ABSTRACT

TITLE:	How Men and Women Became Leopards: Comparing the Textiles and Artwork of atalhyk, Turkey
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ABSTRACT: The Neolithic village of atalhyk has provided significant insight into the daily life of early Eurasia. atalhyk has provided archaeologists with textile artifacts dated from 6000-7400 B.C.E. Textiles were used as an everyday item in households for clothing, matting for floors, and even to wrap the dead before being buried. Even though textiles have been excavated in the houses and burials, it is not depicted as much in artwork at atalhyk. The depictions of people at atalhyk shows men and women wearing leopard skins as clothing in lieu of the textiles. Leopards lived in the same area as atalhyk, but almost no leopard faunal remains are found in the excavations. Strange that an animal that is depicted so much in art would barely be found at a village as large as atalhyk. None of the excavations at atalhyk have even found a leopard skin. The disparity between the textiles that have been found and leopard skins that have not indicates a relationship with the leopard skins, or the idea of the skin, that was not seen in the textiles. The depiction of people using leopard skins as clothing, when compared to the physical evidence of leopards, shows a record of social relationships and familial identity. Furthermore, the depictions of leopards at the village compared to the physical evidence shows a special relationship with the leopard not seen with the other animals present in the area of atalhyk during this same time period. I will show this through comparisons between textiles and the depictions of leopard skins, with additional references to artwork and burials at the village.