at Canhasan, where he worked from 1961 to 1970. In the preface to *Canhasan Sites I*, published only in 1998, he wrote:

There is a mental ease to be won from nostalgia and reminiscence and in the preparation of this volume I have felt the pleasure of both emotions. At the same time, I have come fully to accept the essential anachronism of the publication. Perhaps obscured in 1968, the inadequacies of approach, technique and interpretation, are today an embarrassment. In my view these inadequacies have become so magnified that the originality, such as it was, of the enterprise has mutated into an historical event of little substance and, I suspect, now of little relevance, a conclusion enforced neither by conscience nor by guilt but by reality (French 1998: v).

His harsh verdict on his own achievements at Canhasan was without any doubt influenced by what he realised during his later fieldwork for the rescue excavations. His most innovative contribution to archaeological methodology in Turkey is indeed linked to the rescue excavations he carried out at Aşvan. This site was assigned to the BIAA when he answered positively to the call of Turkish authorities to take part in rescue excavations on the Euphrates before the area was flooded due to the construction of the Keban dam. The project at Aşvan Kale and its neighbouring sites became the Institute’s principal project for six seasons, and a project which would become exemplary for a new approach, in which not only the material remains were studied, but where

‘total recovery’ represented the aim. The reason behind this aim was the reconstruction of the ancient environment of the Aşvan sites, for which organic material, animal bone, wood samples and especially botanical remains were a necessity.

As Stuart Blaylock’s account confirms, these methods were adapted between 1979 and 1990 for the excavations at Tille Höyük, a mound site in the Province of Adiyaman, which was part of the GAP rescue project connected to the building of the Karakaya hydroelectric dam. Photographically, these excavations are especially well documented thanks to the presence of the then BIAA in-house photographer, Tuğrul Çakar. Sadly, Tuğrul also passed away in 2017. He was a good friend of David, who left an archive of wonderful photographs and slides, and can be seen on scaffolding, photographing the excavation at Tille, in an illustration to Stuart Blaylock’s contribution (fig. 6.11). Important however, is that he not only meticulously recorded the excavations, but also local village life. This was important for the ethnographic and anthropological studies that formed part of David’s research policy and allowed comparisons with the excavated remains. By leaving us these stunning and vivid impressions of the life of the villagers and later of the progress of the rising waters of the dam, Tuğrul Bey created a unique – and sometimes very sad – historical archive on different levels, for which the BIAA will always remain grateful.

David transferred his vision for excavation to the institute itself. If excavations were meant to aim for total recovery, then the BIAA research centre was to be equipped in a way that could support these endeavours. Under his direction, the BIAA was transformed from being primarily a base for excavations and field projects, into a major regional research centre, designed to sustain front-line scholarly work across a range of disciplines.

Central to this achievement was the expansion of the library, now one of the main collections on Anatolian archaeology in Turkey, which David built up over the years with the help of designated assistant directors. The library is still organised according to David’s classifications, based on Cambridge University library systems.

Environmental studies linked to the excavations were heavily dependent on comparative research to provide a base for reconstructing the zoological and botanical contexts of ancient sites. For this reason, reference collections of animal bones and seeds, as well as a herbarium, were built up over the years. David had already begun this labour of converting the BIAA in the very first years of his directorship, as the lecture marking the 25th anniversary of the institute and delivered by

Seton Lloyd at the British Academy in London in February 1973 clearly shows (Lloyd 1974: 197–220). Seton Lloyd himself was director of the BIAA from 1949 to 1961, and he observed in the publication of his lecture,

when I visited the Ankara establishment in the spring of last year (spring 1972), I found one room on the first floor occupied by our present Assistant-director, Sebastian Payne, who is a bone specialist. He was working, not only on material from our own excavations, but on collections sent in by Turkish colleagues for examination. In another room sat an Institute Fellow, Mr Hillman, surrounded by all the most up-to-date equipment for identifying plant remains, and a unique collection of comparative material. All these developments seem to me to fit into the traditional line of archaeological enquiry. And, if further relevant information is to be gained by including in one’s excavation staff a palaeo-zoologist, an ornithologist or even a social-anthropologist, the resulting team is no different from that which Robert Braidwood brought out to the Near East in 1949 (Lloyd 1974: 219–20).

Robert Braidwood indeed was one of the main pioneers in scientific archaeology, and a leader in the field of Near Eastern Prehistory, but David remains the first to apply these methods in Turkey, an achievement which the BIAA council seems to have had some difficulties acknowledging. The point is well illustrated by the following remarks in Seton Lloyd’s lecture:

Fortunately in the case of Keban, owing to the foresight of the Turkish Historical Society and other institutions, everything was arranged well in advance, and our excavators have not been pressed for time. This has made it possible for Dr. French to experiment with what is still a rather unfamiliar approach. He has been able to combine his actual ‘spade work’ with a whole series of related studies in environmental and anthropological sciences. ... Since I have referred to this as an ‘unfamiliar’ approach to archaeology, I must correct that by reminding you that there is nothing in the least new about the underlying principle upon which it depends (Lloyd 1974: 219).

As the *Anatolian Studies* obituary for David eloquently puts it: ‘the veteran archaeologists on the BIAA Council of Management did not hide their lack of sympathy for David’s avant-garde Aşvan project’ (Mitchell 2017: v), and this again is illustrated in Seton Lloyd’s address, especially where he refers to the New Archaeology approach:



Fig. 8.2. Three BIAA directors. Hugh Elton (2001–2006), David French (1968–1994), Lutgarde Vandepuit (2006–present).

But when all this is said and done, there remains the culminating task of synthesising and interpreting the whole accumulation of evidence that has been acquired. And at this point, I myself become rather out of my depth, because it becomes necessary to invoke the principles of what is, to my mind rather tiresomely, called ‘the New Archaeology’. ... But most of the dialectical exercises [i.e., phrases used in New Archaeology discourse] are more properly associated with the interpretation of evidence acquired in the field, and could well be of less interest to our actual field-workers, whose job it is to collect it (Lloyd 1974: 220).

Ironically, of course, sticking too austerely to publishing the ‘hard evidence only’ is one of the criticisms often made of David French’s own publication style.

But back to David and the Ankara research centre. As illustrated above, over the years, David and his team managed to create and organise major reference collections of botanical and faunal specimens. In addition, an archaeological collection was created, more specifically of pottery sherds from all over Turkey and from all periods, ranging from the oldest ceramics to the Ottoman period, collected during surveys and brought to the institute in the years when this was still permitted by the Turkish regulations.

The latest BIAA collection to be formed, from thousands of epigraphic squeezes from all over Anatolia, relates to David’s other big project, his study of ancient road systems and of the Roman milestones. He started working on this project in 1973 and continued fieldwork till the mid-90s, criss-crossing the country accompanied by a Turkish representative of the General Directorate only. The squeeze collection, however, houses material collected by many other epigraphers too. Whereas the pottery collection is static, the other collections are still growing today, albeit at a slower pace.

During his directorship, the rescue excavations led by David were the only major excavation projects under the auspices of the BIAA, and this situation did not change until Ian Hodder started his work at Çatalhöyük in 1993. Unlike excavation work, however, David supported a number of archaeological surveys during the years that he was in charge of the BIAA, thus boosting survey archaeology in Turkey.

The beginning of the 1990s brought major changes for the Institute when David retired. This – in short – was the end of an era for the BIAA. It was not, however, the end of all relations between David and the BIAA and I would like to briefly bring the story up to today. Till the end of the 90s, there was not much interaction between David and the institute. During these years, David concentrated on publishing the results of his fieldwork.

Canhasan I, the publication I mentioned earlier, is one of the products of these years. The early 2000s saw a different situation. Not only did David return to Ankara, when he and Stephen Mitchell undertook to complete the record of all Ankara's inscriptions in order to publish the city's corpus, he also met up with other colleagues to discuss roads and milestones.

At that time, David also made his peace with the BIAA and became a regular visitor. This was increasingly happening when Hugh Elton, my predecessor, was director. As long as I have been in post, since 2006, David and his wife Pam visited the institute at least four times a year, when they were on their way to or returning from the seaside house they had bought near Anamur. These visits were not just ordinary visits. We always had lengthy work-related discussions in which David brought me up to date with what he had been working on. David worked hard, for instance, on the organisation of his, and therefore the institute's, photographic archives. He also regularly reminded me of the preciousness of the map collection, owned by the BIAA and made sure that they all were in good order.

His greatest achievement of the last years, however, relates to his epigraphic work. Not only did he devote several weeks at the BIAA with Stephen Mitchell to documenting the institute's squeeze collection in prepa-

ration for its digitisation, he also managed to finish ten volumes of his work on routes and roads, volumes that are now available to download on the website of the BIAA (<http://biaa.ac.uk/publications/item/name/electronic-monographs>).

During the years that I have been at the BIAA, David and Pam were always welcome visitors. Not only could we 'pick their brains' about the institute's past, they were genuinely interested in the research of the newly arrived post-doctoral fellows or in any other institute-related matter that was keeping us busy at the moment of their stay. In spite of the fact that the institute has developed in new directions and has taken on a much wider range of disciplines than in his days, I never heard David criticising this turn of events. He remained interested in all that was being researched. We do miss his visits!

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Fig. 8.3. David French c. 1990 (Tugrul Çakar).

9. My friend David French

İlhan Temizsoy

I would like to offer grateful thanks to the British Institute at Ankara for extending this invitation to me to speak at this gathering to commemorate a most distinguished scholar, David French. The distinguished speakers who have preceded me have presented you with his scholarly personality. I would like to offer a portrait of David French as a good colleague and friend, a good man and a good neighbour.

I first came to know David French through my position in Karaman Museum in 1972, and the beginnings of our friendship go back 45 years. Between 1961 and 1970 David French had carried out excavations at two separate hüyük at Can Hasan village near Karaman, and the small finds that came from these excavations were brought for safe storage to Karaman Museum. David bey's excavation reports and publications appeared over many years, and the final results were presented to the scholarly world in three volumes. These works were in every way appreciated.

During the time that I was at Karaman, between 1972 and 1985, our friendship arose out of this work. After I came to take up duties at Ankara in 1985, first at the General Directorate of Antiquities and Museums at the Ministry of Culture, and then at the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, our professional association developed into a real friendship. A part of the memories that I want to share with you took place at the Roman Baths in Ankara and I would like to provide a few words of explanation about these very important ancient ruins.

In the early years after the creation of the Turkish Republic, inscriptions, milestones, grave steles and architectural blocks that had been collected in Ankara and the small towns of Ankara province from various periods were brought to the Roman Baths, and the inscribed and decorated pieces were left scattered at random, face down to the earth. Here our objective was to organise them so that they were protected from various sources of external damage. Over the years, over 1,500 objects had been collected. In 1991 as part of my museum duties we began to classify these objects and organise their display, so that an open-air museum could take shape at the Roman Baths (fig. 9.1).

At an advanced stage of this work I asked David bey if he could undertake the publication of these inscriptions. In answer to my request he asked what were the intentions of other researchers working on this material.

As far as I knew, up to that time no application had been made by anyone else regarding this material, and for this reason it was unnecessary to make any further enquiries. At this point David did not at once take up my request, but his reminder to me that there might be other scholars working on this material was a beautiful example of the consideration he showed for others.

David's work on the inscriptions of Ankara continued for several years. When *The Inscriptions of Ankara* was published as the conclusion of this research (French 2003), he donated all the copyright to the Anatolian Civilizations Museum without any material requirement and only asked that he take the very small number of 25 copies, which he could give to close colleagues and some scientific institutions. That is an excellent example of how he conducted himself (fig. 9.2).

I would like to share two memories with you of David's love and enthusiasm for his profession that he demonstrated while he was writing this book. The first concerns a gravestone that dates to the end of the first century AD. But the story of this gravestone stretched back 500 years. This was how David bey himself explained the story to us. In the year 1555 Ferdinand I, the emperor of Austria, sent an ambassador to meet Sultan Süleyman. When the ambassador, Ghiselin de Busbecq, reached Istanbul he learned that the Court had gone to Amasya, and the members of the government had reached Amasya by way of Ankara. According to the information we have today, Busbecq was the first western visitor to Ankara. He stayed at Ankara for a few days and during this visit copies were made of various



Fig. 9.1. David French in the Roman Baths, Ankara (photo: Ankara Museum).

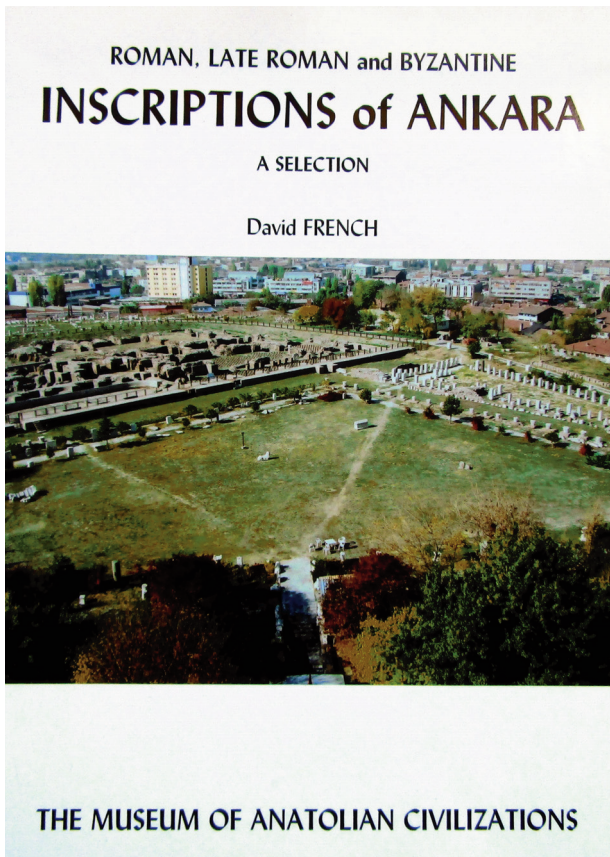


Fig. 9.2. Cover photograph of David French's publication of the inscriptions of Ankara, published by the Friends of the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations.

inscriptions that he saw. When he returned to his own country, he passed on information about this to his readers in the letters that he wrote about his journey. One of these items was the inscription that I mentioned earlier. In the following centuries this gravestone was one of those recorded by other travellers, but it had not been seen since 1950. No one knows how the stone was brought to the Roman Baths. The inscription on the tomb stone had not been recognised for many years as it was face down to the earth. I can hardly describe David bey's excitement when it came to light during our work. He shouted to me 'Ilhan bey, it hasn't been lost, but here it is, undamaged, exactly in its original state,' and his words conveyed his enthusiasm. This was the joy of meeting a long-lost friend after many years.

My second memory is of a rainy autumn day in 2000, approaching evening. David bey had completed the work he was doing in Anatolia and was on the way back to England. He paid a call on me to say goodbye. We were drinking tea, and I explained that in the course of the work at the Roman baths we had come across a magnificent 1.70m-high inscription for the emperor Vespasian, with a very clear inscription carved in letters 5–6cm

high. I cannot describe to you the excitement in his voice as he heard about it. He insisted that we go to the Roman Baths, saying that he was extremely eager to see the inscription. I said that I could take a photograph of the inscription the next day and send it to him in England, but to no avail. He had put all thoughts that he might be going to England a few hours later out of his mind. We went to the Baths. In the dusk, beneath an umbrella and by the light of a torch he read the inscription, and shouted to me, 'Ilhan bey, look at this inscription. It is worth all the trouble and bother. This is the first time that an inscription of this sort has come to light.' He explained that the inscription was set up in Ankara in the period of the emperor Vespasianus by an association or club of veteran soldiers, and it provided information about the function of this association. It is impossible to describe how happy David was with this. After 2,000 years the inscription's words were being seen by him for the first time, and for the first time passed on to be seen by the scholarly world. I think that I myself am very lucky to have witnessed such a rare moment (fig. 9.3).

At the beginning of my talk I mentioned that David's activities at Karaman stretched over many years, the work of a well-known and highly respected scholar. I would like to share two memories with you of remarks that he made himself. Opposite the Karaman Museum stands the small Seljuk mosque of Vali Saadettin Ali Bey, built in AD 1245. During Friday prayers the mosque's imam made this address to the assembled worshippers: 'A foreign gentleman has been carrying out researches for many years and is doing Turkey a great service. I ask you to give him assistance in any of the things he is doing, if ever he needs your help.' David was very moved by this conduct. He was very happy that a man of religion, who had had no contact with him, showed him so much respect and asked the people that they also treat him in the same way.

After living for many years in Turkey David was very much used to Turkish food, but his favourite dishes were kuru fasulya and pilav. Throughout the time that he stayed in Karaman he became a close friend of the owner of the Bir Tat Lokantasi, where he always went to eat. As he always ate the same things, the owner came up to him one day and very politely said, 'Beyefendi, our other dishes are also very delicious. Wouldn't you like to try them?' But David never gave up on his favourites.

When he came to Karaman in 2002 to work on the publication of the Canhasan excavation he telephoned me to say that he had finished work on the Ankara inscriptions book, and that if I could come to Karaman we could pass our eyes over the book together. I would like to call attention to David's sensitivity and respect in these matters. In reply I suggested that he should come to



Fig. 9.3. Inscription mentioning the veterans' association at Roman Ankara (photo: Ankara Museum).

see me in our summer house near Anamur. I said that we could both take a look at the book and enjoy some time at the seaside. He was delighted and accepted my offer. He came to our summer place and stayed with us for a few days. He liked the little seaside settlement so much, that when he left he asked if I would let him and his wife Pamela stay in the house together for a week. We said that we would be delighted, and he and his wife came for a stay. Now they liked the settlement so much that they bought their own house there. They came regularly every year in from May to June, and from September to October, and we established a deep friendship, based on mutual affection and respect, over 13 years.

During the last years of his life David devoted a lot of effort to the publication of the Canhasan excavation reports, and the results were presented to the academic world in three volumes. Another great service that he did was to donate his academic professional books to the library of Bursa Uludag University, that is, 35 cartons containing hundreds of books, a fine example for us to follow.

David and his wife Pamela were very interested in the natural world. They were especially knowledgeable about migratory birds and every year used to visit the bird reserve in the Göksu river delta near Silifke, which gave them a lot of pleasure. They also used to watch out for the migratory birds coming to the stream bed next to our site with keen interest.

We might have had many more years of neighbourly friendship in our community. We met in the afternoons to drink tea and coffee, and conversations about his childhood and his family brought us close together. When I called him David ağabey, his smile was really worth seeing. The last time that they came to visit was in May 2016, and they stayed until the end of June.

I am very happy to tell you that David's neighbour from the house opposite, Sezin Erzev, is another who shares these memories of him, and recalls how David came out onto the grassy mound between their two houses, raised both hands before him and exclaimed, 'With a beautiful sea on one side, forest-covered mountains on the other, a clear blue sky and a garden full of flowers, can there be a greater happiness in one's life?'

Fifty-five families live in our settlement. As neighbours our telephones are linked up by a WhatsApp system, and as neighbours we share information with one another. This was how I passed on the news about David's death. Every one of our neighbours has expressed their sadness and condolences. This is another good example of how respected and loved he was wherever he went.

David Bey, you lived a happy, peaceful and respected life with your family, children and grandchildren. I believe now that you are resting in peace, I bow before your memory with respect.

Bibliography

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