Bronze Age Tell Communities in Context

An exploration into culture, society, and the study of European prehistory – Part 1

Tobias L. Kienlin

A Pástidomb rétege

70‰ Humusz
Kevés hamuval

25‰ Löszös agyag

19‰ Homokos szentörmelékes agyag
10‰ Homokos agyag
18‰ Szeneshamus 1-27-es rétegek
14‰ Szenes homokos agyag-

36‰ Homokos szentörmelékes agyag
6‰ Mint fölső de több szen
15‰ Homokos agyag
5‰ Szenes agyag
agyag
10‰ Agyag sok szennel
3‰ Szenesebb agyag
3‰ Égetett agyag

40‰ Rétegei nélküli homokos agyag hamuval

A gerendák valószinü kötésmódja

A padlózás.

A Pásti domb keletkezése:
Az ember ottlakása folytán rétegesen felhalmozódó hulladék, törmelék, hamu, padlóagyag stb. emelte a dombot [Vázlat].

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Part 1: Critique

Europe and the Mediterranean

Tobias L. Kienlin

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Foreword and Acknowledgements

This study was conceived a couple of years ago, when my interest started shifting from aspects of early metallurgy to settlement archaeology, materiality and the social logic of space – in particular to those fascinating settlement mounds and monuments of long-term human involvement with specific places found throughout the Carpathian Basin but unknown in my native parts of Central Europe. In both fields it struck me how comparable narrative strategies are employed to produce the unified notion of the Bronze Age so widely held – inevitable technological progress towards improvement on the one hand, and the evolution of functionally differentiated, hierarchical society on the other, epitomised by the emergence of 'proto-urban' tell communities under the influence of Mediterranean palatial centres. This, I think, is a reductionist vision of the Bronze Age past which sets up an artificial dichotomy with earlier Neolithic groups. It denies continuity evident in so many aspects of life, and it reduces our understanding of European Bronze Age communities to some weak reflection of foreign-derived social types – be they notorious Hawaiian chiefdoms or Mycenaean palatial rule. We are essentialising thereby from much richer and diverse evidence of past social and cultural realities, and we are equating the material conditions and possibilities available as a medium for social action to past human beings in quite different historical contexts.

At about the same time I was lucky enough to become involved in fieldwork with my friends and colleagues Klára P. Fischl of Miskolc University and Liviu Marta of Satu Mare County Museum on Bronze Age sites in the Borsod plain of northern Hungary and in the surroundings of Carei with the adjacent Ier valley in north-western Romania. To them I owe many enjoyable months of fieldwork, bringing together students and colleagues from our three countries, lively discussions during the occasional bottle of pálinka, and much I learnt about the traditions and pitfalls of Bronze Age research in their respective areas. In a way, this study is an attempt to find a path through competing paradigms and towards an approach, or theoretical framework, to better understand our findings and the regional variability observed, as well as to guide our future research. As such it is not necessarily agreed upon in every aspect by Klára and Liviu, but we certainly found enough common ground for fruitful long-term cooperation.

In order to clear my mind for the next step of this work this study comes in two parts. In the present volume, dedicated rather to deconstruction, I am afraid, an attempt is made to justify my above outlined discontent with much current theorising of the 'Bronze Age'. Since part of the problem involves lofty narratives far removed from the actual and often contradictory evidence on the ground, I tried – as far as my knowledge goes – to provide a rather dense description of the evidence that I am arguing with. This is a fast moving and exciting field of study with a growing number of current projects, so new data are regularly becoming available. However, I hope that the theoretical part of the argument established by reference to the empirical basis as outlined in this volume will withstand, and the refutation of reductionist and essentialising Bronze Age narratives undertaken here will be regarded as successful. Part 2, which is currently in progress, will contain the attempt to develop a positive approach working with what evidence we have so far.

As such, this first part looks broadly in two directions: temporal and spatial. First, it is asked how Late Neolithic tell sites of the Carpathian Basin compare to Bronze Age ones, and if we are entitled to assume structural difference or rather 'progress' between both epochs. Importantly, this is not to deny social and cultural change – after all Neolithic and Bronze Age tells are separated by many centuries of different lifestyles, and they developed in a different historical setting. However, it is certainly to refute what Ch. Pare (2000: 1) described as the 'Bronze Age Hypothesis' and the notion that the '[...] Bronze Age [was] fundamentally different from other "Ages"'. Second, it is examined if a Mediterranean 'centre' in any way can contribute to our understanding of Bronze Age tell communities on the 'periphery'. Here, the answer is to the negative as far as dependency and parallel development are concerned: Bronze Age communities throughout Europe and the Mediterranean had their own trajectories. Archaeology is called on to contribute to an understanding of such differences and the historically specific expressions of the human condition and human agency, not to reduce culture groups to abstract stages and knowledgeable individuals to passive dummies on the teleological ladder of social evolution.

Cologne – Frankfurt, March 2015   TLK

I. Approaches to Neolithic and Bronze Age Tell Settlement in the Carpathian Basin

I.1 Introduction:
Stone Age, Bronze Age and Archaeological Perception

Research in the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age is organised in different paradigms. The respective approaches taken not only reflect a different 'quality' of the material remains that we are studying but also notions of world-view that often enough imply 'difference' in character or 'progress' where an unbiased observer might perceive comparable patterns and continuity between epochs traditionally set apart.

For example, an often quoted dictum has it that in much earlier research '[...] successful farmers have social relations with one another, while hunter-gatherers have ecological relations with hazelnuts' (Bradley 1984: 11). It was only after this state of affairs was widely recognised that hunter-gatherer social and cultural complexity became a new paradigm in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research (e. g. Zvelebil 1986; 1998; Jennbert 1994). The European Neolithic as well was originally seen, at least by V. G. Childe (e. g. 1957; 1962), as a period of stagnation when compared to the Near East. Yet, since then Neolithic man has certainly had a long tradition of being acknowledged as innovative and as a social being. A prominent example is 'Processual Archaeology' and comparable approaches on the Continent to Neolithic social organisation (cf. Renfrew 1973a; 1979; 1984). Thus, by the Late Neolithic at the latest there were assumedly chiefs busy organising the construction of megaliths along the Atlantic façade of Europe (e. g. Renfrew 1973b; 1976). In fact, the search for ranked societies extends back well into the earlier Neolithic too, such as the case of the LBK culture (e. g. van de Velde 1979; 1990; cf. D. Hofmann 2012: 184–185).

However, while this interest persists in certain quarters after the various criticisms of processual 'Social Archaeology', in the meantime the Neolithic can be said to have become 'cultural' rather than 'social'. The interpretation of landscape, megalithic monuments and material culture is an example of this trend (e. g. Tilley 1994; 1999; 2004; Thomas 1996); Neolithic tell settlement in south-eastern Europe is another. While earlier approaches focussed on environment, economy and social dynamics to explain the emergence of tells and their eventual decline towards the end of the Late Neolithic, life in this kind of settlement is now understood in specifically cultural and symbolic terms: a sense of time and continuity, notions of place and culture versus nature or concepts of personhood and identity. I. Hodder's (1990) fascinating and controversial *The Domestication of Europe* is a prominent example (cf. Gibbon 1993), and, of course, the work of authors such as J. Chapman (e. g. 2000), A. Whittle (e. g. 1996) or D. Bailey (e. g. 2000), who follow the same broad approach without necessarily agreeing in their interpretations.

Quite clearly some of the concepts currently discussed are beyond 'testing' in a traditional sense. They should not distract attention from the fact that living on a tell also had to do with the necessity to take practical decisions and meet basic human needs – eating and drinking, the provision of food and shelter from wind and rain (cf. Rosenstock 2009; 2012). However, the specific way of doing so is a cultural expression. Some aspects of Neolithic tells certainly suggest that we should take an interest in the symbolic concerns of the people once inhabiting them and involved in their creation. Hence, much that might be summarised as post-processual or post-modern in current Neolithic debates usefully draws attention to the fact that we should not subsume a more complex ancient cultural reality under simplified notions of social evolution. It should still be of interest what kinds of social relations were involved, and if all the efforts taken in the building of monuments, settlements, etc. were kinship-based and communally sanctioned or elite-driven. However, our interest to understand the past should certainly not remain restricted to the question of how many man-hours were required to move the stones for this megalithic tomb, or to dig the ditch surrounding that tell, and whether some elite person was required to have people do so, or see that the houses on the tell were in neat order.

If, then, the Neolithic is social or rather cultural in current perception, the Bronze Age can surely still be said to be 'political' and has attracted little systematic coverage in genuinely post-processual terms,[1] except perhaps a ready move away by some authors from the processual emphasis on autochthonous development in favour of various kinds of core and periphery models and 'World System Theory' (e. g. A. Sherratt 1993a; 1997a; Kristiansen 1998). This state of affairs might come as a surprise since, for example, this is a period of extensive hoarding throughout large parts of Europe (e. g. Bradley 1990). There certainly is a related interest in Bronze Age cult and religion, including notorious volumes such as *Gaben an die Götter* (Hänsel/ Hänsel 1997). However, this is often ill-theorised[2] and 'religion' tends to be set apart in analytical terms from what much Bronze Age research is truly concerned with, namely the emergence of metalworking and socio-political hierarchisation.

Part of this, of course, goes back to the influential work of V. G. Childe (e. g. 1936; 1950; 1952; 1954), to his 'Urban Revolution' in the Near East and the supposed effects of

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[1] See, however, for example Treherne (1995), Sørensen/Rebay-Salisbury (2009), Budden/Sofaer (2009), Szeverényi (2011) or some papers in Sørensen/Rebay-Salisbury (2013) and Fokkens/Harding (2013).
[2] However, see the ground-breaking work of D. Fontijn (2001/02).

metalworking on European societies of the Bronze Age (cf. Manzanilla 1987; Harris 1994; Wailes 1996). Unlike most archaeologists of his own and indeed following generations, Childe was not simply a diffusionist, and he certainly was not averse to 'theory'. Rather his work involved both a specific link between technology, economy and society ultimately drawn from Marxist sources and a specific vision of Europe and the Orient. Metallurgy, he claimed, had originated in the urban centres of the East because it required surplus production, fulltime craft specialists and elites to support them. However, while the Orient eventually got caught up in superstition and despotism, upon its spread to Europe copper and bronze metallurgy was thought to have taken on a new quality: the specific freedom and creativity of itinerant Bronze Age craftsmen leading right up to modern western civilisation (cf. Gathercole 1971; Trigger 1980; 1986; Rowlands 1994). Iron Age 'people', such as Celts and Germans, have also been claimed as the predecessors of modern states. However, the Bronze Age certainly retains some of the specific pan-European quality it acquired in the work of Childe. It is not claimed that there is a direct link from Childe to, for example, the relatively recent 'European Campaign on the Bronze Age' (cf. Hänsel 1998b). Still this period is seen as somehow historically unique on a European scale, when in fact there is considerable regional variation. This is somewhat amazing since the Early Neolithic LBK culture, for example, covering large parts of central Europe, or a Beaker period 'ideology', extending from the Iberian peninsula to the Carpathian Basin, might lend themselves to such a perspective more readily.

Of equal importance, though, is the tradition of linking metalwork to social and political evolution, i. e. craft specialisation and the emergence of elites. This argument was transferred to Europe from the urban centres of the Near East and entered Processual Archaeology via studies on various early metal-using groups of the European Copper and Bronze Ages from the Aegean to the British Isles (e. g. Renfrew 1968; 1969; 1978; 1986). It fits in with a traditional Continental approach and its emphasis on the upswing of Bronze Age society, whose proponents often do not reflect on the origin of such concepts. The almost endless debate on 'urban' or 'proto-urban' settlements in Bronze Age Europe has to be mentioned here (recently summarised by Gogâltan 2010), and the complete confusion over just how many truly 'urban' traits from the original definition of Childe and others in the Near East can be found in Europe, or which of them are required to establish the existence of towns or urban centres. Quite clearly much of this discussion levels structural differences between European societies of the Bronze Age and the Near East, or for that matter the Aegean Bronze Age. However, let us briefly turn to two recent handbooks of the European Bronze Age instead, each in different ways providing an impression of the state of Bronze Age research.

A. Harding's *European Societies in the Bronze Age* (2000) stands in the tradition of a more down-to-earth approach to Bronze Age studies. The author refrains from

too much overt theorising in favour of a careful review of the evidence. This approach has its like in Continental research (e. g. Jockenhövel 1990; 1998), and the overall picture of the Bronze Age is nuanced.[3] Harding (2000: 1–8) is quite explicit that the Bronze Age saw a new emphasis on the expression of status and power and the emergence of a male warrior ideology. In the long-run – that is in the Late Bronze Age – such preferences developed into a differentiated, hierarchical settlement system and the establishment of more stable elites. However, for much of the earlier Bronze Age a small-scale segmentary pattern of settlement, economy and society is identified with limited importance of trade and exchange. We see most of the population throughout Europe living in small villages or hamlets based on agriculture and livestock breeding (e. g. Harding 2000: 414–417, 422–430) with little or no exposure to, or command over, prestigious copper and bronze objects thought by us as so characteristic of that period (Harding 2000: 410). Consequently, structural differences between the European Bronze Age and the palatial centres of the Mediterranean are emphasised. It is shown that the occasional movement of objects between both areas does not amount to evidence of dependency in some kind of core and periphery system (Harding 2000: 421; see also the discussion in Harding 2013).

If there was a change in ideology related to status and prestige, or rather to the expression of male habitus in a more general sense, one gets the impression that Harding's Bronze Age in other aspects of daily life, settlement and economy only saw a very gradual development away from earlier Neolithic patterns. Large-scale, integrated and truly stratified communities only came into existence towards the Late Bronze Age and into the Iron Age. Among several others this is a distinct point of departure from the other major handbook mentioned, K. Kristiansen and Th. B. Larsson's *The Rise of Bronze Age Society*, since these authors make it quite clear that there was a major qualitative difference between the Bronze Age and the preceding Neolithic (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 60–61). Throughout this study Bronze Age elites are taken as given, rather than demonstrated, since it is precisely their presence, their cultural ethos of theocratic leadership, their cosmologies and their travels and control of esoteric foreign knowledge, of contacts and prestigious (metal etc.) objects that defines the period (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 365–368).

It is already evident from its title that this volume falls – for good or bad – into the category of 'master narratives' and for that matter may be compared to I. Hodder's 'Domestication' rather than to Harding's 'European Societies'. It is difficult to do justice to this kind of highly elaborate theorising and the powerful narrative and construction of a Bronze Age 'other' featuring in *The Rise of Bronze Age Society*.[4] However, a simple

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[3]   For a balanced overview of Bronze Age Europe in this tradition see also Primas (2008) and numerous papers in Fokkens/Harding (2013).

[4]   For a critical review and assessment of this work, the problems it poses both on the empirical and theoretical sides, see, for example,

comparison in fact highlights some interesting differences in these accounts of the Neolithic and the Bronze Age respectively. I. Hodder's (1990: 53–99) is the context-sensitive attempt to trace the reworking by human agents of underlying mental or cognitive structures through contingent events and into different historical as well as environmental settings[5] – whether his initial domus-agrios opposition or the metaphor of 'domestication' is plausible, or one agrees with his specific reading of the Near Eastern and European evidence or not. By contrast, Kristiansen and Larsson (2005) add some sense of *longue durée* by the notion that their Bronze Age '[...] carried along the ritual and cosmological embeddedness of a Neolithic past' (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 368), but in fact their elite ethos and 'theocratic nature' of Bronze Age societies (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 365) is Near Eastern-derived and not truly mediated by specifically European trajectories from the local Stone Age to the Bronze Age. Obviously, this is not the kind of interest taken by Neolithic research in the acting out of long-term structures and the formation of local identities. Nor is it the kind of 'ritual embeddedness' that might be discussed in a Neolithic context. For despite their ritual framing Kristiansen and Larsson's (2005) Bronze Age elites convey a sense of competitiveness and potentially aggrandising behaviour that is distinctly political. This is, of course, the 'Bronze Age Hypothesis' (Pare 2000: 1) widely held in Bronze Age research. More specifically, however, this outlook is due to a peculiar blending of models, notably the heavy reliance on the ethnographic work of M. Helms (e. g. 1979; 1988) to support the notion of Bronze Age 'travellers' and their impact on Bronze Age society and the reference made to Homer's epics as evidence of Bronze Age 'heroes' and elites (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 2, 17, 39–41, 45–47, 51–57; 61, 257). In consequence, the total historical setting is perceived differently from the Neolithic – Europe on the periphery of Near Eastern and Mediterranean civilisations of the Bronze Age. Such notions fundamentally affect the reading of the evidence as well.

Bronze Age (meta-)narratives, therefore, are different from Neolithic ones. They are so for three distinct reasons and with slightly different outcomes: 1) notions of an historically unique European Bronze Age; 2) the situation of Europe on the periphery of a Bronze Age 'world system'; and, partly in relation to points one and two, 3) a specific interest taken in the socio-political impact of technology (metalworking) and/or the evolution of stratified society. This is conceived in predominantly political terms, although the legitimisation of power and ideology may be seen as sacral or ritually framed. The Bronze Age epoch is different, then, from the Neolithic one, and so are our respective approaches, although quite clearly none of the above points stems directly from past; rather they relate

to our specific background as Neolithic or Bronze Age research communities and to corresponding perceptions of our period of interest.

This not to deny that, obviously, the Bronze Age was different from the Neolithic in many respects and the historical background had changed. Yet, our perceptions of these two epochs certainly affect our understanding of the respective evidence at hand. To illustrate this point we may turn to tell settlements again, since after their decline at the end of the Late Neolithic, and the passing of some two thousand years, tells reappeared in large parts of south-eastern Europe during the Early to Middle Bronze Age. If and in what respect these were different from their predecessors, which sometimes even share the same locations, will be examined in detail below. Yet interpretations certainly differ and they do so in a telling way: Neolithic settlement mounds have also been studied with regard to the social organisation of their inhabitants, but beyond this there is a strong interest to understand them in terms of culture history or post-processual approaches.[6] The same can hardly be said for their Bronze Age successors (see also Jaeger 2011b: 149–150, 154–155; Duffy 2014: 25–43). These are not the sites where Bronze Age communities negotiated social relations or developed a sense of continuity and identity, etc. Rather, these are (proto-)urban settlements that more or less successfully drew upon agricultural and other resources, controlling exchange in valuable objects and raw materials from abroad. They were home, supposedly, to some kind of functionally and politically differentiated population with peasants, craft specialists – and some in charge of all this.[7]

Of course, there are nuances to this picture, broadly corresponding to the above-mentioned 'schools' of Bronze Age research: The 'traditional' (proto-)urban faction is just one of these, albeit the one most explicit in its modelling of tells in likeness of Mediterranean civilisation. Theirs is the form of tell with an acropolis protected from conquest by impressive fortifications, accommodating elites and attached craft production; with a *suburbium*

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[6] 'Although the details of the future development of a tell institutional project are necessarily indeterminate, the commitment to the project itself implies certain cultural values.' (Chapman 1997a: 153) – 'On tells, ancestral social space was the key to tell identities, with the maintenance of relatively tight communal rules over house size and shape, the development of controls over "unsociable" practices and the reliance on hospitality as an important response to inter-household tensions arising from spatially closer living. This restricted set of tell-based social practices led to fairly tight, traditional societies, with a strong focus on the past through their ancestors and on managing the dense social interactions of the present.' (Chapman 2012: 226).

[7] 'Deutlich zeichnet sich jetzt an verschiedenen Orten in und um das Karpatenbecken ein an städtische Verhältnisse erinnerndes Siedlungsbild ab [...] Recht viele Indizien sprechen dafür, daß in dieser Zeit ein Konzentrationsprozeß im Sinne der Herausbildung einer wirkungsvolleren Herrschaftlichkeit stattgefunden hat [...]' (Hänsel 1996: 244). – 'Ganz offensichtlich ist eine so klar organisierte Siedlung nicht "gewachsen", sondern die erstaunlich uniformen Häuser sind auf der Grundlage einer zentral geleiteten Bauplanung und -durchführung in einem Zug errichtet worden. [...] Denkbar ist es weiter, daß in der Vorsiedlung auch sozial niedriger gestellte Arbeitskräfte gewohnt haben [...]. [...] die Lenkung durch eine Elite innerhalb der Gemeinschaft ist der plausibelste Interpretationsansatz.' (Hänsel 2002: 80–83). See also, of course, Earle (2002) and Earle/Kristiansen (2010a).

Harding (2006a), Nordquist/Whittaker (2007) and Kienlin (2015). Among several other points it has been noted that regional variability is systematically subdued up to the point that evidence to the contrary seems to have been deliberately ignored. The same certainly holds true for opposing theoretical approaches (see chapters II.2 and II.3).

[5] Continued and modified in Hodder (2006) etc.

accommodating the commoners and drawing surplus production from surrounding open settlements under their political control (e. g. Hänsel 2002). In applications of central place theory a similar interest is apparent, although the terminology may be more careful. And to Kristiansen and Larsson (2005), for example, the Bronze Age tells of the Carpathian Basin belong to an early horizon of Mediterranean influence characterised by 'a stratified settlement system with fortified central settlements for production and distribution [...]', by political territories, etc., and societies '[...] probably no less organised than mainland Greek societies at the time [...]' (Kristiansen/ Larsson 2005: 125). The latter point may certainly be true, since this horizon is actually much earlier than the emergence of palaces in mainland Greece. However, stratification and political territories require rethinking. Again, it is Harding (2000: 71–72) who offers an alternative reading and points to the important distinction that: 'Little or nothing [...] would suggest that political organisation was as developed as social organisation, that interdependencies of territories and central places were on the same scale as interdependencies of individuals within single places.'

There are differences in approach and Bronze Age research is not monolithic.[8] Yet the overall picture is different from the Neolithic in a way suggestive of the world-view involved. It is not claimed that Neolithic and Bronze Age tells are fundamentally the same. Of course in the long-run the Bronze Age may have seen some of the proposed developments towards site hierarchies and corresponding differentiation in social relations and political ranking. Yet it is proposed that often such differences are assumed rather than convincingly demonstrated. The evidence at hand for both periods is multi-faceted. It is suggested that on both sides of the Neolithic/Bronze Age divide we miss important aspects of the picture if we follow either a strictly 'cultural' or 'political' approach. Over the following pages, therefore, an attempt is made at a systematic comparison of Neolithic and Bronze Age tell sites respectively, and the evidence is discussed in terms of its implications for either of the above readings.

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[8] See, in particular, the recently published work by P. Duffy (2014) who, arguing from a quite distinct North American tradition of archaeological thought, in his case study of the Bronze Age Körös region arrives at a very similar assessment like the one advocated here (see also Kienlin 2012a; 2012b).

I.2 Neolithic Tell Settlement in the Carpathian Basin

I.2.1 Background and Origins

A tell is not a tell in the sense that it was founded by its first inhabitants with a multi-layer settlement mound in mind, set apart from its surroundings by its height and qualitatively distinct from neighbouring single-layer horizontal settlements. Rather it is the result of countless decisions taken through time and specific practices. These may relate to the environmental background and topographic setting, to subsistence strategies and the availability of different building materials as well as to specifically cultural notions of where and how to live which encouraged permanency in the choice of settlement location and accelerated the accumulation of settlement debris into a tell.

This first occurred in the Near East where the growth of certain villages into tells is a distinctive feature of the local (pre-pottery and pottery) Early Neolithic, with sites such as Jericho, Çatal Höyük or Jarmo as prominent examples.[9] This process is beyond the scope of the present study. Yet, apart from practical reasons in relation to agriculture and livestock breeding sedentism certainly involved symbolic concerns and changes as well. Hunter-gatherer social dynamics have long been identified as a possible avenue to domestication (e. g. Bender 1978). Now the site of Göbekli Tepe broadens this picture to cultural complexity in more general terms. It provides evidence of the importance elaborate symbolism, feasting and ancestral burial had already acquired during the Epipalaeolithic (Schmidt 2006; 2010). Whatever social and cultural transformations took place from Göbekli Tepe in the 10th and 9th millennia cal BC to a site like Çatal Höyük (c. 7400–6200 cal BC), and whatever the taming or control of the 'wild' actually means in the latter context (Hodder 1990), it is quite clear that the Neolithic village or tell and its houses met not only practical demands either (fig. I-1). Rather the settlement layout, the architecture of houses, their ornament and permanency in terms of repeated rebuilding and intra-mural burial indicate that the specific history and quality of their built environment was highly meaningful to those growing up and living in this setting.

Albeit in a modified manner, some of these concerns clearly were preserved in the initial spread west of the Neolithic way of life into Europe, since tell settlement is also a distinctive feature of Early Neolithic groups in Greece and into the southern Balkans (e. g. Perlès 2001: 172–199; Parzinger 1993: 294–296 hor. 1–3). It did not, however, at first extend further north and into the Carpathian Basin. The earliest Neolithic groups of this area (fig. I-2), Starčevo and Körös/Criş (c. 6000–5500 cal BC; Visy/Nagy 2003: 99–103) have rather ephemeral evidence of settlement and architecture (i. e. so-called 'pit-dwellings') which even gave rise to discussions on a supposedly semi-sedentary lifestyle of these groups.[10] The Early Neolithic Linear Pottery Culture (LBK) which originated from the north-western part of the Starčevo area about 5600/5500 cal BC and was to spread throughout central Europe certainly was fully sedentary and relied on agriculture and livestock breeding.[11] However, here too no tells occurred, and the hamlets of this group, with their impressive wooden houses, by their specific pattern of residential relocation as well as by their architecture and building materials, differed substantially from earlier Neolithic communities in the Balkans and the Near East.

The reasons for this initial divide of south-eastern Europe in tell-'building' communities to the south and those to the north, who did not, again, are beyond the scope of this study (cf. Parzinger 1992; 1993; Rosenstock 2009; Parkinson/Gyucha 2012a). Following broadly the development of various theoretical paradigms, anything from the adaptation of settlement and subsistence economy to different climate conditions and soils, acculturation and the influence of different local Mesolithic traditions, to the reformulation of older symbolic principles of social life and sedentism in non-tell communities have been suggested. Similar discussions refer to the problem why this situation should have changed at a later stage, because from the Middle Neolithic onwards tell settlement spread north towards the Danube and eventually extended along the Tisza river and its eastern tributaries as far north as the Körös river, when it reached its climax during the Late Neolithic (fig. I-3). These are the tells we are interested in in terms of their interpretation as permanent focal sites in the landscape, and how the evidence and its interpretation compares to the later Bronze Age tells of this area (see Anders *et al.* 2010: 148 fig. 1). It will not be asked specifically, on the other hand, how this system came about and why it was later on replaced by a Copper Age pattern characterised by a loose network of rather impermanent settlement units.[12] Comparable to the emergence of tells, many explanations have been proposed for their decline from migration, via environmental change, with consequent adaptations in

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[9] E. g. Hodder 1990; 2006; Catalogue Karlsruhe 2007; Rosenstock 2009.

[10] Cf. Parzinger (1992: 226–227), Gogâltan (2003: 225–226), Scharl (2004: 91–105) and Parkinson (2006: 41–43). See also Chapman (2008a: 69–73, 76–79) on the social practices on 'single-household sites' and 'pit-fields' and their different historical trajectories compared to hamlets and villages.

[11] E. g. Lüning 2000; Eckert/Eisenhauer/Zimmermann 2003; Lüning/Frirdich/Zimmermann 2005; Gronenborn/Petrasch 2010.

[12] Parkinson 2002: 391–394; 2006: 39–63; Visy/Nagy 2003: 125–129; Link 2006: 65–81; Parkinson *et al.* 2010.
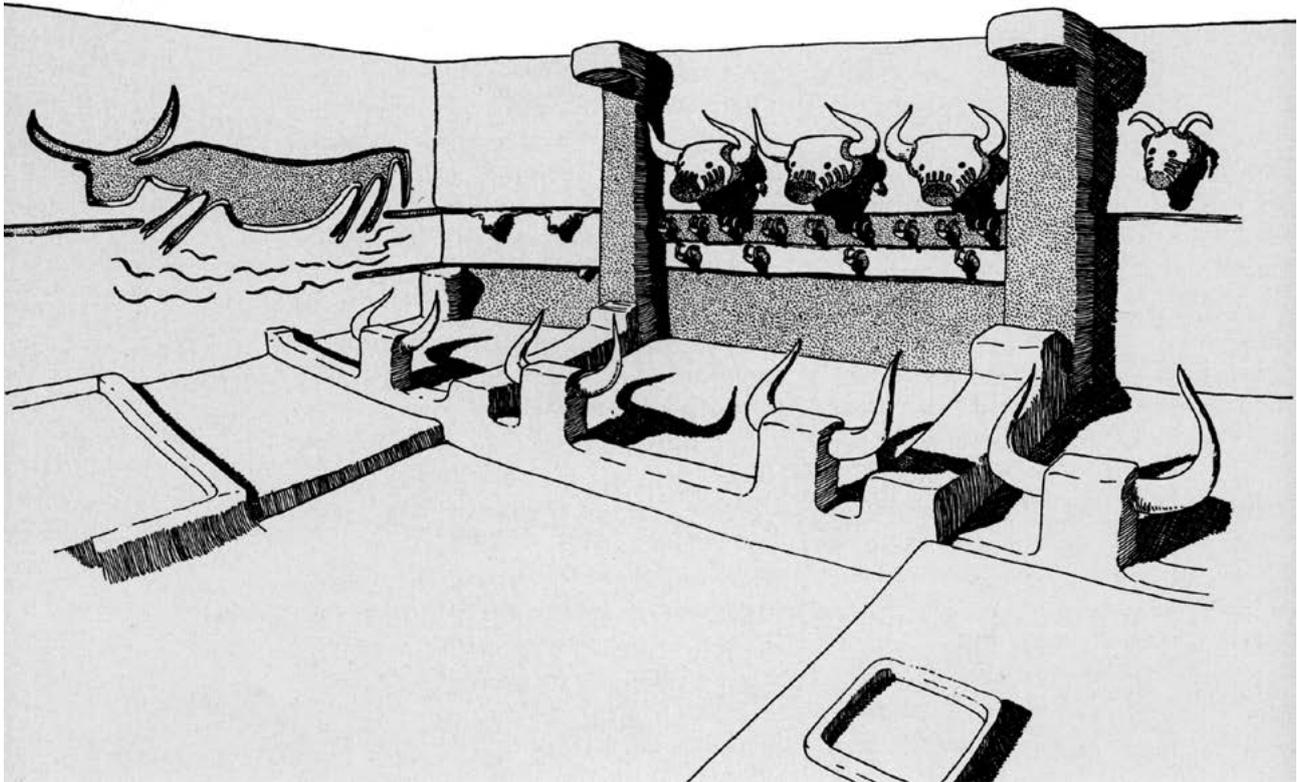
FIG. I-1: ÇATAL HÖYÜK. J. MELLAART'S RECONSTRUCTION OF THE INTERIOR OF HOUSE VI.A.8 (AFTER CUTTING 2007: FIG. ON P. 134).

| Year BC (Calibrated) | Serbia | Transdanubia | Great Hungarian Plain | | | Transylvania | Bulgaria | Period |
			Middle and Lower Tisza	Upper Tisza	Eastern Plain			
3500	Bubanj-Hum	Balaton-Lasinja	B Bodrogkeresztúr A	B Bodrogkeresztúr A	B Bodrogkeresztúr A	Pécska Bodrogkeresztúr A	?	Middle Copper Age
4000	Vinča D2	Lengyel III	B Tiszapolgár A	B Tiszapolgár A	B Tiszapolgár A	B Tiszapolgár A	Karanovo VI (Gumelniţa)	Early Copper Age
4500	Vinča D2	Lengyel III	Proto-Tiszapolgár	Proto-Tiszapolgár	Proto-Tiszapolgár	Proto-Tiszapolgár Petreşti, Erősd	Karanovo VI	Final Neolithic
	Vinča D1 Vinča C	Lengyel II Lengyel I Sopot-Bicske II	Tisza III Tisza II Tisza I/II	Csőszhalom (Oborin) Tisza I/II	Herpály III Herpály I - II Tisza I/II	Petreşti Lumea Noua	Karanovo V (Marica)	Late Neolithic
5000	Vinča B2 Vinča B1 Vinča A	Sopot-Bicske Zseliz-Notenkopf DVK	Tisza I Szakálhát AVK Körös IV	Szakálhát Bükk - Szilmeg AVK	Esztár AVK	Precucuteni I-II Criş IV	Karanovo IV Karanovo III	Middle Neolithic
5500	Starčevo III -IV Starčevo II Starčevo I	Starčevo III Starčevo II Starčevo I?	Körös III Körös II Körös I	Körös-Szatmár	Körös-Szatmár	Criş III Criş II Criş I	Karanovo II Karanovo I	Early Neolithic
6000								

FIG. I-2: CHRONOLOGY OF THE NEOLITHIC AND EARLY TO MIDDLE ENEOLITHIC/COPPER AGE OF THE CARPATHIAN BASIN AND SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE (AFTER PARKINSON 2006: 57 FIG. 4.4).

Horizontal settlement
Horizontal / tell-like?
Tell-like settlement
Tell-like / tell?
Tell settlement

100 km
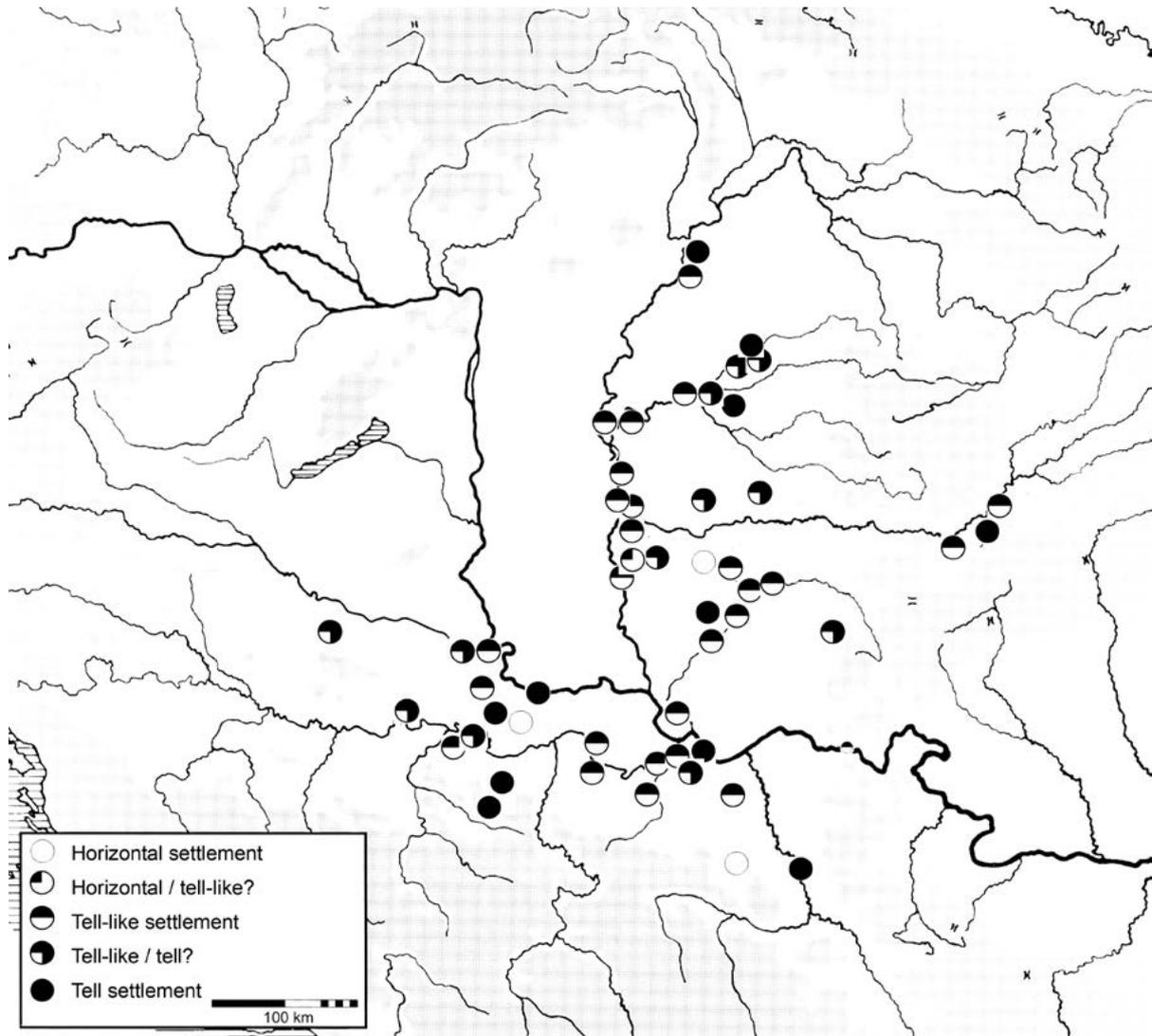
FIG. I-3: DISTRIBUTION OF LATE NEOLITHIC TELL AND TELL-LIKE SETTLEMENTS IN THE CARPATHIAN BASIN (AFTER LINK 2006: 12 FIG. 6).

subsistence economy and settlement, to assumed structural limits of community size, followed by dispersal and a reorganisation of autonomous households.[13] However, the explanation of culture change is another matter. It is not the subject of this work.

I.2.2 Chronology and Distribution of Late Neolithic Tells

Turning, instead, to the Late Neolithic tells of the Carpathian Basin themselves, the first thing to note is that this is not a uniform phenomenon – neither in chronological terms nor in regional ones, since there are important differences in size and continuity, in settlement layout and architecture, etc. Furthermore, our modern perception, derived from some rather outstanding examples of settlement mounds dominating the landscape is partly misleading, since only some tells eventually reached truly impressive heights,[14]

and often they are part of a rather complex settlement system of surrounding sites (see below).

Generally speaking, the first settlements that developed into tells are situated to the south of the Carpathian Basin (figs. I-2 and I-3). Thus, for example, south of the Danube and along the Morava river there is a number of tells that started at the beginning of the Middle Neolithic Vinča culture (Vinča A, *c.* 5400/5300 to 5200 cal BC; Borić 2009: 234–236 fig. 47), and some others dating back to this early period may be found on the northern banks of the Danube in the Romanian Banat region (e. g. Parţa; Gogâltan 2003: 229–230; Parzinger 1993: 258–260, 296– 297 hor. 4–5). The most well known of the former group of Vinča sites is, of course, the eponymous tell of Vinča-Belo Brdo itself (fig. I-4). Although there are problems related to the data from the older excavations, the material from Belo Brdo has attracted much attention and frequent reanalysis, since this is not only the type-site but also

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[13] See, for example, Chapman (1981), Lichardus (1991a; 1991b), Tringham (1991; 1992), Todorova (1995), Parkinson (2002; 2006), Gyulai (2010: 78–88) and Tóth/Demján/Griačová (2011).

[14] Consequently, there are lengthy debates on the definition of true tells

vis-à-vis the large group of 'tell-like' settlements; see, for example, Kalicz/Raczky (1987: 15–16), Gogâltan (2003: 224), Link (2006: 10– 14), Parkinson (2006: 43–44) and Rosenstock (2009; 2012).
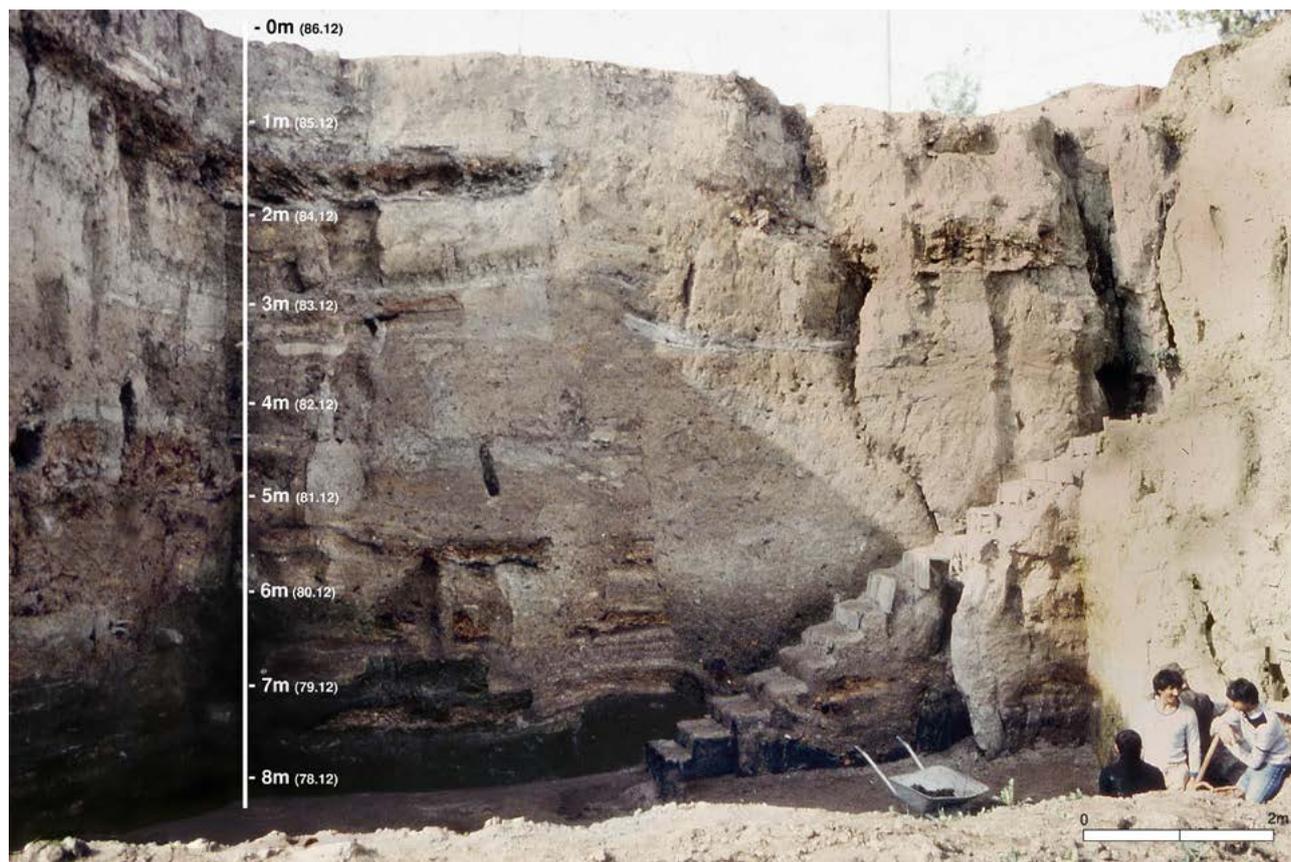
Fig. I-4: Vinča-Belo Brdo; Vinča culture. Southern and western part of trench P/1932–34, cleaned in 1978 (after Borić 2009: 230 fig. 44).

because it has one of the longest sequences of continuous habitation.[15] Like a number of other tell sites at Belo Brdo there was an older Starčevo culture settlement, yet the accumulation of settlement remains into a tell started only with the Middle Neolithic Vinča (A) occupation. There are problems relating the artificial 10 cm strata of the original early 20th century excavations to Neolithic habitation levels and building remains. Hence, there are competing chronological schemes and different opinions on the development of this site in detail. Nonetheless, the following may give an impression of the gradual building up of settlement remains at Belo Brdo: Middle Neolithic Vinča A and B, in the original V. Milojčić (1949) scheme, from the bottom at *c.* 9 m to a depth of 8 m and from 8 m to 6.5 m respectively (i. e. about 2.5 m of settlement layers in the centre of the tell where the excavations were located); Late Neolithic Vinča C and D from 6.5 m to 4.5 m and from 4.5 m up to the surface respectively (i. e. about 6.5 m).[16] The latest settlement remains are dated to Vinča D2, that is rather late and possibly broadly contemporaneous to Early Copper Age proto-Tiszapolgár in neighbouring

areas at about 4600/4500 cal BC (Parkinson 2006: 57–63; Borić 2009: 232–236). Somewhat later a number of Bodrogkeresztúr burials were dug into the latest Vinča levels; they provide a *terminus ante quem* for the end of the Neolithic settlement on this site (Parzinger 1993: 63; Link 2006: 155). Recent radiocarbon dating shows that, in absolute terms, this sequence covers a period from *c.* 5330–5250 cal BC (the beginning of Vinča A at Belo Brdo) to *c.* 4650–4550 cal BC (the end of Neolithic Vinča occupation; Borić 2009: 232). Hence, during an occupation of about 800 years eventually a tell of about 9 m height had built up.

It is up for debate what constitutes a tell – for example, intense long-term occupation and the accumulation of habitation layers in excess of 3 to 4 m (Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 15–16; cf. Anders *et al.* 2010: 151), or just at least three settlement phases with a height in excess of 1 m (Gogâltan 2003: 224)? Consequently, opinions may differ in purely technical terms of definition as to what time of its occupation Vinča-Belo Brdo can be considered a tell. The sheer impressiveness of a site or its visible 'antiquity' is a very subjective criterion, and it also depends on the topographic setting and contemporaneous vegetation and land-use – in the Belo Brdo case the tell is situated on the southern bank of the Danube and potentially widely visible. Yet, it should always be borne in mind, that for several hundred years there may not have been anything particularly special about a place in terms of being a 'tell'. It

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[15] See, for example, Parzinger (1993: 59–64), Gläser (1996) and Schier (1997); cf. Link (2006: 153–155 no. 35) and in particular Borić (2009: 228–234) with the results of a recent radiocarbon dating programme.

[16] This scheme has, of course, undergone subsequent modifications. However, these are felt of minor importance in the present context; problems in particular concern the definition of a transitional 'Gradac' phase, or in more general terms the transition from early to late Vinča (e. g. Garašanin 1951; 1973; 1993; 1995; 1997; Stalio 1984; Parzinger 1993: 59–64; Drașovean 1994; Schier 1997; cf. Link 2006: 153–155 no. 35; Borić 2009: 193–194, 228–234).

was only in its later phases that it had accumulated enough 'surplus' height and tradition to become a 'focal' site that attracted particular attention – be it in socio-economic or symbolic terms – from both its own inhabitants and from those of surrounding sites. At Vinča-Belo Brdo this certainly was the case some time during the Late Neolithic. However, it is a question we have to return to below what precisely constitutes the added meaning and/or functions of a tell vis-à-vis its surroundings.

Further north during an early Middle Neolithic phase, broadly parallel with Vinča A/B, there are just some sites that had already started to accumulate into tells (e. g. Battonya; Parzinger 1993: 296–297 hor. 4–5; Link 2006: 122 no. 15). Settlement of the local Alföld Linear Pottery, Szakálhát and Bükk groups, that had developed from Körös predecessors, was largely dominated by single-layer sites (Gogâltan 2003: 229–230; Parkinson 2006: 42–43). Yet it was already towards the end of this period that a number of the sites were established, which, during the subsequent Late Neolithic, were to develop into tells. That is to say, while tell settlement in this part of the Carpathian Basin is thought characteristic of the Late Neolithic Tisza culture, as well as the neighbouring Herpály and Csőszhalom groups from broadly 5200/5000 to 4500 cal BC (Link 2006: 16 fig. 8; Parkinson 2006: 57 fig. 4.4; Anders *et al.* 2010: 147), these sites also had a longer history. It was only by the Late Neolithic that some previously founded sites grew into more impressive tells, and the number of new settlements that were to take this form considerably increased as well (Raczky 1992: 164–165; Parzinger 1993: 260–263, 297–299 hor. 6–7).

Apart from its general spread from the south and the south-east towards the north and the Carpathian Basin, tell settlement is not a unified horizon (Link 2006: 44–46 figs. 20–22).[17] This variability in terms of their beginning and the duration of their occupation can be illustrated by some of the more prominent, i. e. better known and at least partly excavated sites from Hungary (Raczky 1987a): At Vésztő-Mágor there are already indications of Körös and Alföld Linear Pottery settlement activities, and the earliest building remains surviving are dated to the Szakálhát group. Late Neolithic settlement continued through phases Tisza I and II, after which the tell had reached a height of *c.* 3.8 m and came to a rather early end (Hegedűs/Makkay 1987: 88–91; Parzinger 1993: 33; Link 2006: 108–111 no. 6). The site of Öcsöd-Kováshalom as well dates back to the Middle Neolithic Szakálhát period. Both with regard to the development of its pottery and the organisation of settlement activities in distinct clusters or nuclei this site may illustrate the fluid transitions and continuity from older settlement patterns to Late Neolithic tell sites proper. Here, too, Neolithic occupation came to an end already in Tisza II. By then in the area of the largest settlement nucleus a stratigraphy of about 1.50–1.60 m had accumulated (Raczky 1987b: 62–66; Parzinger 1993: 31; Link 2006:

112–114 no. 9), that is to say a tell-like settlement rather than a tell, and evidence of the wide variability in terms of size, continuity and visibility that we should expect on all such sites. Berettyóújfalu-Herpály, too, developed on the site of an older late Szakálhát settlement with several dispersed nuclei. It is possible that the tell evolved from one of these, although there are different opinions on the precise chronological relation of the earliest Herpály (I) tell level to the previous Szakálhát occupation in its surroundings (compare Kalicz/Raczky 1987b: 106–111, 125; Parzinger 1993: 32; Link 2006: 103–108 no. 3). The tell itself is the type-site of the Herpály group and continuously covers its development from phase I (broadly parallel to Tisza II) to Herpály III and subsequent proto-Tiszapolgár. By the time the settlement was abandoned about 3 m of Late Neolithic layers had accumulated. Finally, there is Hódmezővásárhely-Gorzsa, a site of the Tisza culture which was only founded rather late, at the turn to the Tisza II phase, with no previous Neolithic occupation. Gorzsa was occupied until proto-Tiszapolgár times and eventually reached a height of about 2 m of Late Neolithic settlement layers.[18]

I.2.3 Late Neolithic Tell Settlement: The Evidence

Far from being a uniform phenomenon it is quite obvious that each tell settlement followed its own trajectory.[19] The explanation of their rise and eventual decline towards the Early Copper Age must not rely on simplified notions of widely felt prime movers and parallel abandonment throughout large parts of the Carpathian Basin (see above).[20] The same holds true, of course, for the interpretation of the tells themselves, for neither are these static in terms of their internal organisation nor was their integration within surrounding non-tell parts of the tell settlement itself and neighbouring sites a static one. Furthermore there is much regional variation, with the much higher frequency of Herpály tells along the eastern Berettyó and Körös river valleys, their smaller extent and more densely packed houses (compared to those of the Tisza culture further west) just being a notable example of the variability encountered.[21]

Strictly speaking, therefore, each phase of each tell (as well as its surroundings) would require separate discussion, since where in one phase there was a demarcation, in the following one there may have been none, or the arrangement and/or internal organisation of houses may have shifted. Any review short of a full site report has to neglect some of this variability, and often the state of excavation and/or publication is such that no information

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[17] See the recent reviews by Parzinger (1993), Gogâltan (2003), Link (2006), Parkinson (2006) and Rosenstock (2009).

[18] Horváth 1987: 33–37; Parzinger 1993: 29–30; Horváth in Visy/Nagy 2003: 106–107; Link 2006: 117–120 no. 13.

[19] See also Merkyte/Albek (2012: 172–176) with a related point on the dynamics of tell settlements.

[20] Note the reversal of approach suggested by Link (2006: 62): 'Aus diesem Blickwinkel sollte nicht so sehr das Abbrechen und Verlassenwerden der neolithischen Tells in den Vordergrund gestellt werden, sondern der allmähliche Wandel der Siedlungsdynamik, der das Entstehen neuer Tells immer mehr verhindert.'

[21] Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 16–17; Kalicz 1995; Raczky 1995; Parkinson 2006: 46–48; Link 2006: 61.

GEOGRAPHISCHE UND
HYDROGRAPHISCHE VERHÄLTNISSE
DES KARPATENBECKENS

1: Horizontale Siedlungen der Theiß-Kultur;
2: Tellsiedlungen der Theiß-Kultur;
3: Fundorte der Lengyel-Kultur außerhalb des Stammgebietes;
4: Horizontale Siedlungen der „Csőszhalom"-Gruppe;
5: Tellsiedlung der „Csőszhalom"-Gruppe;
6: Tellsiedlungen der Herpály-Kultur;
7: Verbreitungsgebiet der Lengyel-Kultur;
8: Nördliche Grenze der spätneolithischen Tellsiedlungen im Karpatenbecken;
9: Nördliche Einflußrichtung der Herpály-Kultur;
10: Nordöstliche Einflußrichtung der Lengyel-Kultur;
11: Südliche Einflußrichtung der Stichbandkeramik aus Polen;

Fig. I-5: Map indicating the northern boundary of tell sites of the Tisza culture and the dense pattern of tell sites of the neighbouring Herpály group (after Raczky 1995: 78 fig. 1).

on relevant aspects is available at all. In what follows, therefore, an attempt is made only to draw attention to the broad range of organisational possibilities and cultural expressions evident on Late Neolithic tell settlements of the Carpathian Basin, and how these are interpreted. No claim is made to complete coverage, but diversity is stressed opposite targeted selection of evidence that may support this interpretation or another.

I.2.3.1 Tells and Settlement Systems

Variability is already evident on the macro-scale, i. e. the occurrence of tells as such and their integration in a regional settlement system. Thus, for example, within the wider area of the Tisza culture tells frequently occur as far north only as the Körös river valleys (fig. I-5).[22] They are largely absent in the upper Tisza region, with the most notable exception of Polgár-Csőszhalom,[23] the eponymous tell site of the so-called Csőszhalom group, which bears witness to the strong western Lengyel contacts of this region (see below). Similarly, there are significant differences between the southern Tisza culture area and its eastern neighbour, the so-called Herpály group. In the larger Tisza area, which is quite well examined archaeologically, there are some 15 tells or tell-like settlements of sometimes considerable size (tells up to c. 4 ha; tell-like sites even larger; see below). Some of these are part of, and developed within, even larger horizontal settlements, but more dispersed single-

layer sites of up to 12 ha also occur by themselves, i. e. without an accompanying tell (Raczky 1987a; 1992: 174–175; 1995: 80; Link 2006: 59–61; Parkinson 2006: 46–47). Compared to the previous Middle Neolithic there is a decrease in the total number of sites known (cf. A. Sherratt 1997b: 307), and both these types of settlement seem to indicate a continuous process of nucleation that equally affected both the southern and the northern Tisza area. However tells, in addition to larger horizontal settlements, only occur in the south. In the much smaller Herpály territory, for comparison, there is a total number of up to 25 tell sites known, which accounts for a considerably higher density of this type of settlement. Tells in this area may occur at regular distances of down to a few kilometres along the river valleys. These tells tend to be much smaller than the Tisza ones (up to just 0.3–0.5 ha), and unlike those they seem to represent the 'standard' settlement of the Herpály area, although they may also at times occupy a 'central' position within an open horizontal settlement.[24]

The reasons for such differences are unknown. Most of these tells are situated along major river valleys. There certainly was contact and some exchange going on in raw materials along these lines (Kalicz/Raczky 1987a; Raczky 1987a). However, there are no indications that particular sites achieved prominence as foci of trade, etc., let alone that this could explain the differences in Tisza and Herpály settlement patterns. We will have to return to the evidence of subsistence economy and production below. However, in both groups their choice of comparable settlement locations seems to reflect the concerns of a population

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[22] Korek 1989: 49, 61–65; Raczky 1992: 174; 1995: 78; Visy/Nagy 2003: 101; Anders et al. 2010: 151.
[23] See, for example, Raczky et al. (2002), Raczky/Domboróczki/Hajdú (2007), Raczky/Anders (2010), Raczky/Anders/Bartosiewicz (2011) and Raczky/Sebők (2014). However note also the neighbouring tell-like settlement of Polgár-Bosnyákdomb (Raczky/Anders 2009).

[24] Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 16–17; Kalicz 1995: 67–68; Gogâltan 2003: 238; Link 2006: 57, 61; Parkinson 2006: 47–48.

dependent on agriculture and livestock breeding more than anything else. The availability of fertile soils and water was important. Sites were situated above high-water levels, and their inhabitants were able to draw upon the resources from both the river valley and the backward 'upland' ecosystem on the river terraces. Against this common background it is entirely unclear what the term greater 'centrality' of Tisza tells should imply other than the obvious (see also Kalicz/ Raczky 1987a: 16), i. e. general nucleation, greater size and population numbers of tells which they shared with the larger, more 'central' non-tell sites, and a greater sense of permanence that developed on just some of these new and more nucleated 'villages'. Most likely, then, it is culture rather than just socio-economic reasons that accounts for the different Herpály pattern. These tells are notable for their greater emphasis – compared to Tisza – on truly small-scale local identities and on direct architectural continuity (Raczky 1995: 80).

I.2.3.2 Tells and Surrounding Settlement

The existence of horizontal settlements surrounding some tell sites has been noted for some time. However, with most archaeological work traditionally focusing on the stratigraphy of the more impressive settlement mounds themselves there is much less information on their surroundings. It was only more recently with the application of geophysical survey methods that this situation started to change (e. g. Drașovean/Schier 2010; Hansen/Toderaș 2010; Mischka 2010). As mentioned above, such horizontal settlements occur alongside a number of Tisza and Herpály tells. Their existence is also well attested further south in the Vinča culture, where a comparable system of tells and single-layer sites came into being even somewhat earlier (see above; e. g. Chapman 1981; Tringham/Krstić 1990a; Borić 2009). It is important to note that the distinction between tells, tell-like settlements and single-layer sites is fluid both in terms of definition (see above) and the actual evidence on the ground, whenever these 'types' occur on the same site. The obvious question then concerns their chronological relation. Since this is often unclear, it is only by circumstantial evidence that the development and structure of such sites is inferred: was this a tell or tell-like mound that developed from or parallel to (parts of?) a larger open settlement? Or was there a tell that eventually expanded beyond its original limits and/or attracted additional population from its surroundings? These are no trivial questions since they also affect the interpretation of such sites in functional, social and cultural terms.

Single-layer settlements of the Tisza culture range in area from c. 1 ha to up to c. 12 ha (Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 16; Link 2006: 56–57; Parkinson 2006: 46). The Vinča site of Selevac even covered an area of more than 80 ha (Tringham/Krstić 1990a; Link 2006: 149–153 no. 34). It is hard to imagine that such huge areas were completely settled at any time. At Selevac there is in fact good evidence of discontinuous occupation in several nuclei. Houses periodically shifted and were rebuilt in a new location (Tringham/Krstić 1990b: 582–586). A similar model has been suggested for

the Tisza site of Öcsöd-Kováshalom (fig. I-6) that consists of some three to five discrete nuclei covering an area of at least 3 to 5 ha, which each developed at its own rate into a multi-layer tell-like settlement of up to 1.5 m in height (Raczky 1987b: 62–69; 1995: 82; Link 2006: 112–114 no. 9). At Öcsöd-Kováshalom there is evidence that the house clusters of these residential foci were enclosed by fences, thus probably retaining and perpetuating a traditional segmentary pattern. A comparable development of a tell or tell-like mound in relation to (parts of) a larger horizontal settlement has also been suggested for a number of other Tisza and Herpály sites, such as Hódmezővásárhely-Kökénydomb or Berettyóújfalu-Herpály, that also have a surrounding single-layer site (Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 16–18; Raczky 1987b: 63). However, in each case the chronological evidence needs to be carefully considered. The development these sites took in terms of internal organisation and architecture of houses, etc. is not uniform.

Clearly, this is an attractive model to account for both the occurrence of tells in a larger horizontal settlement and the large area covered by some tell-like Tisza mounds of up to 6–7 ha, such as at Hódmezővásárhely-Gorzsa (Horváth 1987: 33; Horváth in Visy/Nagy 2003: 106–107; Link 2006: 117–120 no. 13). Rather than reflecting one large village these may consist of discrete residential foci the occupation of which may have shifted periodically. Only one part of them eventually developed into an (enclosed) tell or tell-like mound with a multi-layer stratigraphy. Again, however, often the chronological information available is not sufficient to decide such issues. Each of these sites has a complex history of its own, and there is also evidence of an opposite development – settlement activity apparently spreading outwards from a tell. The already mentioned sites at Berettyóújfalu-Herpály and Hódmezővásárhely-Gorzsa provide an excellent example of the complex processes we need to be aware of. At Herpály the tell part of the site was enclosed early on by ditches that during subsequent phases were filled in and built upon, while a new ditch was dug further out (Kalicz/ Raczky 1987b: 107–108; Link 2006: 57, 103–104). Similarly, at Gorzsa a ditch that surrounded a part(?) of the oldest settlement was subsequently filled in, and the focus of settlement activities seems to have shifted in and out of this central area repeatedly (Horváth 1987: 35–37; Link 2006: 57, 118–119).

From the evidence discussed so far it is obvious that tells did not exist in solitary isolation from either their immediate vicinity or from neighbouring sites in the same region. The precise way, however, in which these sites or parts of the same site interacted is open to debate. It is far from self-evident in what sense a tell should have been 'central' to its own inhabitants or to those living in surrounding horizontal settlements as well as further away. This is a complex question that requires a closer look at the internal structure of such sites, their architecture and material culture. Before doing so, however, it is worthwhile introducing some additional sites where recent work has the potential to add significantly to our knowledge of the
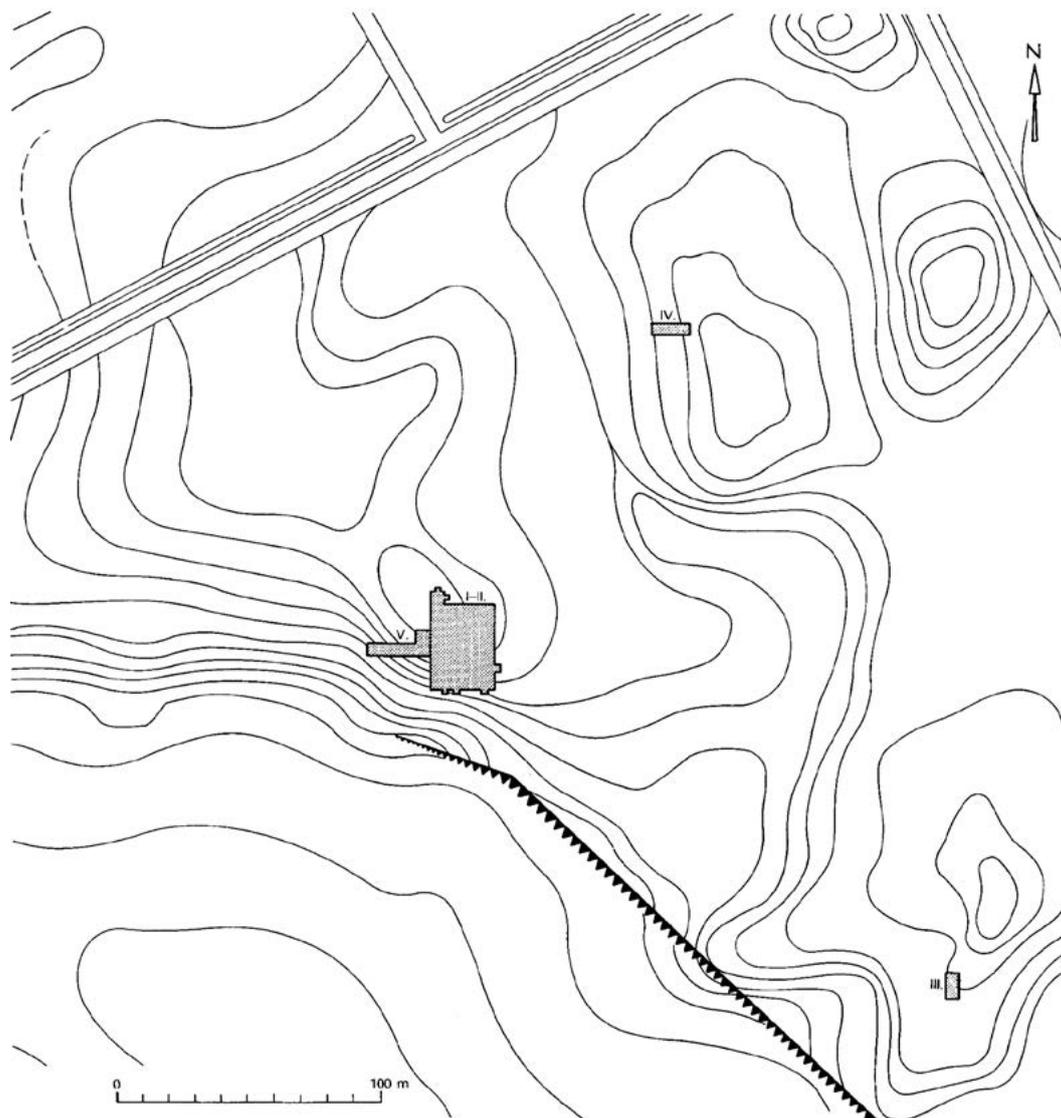
FIG. I-6: ÖCSÖD-KOVÁSHALOM; TISZA CULTURE. SETTLEMENT NUCLEI COVERING AN AREA OF AT LEAST 3 TO 5 HA (AFTER RACZKY 1987B: 62 FIG. 1).

development of Late Neolithic tell sites and the variability of the settlement activities in their surroundings.

At Okolište, a tell of the local Late Neolithic Butmir group in Bosnia-Herzegovina, i. e. outside the Carpathian Basin, dated to *c.* 5200–4700/4600 cal BC and broadly corresponding to Vinča A3–C3/D1, from current fieldwork no outer settlement is reported. Judging from the published evidence this may or may not be a consequence of the modern setting with a village situated close to and on top of a part of the site, and the geomagnetic measurements only extending outward from the tell in a small area (cf. Müller/Rassmann/Kujundžić-Vejzagić 2013: 16 fig. 7, 18 fig. 8, 39–52; Hofmann 2013: 48). What is interesting, however, is the dynamic of this site, which nicely contradicts modern expectations of the continuous growth of such communities. It has been shown by current work that within three main phases of occupation the settlement was reduced from an initial *c.* 7 ha, probably surrounded by an elaborate system of three ditches right from the start, via a densely settled yet smaller enclosed settlement of *c.*

5.6 ha with one remaining ditch only, to an open settlement of just *c.* 1.2 ha in its third and final phase (fig. I-7).[25]

At Uivar-Gomila, on the other hand, a Vinča tell in the Romanian Banat region with Late Neolithic Vinča to early Tiszapolgár settlement activities, broadly dated to *c.* 5150/4950–4700/4500 cal BC,[26] there is an elaborate multi-phase system of ditches enclosing both the multi-layer tell part of the site (*c.* 3 ha) and an outer horizontal part of the settlement area of up to 8 ha (fig. I-8; Schier/Draşovean 2004: 150–154; Draşovean/Schier 2010: 172; Schier 2014: 30–34). Both the two concentric inner ditches and the outer ones, increasingly more oval in shape, have a complex history of being maintained and extended,

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[25] Hofmann *et al.* 2010: 194–197; Müller-Scheeßel *et al.* 2010: 182–185; Müller *et al.* 2011: 82–83; Müller/Rassmann/Kujundžić-Vejzagić 2013: 41–52; Hofmann 2013: 443–448.

[26] See Schier/Draşovean (2004: 201–209) and Draşovean/Schier (2010: 184); more recently see Dammers (2012) and Schier (2014: 22 tab. 1, 29) with evidence of an earlier beginning of Uivar than expected and the unexpected cultural affiliation of these formative layers, i. e. Szakálhát and Szakálhát-Tisza.
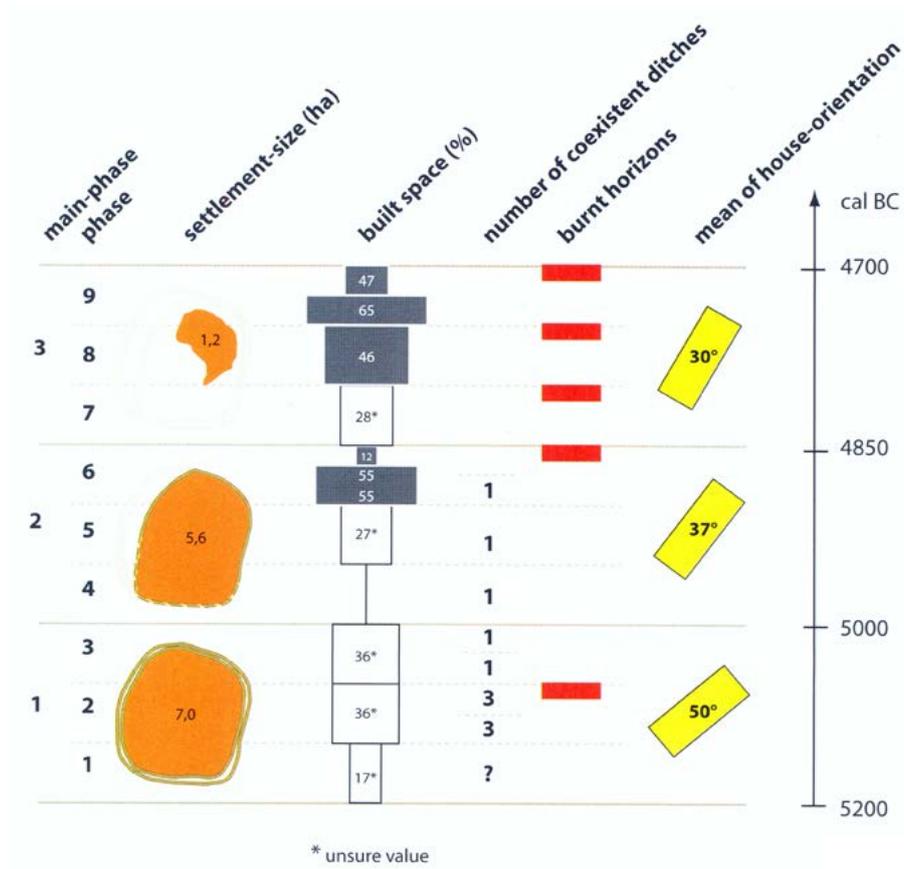
Fig. I-7: Okolište; Butmir group. Phases and development of the site (after Hofmann 2012: 190 fig. 8).
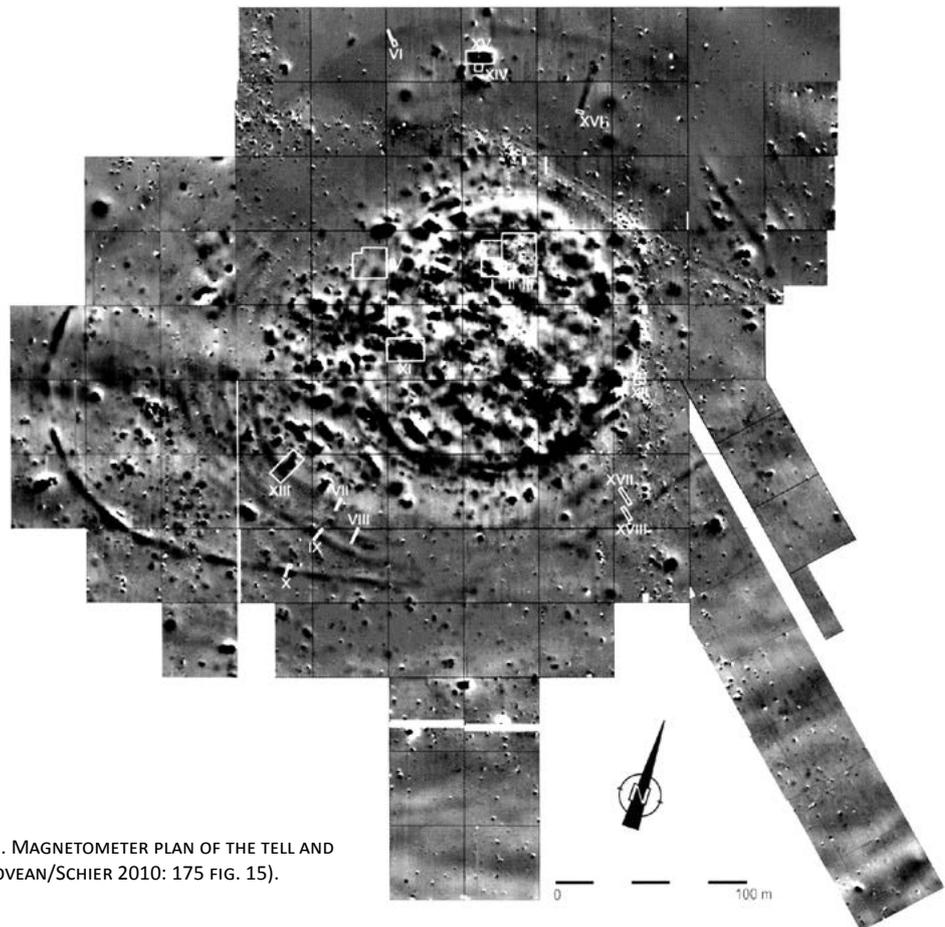
Fig. I-8: Uivar-Gomila; Vinča culture. Magnetometer plan of the tell and outer settlement (after Draşovean/Schier 2010: 175 fig. 15).

with some of them eventually replaced. The sequence of inner ditches starts with a relatively shallow (innermost) ditch, that finally reached a depth of 4 m, followed by the addition of a second inner ring, and there are several phases of outer ditches as well (Drașovean/Schier 2010: 172–175). At least in some places there is evidence that new ditches were cut through the remains of previous settlement activities. Conversely other trenches were filled in and houses built in their place, amounting to a complex dynamic of settlement activities that is still not fully understood. The spatial organisation inside tells will be the subject of the following paragraph, but it may already be noted that the core area of Uivar was densely packed with houses. In the outer parts of the settlement the evidence is more ambiguous. The excavators of this site, W. Schier and F. Drașovean (2004: 158–166; Drașovean/Schier 2010: 176–184), in their cautious and well-argued preliminary reports, make it quite clear that different options need to be considered. From the geomagnetic measurements it is possible that parts of the outer site were left unsettled, possibly to accommodate cattle, some small-scale horticulture or other activities such as pottery-making that could (or should) not be carried out on the densely settled inner tell. However, since only burned houses clearly stand out as magnetic anomalies, and at least some houses were uncovered in the apparently 'unsettled' outer part, it is also possible that there was in fact a denser pattern of houses or farmsteads on the periphery of the tell than so far is proven (Drașovean/Schier 2010: 182–183). Similarly, the chronological relation of all archaeological features and corresponding Neolithic activities is not yet clear. The authors consider each of the above mentioned possibilities: a) an expansion of settlement activities from the tell towards its surroundings during later phases of the site;[27] b) coexistence of the tell and non-tell parts of the site for an extended period of time with either a functional, economic or social differentiation of both parts; c) an earlier single-layer settlement confined by an outer ditch, followed by the accumulation of a tell in the centre – be it because of the higher density of houses, more frequent rebuilding for practical or cultural reasons, etc. – with a subsequent contraction from the outside zone to the centre tell and fortification of this zone (Drașovean/Schier 2010: 184); or d) more recently the reverse option that the outer settlement actually outlived intense settlement on the tell itself (Schier 2014: 32–34).

Finally, broadly comparable findings of large settlement zones in the vicinity of tells have recently been established by geomagnetic prospection and partly excavated by large-scale projects at two other sites as well. One of these is Pietrele-Măgura Gorgana in the lower Danube region outside the Carpathian Basin, assigned to the local Eneolithic Kodžadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI complex and dated to *c.* 4600–4250 cal BC (Hansen/Toderaș 2010; 2012; Reingruber/Hansen/Toderaș 2010; Hansen/Toderaș/Wunderlich 2012). Apart from the

evidence it provides for the coexistence of a fortified tell of *c.* 100 m in diameter with an open horizontal settlement of about three times that size, this site is of interest because its interpretation takes places in quite different terms from Okolište and Uivar. Tells in the perspective advocated at Pietrele are monumental 'representations of power', and their relation to surrounding lower parts of the settlement is one of dependency conceived in terms of functional differentiation and political hierarchies (Hansen/Toderaș 2010: 98, 101–103; Reingruber/Hansen/Toderaș 2010: 171–172, 179; Reingruber 2011). In order to challenge this view we will return to the evidence from the excavations at Pietrele below. It will be suggested that such notions stem from the problematic extrapolation from burial evidence to settlement, and more precisely from the unique burial ritual of Varna on the Black Sea coast to the wider Late Neolithic/Eneolithic of south-eastern Europe (e. g. Hansen/Toderaș 2010: 86–87; Hansen 2012; 2013a). The second site is Polgár-Csőszhalom, with its unique combination of a Csőszhalom group tell with a system of multiple concentric ditches and a large horizontal settlement (fig. I-9).[28] This site, it will be argued, in its likeness to western Lengyel-type enclosures[29] does not compare well with either Tisza or Vinča culture tells. Nor does is support Pietrele-style notions of socio-political hierarchisation, since there is good evidence of communally sanctioned ritual activities on the tell. Complexity and social inequality, if such was emerging, was apparently firmly rooted in and mediated by the ritual and communal spheres (Gogâltan 2003: 242; Raczky/Anders 2010: 147–150, 155–156).

I.2.3.3 Fortification, Demarcation and Internal Organisation

Late Neolithic tells sites, as already mentioned, are frequently enclosed by ditches and palisades or fences. This applies to the culture groups of the Carpathian Basin, that is Tisza (e. g. Hódmezővásárhely-Gorzsa; Horváth 1987), Herpály (e. g. Berettyóújfalu-Herpály; Kalicz/Raczky 1987b) and Vinča (e. g. Parța and Uivar; Drașovean/Schier 2010), as well as beyond in the lower Danube region (e. g. Pietrele: Hansen/Toderaș 2010; Bulgarian tells: e. g. Todorova 1978; 1982) and in the Balkans (e. g. Okolište; Hofmann *et al.* 2006: 56–59, 69–73; Müller/Rassmann/Kujundžić-Vejzagić 2013: 41–47). There is great variability in the layout and construction of such 'fortification' systems that may either enclose the entire site or just parts of it. There may be one or several ditches, which can be rather shallow and of limited width or of substantial depth and rather wide; and there may be walls, fences or palisades accompanying the ditches.[30] Often, however, from the limited excavations that took

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[27] However this is thought unlikely since one of the houses excavated in the outer zone apparently dates rather early in the sequence of the site (Drașovean/Schier 2010: 184).

[28] Radiocarbon dates indicate that the tell was most likely occupied *c.* 4820–4530 cal BC, while the horizontal settlement has a date range from *c.* 4830–4600 cal BC, i. e. both parts are broadly contemporaneous (Raczky/Anders 2010: 143; Raczky/Sebők 2014: 55–56, 59).

[29] See, for example, Raczky/Anders (2010: 143–146) and Raczky/Sebők (2014: 53); compare also Petrasch (1990), Trnka (1991) and Bertemes/Meller (2012).

[30] See Kalicz/Raczky (1987a: 17–18), Link (2006: 58), Parkinson (2006: 46–48) and Anders *et al.* (2010: 153–156).
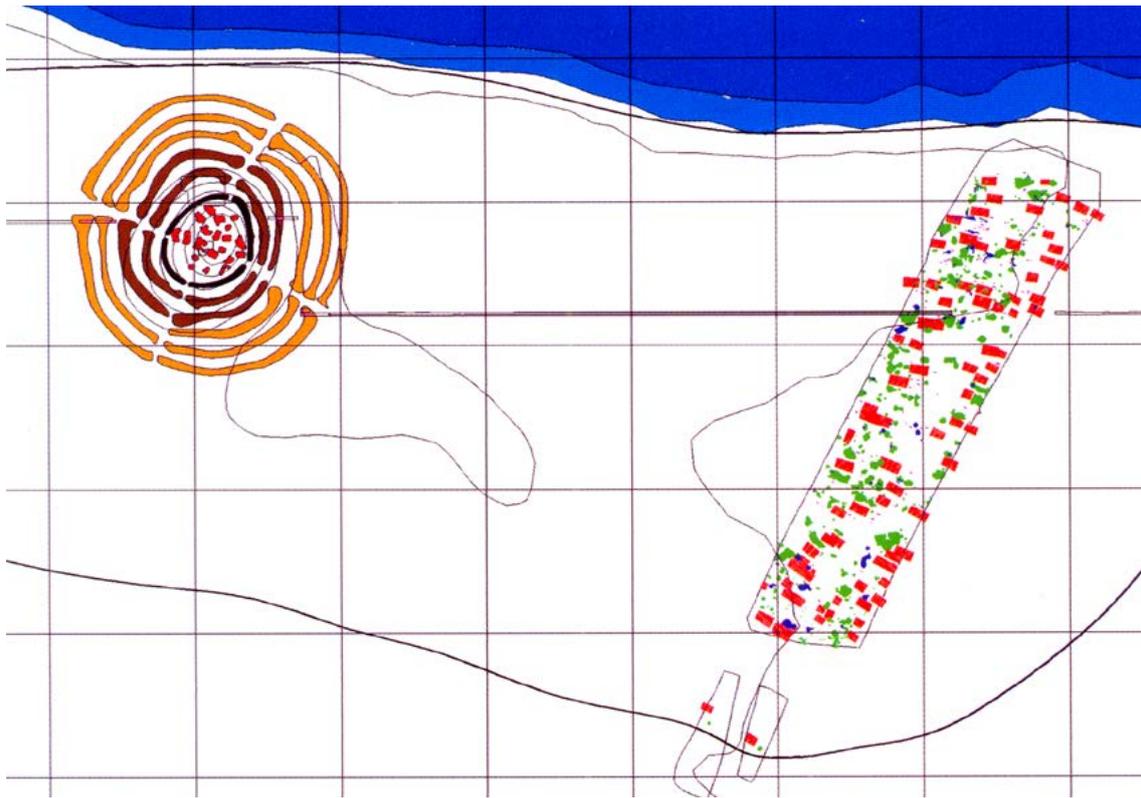
Fig. I-9: Polgár-Csőszhalom; Csőszhalom group. Tell site with a system of multiple concentric ditches and large horizontal settlement (after Raczky/Anders 2010: 145 fig. 2).

place there is insufficient information on the construction details of these 'defensive' systems and their development. Some tells were apparently enclosed throughout their occupation, while at other sites this is true only for particular phases of the settlement activities. Whenever there are several ditches this raises the question whether these coexisted at the same time or if there was a sequence of successive ditches. Generally speaking one has to be aware of the dynamics of tell sites and their demarcation in relation to settlement activities in their surroundings. Caution is also required in the interpretation of such 'fortifications'. Different readings have been suggested from the obvious fortification function in practical terms, via socio-political ones in terms of differential access of people living inside and outside the fortified tell to wealth and/or power, to cultural notions such as the commitment to a place, the construction of community identity or inside/outside dualities in terms of culture versus nature. Such arguments involve different perceptions of the evidence that are not easily reconciled (see below): was this tell with its ditch and palisade 'impressive' in political terms, a powerful statement of social inequality, or did it express and reinforce a sense of communal values? Does the workforce required and the organisational effort involved in the construction of ditches, etc. and their maintenance imply elite control, or is it to be explained in terms of communal endeavour and decision-making?

The different sizes, for example, of the Tisza and Herpály tells, and if so their fortifications, have already been noted. There is regional variation in the internal organisation of tell settlement as well. A number of both Tisza and Vinča culture tells (as well as horizontal settlements) have distinct clusters of houses. From phase to phase or from tell to tell these may differ in size, the number of houses, their spacing relative to each other, and the distances maintained between neighbouring compounds (Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 16–18; Link 2006: 57–58; Parkinson 2006: 46–48). However there is often some kind of continuity of the individual houses and clusters themselves. The Tisza site of Öcsöd-Kováshalom has been mentioned above with its residential foci enclosed by fences (fig. I-10; Raczky 1987b; 1995: 82). The Vinča sequence at Parţa may provide another example with its initial pairs of houses (level 7a), which through subsequent levels (7b and 7c) developed into a more densely occupied settlement that still maintained some notion of the original clustering (fig. I-11; Lazarovici/Draşovean/Maxim 2001: 85–180; Draşovean/Schier 2010: 166–170 figs. 4–5, 7). Further examples in this group include the Tisza sites of Hódmezővásárhely-Kökénydomb (Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 18; Link 2006: 116–117 no. 12) and Kisköre (Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 18; Parkinson 2006: 46) as well as the Vinča site of Divostin (IIb; Link 2006: 57, 149 no. 33; Borić 2009: 215–221).

A different organisational pattern is apparent from a second group of sites, although here too there is considerable variation on the basic theme. As far as reliable evidence of contemporaneity from excavations goes, these have more or less densely packed houses arranged into parallel rows or orientated towards an open space in the centre (Kalicz/
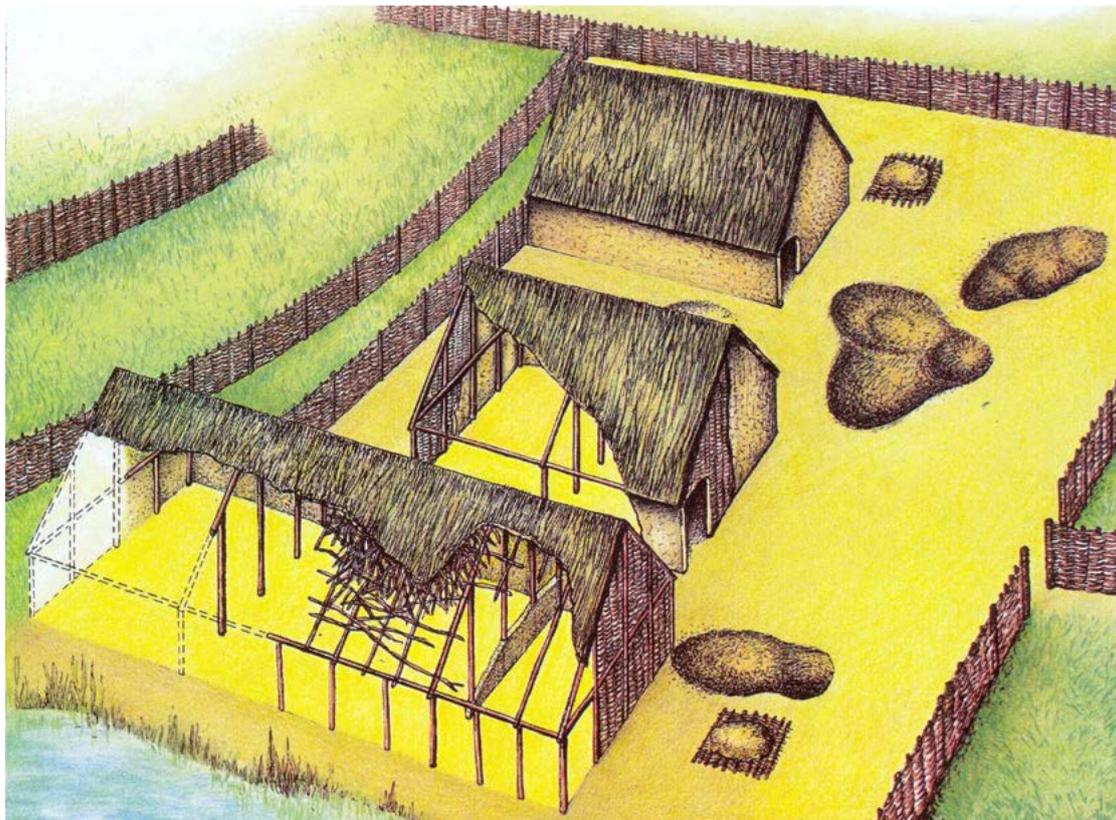
FIG. I-10: ÖCSÖD-KOVÁSHALOM; TISZA CULTURE. RECONSTRUCTION OF RESIDENTIAL FOCI ENCLOSED BY FENCES (AFTER RACZKY 1987B: 66 FIG. 5).

Raczky 1987a: 18; Link 2006: 57; Parkinson 2006: 47–48). It is clear from excavations that such a general pattern may also have been stable and reproduced through several phases of a site. Outside the Carpathian Basin Okolište belongs to this group (fig. I-12; Hofmann *et al.* 2010: 195–199; Müller *et al.* 2011: 83–90; Müller/Rassmann/Kujundžić-Vejzagić 2013: 50–52), as well as Pietrele, where the magnetometer data indicate that houses both on the tell and in the surrounding open settlement broadly had the same parallel orientation (fig. I-13; Hansen/Toderaş 2010: 92–93; Reingruber/Hansen/Toderaş 2010: 174–178). Parallel rows of houses are also known from the Vinča tell at Gomolava (Link 2006: 57, 163–166 no. 42; Borić 2009: 221–227). At Uivar, on the other hand, it is assumed that the houses on the tell were arranged in concentric circles following the inner ditches (see above). The existence of a small central square is claimed, although this is not entirely clear from the published magnetogram and excavation data (Draşovean/Schier 2010: 175–177). A similar pattern can be observed at Polgár-Csőszhalom, where the houses of the central tell through several phases were radially aligned towards the centre, while those in the nearby open settlement are more or less ordered in broadly parallel rows.[31] Finally, Berettyóújfalu-Herpály during its earlier phases also belongs to this group because of its densely packed houses (fig. I-14) which sometimes even share a wall and more or less the same parallel orientation

(levels 9–7; Kalicz/Raczky 1987b: 107–111; Kalicz 1995: 73; Link 2006: 103–108 no. 3). However Herpály tells in general are distinct from Tisza and Vinča sites by their smaller size (see above), and they also have – again, as far as there is reliable information – a higher density of houses or house to open space ratio.[32] This sets them apart from neighbouring Late Neolithic groups of the Carpathian Basin. The closest parallels, it has been suggested, may be found among the Eneolithic tell sites of north-eastern Bulgaria, such as Ovčarovo, Goljamo Delčevo and Poljanica (fig. I-15; Todorova 1982; cf. Kalicz 1995: 72; Link 2006: 57).

I.2.3.4 Houses and Life on Tells

Among the houses excavated on Late Neolithic tell sites there is also considerable variation in terms of size and overall layout. There is evidence of rather small houses with just one room, yet there is a general trend towards larger buildings than previously was the case, and often there are internal subdivisions.[33] Such houses often have an elongated ground plan and dimensions of some 4 to 9 m in

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[31] Raczky/Anders 2010: 147–149; Raczky/Anders/Bartosiewicz 2011: 59–64; Raczky/Sebők 2014: 62–63.

[32] Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 17; Chapman 1990: 53 fig. 3.2; Parkinson 2006: 48; Link 2006: 57–58.
[33] Such rather large multi-room houses were found, for example, at Hódmezővásárhely-Gorzsa (Horváth 1987: 34–35, 38–40), Berettyó-újfalu-Herpály (Kalicz/Raczky 1987b: 110–114), Uivar-Gomila (Draşovean/Schier 2010: 170–171, 174 fig. 14; Schier 2014: 21–28) and during phase 9 towards the end of the Okolište sequence (Müller/Rassmann/Kujundžić-Vejzagić 2013: 42 fig. 37, 49; Hofmann 2013: 447, 457).

Fig. I-11: Parța, Vinča Culture. Habitation levels 7a and 7b; initial pairs of houses and increasingly denser occupation with clusters of houses in subsequent phases (after Drașovean/Schier 2010: 168 figs. 4 and 5).

Fig. I-12: Okolište. Butmir group. Magnetometer plan of the site and its ditches indicating parallel orientation of the houses on the tell (after Müller *et al.* 2011: 83 fig. 3).
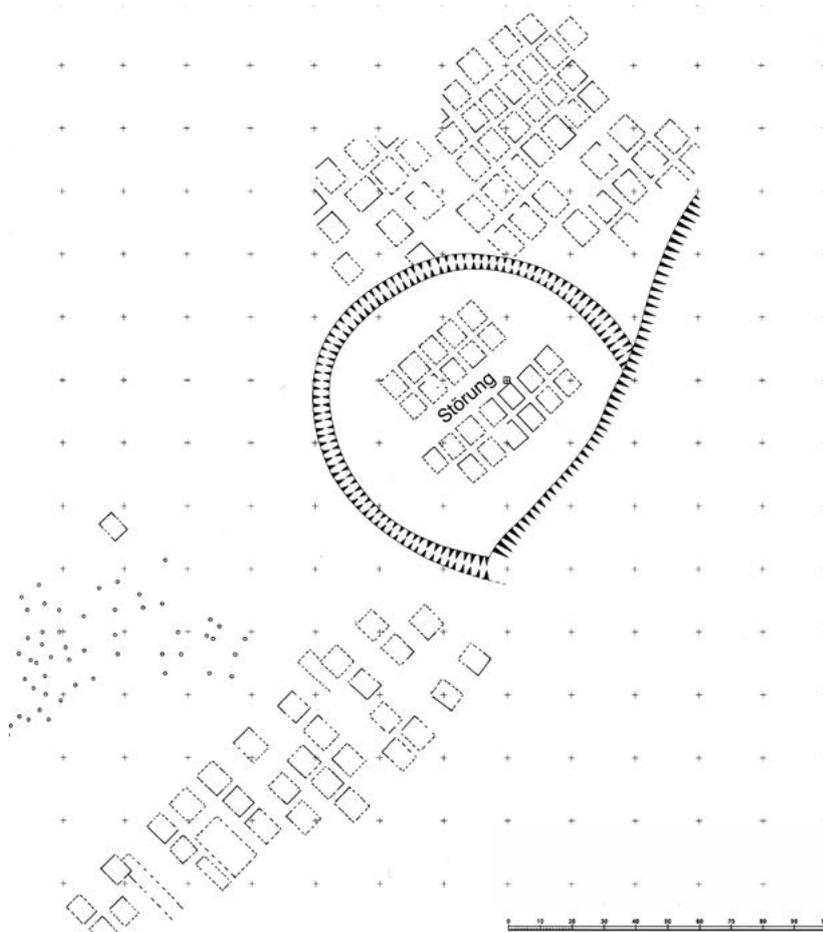
Fig. I-13: Pietrele; KGK VI complex. Interpretation of the magnetometer data indicating parallel orientation of houses on the fortified tell and in the surrounding open settlement (after Reingruber 2011: 45 fig. 3).
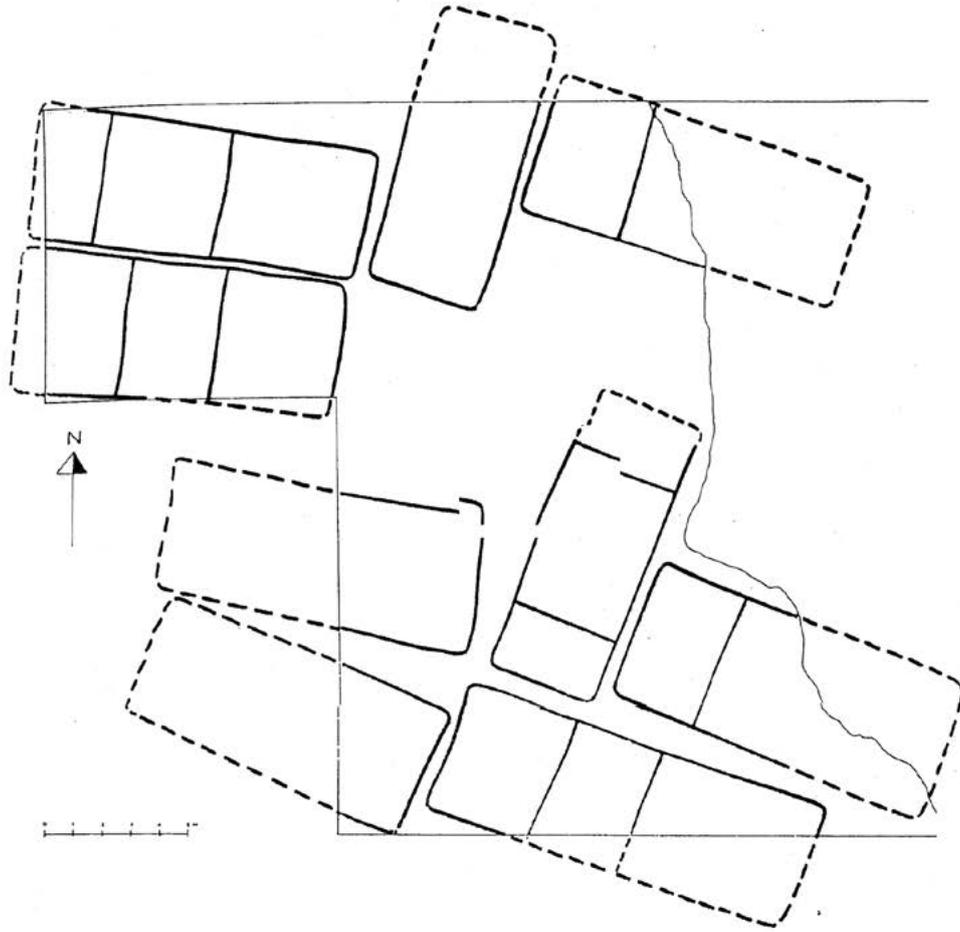
Fig. I-14: Berettyóújfalu-Herpály; Herpály culture. Densely packed houses arranged into broadly parallel order during earlier phases of this settlement (after Kalicz/Raczky 1987b: 109 fig. 6; Kalicz 1995: 73 fig. 4).
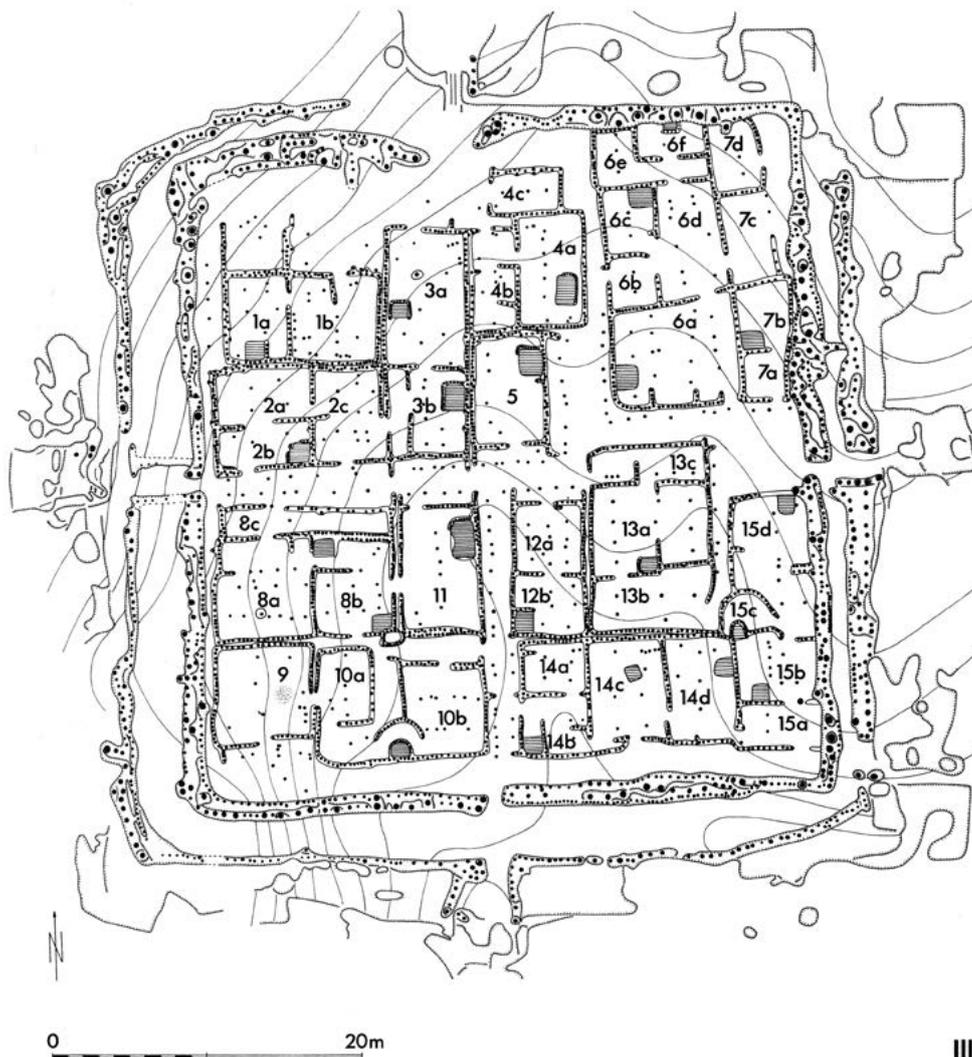
Fig. I-15: Poljanica. Phase III of the Eneolithic tell site in north-eastern Bulgaria (after Todorova 1982: 210 fig. 163).

width and a length of some 5 to 15 m with several rooms.[34] However there is regional variation[35] and even on the same tell there may coexist quite different layouts. Walls were constructed in wattle and daub technique. Sometimes there are quite massive wooden posts, and there is evidence of both single-storey and two-storeyed houses. Evidence of the latter comes, for example, from Berettyóújfalu-Herpály (Kalicz/Raczky 1987b: 107, 110, 113–114) and the Vinča sites of Parţa and Uivar (Schier/Draşovean 2004: 166–168; Draşovean/Schier 2010: 167–171; Schier 2014: 27 fig. 11, 28 fig. 12). Such houses may be freestanding with passageways of varying widths between them, or they may be arranged in groups or compounds with more or less smooth transitions between both solutions. One of the more spectacular examples is house complex 2 from Hódmezővásárhely-Gorzsa (phase C) with six rooms grouped U-shaped around a narrow central corridor and a

size of 13 m x 20 m (fig. I-16; Horváth 1987: 34–35, 38–40; Horváth in Visy/Nagy 2003: 106–107). Since the levelling for subsequent building phases often obliterated parts of previous houses, and such sites are not easy to excavate, it has been suggested that such compounds were often missed and taken for discrete buildings (Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 18). On the other hand, difficulties in distinguishing the chronology between separate building phases may result in houses from different layers being mistaken for a larger contemporaneous complex. Despite such potential problems, however, it is quite clear that large multi-room compounds indeed existed. They were certainly not the rule, but they are known or suspected from a number of Tisza and Herpály sites and may even have been fairly common (cf. Link 2006: 53–54; Parkinson 2006: 46–48). The groups of houses from the Vinča tell of Parţa level 7c may illustrate the smooth transitions mentioned. Partly these houses share walls, partly there are narrow alleys between them – but the general impression must have been of just one complex of associated buildings.[36]

[34] Link 2006: 53; Lichter 1993; Gogâltan 2003: 228–242; Parkinson 2006: 46–48.

[35] Note, for example, the differences in architecture (or at least in the architectural remains surviving for archaeologists to study) between the tell sites in the southern Tisza culture area and in the upper Tisza region where this type of settlement is largely absent (Korek 1989: 49–52).

[36] Lazarovici/Draşovean/Maxim 2001: 105 fig. 82 and back cover; Draşovean/Schier 2010: 167–171 fig. 8.
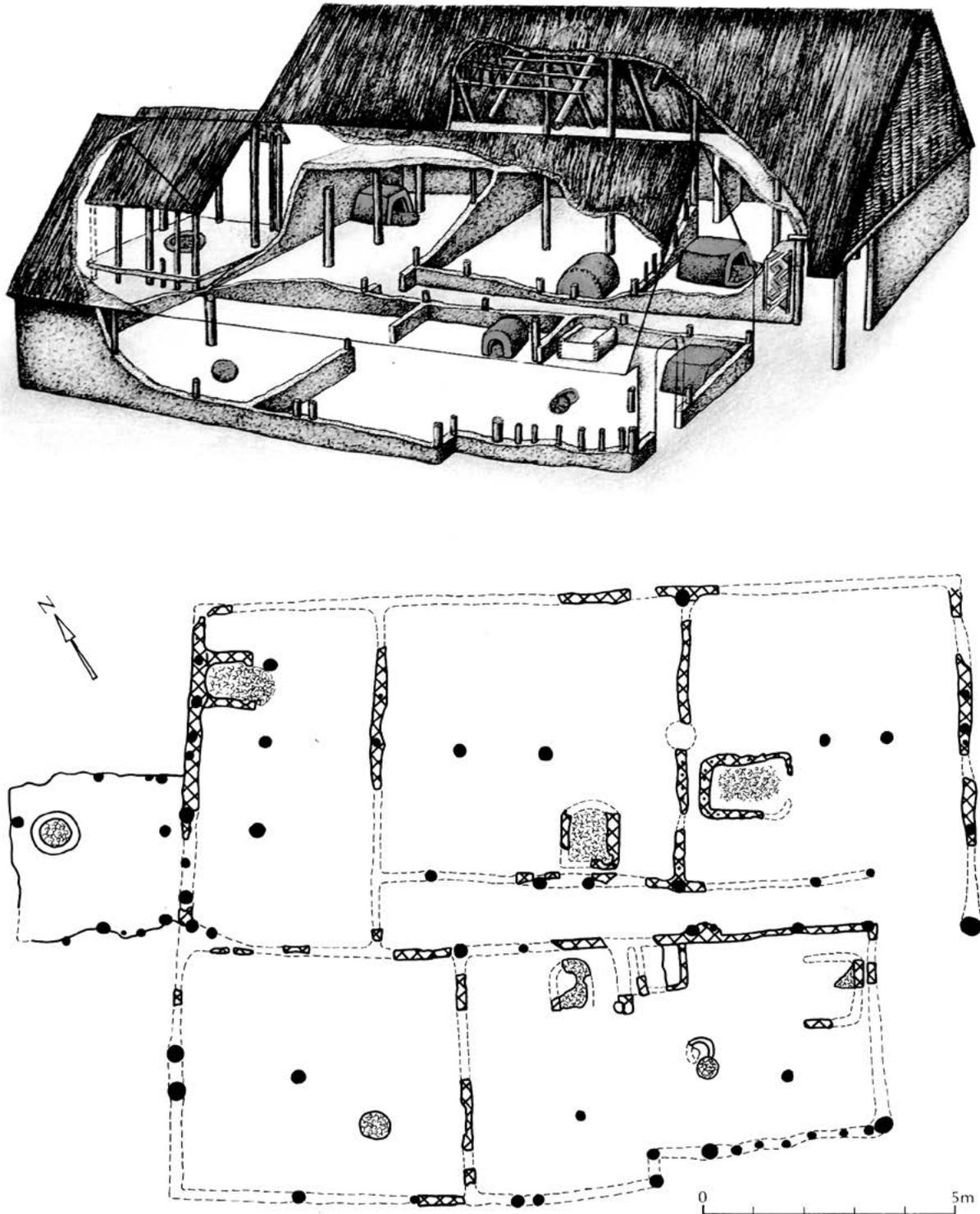
Fig. I-16: Hódmezővásárhely-Gorzsa; Tisza culture. Plan and reconstruction of house complex 2 (after Horváth 1987: 34 fig. 3, 35 fig. 6).

Fixed installations related to daily life include ovens and hearths, which often occur in each room of a house, storage vessels and clay platforms. Pottery, grinding stones, loom weights, spindle whorls and various stone or flint tools point to food preparation, textile production and various other craft activities (Kalicz/Raczky 1987a: 19–21; Link 2006: 55). Wherever the results of modern excavations become available it is likely that we will see some kind of specialisation, or rather different preferences for specific tasks on a household level. For example at Okolište it has been shown that some economic activities, such as hunting, the processing of cereals, woodworking or weaving, were unevenly distributed among the houses examined. In addition, patterns of consumption evident,
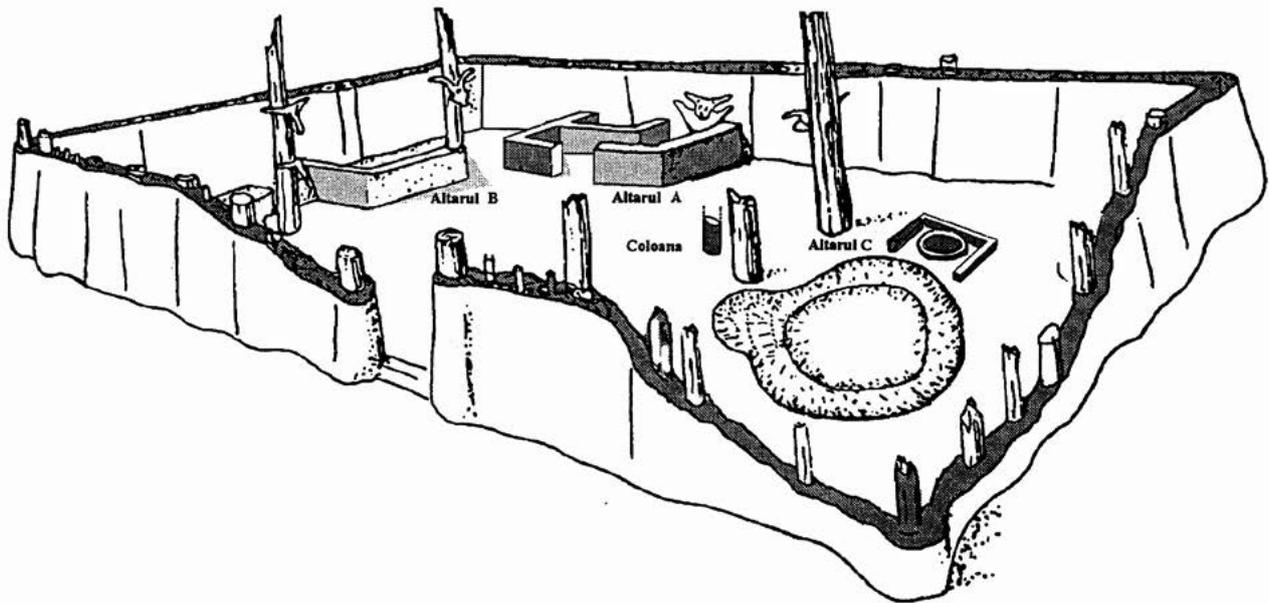
FIG. I-17: PARŢA; VINČA CULTURE. RECONSTRUCTION OF 'SANCTUARY' 1 (AFTER DRAŞOVEAN/SCHIER 2010: 169 FIG. 6).

for example, in the pottery assemblages also show characteristic differences.[37] From this the excavators conclude that there may have been so-called 'alpha' households, which for several generations turned out to be more successful in food production and pursued a broader range of productive activities than their neighbours. Since these 'alpha' households are also thought to feature evidence of ritual elaboration (e. g. figurines) and ritualised food consumption or feasting, it is assumed that such differences in relative 'success' may have been translated into greater influence of these households and their members on their community. It is a matter of debate if such household specialisation and related differences, which are widely known throughout Neolithic Europe, equals political differentiation (see below for discussion and references). In any case, the excavators of Okolište are quite careful in their interpretation. They point out that such differences did not in the long run solidify into significant social inequality and stable political hierarchies. Rather, it is supposed that there were mechanisms at work which set limits to aggrandising behaviour and put an emphasis on cooperation. In the end, there was fissioning and 'devolution' of the Okolište community rather than growth and increasing stratification.[38]

Beyond a 'secular' sphere, from clay altars, the previously mentioned figurines, bucrania and anthropomorphic vessels, etc. there are indications of ritual activities in a domestic context (e. g. Bánffy/Goldman in Visy/Nagy

2003: 112–117). At some sites, notably at Parţa ('sanctuary' 1/2) and Vésztő-Mágor, houses particularly rich in such 'cult' objects, altars or 'libation tables' and 'sacrificial pits' have been interpreted as communal shrines or sanctuaries (fig. I-17).[39] However, it is debatable if there really was such a functional differentiation of sanctuaries and 'normal' houses. Generally speaking, the complexity of the inventory recovered from a house (i. e. 'ritual' versus more mundane objects) also seems to depend on its state of preservation (Parkinson 2006: 47). Other buildings as well have produced similar assemblages, and in the 'shrines' too there are elements of residential buildings (see discussion in Hegedűs/Makkay 1987: 101–103). So most likely ritual was integrated in a domestic context and in fact more or less frequently occurred in houses throughout the entire settlement.[40] This is not to deny the importance of ritual or belief systems in a wider sense, yet this did not apparently result in a distinction made between ritual and a more worldly sphere – a finding that is not altogether surprising in a pre-modern context anyway.

The emphasis on the continuity of houses (both the 'shrines' and normal ones) may also relate to the sphere of belief systems or ideology. This is certainly true for the frequent burial of (select) groups of individuals inside the settlement (often children and men rather than a

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[37] Hofmann *et al.* 2010: 197–207; Müller *et al.* 2011: 83–90; R. Hofmann 2012: 188–190, 193–196; Müller/Rassmann/Kujundžić-Vejzagić 2013: 54–57; Müller *et al.* 2013: 413–418; Hofmann 2013.

[38] E. g. Hofmann *et al.* 2010: 207–208; Müller-Scheeßel *et al.* 2010: 188–189; Müller *et al.* 2011: 97–99, 102–103; R. Hofmann 2012: 196–198; Müller/Rassmann/Kujundžić-Vejzagić 2013: 56; Müller *et al.* 2013: 418–419; Hofmann 2013: 447–448, 455–457.

[39] Sometimes there are sequences of 'special' houses in use through several levels; see, for example, Hegedűs/Makkay (1987: 87, 92–103), Kalicz/Raczky (1987: 22–24), Meier-Arendt (1991: 80–82), Parzinger (1993: 27), Lazarovici/Draşovean/Maxim (2001: 204–246, 381–396), Gogâltan (2003: 230) and Draşovean/Schier (2010: 167–169 fig. 6).

[40] See, for example, Lichter (1993: 70–71), Raczky (1995: 84), Link (2006: 55) and Siklósi (2013: 426–429). See also above on the Okolište evidence, as well as I. Hodder's (2006: 109–140) reappraisal of the Çatal Höyük evidence and his rebuttal of J. Mellaart's older reconstruction of separate 'shrines'.
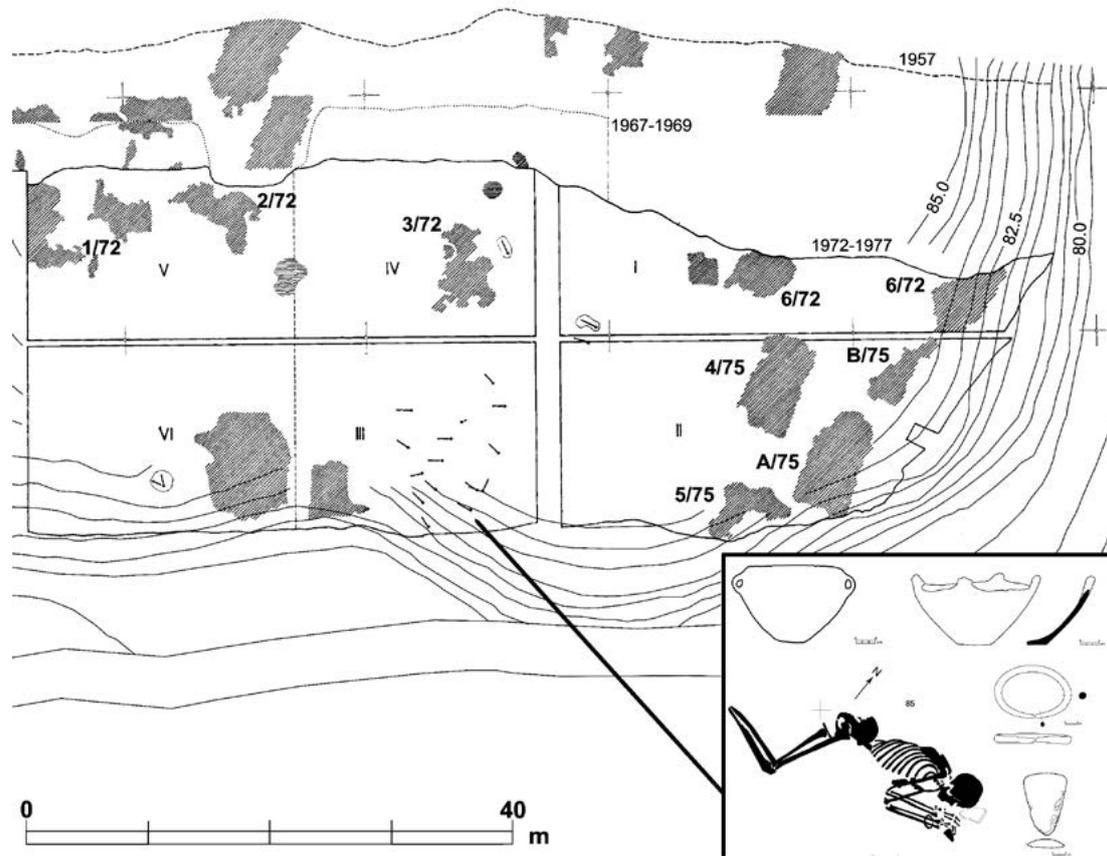
Fig. I-18: Gomolava; Vinča culture. Buildings, intramural burial ground and close-up of the adult male burial no. 12 (after Borić 2009: 221 fig. 34, 223 fig. 36).

representative sample of the entire population).[41] Typically these are single burials or small groups dispersed throughout the settlement (Korek 1989: 46–47; Oravecz in Visy/Nagy 2003: 108–110), with the notable exception of a more formal burial ground in an unoccupied part of the Vinča site of Gomolava (fig. I-18; phase Ib; Borić 2009: 221–225 figs. 35–37). Whether this practice provided shelter to those who had suffered a premature death or added to a sense of ancestry and continuity of place, it certainly implies that such (or related) notions pervaded daily life at these Late Neolithic sites. In some cases such practices may have become more focussed on individual houses or parts of a settlement, although this is not a universal feature. The coexistence of the 'sanctuary' with the 'house of the tribe' through several settlement phases at Parţa may be such an example (Lazarovici/Draşovean/ Maxim 2001: 101 fig. 77, 105 fig. 82; Draşovean/Schier 2010: 167, 185). Another comes from the central tell part of Polgár-Csőszhalom, where the analysis of animal bones revealed a clear predominance of wild species that contrasts with the nearby horizontal settlement. This finding is interpreted in terms of communal events and feasting, as well as the importance of binary wild and domestic, etc. oppositions. Accordingly, some of the central houses of

the tell are assigned a special role in social and/or ritual terms on grounds of their specific decoration and artefact assemblages.[42]

Interestingly, at Pietrele the interpretation of a comparable pattern – i. e. a high percentage of wild animals in the faunal assemblages on the tell – takes a slightly different turn.[43] In this case the authors put particular emphasis on the prestige provided by hunting in what is conceived as a dynamic system in political terms (Hansen/Toderaş 2010: 94–96; Reingruber/Hansen/Toderaş 2010: 172, 179). As already mentioned above, Polgár-Csőszhalom may not be a good guide to tell settlement in general. In its likeness to Lengyel-type circular enclosures Csőszhalom may have carried social and/or ritual connotations rather exceptional in the wider Tisza region. It may have attracted activities which were not carried out or at least were less spatially focused on 'normal' tell sites. That is to say, by their explicit reference to Polgár-Csőszhalom the excavators of Pietrele may be led to expect their site to live up to unrealistically high expectations. Apart from equating ritual complexity and explicitly political power, which is not proposed

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[41] See, for example, all the sites discussed in the papers in Raczky (1987a); see also Kalicz/Raczky (1987: 23–24), Lichter (2001), Link (2006: 58–59), Parkinson (2006: 47–48) and Siklósi (2013: 423–425, 429–430).

[42] Raczky/Anders 2010: 147–150, 155–156; Raczky/Anders/Bartosiewicz 2011: 62–71; Raczky/Sebők 2014: 56, 62–85; cf. Chapman/ Gaydarska/Hardy 2006: 29–33.

[43] As far as the published evidence goes, hitherto this is without comparison to faunal material from the contemporaneous surrounding horizontal settlement (see Hansen/Toderaş 2010: 94–96; Reingruber/ Hansen/Toderaş 2010: 179; Benecke et al. 2013: 182–183, 189–190).

for Csőszhalom itself in such a straightforward way, Csőszhalom-derived notions of ritual 'elaboration' and general 'significance' may not be matched by any 'normal' settlement mound in the area (cf. Whittle 2013: 461). Household specialisation, including differences in subsistence strategies and in the relative importance of wild versus domestic animals have been noted at other sites as well, such as at Okolište. The interpretation of this finding in social terms is not at all a straightforward matter (see above). The same applies on the settlement level, where differences in the wild versus domestic animal ratios have previously been noted, for example, on the Vinča sites of Selevac and Opovo (Tringham/Krstić 1990a; Tringham/Brukner/Voytek 1985; Tringham *et al.* 1992). It is open to debate whether they imply dependency in social or functional terms, i. e. Opovo as a specialised 'hunting' site controlled from a neighbouring 'central place', or rather the adaptation of an independent community to a marginal environment (Tringham *et al.* 1992: 381–384; Tringham 1992: 138–143; cf. Link 2006: 70–71). That is to say, notions of Late Neolithic tell-based communities differ in regard to various cultural, social and political aspects. We will turn to the implications of these differences in outlook in the following paragraphs.

I.2.4 Late Neolithic Tell Settlement: Interpretation

The approach taken here is eclectic. There is no direct access to the past whose material remains we are studying. Instead, our notions of the past involve a (re-)construction, and they always carry with them some of our own academic training and personal background. They are not *per se* right or wrong, good or bad, and they are not mutually exclusive – although the succession of various paradigms, i. e. larger parts of academia adhering to a specific way of dealing with their 'data' and interpreting it, has us believe so. The advance from processual to various brands of post-processual archaeologies is a good example. Amongst others this involved a shift from – broadly speaking – environmental adaptation and social organisation towards a concern with wider cultural issues and a consequent neglect of previous interests. It is quite likely that 'ideas about tell living' (Chapman 1997b: 160) rather than just environmental constraints had an important role to play in the emergence of this specific type of settlement. Still, those people *were* faced with basic human needs and they *had* to organise their lives in social terms on a day-to-day basis. Moreover, there is no clear-cut distinction at all between assumedly broader cultural notions of identity, etc. as nowadays discussed, and what was previously framed in terms derived from cultural anthropology, such as household or kinship-based systems. 'Culture' and 'society' may be set apart for analytical reasons or in consequence of our specific research interests. But they are certainly no mutually exclusive categories, and they are mediated by each other. The true difference is that previously 'testing' for some rather simplified social types was thought possible, while in parts of subsequent culture-historical research the claim to a better fit of our narratives with the past was discredited as anti-

humanist and limiting to archaeological interpretation. In fact, both can be limiting – the older emphasis on environment and socio-economic dynamics as well as an idealist stance. From this perspective the past thirty years saw an enrichment and broadening of approaches, yet it is unfortunate if the approaches to different facets of the past should be conceived mutually exclusive and tied to different epistemological positions. There are, and of course should be, constraints to our narratives, yet this applies to both the social and the cultural. In the following paragraphs, therefore, broadly processual and post-processual approaches, and their equivalents in less overtly theoretical research, are taken to shed light on different but equally important aspects and qualities of the past and its material remains.[44]

I.2.4.1 Integrative Units and Social Dynamics

Kin groups have been identified by various authors as the basic integrative unit of Late Neolithic tell settlements. There are differences in approach, however, that ultimately relate to the structure of segmentary systems, their supposed dynamics and their outcome in economic and social terms. In their analyses of Selevac and other Vinča sites, R. Tringham and her collaborators stressed the interdependence of sedentism, the intensification of production and consumption (both of staple foods and other goods) and the emergence of stable household units identified by the increasing emphasis on the architecture and the continuity of houses or house clusters within larger tell and non-tell villages (e. g. Tringham/Krstić 1990a; 1990b: 589–605). The social and economic dynamics of this system were stressed. We see competition and inequalities arising among such household units that – grossly simplified – led to group fissioning along household lines when, towards the end of the Late Neolithic, the structural limits were reached that such sites could accommodate in terms of individual households' aggrandisement, dominance structures, population numbers, production, communication and decision-making.[45]

More recently it was W. Parkinson (2002; 2006) who returned to the concept of tribal society in his studies of Late Neolithic to Copper Age settlement patterns in the Carpathian Basin. He developed the analysis of integrative units on various structural levels from the house or immediate co-residential unit via the village up to whole clusters of sites into a major analytical tool. We have seen above, that with some regional variation in the Late Neolithic there were (also) large, multi-room and possibly two-storeyed houses. Their internal division, for example the presence of more than one oven or fire-place, is taken

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[44] For a review of current debates on the interpretation of Late Neolithic tell sites and the explanation of culture change in subsequent Copper Age groups see Link (2006: 65–81) and Rosenstock (2009: 51–63).
[45] See Tringham/Krstić (1990b: 608–615) and Tringham (1992: 139–143). For a similar model to account for internal conflict and eventually the decline of Late Neolithic Okolište in Bosnia-Hercegowina see Hofmann *et al.* (2010: 204–208), Müller *et al.* (2011: 98–99), Müller (2012: 48–49), R. Hofmann (2012: 187–197; 2013: 456) and Müller/Rassmann/Kujundžić-Vejzagić (2013: 56–57).

to imply co-residence of several nuclear families and a high degree of interaction and cooperation at household level (Parkinson 2002: 401–419; 2006: 123–156). In some cases such units are seen to group into distinct clusters within the wider settlement. These neighbourhoods of extended kin groups or lineages are interpreted as the basic unit of Late Neolithic communities, the focus of daily life, storage, production and social reproduction (see also Link 2006: 57–58). Above the individual settlement unit, on a regional level, Parkinson is able to identify groups of settlements called clusters or super-clusters generally organised around tell sites. These are interpreted as focal points for exchange and may have expressed a sense of continuity. They are not, however, seen in social and functional terms as very much distinct from surrounding settlement units. It was not power, from this perspective, that held the system together, or the control exercised by a central place over its tributaries (see also Link 2006: 59–63, 84). Rather, the organising principle of clusters and super-clusters was tribal identity, reinforced, for example, by traditions expressed by tell settlements, by regular gatherings and feasting.[46]

This makes for a less competitive structure than in R. Tringham's account, and in fact Parkinson's explanation of subsequent change in terms of tribal cycling is different from hers: Copper Age houses are smaller and show a lack of comparable internal complexity.[47] There is no equivalent to the structural level of the Late Neolithic neighbourhood, i. e. groups of houses (households) spatially combined to form a functional unit. Instead, settlement consists of the smaller houses of one nuclear family each, and Parkinson (2002: 401–426; 2006: 123–184) suggests that activities previously located in the household or neighbourhood were now carried out communally on settlement level. Settlements were relocated more frequently. Clusters or super-clusters tend to become less visible in the archaeological record. It is suggested that we see a reduction in structural levels and complexity combined to increasing mobility of the settlement system as a whole. The earlier emphasis on group identity and integration is weakened with social boundaries towards neighbouring communities (clusters) losing their former importance. Since in his view this process does not correspond to obvious changes in social structure, Parkinson (2002: 430; 2006: 185–188) suggests modifications within the limits of structural flexibility of a tribal society – possibly in consequence of different mobility patterns and an economic shift towards pastoralism.[48] In what was fundamentally the same society and population, structural levels previously actualised became latent. Traditional aspects of life and

social organisation reproduced by the day-to-day practice of numerous individuals began to fade when other options were acted out: latent ways to live were realised and began to shape perception (Parkinson 2002: 398).

However, both R. Tringham (1991; 1992; Tringham/ Krstić 1990b) and W. Parkinson (2002; 2006) would agree that there was no distinct socio-political hierarchisation or institutionalised central authority in Late Neolithic tell communities, be it because fissioning set a limit to household competition or because collective identities were emphasised vis-à-vis individual ambitions. Importantly, this is not a claim that these groups were somehow 'egalitarian'. In segmentary societies there is in fact considerable complexity in social and cultural terms and distinctions are made between individuals or groups of people in various respects (Kienlin 2012a; see also Tringham/Krstić 1990b: 605–606). Yet any inequalities that arose, such as in the number of household members, in relative economic success or in knowledge and skills, were short-lived and not accumulative. This is certainly in line with the evidence discussed above, and with the recent modelling of the Okolište community insofar as the 'alpha' households identified on this site are thought to have failed to establish stable 'political' institutions and the necessity of cooperation between household units is emphasised (e. g. Müller *et al.* 2011: 102–103; Müller/Rassmann/ Kujundžić-Vejzagić 2013: 56–57; Hofmann 2013: 455– 456).[49] Ranking and hereditary socio-political inequality are not the appropriate analytical tools for the study of Late Neolithic tell communities (see Kienlin 2012b).[50] Of course, this leaves the possibility of social and economic competition below institutionalised ranking as a source of disagreement, albeit one that does not stand in opposition to the general model: where distinctions are made inequality may be noted and different interests may arise. Where there is the possibility of individual or group action there may be competition. Yet, this did not – as long as the tells were occupied – fundamentally affect the integration of these communities, their specific organisation of social practices, or the spatial and architectural setting in which these took place and social relations were negotiated and

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[46] Most notable, of course, the evidence of feasting at Polgár-Csőszhalom; see Raczky *et al.* (2002), Gogâltan (2003: 242), Raczky/Anders (2010), Raczky/Sebők (2014: 59–71, 82–85).
[47] For example Kenderes-Kulis and Körösladány-Bikeri or somewhat later Tiszalúc-Sarkad; see Patay (1995; 2005), Parkinson (2002: 403– 404; 2006: 102, 116–117), Parkinson *et al.* (2004: 67–68; 2010), Virág/ Bondár in Visy/Nagy (2003: 127–129) and Link (2006: 56, 59).
[48] See also Müller-Scheeßel *et al.* (2010) for a discussion of the effects of transhumance as a possible cause of the decline or 'devolution' of the Late Neolithic tell site at Okolište.

[49] Interestingly, in what would seem a mismatch of the theory applied, the data at hand and the general thrust of their argument in other passages, Hofmann *et al.* (2010: 190–192) refer to W. Christaller's theory of central places for theoretical guidance – while in effect their own analyses show a (tribal) pattern of economic activities related to household units, and no clear indications of either intra- or inter-site specialisation or hierarchies (Hofmann *et al.* 2010: 199–209; cf. Hofmann *et al.* 2006; Müller *et al.* 2011; R. Hofmann 2012; 2013). See also the related criticism by Merkyte/ Albek (2012: 174–175) directed against supposed 'site hierarchies' between tells and surrounding sites.
[50] Much the same point is made by Merkyte/Albek (2012: 176): 'Better investigated and better preserved sites offer rich find inventories, allowing for differentiation between the personal lifestyles of the inhabitants, in terms, for instance, of fishing/hunting or weaving [...]. Unfortunately, such diversity is often interpreted through deeply embedded evolutionary notions of complexity, seen as evidence of specialised production, which in turn signifies division of labour and ultimately is explained by a hierarchical setup of a society. As stressed by McIntosh, research is being marked by the pervasive metaphor of complexity as hierarchy, whilst ethnoarchaeology offers a multitude of models for exploration of horizontal complexity [...].' See also McIntosh (1999), Kohring/Wynne-Jones (2007) and Kienlin (2012a).

reproduced. It is the latter aspect, incorporation and identity, that receives particular attention in current post-processual reasoning. Although framed in more fashionable terms than previous 'households' and 'tribes', it is suggested here that there is no fundamental contradiction between both interests taken. Clearly, identity, 'ancestral values', etc. are the sort of concerns that the members of descent-based segmentary (tribal) groups may show at various integrational levels and related occasions. Rather than a divide along broadly processual versus post-processual lines, it is the question of socio-political dynamics that sets different authors apart.

I.2.4.2 Identity and Social Dynamics

Current approaches may be exemplified by the work of J. Chapman (1997a; 1997b; 2000), A. Whittle (1996) and D. Bailey (1997; 1999; 2000). As already mentioned, there are notable differences in this group, that we have to return to below, and some points are clearly controversial. In the first instance, however, these authors share an interest in an otherwise neglected quality of the evidence. They offer ways to understand tell-based communities in terms of long-term process, the development of corporate identities and the attachment of people to their natural and built environment. Obviously, some of the concepts advocated remain indistinct. However, they usefully draw attention to the emphasis put on tell sites on permanence, group identity on various levels, and the maintenance of traditions. A social space and architectural setting developed from numerous people's practices that emphasised the deep ancestry of their houses or households and reinforced their reproduction by regulating the interaction and relationships between people. In consequence of such practices and conscious action to structure and legitimate social relations, the tell site as such developed into a token of permanence and continuity. It became a place that attracted commitment, and by its perceived ancestry came to structure notions of the social landscape as well as perhaps, in a more general sense, notions of culture and the outside world.[51] Evidence in favour of such readings comprises all aspects that make a tell 'special' as such, namely the general continuity of houses or direct super-imposition, when in fact there was choice and horizontal settlement also occurs; the specific quality in architectural and spatial terms that these sites attained in consequence of such practices to frame social action; as well as their ditches (not just functionally understood) and the sheer impressiveness of (some) tells at a later stage of their existence. Evidence of ritual is not restricted to tell-based communities, of course, but it fits in nicely, be it in a domestic context or less often on a communal level;[52] and so does settlement burial that may have underlined claims to tradition by incorporating the ancestors (e. g. Chapman 1997a: 153; 1997b: 163). Other aspects are more controversial, such as the deliberate burning of houses, supposedly linked to the life cycles of its inhabitants, the social reproduction of households and the construction of social memory.[53]

Differences arise, on the other hand, with regard to the social and economic strategies of people drawing on 'their' tell and, correspondingly, with regard to the relation of tells to open horizontal sites. D. Bailey (1997; 1999; 2000: 173–177) – mainly drawing on the Bulgarian evidence – certainly opts for the most fluid system of residential mobility. In functional terms he tends to reduce tells to just one specialised type of site among others, albeit the ones with the greatest symbolic potential to develop into an expression of '[...] people's increasing desires, and needs, to make permanent, visible statements of continuities in occupation and residence' (Bailey 2000: 175) and '[...] a statement of the monumental identification of a social place in an otherwise mobile and fluid landscape' (Bailey 1997: 55). It is certainly true that all sorts of activities carried people away from their settlements, and we must not introduce a rigid on-tell versus off-tell, or culture versus nature, opposition. Yet evidence of seasonality in the occupation of tells is ambiguous. There are no indications that agriculture, herding, hunting and other similar activities were conceived as mutually exclusive and carried out the year round from different locations. Rather, both tells and single-layer sites may provide evidence of adaptation to specific environmental and other conditions, most notably of course at Opovo (see above), but they were broadly drawing on the same range of subsistence and wider economic strategies (cf. Raczky 1987a; Gogâltan 2003; Rosenstock 2009: 61–63; 2012). So, Bailey's observation is important that tells represent '[...] a major rearrangement of people and their physical relationship with their natural and built environments' (Bailey 2000: 177). However the tell sites of the Carpathian Basin at

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[51] See, for example, Chapman (1997a: 139–142, 151–154; 1997b: 142–148, 158–163; 2000: 207–208), Bailey (1997: 48–55; 1999: 106–108; 2000: 156–177) and Whittle (1996: 72–112). Although arguing from a different tradition and academic background both W. Meier-Arendt (1991) and H. Parzinger (1992) also broadly fall into this group. Of course, the approaches referred to are more complex and controversial than becomes clear from the passing mention above: note, for example, D. Bailey's (1997: 43–45; 1999: 94–101) criticism of the so-called 'permanence myth' and I. Hodder's (1990) domus/agrios opposition, etc.

[52] Of course, Polgár-Csőszhalom springs to mind in this context, and P. Raczky and A. Anders' (2010: 153–156) reading of this site in terms of all-encompassing cosmological schemes and social and ritual performances (see also, for example, Raczky/Sebők 2014). The tight integration of ritual into the settlement context has also been declared a defining feature of tell sites by other authors. Tells from this perspective are initial 'central places' in the landscape (e. g. Meier-Arendt 1991: 80–83; Parzinger 1992: 222–223, 226–227; cf. Link 2006: 72–73). It is certainly true that ritual had an important role to play on tells. This aspect is closely linked to the wider domains of identity and ancestral traditions anyway (see above). However, Polgár-Csőszhalom is in fact unique so far in its combination of tell elements to those of a circular Lengyel-type enclosure or 'Kreisgrabenanlage' (see above). Although tells and Neolithic enclosures have in common ritual connotations, they should not be drawn together (contra Parzinger 1992: 227; Raczky/Anders 2010: 146). Both occur in different cultural contexts, and tells distinctly are settlements (with additional connotations and practices carried out, etc.), while 'Kreisgrabenanlagen' typically are not (Petrasch 1990: 473–479; Trnka 1991: 306–318; Bertemes/Meller 2012).

[53] One group of authors argue for the deliberate burning and destruction of houses and its social significance in the Neolithic of the Near East and south-eastern Europe, e. g. Stevanović/Tringham (1997), Chapman (1999; 2000), Verhoeven (2010) and Raczky/Sebők (2014: 56); others disagree and argue for accidental fires instead, e. g. Reingruber (2010: 107–109), Hansen/Toderaş (2010: 100–101) and Schier (2014: 21).

least do not belong to the very first Neolithic communities in the area, and his specific reading that in effect seeks to collapse a rigid Mesolithic (mobile)/Neolithic (sedentary) dualism is problematic.

A. Whittle (1996: 72–112) is also careful to emphasise aspects of mobility in Neolithic subsistence and settlement strategies. He also makes it quite clear that tells are not static but the result of long series of cultural choices. Yet his argument is mainly on cycles of aggregation and dispersal in the broad tradition of a more or less sedentary Neolithic way of life, from the Middle Neolithic via the Late Neolithic into the subsequent Copper Age of the Carpathian Basin (e. g. Whittle 1996: 107–112). In opposition to R. Tringham, the importance of autonomous households is questioned and larger residential collectives and basic social groupings are suggested (Whittle 1996: 103–107, 112). This usefully draws attention to the fact that the tell or village is more than the sum of individual houses or households.[54] However the true difference is that internal (household) competition is largely denied in favour of an approach that emphasises communal values of permanence, an ideology of residential collectives and incorporation. Tells from this perspective are seen as a means of integration by the gradual building up of traditions and commitment to fixed places: 'These places were the focus for ritual, exchange and burial. The settings for such negotiations with neighbours, kin, ancestors and others were groups of buildings, carefully built and colourfully decorated [...] Through domestic cult and burials close to the settlement, people mediated with their ancestors and traced descent [...] Through the provision of hospitality and by gift-giving, the living negotiated a wider sense of community which could incorporate previously more independent groups' (Whittle 1996: 112).

As far as claims to ancestral traditions and the importance of local identities are concerned, this goes along well with the approach of J. Chapman (1997a; 1997b; 2000; 2012). However, Chapman in his work on the social organisation of Late Neolithic and Copper Age communities identifies further practices involved in social reproduction, namely enchainment, i. e. the establishment of social relations via the use and exchange of exotic and/or personalised objects, and the importance of fragmentation and structured deposition in this process (e. g. Chapman 2000: 23–48; 2008b). The overall picture of Late Neolithic communities emerging is one of increasing complexity and intensification, be it in terms of different 'kinds' or 'types' of persons in command of complementary skills, the exchange of sought-after raw materials over large distances, or competition among corporate groups such as age-sets, household units or kin groups such as lineages or clans.[55] Albeit framed in different terms this is not far from the older views of R. Tringham. However, the solution

suggested is not fissioning, but a decoupling of alternative 'arenas' of social power. Conflict and individual identities, it is proposed, could not be accommodated, negotiated or expressed any more within the constraints put upon social practices in contemporaneous tell settlements (Chapman *et al.* 2006: 163, 171). In consequence there was a decoupling and spatial separation of mortuary space: '[...] a crisis in the communally accepted form of personhood and a threat to the egalitarian basis of ancestral dwelling on the tell from a new level of conspicuous, competitive consumption that could not be contained within the traditional ancestral domestic arena. [...] that led to the co-emergence of a new arena of social power to validate the newly developed patronal roles [...]' (Chapman *et al.* 2006: 174).

I.2.4.3 Late Neolithic/Eneolithic Tells and the Varna 'Problem'

Clearly, both incorporation and competition need to be analysed (see above). It is a weakness of A. Whittle's (1996) approach that it does not properly accommodate the latter. Hence Chapman is right to stress that the visual ancestry of fully developed tell sites may have invited attempts by 'central people', on-tell lineages or other groups to lay claim to preferential access to the ancestors. There may also have been potential asymmetry in terms of 'place value' and 'place myths', i. e. in the symbolic capital accumulated by tell-based communities vis-à-vis their neighbours on single-layer sites (Chapman 1997a: 153–154; 1997b: 162–163). However, we do not see such potential competition resulting in functional or political dependency. Claims to distinct social inequality or political hierarchies on Late Neolithic tells of the Carpathian Basin are problematic (see above; cf. Whittle 1996: 75–76, 93, 105–107, 111–112). J. Chapman, on the other hand, carries forward discussion from competition and inequality, that may occur on tells and be accommodated by tell communities, to hierarchisation and ultimately to the Varna 'problem' or, later on, 'effect' (e. g. Chapman 1990; 2012; 2013a; 2013b), in a way that requires discussion.

First it should be noted that Chapman in his relevant work is mainly concerned with the Bulgarian sequence. Apart from different terminology this involves some true differences in the archaeological record we are discussing. In Bulgaria tell sites of the 5th millennium BC, such as Ovčarovo, Goljamo Delčevo and Poljanica, are classified as Eneolithic or Copper Age.[56] A number of these coexist with extramural cemeteries, so there certainly was a rearrangement in the relation of mortuary space and the built environment of the living.[57] Varna, in particular, which was previously thought to date to the end of the Eneolithic sequence (Kodžadermen-Gumelniţa-Karanovo VI; phase III of the so-called Varna group; Lichter 2001: 87–113), has been shown by recent radiocarbon dating to

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[54] See also Parkinson (2002; 2006), Chapman (2009: 151–152), Müller *et al.* (2011: 98–99), Müller/Rassmann/Kujundžić-Vejzagić (2013: 56–57) and Hofmann (2013: 455).
[55] See, for example, Chapman (2000: 148–159, 203–221), Chapman *et al.* (2006: 160–165) and Higham *et al.* (2007: 647–652).

[56] See Todorova (1978; 1982), Whittle (1996: 81–82, 89–95) and Bailey (2000: 156–160, 173–177).
[57] E. g. Golyamo Delčevo; see Todorova (1982: 59–61), Parzinger (1993: 315–318), Whittle (1996: 95–96), Bailey (2000: 197–203) and Lichter (2001: 114–129).

be in the region of one to two centuries older than expected (*c.* 4560–4450 cal BC). In absolute terms, then, Varna runs parallel with Middle Eneolithic sites in surrounding areas (Chapman *et al.* 2006: 165–170; Higham *et al.* 2007: 643–647). It is suggested that this finding may be explained by the role of Varna and the lake Varna area as a 'centre of social and cultural innovation' (Chapman *et al.* 2006: 171), where new ways to negotiate status by the massive accumulation of prestigious objects in burial ritual first occurred, which subsequently found wider acceptance and spread into neighbouring Middle to Late Eneolithic groups (Chapman *et al.* 2006: 170).[58]

This does not compare well with the Carpathian Basin, where extramural cemeteries are a feature of the Tiszapolgár and Bodrogkeresztúr cultures of the late 5th and early 4th millennium BC (Bognár-Kutzián 1972; Patay 1974; 1984: 6; Parkinson 2006: 57 fig. 4.4). In local (Hungarian) terminology, that is also applied in the present study, this is the Eneolithic/Copper Age of the Carpathian Basin and northern Balkans that by and large only starts after the end of Late Neolithic tell settlement,[59] i. e. after the end of the Vinča sequence in this area as well as after Tisza and Herpály (Link 2006; Parkinson 2006). These burials, of course, within a traditional Copper Age discourse have been claimed as important evidence of social hierarchisation. The Copper Age from this perspective is a 'complex structure of economy, society and religion' comprising amongst other features the emergence of complex society, social hierarchisation and craft specialisation, as well as the use of prestige goods to express individual status (e. g. Lichardus 1991b: 786–788). However, it is quite clear that in Tiszapolgár and Bodrogkeresztúr graves there is no evidence of hereditary social inequality. What differences there are in grave goods clearly refer to age grades and gender, i. e. to general aspects of the habitus, of individual or group identity of Copper Age women and men in broadest terms (see Lichter 2001: 289–291, 344–349). This scheme, as well as the small number of individuals living and being buried at the same time, indicates that the cemeteries belonged to settlement units of limited size, possibly organised along kinship lines. Male authority was derived from age and personal achievement but hardly extended beyond the immediate co-residential unit or the limits of the individual's lifespan. Distinguished by age, and possibly by individual merit, their ability to assert themselves hardly affected more than the particular kinship group. After all, R. Tringham (1992; Tringham/Krstić 1990b) and W. Parkinson (2002; 2006) seem correct in that there was fissioning or dispersal, and

both the Late Neolithic and Copper Age communities are broadly located on a tribal level.

J. Chapman, therefore, is specifically dealing with the Bulgarian situation only, and more precisely with the so-called Varna 'problem' – explaining why this exceptionally rich cemetery should occur alongside what would appear largely 'egalitarian' tell settlements (Chapman 1990; 2012; 2013a). Problems on the burial side of Chapman's argument have been discussed in a recent volume (Kienlin 2010: 97–101; see also Kienlin 2008). Broadly speaking they refer to extrapolation from the archaeological data: First, in that Varna is used as a model for Eneolithic society in wider parts of south-eastern Europe; second, with regard to the Childean notion, that rich burials reflect initial competition for elite positions and their decline is due to a more stable social structure, to account for the early end of truly elite burials at Varna (Chapman *et al.* 2006: 172; Higham *et al.* 2007: 650–651).

We may have to admit that our approaches fall short of reconstructing a more complex ancient reality here. With the numerous cenotaphs in Varna as possible indicators of cult and culture rather than just graves reflecting social and political hierarchies, we may miss the point in our search for chiefs, great men or dominant lineages – both in Varna and in its wider south-eastern European context. It is not claimed that Varna is well understood. However, along the lines suggested by A. Whittle (1996) or D. Bailey (2000), we may have to turn to an approach focusing on aspects of identity, both individual and communal, constructed via burial ritual and its hypertrophic elaboration in just some historically specific situations and regional contexts, such as on lake Varna.[60] Varna from this perspective is best understood in terms of the mediation with ancestors, possibly not that far removed from what was going on in the settlements, and the expression of differences in individual identities in 'communally sanctioned and valued ways' (e. g. the ability to provide hospitality or to fulfil symbolic/religious roles on behalf of the community as a whole; Whittle 1996: 97–98; Bailey 2000: 199–209). The famous rich cenotaphs, it has been suggested, may indicate the 'community importance' of burial ceremonies and indicate ancestral rites rather than refer to some rich and powerful leaders who went missing during warfare abroad (Whittle 1996: 97–101; Bailey 2000: 203). The rich burials, rather than expressing individual status and referring to socially pre-eminent persons alone, possibly provided an opportunity to negotiate inter-individual distinctions in the context of burial ceremonies, which put equal emphasis on the '[...] inclusion of differently

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[58] See also Hansen/Toderaş (2010: 86–87) and Hansen/Toderaş/ Wunderlich (2012: 88) for supportive discussion of the new Varna dates in relation to Pietrele and for their implications for the wider south-eastern European Copper Age. On the other hand, members of a current project on the Varna cemetery material are highly critical about Chapman *et al.*'s early dates for the rich graves in particular. They come up with a five-phase model for the chronology of the cemetery and place some of the particularly rich graves and 'cenotaphs' in their youngest phase dated to *c.* 4400 cal BC (Krauß/Leusch/Zäuner 2012: 72–79; Krauß/Zäuner/ Pernicka 2014: 377–384). This problem therefore is not solved.

[59] For temporal variation in the abandonment of the Late Neolithic tells, see above and, of course, Link (2006: 44–46 figs. 20–22).

[60] Prominent among the elements that make Varna 'special' is, of course, its situation on the Black Sea coast, which facilitated contact and exchange, as well as possibly salt production in its surroundings (see Nikolov 2010). However, none of this, apparently, led into the formation of permanent stable hierarchies, or an otherwise exceptional position of this area. Generally speaking, we need to be aware that the Late Neolithic (Eneolithic) of south-eastern Europe is characterised by different local trajectories as well as by the general instability of social formations and of claims to authority and power, if at all. It is in consequence of this situation that we see an overriding interest in stabilising group identities and communal traditions.

identified individuals within a larger group buried within the cemetery [...]' and community cohesion (Bailey 2000: 202, 208–209). Varna in this sense '[...] may represent extra-ordinary mortuary behaviour unrelated to the reality of everyday life as documented from settlements.' (Bailey 2000: 199; cf. Whittle 1996: 100).

One does not have to agree to any of the above suggestions, however, to see that despite a cemetery like Durankulak (Todorova 2002) Varna is unparalleled even in Bulgaria (see Lichter 2001: 75–113). If it was a centre of innovation for the emergence of hierarchical society, this left hardly any traces in the archaeological record of its surroundings and there was no follow-up during subsequent periods. It is here that the critique of Childe-derived archaeologically invisible elites brings us back to settlements: J. Chapman's (e. g. 2012: 234–239; 2013a: 326, 328–331) 'ideological misrepresentational viewpoint' certainly is in line with other modern reformulations of this position, which stress that burial ritual offers an arena for the negotiation of social relationships, and grave goods may either express or conceal social structure (e. g. Hodder 1982; Parker Pearson 1999). There is a problem, however, as we have got used to arguing that existing elites were concealed for ideological reasons, or that there was simply no more necessity for them to express their status in death. A social or political interpretation is preferred. Elite positions are taken for granted, whereas their existence should actually be proven by a contextual approach.

Bulgarian tells like Ovčarovo, Goljamo Delčevo and Poljanica resemble the Herpály examples introduced above. It is entirely unclear why minor variation in house size and structure should reflect anything close to the socio-political hierarchisation derived from the Varna evidence (Chapman 1990; contra: Whittle 1996: 90–93; Bailey 2000: 156–160, 173–177). Fundamentally the same holds true for the stone-built 'palaces' or, alternatively, 'temples' or 'shrines' at the settlement of Durankulak.[61] It is open to debate if such structures should be understood in truly political, or rather in broadly communal or ritual terms (i. e. the residence of some elite person vs. communal buildings for feasting, etc.). Without Varna in the background, the interpretation of such 'special' buildings in the Carpathian Basin often opts for the latter (e. g. Raczky 1987a; Gogâltan 2003; Raczky/Anders 2010).

That is to say Varna tends to unduly influence our readings of the settlement evidence.[62] In this context, then, order and continuity in the layout of houses as well as the monumentality of 'fortification' systems are attributed to

centralised power and control,[63] when otherwise they may be referred to the wider domain of corporate identity of tell communities and the demarcation of ancestral places (e. g. Chapman 1997a: 153; 1997b: 163). Similarly, all patterning and difference in subsistence strategies, production or raw material procurement, that fits in well with the communal or household organisation of such activities in kin-based segmentary groups, and stands in a broader Neolithic tradition,[64] is interpreted in terms of different 'quality' or 'prestige' of an activity, differential access to resources, inequality and control.[65] Metallurgy, which first occurs in this period, is just the most prominent example. This is an activity[66] which for many authors seems entirely impossible to relate to a wider community rather than to some elites and craft specialists,[67] although in Vinča contexts the former is exactly what we see: on-site extractive metallurgy and metalworking firmly rooted in a long-standing communal interest in ornaments and pigments that developed continuously alongside the production of other elements of expressive material culture without any obvious socio-political impact.[68]

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[61] See, for example, Todorova (2002: 13 fig. 5a/b, 15 fig. 8a/b); see also Chapman/Gaydarska/Hardy (2006: 27–29) and Chapman (2012: 226–227 fig. 1).

[62] See also, for example, Hansen/Toderaş (2010; 2012), Reingruber (2011) and Hansen/Toderaş/Wunderlich (2012), who use Varna as a welcome background for their social modelling of the Pietrele community, which is situated not only at a considerable distance from the Varna cemetery but also in a rather different topographic and cultural setting from the Black Sea area.

[63] See, for example, Todorova (1982: 62–66, 144–165), Reingruber/Hansen/Toderaş (2010: 179) and Hansen/Toderaş (2010: 96–103).

[64] For example, see above on the evidence of household specialisation at Okolište. Different traditions of 'doing things' on a household (= familiy or kin group?) level are widely found throughout Neolithic Europe – provided there are modern excavations and good conservation of archaeological finds. In the Early Neolithic LBK culture of central Europe, for example, related evidence often refers to the provision of stone or flint raw materials, pottery style or figurines, all of which potentially are specific to individual houses (= households?) and may remain stable over several (house) generations (e. g. Zimmermann 1995; Gronenborn 1997; Lüning 2005; Frirdich 2005; Ramminger 2007). Similarly, from the Late Neolithic lake sites of the northalpine region there is plenty of evidence for differences in plant and animal species used (both wild and domestic) as well as different 'crafts' preferentially carried out in adjacent houses, which is interpreted in terms of 'household' specialisation in broadly 'egalitarian' segmentary groups (e. g. Ebersbach 2010; Doppler et al. 2010; 2012; Doppler/Pollmann/Röder 2013; cf. Schlichtherle 2004; 2009).

[65] See, for example, Hansen/Toderaş (2010: 94–96) and Reingruber/Hansen/Toderaş (2010: 172, 179) with regard to the faunal assemblages (domestic vs. wild animals) and the evidence of weaving at Pietrele (cf. Hansen et al. 2007; Hansen et al. 2009), as well as the passages on craft specialisation in the production of storage jars (Hansen/Toderaş 2012: 132–136). Reingruber (2010; 2012) from her meticulous analyses of the Pietrele data has good evidence of communal elements in the processing of cereals and storage (cf. Parkinson 2006), but she declines that such could have been done without centralised control (i. e. hierarchical structures; see Reingruber 2010: 119–122). Her corresponding argument that the pottery of the site could only have been produced by specialist potters is entirely circumstantial (cf. Reingruber 2010: 121; 2011: 46–53): not all division of labour or communal activities require elite control; nor is nicely decorated and high-quality pottery evidence of craft specialisation (see Kienlin 2012a).

[66] The same applies, of course, to all products of metallurgy, i. e. all copper objects, which are primarily seen as prestige goods drawn upon in the establishment or reproduction of social and political hierarchies.

[67] With the 'metallurgy and elites' position, that goes back, of course, to C. Renfrew's (1978; 1986) Varna studies, for example: Hansen/Toderaş (2010: 86, 96–97). See, however, most recently Müller (2012: 47–49) with a more cautious view of the social implications of Late Neolithic metallurgy.

[68] See discussion in Kienlin (2010: 3–20, 80–117) and Roberts/Thornton (2014) for the wider metallurgical context. For an up-to-date review of the evidence of mining, the early use of copper minerals (pigments), as well as for proof of the beginnings of extractive metallurgy in the Vinča culture and the absolute dating of this development, see Radivojević (2007), Borić (2009) and Radivojević et al. (2010).

Once this line of argument is followed, all previous or alternative characterisations of tell communities in terms of communal identity and shared ancestral values retreat into the background (cf. Kienlin 2012a; 2012b). However, this is not J. Chapman's approach. In order to conclude this section, therefore, we have to return to his notion of alternative arenas of social power and the concomitant decoupling of strategies and practices in both spheres. In Bulgaria, at least, there certainly was a shift in the perception of death in relation to the built environment that is evident from the increasing use of extramural cemeteries during the local Eneolithic. This represents a rearrangement of landscape use and perception, and the construction of settlement or 'village' identities.[69] However it is problematic to argue for a decoupling of spheres, one tell-based and focussed on maintaining tradition, the other unfolding on cemeteries where status was negotiated by the massive consumption of prestigious objects.

The coexistence of two such spheres may have been a specific structural feature of these communities. However, to relocate cemetery-derived social competition into the settlements where somehow or other this could not be lived out is problematic. This approach has us believe in a strangely passive and reversely orientated role of architecture and social space. This is not only the setting where people are duped into believing their ancestral values intact, and every conflict or ambition may be relegated to the outside and to special occasions such as an occasional burial. It is not status quo settlement vis-à-vis modern-day cemeteries. Rather, the settlement, the tell, was the social and cultural setting into which people grew, where they acquired their habitus and social standing. That is to say 'elite' positions acquired

by anyone reared into this setting, his ambitions and practices, would have been different than the cemetery-derived reconstruction of social structure would have us believe. This difference is not just about 'concealing' the true nature of power relations in daily (settlement) life.[70]

In the graves there is a concern with aspects of personhood and individual identities – not least perhaps in terms of one's qualification to represent one's community in extramural inhumation at all – which were not previously expressed in this way. However, at everywhere except Varna it can be shown that this concern typically centred on categories of age and gender – children versus adults, male versus female, differentiated by the deceased's body's position/orientation and grave goods. There is little evidence to suggest a markedly stratified society beyond maybe personal merit, experience or preferred activities.[71] Rather, in such 'patterns of similarity' and the adherence to more or less strict rules of inhumation indicative of age and gender, one may see an extension of the community of the living, an emphasis on ancestors and communal values similar to that expressed by the sense of place evident from tell settlement, as well as by the symmetry and order of settlement layout. Extramural burial may thus be a consequence of changing perceptions of death and its appropriate treatment, rather than of social or political change. It may have provided an opportunity for the expression of individual distinctions. Yet it did so without negating or eroding communal solidarity. Burial grounds may have provided alternative focal points to the house and the tell in the landscape for ceremonies, strengthening the bond between the living and the dead (Whittle 1996: 95–96, 100–101, 112, 120–121; Bailey 2000: 199, 202–203).

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[69] See Parzinger (1993: 297–301, 313–320), Whittle (1996: 86–96, 101–101, 112, 120–121), Bailey (2000: 156–177, 190–209) and Lichter (2001: 75–132).

[70] Problems with his theorising of social space become even more marked in Chapman's (2013a: 326; 2013b: 313) most recent work. Here 'tell-dwelling' and tell economy are reduced to a mere foil for the Varna 'effect': their role is to provide an economic background, i. e. surplus production which enabled some members of these communities to obtain Varna-style 'long-distance exotica'.

[71] Whittle 1996: 95–96; Bailey 2000: 197–203, 208–209; Lichter 2001: 125–132.

I.3 Bronze Age Tell Settlement in the Carpathian Basin

Comparable to the different usages of 'Late Neolithic' and 'Eneolithic'/'Copper Age' the term 'Early Bronze Age' throughout south-eastern Europe denotes quite different phenomena. Typically, it is culturally defined rather than through metallurgy, as in its earliest stages it refers to groups that did not yet use tin bronze. This is most marked in the Balkans and the Carpathian Basin, where groups like Ezero (from *c.* 3100/3000 cal BC; Schwenzer 2005: 185–187), late Vučedol and Makó/Kosihy-Čaka (from *c.* 2800/2600 cal BC; Maran 1998: 347–351, 354, tab. 82; Kulcsár 2009: 15) in local terminology constitute the beginnings of the Bronze Age.[72] There is culture change to justify this view. For example, Ezero marks the end of the 'hiatus' or 'transition period' following the Bulgarian Eneolithic (*c.* 3500–3100/3000 cal BC; Pare 2000: 2–3). After *c.* 3000/2800 cal BC there certainly was a renewed increase in metallurgy, and/or in the deposition of metal objects, which is linked to the appearance of new types of single-edged copper shaft-hole axes, daggers and precious metal ornaments.[73] However, with Makó drawing on late Baden traditions and Vučedol influence in the Carpathian Basin there is also a strong element of continuity.[74] In addition, from the large Makó area, for example, actually very little is known in terms of copper artefacts and evidence of metalworking (Kulcsár 2009: 167–170), so that metallurgy can only be said to have undertaken a rather slow ascent, with little socio-cultural impact.

Makó, which typically has evidence of rather ephemeral buildings and one-phase open settlements only (Kulcsár 2009: 58–70), gave way to a variety of Early Bronze Age groups, such as Nagyrév, Hatvan, Otomani and Maros (fig. I-19; EBA II/III and subsequent Middle Bronze Age in Hungarian terminology; *c.* 2400/2300–1500/1400 cal BC).[75] These are defined in particular by their different pottery styles, burial customs (inhumation vs. cremation) and by the beginnings of Bronze Age tell settlement.[76] As late as the 1990s the explanation of this development involved multiple migrations and war (e. g. Bóna 1992a; cf. Evans/Rasson 1984: 718–719). Only more

recently have up-to-date reviews of the evidence become available.[77] Explanation of culture change has shifted away from historical concepts to, for example, the formation of regional identities expressed and negotiated through material culture, both indigenous and foreign.[78]

It is the tell settlements of these groups that we will turn to in the following paragraphs. Some two thousand years after the decline of their Neolithic predecessors they share some basic structural features. However, like their predecessors, Early to Middle Bronze Age tells are noticeable for their variability in terms of size and continuity, as well as with regard to their internal organisation and their integration into wider settlement systems. As such they too require a differentiated approach.

I.3.1 Chronology and Distribution of Bronze Age Tells

Generally speaking, the distribution of Bronze Age tells in the Carpathian Basin overlaps with that of previous Neolithic ones, but during the Bronze Age the territory of tell-'building' communities extended further north and north-west than previously was the case (fig. I-20).[79] Thus Bronze Age tells are found in some numbers along the terraces accompanying the Danube south of Budapest and on the lower plains and banks along the Tisza river (fig. I-21). Only the latter area had previously been occupied by Neolithic tells as well. Sites in Hungarian Transdanubia as well as along the Hron and Ipeľ valleys in Slovakia mark the western and north-western boundaries of the Bronze Age tells which extended well beyond the territories of Late Neolithic ones. There is also a large number of sites in the north of the Carpathian Basin, where previously this type of settlement was unknown. These tells are located in the zone between the Danube and the Tisza rivers, in the hilly area east of Budapest, in the northern Tisza area along the Bükk mountains, as well as along the Tisza's northern and north-eastern confluents. Towards the south-east there is a large concentration of numerous Bronze Age tells known from the Körös/Criş and Berettyó, etc. river valleys, as well as along the lower course of the Maros in the Romanian Banat region and further south towards the Danube.[80] Prior to the embankments of the Tisza and its tributaries in modern times, large parts of this region

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[72] Todorova 1981: 2–3 fig. 1; Tasić 1984a; Bóna 1992a; Kulcsár in Visy/Nagy 2003: 141–142; Heyd/Kulcsár/Szeverényi 2013.

[73] Maran 1989; 2001: 278–283; Parzinger 1993: 270–271 horizon 13, 348–351; Pare 2000: 12–13; Bátora 2003: 13–24; Dani 2013; Szeverényi 2013.

[74] E. g. Bóna 1992a: 11–12; Kulcsár 2009: 171–178; Kulcsár/Szeverényi 2013; Kulcsár 2013.

[75] Točik/Vladár 1971; Tasić 1984a; Machnik 1991; Bóna 1992a; Raczky/Hertelendi/Horváth 1992; Roeder 1992; Görsdorf 1992; Forenbaher 1993; Novotná/Novotný 1996; O'Shea 1996: 36 fig. 3.3; Maran 1998: tab. 82; Furmánek/Veliačik/Vladár 1999; Barta 2001; David 2002: 3–46; Görsdorf/Marková/Furmánek 2004: 88–90; Gogâltan 2008a: 41 fig. 2; Müller/Lohrke 2009.

[76] Meier-Arendt 1992; David 1998; O'Shea 1996; Gogâltan 2005; 2008a; 2008b.

[77] E. g. Vollmann 2005; Thomas 2008; Kulcsár 2009; Kiss 2012a.

[78] E. g. O'Shea 1996: 27–52, 353–369; Reményi 2005; Sørensen/Rebay-Salisbury 2009; Jaeger/Czebreszuk/Fischl 2012; Vicze/Poroszlai/Sümegi 2013; Heyd/Kulcsár/Szeverényi 2013; Fischl *et al.* 2013: 355–357; cf. Bankoff 2004.

[79] Cf. Kovács 1988: 25 fig. 1; Link 2006: 12 fig. 6; Gogâltan 2008a: 41 fig. 1; Anders *et al.* 2010: 147–148.

[80] Meier-Arendt 1992: map inside front cover; David 1998: 231–240; Gogâltan 2008a: 40–41; Duffy 2014.

CHRONOLOGISCHE TABELLE DER FRÜHEN UND MITTLEREN BRONZEZEIT IN UNGARN nach Bándi, Kalicz, Kalicz-Schreiber, Kovács, Patay

Süddeutschld. Österreich	Hänsel	Mozsolics	Mittlere/Frühe Bronzezeit	1 TRANS-DANUBIEN SW SO	2 TRANS-DANUBIEN NW	3 TRANS-DANUBIEN N	4 DONAU-THEISS ZWISCHEN STROMLAND NO	5 JENSEITS DER THEISS SÜD W O	6 JENSEITS DER THEISS NORD W O	7 NORD-GEBIRGE W
B₂–C₁	MD III	B IV	JÜNGERE BRONZEZEIT	H Ü G E L G R Ä B E R Z E I T						
B₁	MD II / MD I	B III b	MITTLERE BRONZEZEIT 3	? / SZEREMLE	MADAROVCE-KULTUR / DOLNY PETER-PHASE		VATYA-KULTUR / RÁKOSPALOTA-PHASE MIT SZEREMLE	MAROS-KULTUR (SZÖREG) SPÄTESTE PHASE	FÜZESABONY-KULTUR / BODROGSZERDAHELY PHASE	
A₂	FD III	B III a	2	TRANSDANUBISCHE INKRUSTIERTE KERAMIK SÜD-GRUPPE	GATA-WIESELBURG / TRANSDANUBISCHE INKRUSTIERTE KERAMIK NORD-GRUPPE	UND MADAROVCE	VATYA-KULTUR	MAROS-KULTUR	OTTOMÁNY KULTUR FRÜHE / JÜNGERE / FÜZESABONY KULTUR	HATVAN ?
A₁	FD II	B II	1	FRÜHESTE INKRUSTIERTE KERAMIK (KISAPOSTAG-TYP)	TOKOD GRUPPE / NAGYRÉV MIT KISAPOSTAG (KULCS)	NAGYRÉV KULTUR	SPÄTE TÖSZEG JÜNGERE	MAROS-KULTUR	HATVAN KULTUR / OTTOMÁNY KULTUR	HATVAN KULTUR
	FD I	B I b	FRÜHE BRONZEZEIT 3	?	BUDAFOK (DIÓSD)		FRÜHE PHASE			
		B I a	2	SOMOGYVÁR-VINKOVCI-KULTUR	GLOCKENBECHER-CSEPEL-GRUPPE		ÓBÉBA-PITVAROS GRUPPE	NYÍRSÉG-KULTUR	?	
			1	M A K Ó – KULTUR (KOSIHY · ČAKA)						

Fig. I-19: Relative chronology and culture groups of the Early and Middle Bronze Age of the Carpathian Basin (Hungarian terminology; after David 2002: 34 fig. 2.8).

would have been prone to occasional flooding, and there were wide, marshy areas (e. g. Hänsel 1998a: 16 fig. 1; O'Shea 2011; Gyucha/Duffy/Frolking 2011). Due to this topographic setting and natural background, Bronze Age (tell) sites of this area, like their Neolithic predecessors, often occupy elevated positions along river terraces or on small 'islands' in the surrounding swampy area (see below).

The Bronze Age tells under discussion belong to various different archaeologically defined 'cultures'. However they did not always characterise the entire distribution area of such tell-'building' cultures (e. g. Nagyrév, Vatya, Hatvan). Rather, it can be shown that within their larger territories sometimes only a smaller area was actually occupied by tells – be it in consequence of social, economic or environmental factors.[81] Tells were often successively occupied by 'people' of different culture groups, which accounts for some of the confusion in terms of migrations and supposed displacement of population

in the older literature (e. g. Kalicz 1968; Bóna 1975; 1992a). Often there is disagreement on the definition of these 'cultures' and their precise boundaries in space and time. Corresponding discussions centre on the question of continuous development, i. e. the 'genetic' derivation of a new 'culture' from its predecessor, versus foreign 'influences' or migration to account for new traits; on the interpretation of changes in a given culture's territorial extent through time (= diffusion? conquest/migration?); and on the coexistence of different pottery styles (culture traits) in the same layer of a tell (= contact/exchange? presence of foreign people?). To name just two of the more prominent examples, such discussions in the past arose with regard to the Óbéba/Pitvaros to Perjámos sequence (i. e. Maros; cf. Soroceanu 1991: 9–19; Bóna 1992a: figs. on p. 16–17, 21; O'Shea 1996: 27–35) and the different Hungarian and Romanian interpretations of the Nyírség (Sanislău) to Ottomány and Gyulavarsánd or Nir to (Sanislău) Otomani I–III succession respectively,[82]

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[81] Sümegi/Kertész/Rudner 2003: 56; Gyulai 2010: 100; Fischl 2012: 41–46; Fischl/Rebenda 2012: 495; Reményi 2012: 276–278, 280–282; Fischl/Reményi 2013: 726–729; Fischl et al. 2013: 356–357.

[82] Cf. Ordentlich 1970; 1971; Kacsó 1972; 1999; Bóna 1975: 120–170; 1992a: 16–17, 21, 29–32; Bader 1978; 1998; Kalicz 1981; Kovács 1982b; Tasić 1984a; Roman/Németi 1986; 1989; Schalk 1992; 1994; Dani 1995/96; 1997/98; 2001; Müller 1999; Máthé 2001; Furmánek/
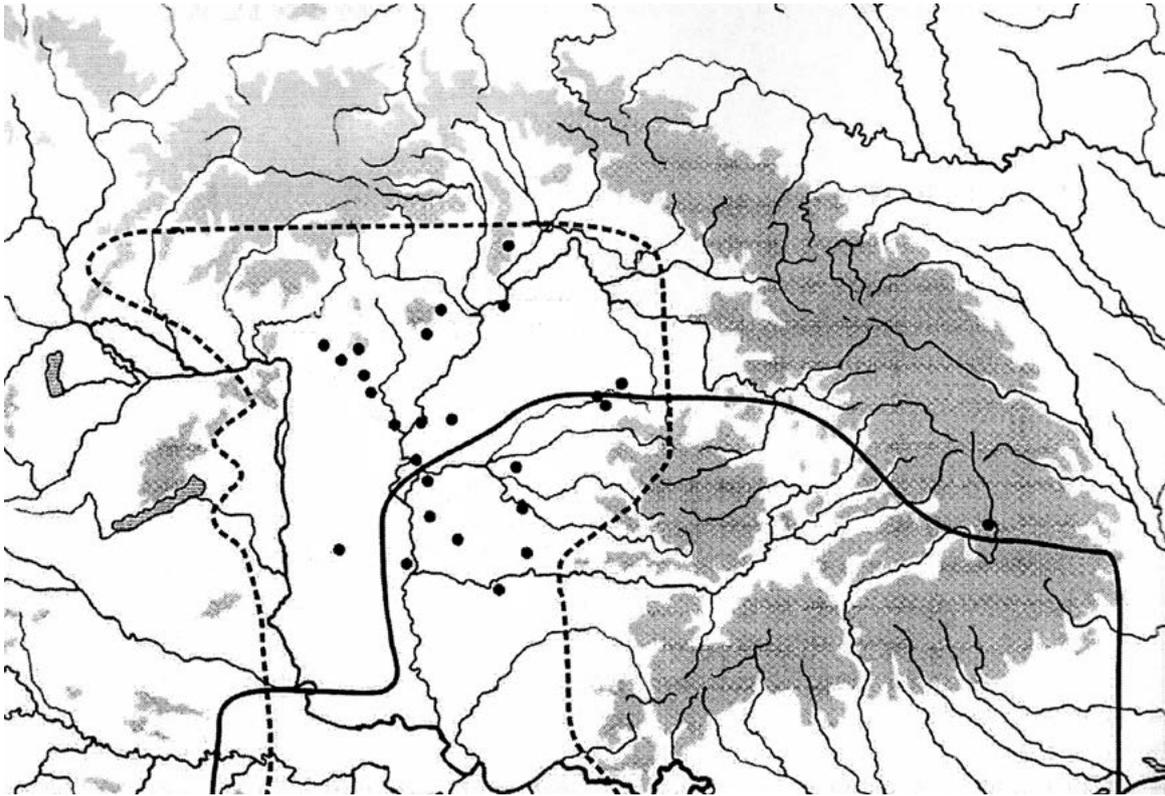
Fig. I-20: Comparison of the distribution of Late Neolithic (continuous line) and Bronze Age (broken line) tell sites in the Carpathian Basin (after Anders *et al.* 2010: 148 fig. 1).
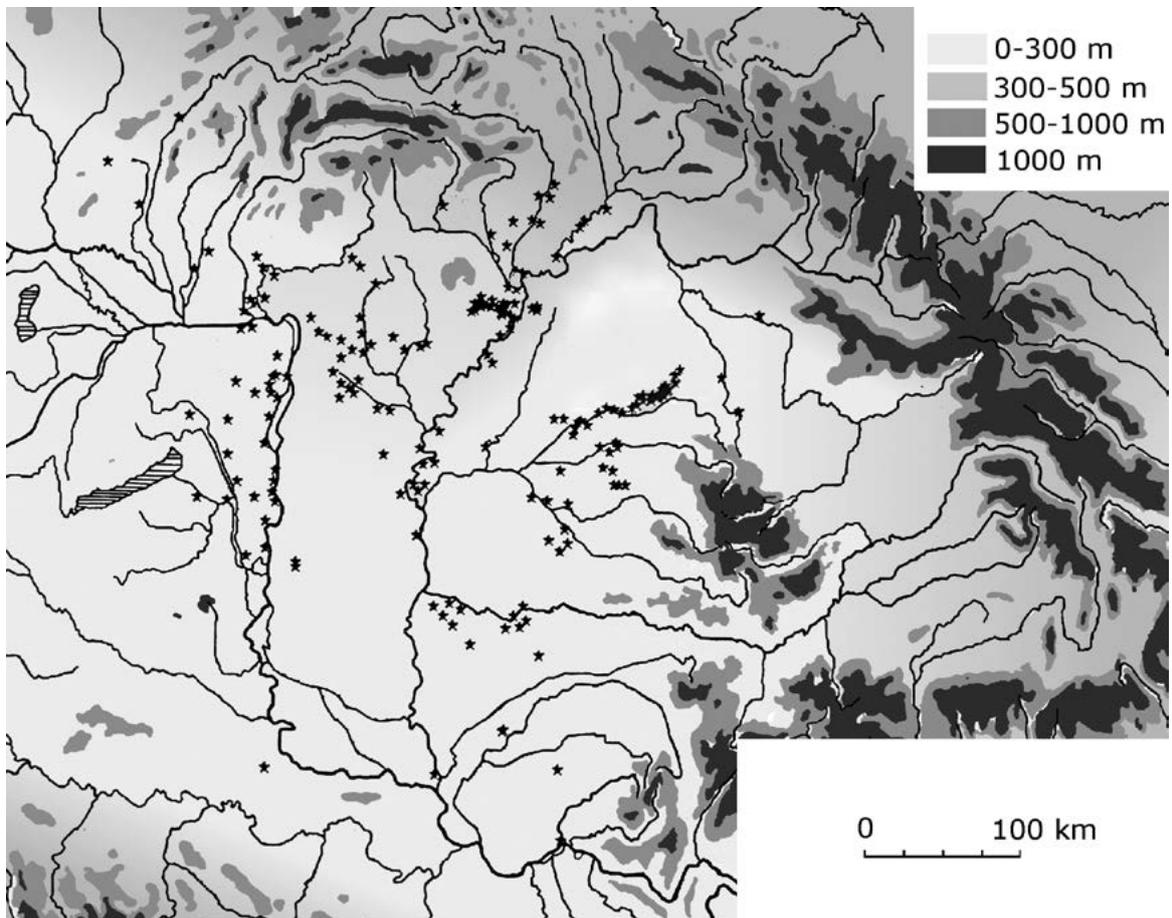
Fig. I-21: Distribution of Bronze Age tell and tell-like settlements in the Carpathian Basin (after Gogâltan 2008a: 41 fig. 1).

or the relation of these rather loosely defined groups to their respective neighbours, such as Hatvan. In fact, the younger part of the Early Bronze Age (EBA II–III) and the subsequent Middle Bronze Age (Hungarian terminology) of the Carpathian Basin is noticeable for its diversity of regional archaeological 'cultures' as defined by their distinctive pottery styles, burial customs and settlement patterns (see above). In the sequence of many tells (e. g. Meier-Arendt 1992) there is change in material culture – mainly observed in pottery style – that is traditionally thought to indicate the presence of a new archaeological culture (see, for example, the famous Tószeg-Laposhalom sequence with Nagyrév, Hatvan, Füzesabony and Koszider horizons; Mozsolics 1952; Bóna 1992b). However, it is entirely unclear what this means in 'ethnic' terms, etc. In any event, much of this debate takes us back to 19th and early 20th century culture historical archaeology. Instead, the approach taken here is largely to ignore the older use of historical concepts to account for change in the archaeological sequence and focus on the structural analysis of tell settlement and its development.

In chronological terms, the first multi-layer sites are thought to have reoccurred in the Carpathian Basin around the middle of the 3rd millennium BC in the Somogyvár-Vinkovci and Nyírség groups, dated to phases I and II of the local Early Bronze Age (David 1998: 231; Gogâltan 2005: 161–163; 2008a: 39–41, fig. 2, hor. 1; Kulcsár 2009: 230–232, 263–268). However, these remained an exception rather than the rule among the settlement sites of their respective groups.

It is only somewhat later, after c. 2400/2300 cal BC, that proper tells started to appear more frequently in the context of the Nagyrév culture (Schreiber-Kalicz 1984; Szabó 1994; Poroszlai in Visy/Nagy 2003: 142–143). Among these there are sites like Százhalombatta-Földvár (Poroszlai 1992b; Poroszlai/Vicze 2000; 2005; Earle/Kristiansen 2010a), Bölcske-Vörösgyűrű (Poroszlai 1992a), Dunapentele Dunaújváros-Kosziderpadlás (Bóna 1992c) and others on the fertile Loess banks along the western side of the Danube, as well as Tószeg-Laposhalom (Bóna 1992b) and the type-site of this group Nagyrév-Zsidóhalom (Tompa 1934/35: 66–68) on the middle course of the Tisza river (cf. David 1998: 232; Gogâltan 2005: 163–165; 2008a: 40–41, fig. 2, hor. 2–3). Depending on definition, in total there are some 15 tells or tell-like settlements known to have been occupied in Nagyrév times, with habitation layers in the range of some 20–40 cm up to 2–3 m (Kalicz-Schreiber 1995: 136–137; David 1998: 232). As noted above with regard to the Neolithic tells, none of these sites also would have been founded with an impressive settlement mound in mind and intended to dominate the landscape. It is unclear if Nagyrév sites already had fortifications (cf. Jaeger/Kulcsár 2013: 308, 313), but an extended period of time was required for some of them to accumulate into a tell of

notable or truly impressive height. Hence, at least initially there would not have been a marked difference between a tell-to-be and those 'normal' horizontal settlements also known from this group in greater numbers (Kalicz-Schreiber 1995: 137–139). Similarly, it is important to recall that we are not talking about a uniform phenomenon in chronological terms, but broad horizons that were defined by archaeologists to describe the spread of Bronze Age tells, when in fact each settlement followed its own trajectory in terms of settlement layout, internal dynamics and the rate – if so – at which settlement debris eventually accumulated into a tell.

Bearing in mind these limitations, the majority of (future) tell sites was first occupied sometime during horizon 3 (c. 2300–1950 cal BC) as defined by F. Gogâltan (2005: 165–168; 2008a: 40–41, fig. 2), or – broadly – the Early Bronze Age III to Middle Bronze Age I in Hungarian terminology (cf. Tasić 1984a; Bóna 1992a: 18–32; David 1998: 231–240, fig. 3). Local sequences are complex and opinions differ widely on questions of chronology and culture definition – all the more so, since there are different schools of archaeological research in the modern countries of this area; note, for example, the near endless Ottomány/Gyulavarsánd, Otomani I–III and Otomani-Füzesabony debate, with the substantial differences in approach and terminology in Romania, Hungary and Slovakia respectively (see above).[83] Much of this is plainly irrelevant for the purposes of this study. Instead, the aim of this paragraph is to provide a broad outline of the Bronze Age tell-'building' communities in question.

During Gogâltan's (2005: 165–168; 2008a: 40–41) horizon 3, settlement mounds occur throughout large parts of the Carpathian Basin, in particular in communities of the Maros, Hatvan, Vatin and Otomani groups. In the Nagyrév area discussed above, many tells first occupied in Nagyrév times saw culture change at the turn from Early Bronze Age III to Middle Bronze Age I, but occupation continued without interruption into Middle Bronze Age Vatya times (cf. Kovács 1984a; Poroszlai in Visy/Nagy 2003: 151–155; Reményi 2012). These tells, in particular, sometimes reached an impressive height of up to more than 6 m of subsequent Nagyrév and Vatya layers (e. g. Bölcske-Vörösgyűrű; Poroszlai 1992a: 141). In addition new settlements were founded, some of which developed into tells as well. Eventually the Vatya area extended on both sides of the Danube and as far east as the Tisza (Kovács 1982a; cf. David 1998: 232–234). Best known from an archaeological point of view are the multi-layer Vatya sites along the Danube (e. g. Százhalombatta; Bölcske; Dunaújváros-Kosziderpadlás), some of them with substantial fortifications (see below) and accompanied by large cemeteries with cremation burials (e. g. Dunaújváros-Dunadűlő near -Kosziderpadlás).[84]

Vladár 2001: 83–85; Koós 2003: 301–303; Kreiter 2007: 25–28; Thomas 2008: 286–289, 292–294; Šteiner 2009; Németi/Molnár 2012: 10–13; Duffy 2014: 86–96.

[83] Cf. Tasić 1984a; Bader 1998; Furmánek/Veliačik/Vladár 1999; Gancarski 1999; 2002; Thomas 2008; Németi/Molnár 2002; 2007; 2012.
[84] Bóna 1992c; Vicze 1992a; 2011; Vicze in Visy/Nagy 2003: 155–156; Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012; Jaeger/Kulcsár 2013; cf. Sørensen/Rebay-Salisbury 2009.

A greater number of tell or tell-like sites – often located in elevated positions and surrounded by open horizontal sites – is known from the area of the Hatvan culture, which extended in the northern part of the Carpathian Basin, i. e. in northern and north-eastern Hungary, as well as in eastern Slovakia, broadly parallel with middle and late Nagyrév and continued into the Middle Bronze Age.[85] Some of the better known tell or tell-like sites of this culture, that total more than a hundred sites, include Malé Kosihy-Törökdomb (Točík 1982: 406–407), Vráble-Fidvár (Bátora *et al.* 2008; 2009; 2012), Törökszentmiklós-Terehalom (Tárnoki 1992a), Tiszaug-Kéménytető (Csányi/Stanczik 1992), Tószeg-Laposhalom (Bóna 1992b) and Tiszafüred-Ásotthalom (Kovács 1992a). The origins of this group, which developed in Early Bronze Age III, have been sought in either Makó or Nyírség contexts – based on partial overlap in distribution area and/or occasional superimposition of its tells on top of older Makó or Nyírség remains (cf. Bóna 1992a: 21–24; Furmánek/Veliačik/Vladár 1999: 41–43; Thomas 2008: 289–291). Elsewhere, younger (Middle Bronze Age) Hatvan layers were found above Nagyrév ones. In these areas – towards the south and west – an expansion of the Hatvan group during its later, Middle Bronze Age phases is argued (e. g. Tószeg; Bóna 1992a: 22–23; 1992b; Visy/Nagy 2003: 145). There are problems telling apart Hatvan from neighbouring Otomani and (neighbouring/younger) (Otomani-) Füzesabony,[86] but the traditional picture has it that during its younger phases Hatvan was increasingly 'displaced' – starting in the east – by Füzesabony (e. g. Bóna 1992a: 26–28; cf. Tárnoki 1986; 1988: 143–144). In any case, there are Füzesabony layers on top of a great number of Hatvan tells (e. g. Tószeg, Békés, Tiszafüred and Ároktő-Dongóhalom).[87] Given the expressive quality of 'Hatvan', 'Otomani' and 'Füzesabony' pottery it is quite likely that differences in pottery style were used to express local identities, and there were also differences in burial customs (Hatvan: cremation; Füzesabony: inhumation; cf. Tárnoki 1992b; Kovács 1992b). However, the number of Hatvan graves known is small and transitions both in pottery style and burial custom are more fluid than we tend to expect (Thomas 2008: 290–291, 339–340). Hence, given the broad similarities of these groups (and the obvious problems archaeologists suffer to tell these traditions apart; see above) Füzesabony layers on top of Hatvan ones, etc. should not be taken to imply different 'people' moving around and seizing tell sites from their neighbours. In fact, it is entirely unclear what kinds and 'levels' of

identity were negotiated through material culture. Setting aside such problems, continuity of occupation and multi-layer tell or tell-like sites are fairly typical for Hatvan, both in its northern hilly area and further south where Hatvan tells are situated along rivers and streams in the lowlands. Hatvan layers on long-lived sites typically reach a height of some 2–3 m. With earlier levels and the younger overlying Füzesabony ones, some of these tells eventually reached a height of some 5 m or more. If living on a tell is fairly typical Hatvan, so is its fortification with sometimes massive ditches and the presence of larger open settlements in the surroundings (see below; cf. David 1998: 234–235).

The Otomani (Otomani-Füzesabony) culture, depending on its definition applied, had a wide distribution from Transylvania east of the Tisza, where a large number of sites is located along the rivers Körös/Criş, Berettyó, Ier/Eriu and Kraszna, via north-eastern Hungary to eastern Slovakia.[88] Well-known sites include Túrkeve-Terehalom (Csányi/Tárnoki 1992; 2013), Berettyóújfalu-Herpály (Mathé 1992a), Sălacea-Dealul Vida (Bader 1982: 56–60), the type-site of Otomani-Cetăţuia (Horedt/Rusu/Ordentlich 1962; Bader 1982: 55–56) and Carei-Bobald (Bader 1978: 121 no. 17; Németi/Molnár 2002: 118 no. 14; 2012) along the Berettyó and Ier/Eriu valleys, the Füzesabony layers at Tószeg-Laposhalom (Bóna 1992b) and Tiszafüred-Ásotthalom (Kovács 1992a) on the Tisza as well as Košice-Barca (Furmánek/Veliačik/Vladár 1999: 115 fig. 52), Spišský Štvrtok (Vladár 1973: 280–285; 1975; 1977) and Nižná Myšľa (Olexa 1982a; 1982b; 1992; 2003) in modern Slovakia. Along the Tisza, Körös and Berettyó, etc. valleys, which in pre-modern times formed systems of wide river valleys and marshland that was occasionally flooded, this involved a similar choice of settlement location on river terraces and 'islands', like that of previous Late Neolithic Tisza and Herpály tells (Bökönyi 1988: 123; Kovács 1998: 484–486). At Berettyóújfalu-Herpály, for example, there are 1.2 m of Bronze Age Otomani stratigraphy overlying the remains of the previous Neolithic occupation (Mathé 1992a: 171). The 'origin' and 'precursors' of Otomani (-Füzesabony) in the different parts of its distribution area are subject to perpetual debate. In the present-day Romanian area, an early phase is thought to be represented by the so-called Sanislău group, drawing on Nir/Nyírség roots, and followed by the Otomani II–III or I–III sequence (compare, for example Roman/Németi 1986; 1989; Németi/Molnár 2012: 34–37). Since at a later stage Otomani (-Füzesabony) sites have a wide distribution throughout large parts of the northern Carpathian Basin, this 'culture' in particular is affected by different local terminology and chronological systems in Romania, Hungary and Slovakia (see above). The Romanian sequence of Sanislău, Otomani I to III is broadly parallel, but not identical, in terms of archaeological material contained with the Hungarian one,

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[85] Kalicz 1968: 110–143; 1984; Točík 1982; Furmánek/Veliačik/Vladár 1999: 41–43; Furmánek/Marková 2001; Gogâltan 2008a: 40–41, fig. 2, hor. 3; Fischl 2012; Fischl/Rebenda 2012; Fischl/Kienlin/Seres 2012; Fischl/Kienlin 2013.

[86] See Szabó (1999: 11–26) and the recent summary in Thomas (2008: 289–291, 339–341); compare, for example, Kovács (1982b) and Roman (1988).

[87] See, for example, Banner/Bóna (1974), Bóna (1992b), Kovács (1992a), Fischl (2006; 2012), Fischl/Rebenda (2012), Fischl/Kienlin/Seres (2012) and Fischl/Kienlin (2013). While continuity of occupation from Hatvan to Füzesabony was fairly common, a smaller number of sites was founded only in Füzesabony times, for example the eponymous tell of Füzesabony-Öregdomb itself (Szathmári 1992; Szathmári in Visy/Nagy 2003: 156–157).

[88] E. g. Ordentlich 1970; 1971; Bóna 1975: 120–170; 1992a: 26–32; Bader 1978: 30–62; 1998; Kovács 1984b; Benkovsky-Pivovarová 1998; Gancarski 1999; 2002; Furmánek/Veliačik/Vladár 1999: 49–53; Németi/Molnár 2002; 2007; 2012; Koós 2003; Thomas 2008: 292–294, 333–351; Dani/Fischl 2010; Dani 2012; Fischl 2012; Bátora 2013; Duffy 2014.

with a succession of Ottomány (Otomani I), Gyulavarsánd A (Otomani II) and B (Otomani III). Similarly, the (Otomani-) Füzesabony phase or group is subject to quite diverse definitions in terms of its contents and precise chronological position (cf. recent summary in Thomas 2008: 286–289, 292–294, 333–348; see also Šteiner 2009). Cutting short these debates, it can be summarised that there are both tells and tell-like settlements with Otomani-type material culture that start early in this group's sequence (Early Bronze Age III), and such that were occupied only during its later Middle Bronze Age phases. At Túrkeve-Terehalom, for example, there is evidence of a long Otomani occupation with a resulting stratigraphy in excess of 5 m (Csányi/Tárnoki 1992: 162; 2013: 708–709; Csányi/Tárnoki in Visy/Nagy 2003: 158–160). Living on a rather substantial tell would also have been a fairly common experience wherever an (Otomani-) Füzesabony occupation was located on top of an older tell (e. g. Hatvan; see above). However many sites east of the Tisza (Mathé 1992a: 171), as well as in other parts of this group's distribution area, only reached a height of the Otomani layers of up to *c.* 2 m, so not every Otomani tell offered a commanding aspect from its surroundings (cf. David 1998: 236–237). As with the Hatvan sites discussed above, the central (tell) part of Otomani settlements was often enclosed by fairly massive ditches, and there was an open outer settlement as well (e. g. Dani/Fischl 2010; Dani 2012; Fischl 2012). Comparable to other tell-'building' communities, there is the problem that much less archaeological attention has been attracted by other types of settlements. There is, however, good evidence for the existence of open horizontal sites at least in some regions (e. g. Németi/Molnár 2002; 2007; 2012). We need to be aware of complex settlement systems comprising both tells and other more short-lived sites.

Finally, further south there are the tell sites of the Maros and Vatin groups. The Maros group, in particular, attracted archaeological attention at an early stage as a result of its cemeteries with inhumation burials[89] and early tell excavations (cf. Girić 1984: 45–47; 1996: 395–398; Soroceanu 1984; 1991: 16–19). The most well-known tell sites of this group, which extended mainly along the lower course of the eponymous Maros river and its confluence into the Tisza, are Periam-Movila Şanţului (Perjámos-Sánchalom; Soroceanu 1991: 96–122) and Pecica-Şanţul Mare (Pécska-Nagysánc; Soroceanu 1982; 1991: 20–87) in Romania and Klárafalva-Hajdova in Hungary (Fischl 1998a; 1998b). Pecica, for example, on top of the previous Neolithic occupation of this site has a stratigraphy of 4 m of Bronze Age deposits covering most of the sequence of the Maros group (Soroceanu 1991: 20, 123–126). In addition, importantly, there are tell-like and open single-layer settlements known, such as Ószentivan-Nagyhalom/Tiszasziget and Kiszombor-Új Élet in Hungary, and Popin

in Serbia.[90] The Vatin group, on the other hand, is much more loosely defined by material recovered from sites in the southern Banat region (Romania) and in Serbia south of the Danube (Tasić 1984b). Here it is the tell settlement of Mošorin-Feudvar and its surroundings close to the confluence of the Tisza and Danube that is of particular interest, since the so-called Titel plateau, where Feudvar is located, was the subject of a major research programme in the 1980s and early 1990s (cf. Hänsel/Medović 1991; 1998; Falkenstein 1998; Falkenstein/Hänsel/Medović 2014).

Summing up, tell settlement is a phenomenon of the late Early and Middle Bronze Age of the Carpathian Basin, *c.* 2400/2200 to 1500/1400 cal BC.[91] The sites in question belong to various archaeological groups or 'cultures'. As far as our knowledge from excavations of limited extent goes, they do not represent a uniform chronological horizon, nor are they identical in terms of basic structural features. The occupation of tells-to-be started at different points in time – both in the same micro-region, where there may be tell sites with a different lifespan, and in the wider comparison of different parts of the Carpathian Basin, where the occupation of tell sites may start in different chronological horizons. Individual tells developed at different rates and towards various heights and levels of 'impressiveness'. The same holds true, of course, for the end of individual tell sites and of this type of settlement in general. In Hungarian research, in particular, the end of tell settlement used to be interpreted as an historical event – namely the invasion of the Tumulus culture 'people' into the Carpathian Basin.[92] Slovakian research, by contrast, disagreed with this notion early on (see Furmánek/Veliačik/Vladár 1999: 59–66; cf. Stuchlík 1992). It is increasingly realised that such historical concepts stand in stark contrast to the actual quality of the archaeological data able to inform us on long-term process and cultural aspects of prehistoric life (Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012: 287–293; papers in Vicze/Poroszlai/Sümegi 2013). With better excavations and knowledge of both relative and absolute chronology it is quite clear that tell settlement did not come to an abrupt end. Towards the end of the Middle Bronze Age at the latest, the earlier concern with continuity had lost its meaning and appeal and new patterns of settlement and economic activity ensued in Late Bronze Age groups. However individual tells, of course, were abandoned throughout the lifespan of Early to Middle Bronze Age tell-'building' communities. The reasons for the final decline of tell settlement are unclear. Related discussions bear resemblance to those for the end of Late Neolithic tells discussed above, and suggestions range from changes in climate, subsistence patterns and economy to perceived structural limits to 'proto-urban' life on tells (see below).

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[89] E. g. Mokrin; see Girić (1971), Soroceanu (1975), Rega (1997), Wagner (2005) and Porčić/Stefanović (2009).

[90] Girić 1984: 46; 1996: 396–401; O'Shea 1996: 38–44; David 1998: 238; Fischl 2003: 118–119; Fischl in Visy/Nagy 2003: 160–161; Michelaki 2008.
[91] Cf. Gogâltan 2005: 162 fig. 2; Anders *et al.* 2010: 147; Kiss 2012b: fig. 9; Jaeger/Kulcsár 2013: 302–313.
[92] E. g. Mozsolics 1957; 1967; Bóna 1992a: 34–38; cf. David 1998: 240–244; 2002: 10–33; Poroszlai in Visy/Nagy 2003: 161.

I.3.2 Bronze Age Tell Settlement: The Evidence

Comparable to the Neolithic situation discussed above our knowledge of Bronze Age settlement patterns suffers from a lack of intensive survey work and from the focus of archaeological interest on the more impressive and easily discerned long-lived tell sites. In addition, most of the latter have only been examined by rather small-scale excavation programmes aimed at chronological questions. Little information is available on the internal organisation of tell sites. This situation is slowly improving, and it is mainly from three distinct areas – the Hungarian Benta valley and the Kakucs micro-region west and east of the Danube respectively south of Budapest,[93] the eastern confluences of the Tisza, i. e. the Hungarian and Romanian Körös, Berettyó, Ier/Eriu and Maros valleys[94] and the Serbian Titel plateau on the confluence of the Tisza and the Danube (Hänsel/Medović 1998; Falkenstein 1998; Falkenstein/Hänsel/Medović 2014) – that with recent projects a more complex picture is beginning to emerge, and there is sound information on the organisation and dynamics of Bronze Age micro-regions in the Carpathian Basin.

The resulting picture is one of regional and chronological variability,[95] and tells can only be said to have 'dominated' the landscape in a very restricted sense. The frequency of potentially fortified tell sites vis-à-vis open horizontal settlements may differ from region to region and from phase to phase. The same holds true – as far as our knowledge goes – for fortification systems that may enclose the whole of a continuously settled multi-layer tell site or just a part of it. Ditches, ramparts and/or palisades may have been present right from the start, they may have been built at a later stage, or they may have been abandoned sometime during the lifespan of a tell settlement. Correspondingly, it is not an easy task to determine the function and meaning of tell sites in their respective micro-regions: Were they political and/or economic centres drawing on the agricultural surplus from surrounding open sites, in control of craft production and/or far ranging trade or exchange (e. g. Earle/Kristiansen 2010b; 2010c; Uhnér 2012)? Were they the seat of tribal aristocracy and local chieftains (e. g. Máthé 1988: 43; Németi/Molnár 2007: 55–69, 177–183, 486; 2012: 50–53; Reményi 2012: 279–281), or the focal sites of communal identity and tribal tradition? Is their architectural continuity the visible expression of the accumulation of power and prestige? Or is their 'impressiveness' the mere result of specific micro-environmental conditions and the repeated choice of favourable soil types or dry patches fit for settlement and agriculture in a landscape prone to frequent flooding?[96]

I.3.2.1 Tells and Settlement Systems

As mentioned above, the relative frequency of (fortified) multi-layer tell sites and short-lived (open) horizontal settlements may differ in the various Early to Middle Bronze Age groups of the Carpathian Basin. There is, however, more or less good evidence for the widespread coexistence of both types of settlement throughout many of the groups under consideration. Tell sites must clearly be understood as part of a more complex and dynamic settlement system.

In the north-western Romanian valley of the Ier river and on the adjacent Carei plain, for example, several micro-regions of different size have been identified, each comprising a number of open sites thought to focus on an Otomani tell that are situated at distances of 3.5 to 17 km. From the Otomani I to II period this system saw an increase in the number of sites and an expansion onto more marginal land thought to relate to an increase in population (fig. I-22). In Otomani III there was a renewed contraction and a number of sites was abandoned (Németi/Molnár 2002: 46–53; 2007: 70–87, 204–210, 486–487; 2012: 41–50; Molnár/Nagy 2013: 26–30). Likewise, further south along the Körös rivers a large number of Otomani open horizontal sites has been detected and in part examined by recent projects (cf. Kovács 1998: 484; Duffy 2014). Here as well there is a significant increase in settlement numbers from the early to the later phase of the Otomani culture (i. e. Ottomány to Gyulavarsánd), and tells and non-tell sites are found to be arranged into distinct clusters or micro-regions (Duffy 2014: 197–277). A comparable pattern of tell sites located along river terraces and open horizontal sites of various size is known from the Maros region.[97]

On the other hand, on the Borsod plain of northern Hungary and along the foothills of the Bükk mountains there is a rather dense pattern of enclosed Hatvan period tell sites at distances down to about 5–10 km, and there are few, if any, single-layer settlements in between them (fig. I-23). The current model suggests, therefore, that such tell or tell-like sites are the 'standard' type of settlement in this micro-region.[98] There is some variability in the size of the central part of these sites and in the thickness of their cultural layers, but surely 'centrality' is not the right concept to account for such differences. For the Hatvan culture of the Borsod plain, therefore, a settlement pattern of more or less equivalent sites in social and functional terms is much more conceivable than the evolution of centralisation and political control. Like the above examples, however, in the Borsod plain there was also change through time and the settlement system did not remain stable. For in the subsequent Füzesabony period some of the older Hatvan sites seem to have been abandoned (fig. I-23). Others were continuously occupied, but the original ditches

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[93] Earle/Kristiansen 2010a; Earle *et al.* 2012; Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012; Jaeger/Kulcsár 2013.
[94] Máthé 1988; O'Shea 1996; 2011; Németi/Molnár 2002; 2007; 2012; Dani/Fischl 2010; Dani 2012; Duffy 2014.
[95] See, for example, Meier-Arendt (1992), Gogâltan (2008a; 2010), Szeverényi/Kulcsár (2012) and Fischl/Reményi (2013).
[96] E. g. O'Shea 1996: 40–43; Fischl 2003; Dani/Fischl 2010; Jaeger 2011b: 155.

[97] Girić 1996: 398–401; O'Shea 1996: 40–43; 2011: 167–168; Fischl 2003; Fischl in Visy/Nagy 2003: 160–161.
[98] Fischl 2012: 41–43; Fischl/Kienlin/Seres 2012: 23–26; Fischl/Kienlin 2013: 5–8; Fischl *et al.* 2014.
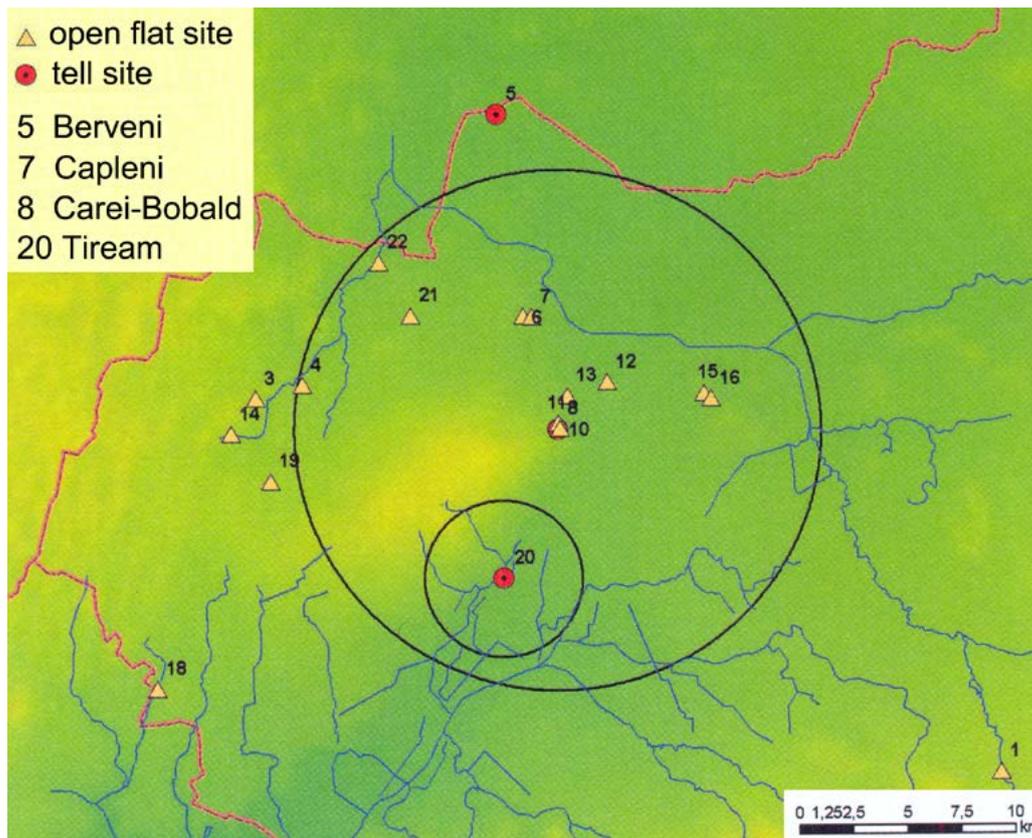
Fig. I-22: Otomani II period settlements on the Carei plain in north-western Romania; hypothetical political territories (after Németi/Molnár 2012: 45 fig. 53).

were backfilled, and there was an outward expansion of settlement activities. So there was possibly centralisation of a kind, or rather a reorganisation of land-use and settlement structure with an increase in settlement size. However, for both periods it is assumed that the tells were situated in favourable topographic and ecological positions and were home to a population drawing largely on agriculture (Fischl 2012: 39–43; Fischl/Kienlin/Seres 2012: 38–41; Fischl/Kienlin 2013: 27–28).

For the Vatya period in the Hungarian Hajós area micro-regions of some 8–10 km in diameter have been suggested which comprised a fortified tell, an additional multi-layer site without fortification and some three open single-layer sites (Tóth 1990; Vicze 2000: 120). In the whole Vatya area along the Danube and east towards the Tisza a total of up to 300 sites including cemeteries is recorded (Vicze 2000: 126 fig. 1). The settlement sites among them fall into the categories of fortified tells or hillforts, tells (i. e. those multi-layer sites without known fortification), as well as two groups of smaller and larger single-layer open settlements (Vicze 2000: 120–121, tab. 1; Poroszlai in Visy/Nagy 2003: 152; cf. Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012). The overall pattern was in the past interpreted as a line of fortified tell sites in defence of the Vatya 'tribal territory'.[99] However, we should be wary of such historical concepts in the interpretation of archaeological 'cultures' (Szeverényi/

Kulcsár 2012: 288–293; Kienlin 2012b). Often economic, geographical and environmental factors had an influence on the occurrence of tell sites in only a part of the territory 'held' by a specific archaeological culture (see above; Sümegi/Kertész/Rudner 2003: 56; Reményi 2012: 276–278). Furthermore, in many cases it is still unknown if there was a fortification, and fortified tells are certainly not only found along the outer perimeter of the Vatya territory. It is unclear what area precisely was occupied by the Vatya 'culture' since its demarcation from neighbouring pottery styles and archaeological groups is often fluid. The concept of a Vatya 'territory' in need of defence is closely linked to notions of intrusive Tumulus culture groups that set an end to indigenous Middle Bronze Age tell-'building' communities in the Carpathian Basin (e. g. Mozsolics 1957; Bóna 1992a: figs. on p. 17; see above). In this context the fortifications of Vatya sites, as well as of other groups, tend to be seen as a late phenomenon in reaction to external aggression, and hoards of the Koszider type in particular are thought to mark the end of tell communities (e. g. Bóna 1958; 1992a: 32–38; 1992d: 58–64; cf. Poroszlai in Visy/Nagy 2003: 154–155). In fact both phenomena are still not well understood in chronological terms but nowadays tend to be seen as broader chronological horizons.[100] Tells –

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[99] E. g. Bóna 1975: 57–59; 1992a: 24–26; Kovács 1982a: 281, 289; cf. Poroszlai 2000: 14; Vicze 2000: 120.

[100] See, for example, David (1998: 240–244; 2002: 10–33), Gogâltan (2005: 168–173), Horváth (2012: 87–88), Vicze/Poroszlai/Sümegi (2013), Vicze (2013b: 71–73) and Fischl et al. (2013: 355). Note the wide range of radiocarbon dates related to Koszider 'type' hoards and the Koszider 'horizon' listed by Görsdorf/Marková/Furmánek (2004: 90); see also the most recent discussion of the absolute dates available

Legend

- ● Settlement system of the Hatvan Culture
- ■ Settlement system of the Füzesabony Culture
- ○ Unidentified Hatvan settlements
- ✚ Cemeteries or graves of the Füzesabony Culture

Fig. I-23: Distribution of Hatvan period settlements and Füzesabony period settlements and cemeteries on the Hungarian Borsod plain and along the foothill zone of the Bükk mountains (after Fischl/Kienlin/Seres 2012: 24 fig. 1).

FIG. I-24: COMPARISON OF EARLY AND MIDDLE BRONZE AGE SETTLEMENT PATTERNS IN THE HUNGARIAN BENTA VALLEY (AFTER EARLE/KOLB 2010: 73 FIG. 3.3, 75 FIG. 3.4).

both fortified ones and those without (known) 'defensive' system – should be analysed in terms of regional settlement dynamics, not as part of overarching historical narratives.

Such information on the development of Bronze Age settlement patterns and the coexistence of different 'types' of sites comes from a recent project in the surroundings of Százhalombatta on the Danube and along its western tributary, the Benta river (fig. I-24; Earle/Kolb 2010; see also Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012). From Early Bronze Age Nagyrév times there is evidence of some five settlements along the Benta valley that are thought to have made up two distinct 'polities' – one centred on the rather large open settlement of Sóskút (c. 4.75 ha) located in the upper Benta valley, and the other one on the tell site of Százhalombatta-Földvár (c. 2 ha) situated in the lower Benta valley and orientated towards the Danube (Earle/Kolb 2010: 72). Both sites, supposedly, 'dominated' their part of the Benta valley, and most of the population is thought to have lived at Sóskút and Százhalombatta respectively. However, there is also evidence of smaller open sites or 'hamlets' in both the upper and lower Benta valley that existed alongside the 'central' places mentioned. In Middle Bronze Age Vatya times there was a substantial increase in estimated population numbers, and throughout the Benta valley some 13 settlements of this period are known. Most prominent in the Vatya period Benta valley, of course, features the fortified tell of Százhalombatta-Földvár that grew to some 5.5 ha in this period (including its surrounding open settlement; see below). However, Százhalombatta was actually outnumbered both in size and estimated number of inhabitants by the open site of Tárnok further up the Benta valley (c. 12.5 ha, 550 people). Throughout

for the Vatya culture and the Koszider period by Jaeger/Kulcsár (2013: 302–313).

the valley there were also additional open 'villages' and fortified settlements or 'forts' on higher ground that are thought to have protected what supposedly had become one larger 'polity' under the control of the Százhalombatta tell (Earle/Kolb 2010: 72–75). We will return to the interpretation of such patterning in economic, social and political terms below.

No reified model of Bronze Age settlement organisation and increasing hierarchisation should be employed. The Titel plateau with its 'central' tell site of Mošorin-Feudvar provides an excellent example of the different trajectories encountered in the various Early to Middle Bronze Age groups of the Carpathian Basin (fig. I-25). During the early phase of the Vatin culture there coexisted on the fertile Titel loess plateau two fortified settlements at a distance of only 400 m apart (Falkenstein 1998: 264–265 fig. 234, hor. 11). One of these was subsequently abandoned – most likely in favour of the other, the tell(-to-be) of Mošorin-Feudvar, around which by that time a larger open settlement had formed. In this so-called classic Vatin period, some 4 km south-east of Feudvar a previously open settlement developed into a fortified site as well, but one of smaller dimensions and therefore thought to have been dependent of Feudvar. In addition, there were some open sites on the southern part of the plateau that had previously been unsettled by the Bronze Age population (Falkenstein 1998: 266–267 fig. 235, hor. 12). Unlike the Benta valley discussed above, however, this development did not cumulate in a more or less densely settled landscape dominated by the Feudvar tell. Instead, in the subsequent late Vatin phase all other sites on the Titel plateau were abandoned. Settlement activity apparently concentrated in Feudvar – on the tell itself, and, more importantly, in the surrounding open settlement that during this phase

saw an expansion of some 6 ha (Falkenstein 1998: 266 fig. 236, hor. 13, 268).[101] F. Falkenstein (1998: 267–268) in his discussion of Feudvar and the Titel plateau in comparison with neighbouring Vatin micro-regions notes the 'segmentary' or 'tribal' impression given by the overall settlement pattern of the Vatin culture. Within each micro-region, however, the model preferred is a strictly hierarchical one with sites like Mošorin-Feudvar at the top of a site hierarchy including political rule and functional differentiation between sites. Again, this is a point we have to return to below.

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[101] For another example of settlement growth and concentration see Nižná Myšľa (Olexa 1982a; 1982b; 1992; 2003).

I.3.2.2 Tells and Surrounding Settlement

The study of tells and open settlement in their immediate surroundings as well is severely hampered by the lack of spatial data from systematic field walking and the application of geophysical survey methods. Unlike the Neolithic situation discussed above there is little information from current excavation projects on the structure of occupation outside (fortified) Bronze Age tells. At best settlement activity in the outside area has been established by coring and surface finds, but the lack of excavations means that even the precise chronological relation of both parts of the site and their dynamics relative

to each other cannot be properly determined, let alone what would have been 'central' about a tell in the perspective of its own inhabitants or of those living in its surroundings. Even what little information there is, however, points to different regional traditions and local trajectories that must not be subsumed under simplified notions of a tell 'acropolis', or 'citadel' opposite surrounding 'commoner' quarters (e. g. Earle/Kristiansen 2010b: 26; Gogâltan 2010: 37–38).

On Vatya sites, for example, the ditch and/or rampart fortifications were previously assumed to have enclosed the entire settled tell area (e. g. Kalicz 1968: 133; David 1998: 233–234). In some cases this is indeed likely from the overall topographic situation, with the settlement being located on a plateau, etc. In others it is unclear whether the boundaries of the (outer) settled area have indeed been recognised, and recent fieldwork suggests the existence of an outer settlement at a number of sites (Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012: 294–336). For example at Százhalombatta-Földvár it was only by a recent coring programme and a systematic surface survey that the existence of an open settlement of *c.* 3 ha could be established for the Vatya period occupation of the site. It had developed on the terrace north of the (fortified) tell that had been continuously occupied since Nagyrév times (Artursson 2010: 107). Unlike settlement remains from their surroundings which are a relatively recent discovery, the existence of occasionally massive ditches around Vatya sites has been observed for a long time (see, for example, Vicze 2000: 121 tab. 1). Often, taking advantage of natural topographic features, such systems of ditches and/or ramparts not only enclose a (major?; see above) part of the settlement, but they divide it into two or even three sections (fig. I-26). Examples in this group include Lovasberény-Mihályvár, Vál-Pogányvár, Sárbogárd-Cifrabolondvár or Dunaújváros-Kosziderpadlás, while Százhalombatta-Földvár, Baracs-Földvár and Nagykőrös-Földvár may stand for the group of fortified sites without such an internal division.[102]

Clearly, there was variability – note also the group of multi-layer tell sites without (known) fortification in this culture group. Even a short review illustrates that interpretation often takes place in broad political or historical terms, when in fact next to nothing is known from the archaeological evidence to support these assumptions. The first line of argument can be outlined by reference to the example of Nagykőrös-Földvár, which in spite of its rather large size and strong fortification is seen as a 'normal' (though rather big) agricultural 'village', because it lacks the internal division of a 'Burg' (castle) and 'Dorf' (village) (Poroszlai 1992c: 158), thought to distinguish the bipartite Vatya sites mentioned and raise them above other tells (cf. Poroszlai in Visy/Nagy 2003: 152–153; Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012: 319). This is, of course, the 'political differentiation' model of fortified tell versus surrounding open settlement turned to fit the specific Vatya situation – and it can only be said

to lack the support of available data. Typically, we only have small-scale excavations, hardly enough to establish the chronology of occupation at different parts of sites, and certainly not their (different?) function in economic, social or political terms. As far as the evidence from such small trenches goes, it does not imply hierarchical differences (e. g. in architecture). Instead, recent geophysical survey indicates that the internal division of some Vatya sites may point to strictly functional differences between the demarcated settlement areas such as living and housing, production and storage, and livestock keeping (e. g. Kakucs-Turján; Jaeger 2011a: 85–87, fig. 24; Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012: 329, 336; see also Kovács 1982a: 283). One may ask then, why massive ditches were required? Here a second line of argument comes in that stresses military function opposite migratory pressure. This is the traditional historical narrative related to the Tumulus invasion. Thus, for example, Koszider-asztal, part of the larger fortification of Dunaújváros-Kosziderpadlás, has been declared a 'Vor-oder Fluchtburg' of late Vatya times (Bóna 1992c: 152; cf. Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012: 305–307). Such concepts have already been discussed above. It is sufficient to repeat that Vatya fortifications, as well as those of other Middle Bronze Age groups in the Carpathian Basin, fell out of use and were sometimes built over across a broad chronological horizon. There is certainly no evidence of their frequent destruction by violent warfare (Vicze 2000: 122). As it is, both the political and military approach are unsatisfactory by themselves. We will have to return to the question of fortification below.

Given the results of recent fieldwork, it is likely that Vatya tell sites, too, did (sometimes?) have a single-layer settlement surrounding them (see Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012). Compared to Hatvan and Otomani tells there may still be differences in the relative frequency of such an outer settlement however. Such differences may exist, and they may express important distinctions in cultural notions of social space versus the outside world – mind, for example, the differences in Neolithic Tisza and Herpály settlement patterns discussed above. At Hatvan and Otomani tells, for certain, settlement activity outside the (fortified) tell area is considered fairly typical, although the evidence at hand differs widely in quality (fig. I-27).[103] At a number of Hatvan settlements the actual tell or multi-layer part of the site, which was frequently fortified, is actually quite small (below *c.* 1 ha) and may be located in a much larger settled area of up to 6 ha (Kalicz 1968: 131–134; David 1998: 234–235). Examples include Jászdózsa-Kápolnahalom with a 6 m high tell of *c.* 130 x 60 m situated in a settlement area estimated to *c.* 500 x 800 m (Stanczik/Tárnoki 1992: 120, 127; cf. Tárnoki in Visy/Nagy 2003: 146–147), as well as Törökszentmiklós-Terehalom (tell: *c.* 180 x 70 m; Tárnoki 1992a: 128), Tiszaug-Kéménytető (Csányi/Stanczik 1992: 117) and Tiszafüred-Ásotthalom (tell: *c.* 75 m in diameter; Kovács 1992a: 131), with outer settlements of

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[102] Kovács 1982a: 282–283; Poroszlai 1992c; Vicze 1992b; 2000: 120–122; Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012: 294–321.

[103] See, for example, Kalicz (1968: 114–134), Banner/Bóna (1974), Tárnoki (1988: 137), Fischl (2006; 2012), Fischl/Pusztai (2009), Dani/Fischl (2010), Anders *et al.* (2010: 151), Fischl/Hellebrandt/Rebenda (2011), Fischl/Kienlin/Seres (2012) and Fischl/Kienlin (2013).
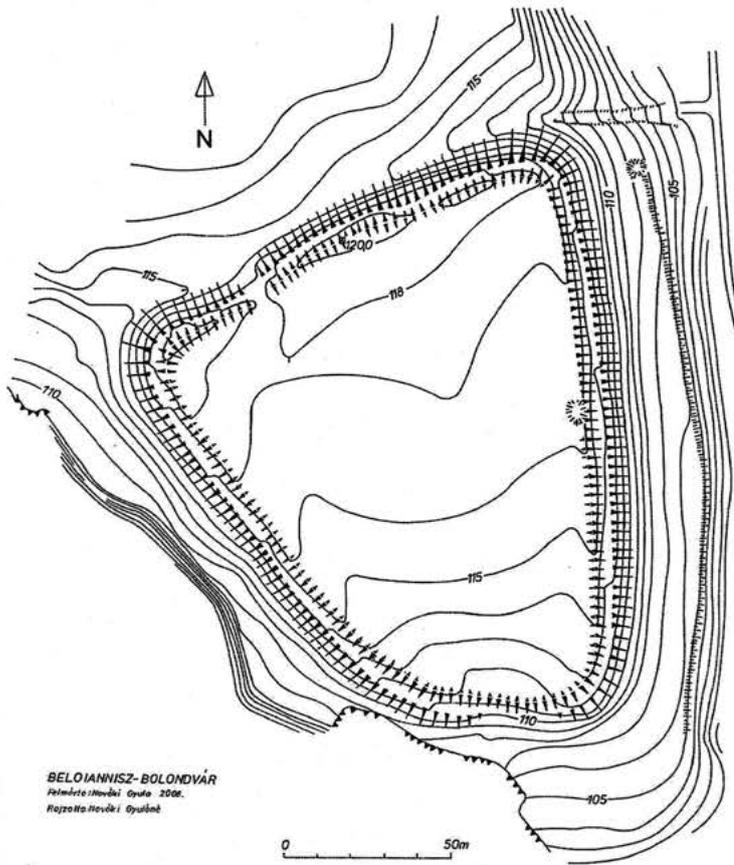
Fig. I-26: Alcsútdoboz-Göböljárás-Pogányvár (bottom) and Beloiannisz/Ercsi-Bolondvár (top); Vatya culture (after Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012: 299 fig. 6, 302 fig. 9).
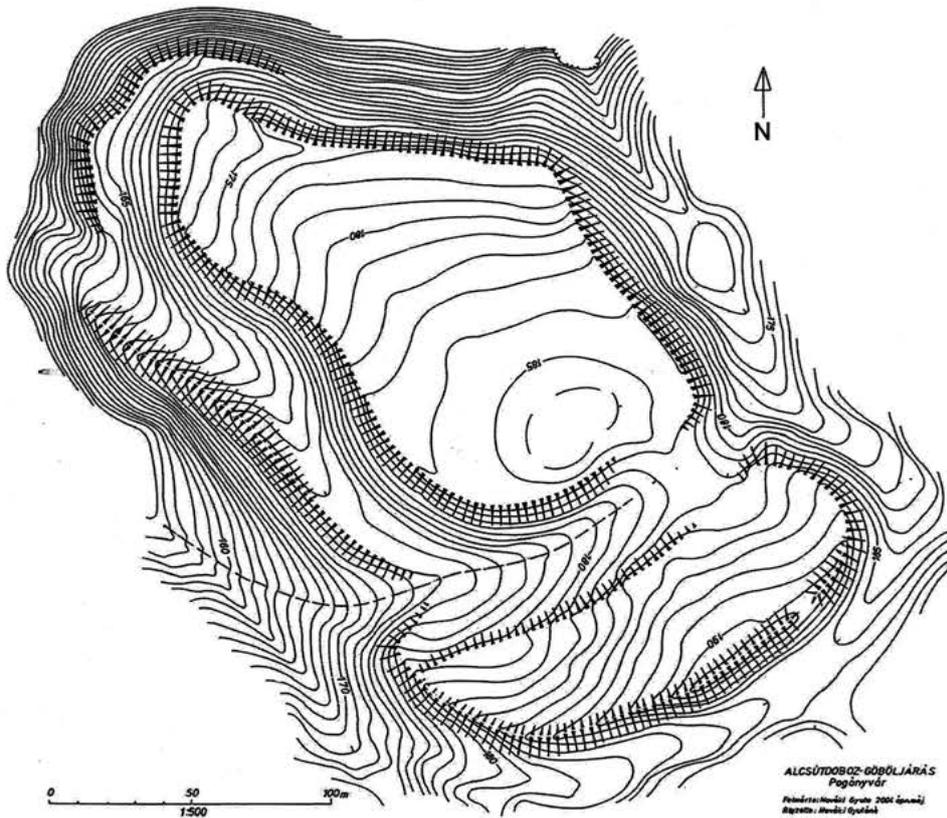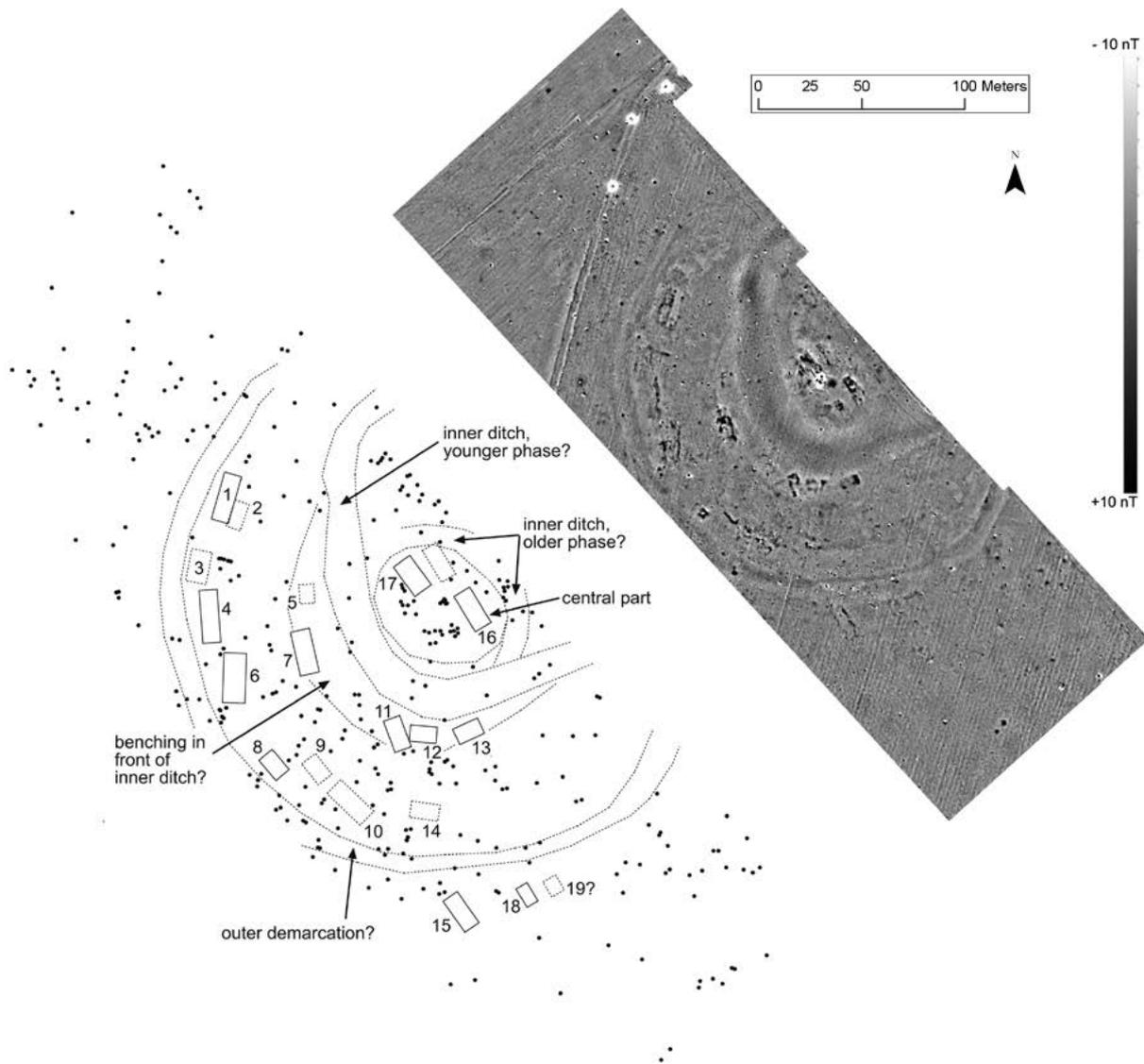
FIG. I-27: TARD-TATÁRDOMB; HATVAN AND FÜZESABONY CULTURE. GREYSCALE PLOT AND INTERPRETATION OF THE MAGNETOMETER DATA OF THE CENTRAL PART OF THE SITE AND PART OF THE OUTER SETTLEMENT (AFTER FISCHL *ET AL.* 2014: 347 FIGS. 6 AND 7).

unspecified size. Among Otomani sites with evidence of settlement activity beyond the central fortified multi-layer tell we know of, for example, Túrkeve-Terehalom (tell: *c.* 100 x 60 m; Csányi/Tárnoki 1992: 159, 162; 2013: 708–709; Csányi/Tárnoki in Visy/Nagy 2003: 158–160), Berettyóújfalu-Herpály (Máthé 1992a: 171), Medieşu Aurit-'Ciuncaş' (Marta/Ştefan 2011) and Carei-Bobald (Németi/Molnár 2002: 118–121; 2012: 52 figs. 62–63).[104] In a some cases an additional fortification of the outside settlement has been suggested – but hardly convincingly demonstrated (e. g. Stanczik/Tárnoki 1992: 127). The evidence is generally poor with regard to the size of the outer settlement area and its chronological or functional relation to the central tell part of the site.

It is often assumed that the central tell part of such sites was more densely settled, and that the open single-layer part was dependent on it in functional and political terms and had developed from it (e. g. Máthé 1988: 43; 1992a: 171; Csányi/Tárnoki 1992: 162). However, on the central multi-layer part of tell sites as well there is considerable variability in terms of settlement layout (see below), and magnetometer data alone, which has recently been obtained from an increasing number of sites, is not a good guide in these matters. It is certainly possible that the arrangement of houses was somewhat denser and more orderly inside the ditches where space was limited. It is possible that different principles of spatial order were applied, but we also have to consider that the central part of the site was continuously occupied for a longer period of time. We do not know, then, if all houses visible in the magnetogram are actually contemporaneous, and short of excavation there is little chance to decide between these options.

[104] See also the reviews of the Otomani sites along the Berettyó valley by Dani/Fischl (2010) and Dani (2012), as well as Duffy (2014: 176–184) for intensive survey data on fortified Otomani tell sites and their surrounding open settlements in the Körös region.
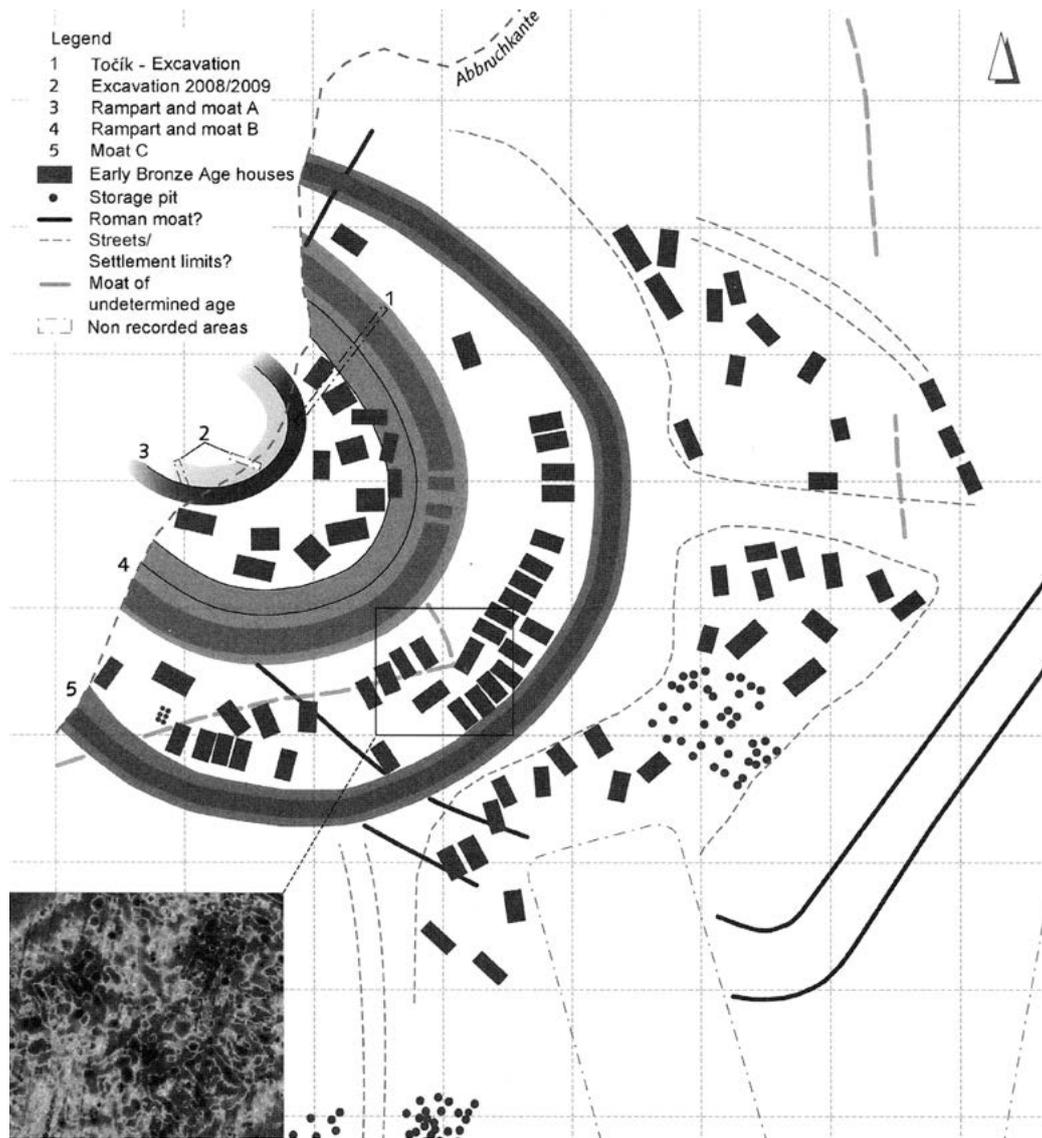
Fig. I-28: Vráble-Fidvár. Interpretation of the magnetometer data indicating several phases of occupation and fortification; note the possibility of a separate storage area located between adjacent groups of houses in the outer part of the settlement (after Earle/Kristiansen 2010a: pl. 8.1).

Furthermore, not even the lower levels of most of these tells themselves are known well (e. g. their precise beginning in the Hatvan or Otomani period, or previous occupation such as Nagyrév; see above), let alone the chronology and structure of settlement activity in their surroundings that is often inferred from surface finds only. Hence, at least some Bronze Age tells may also have developed from, and parallel to, neighbouring settlement nuclei in a pattern similar to that put forward for a number of Late Neolithic tell sites.[105] Thus, for example, it was shown by K. Fischl (2003: 118–120) that some Maros sites – often situated on islands in the swampy surroundings – actually consist of several nuclei which cyclically shifted over a larger area. They only developed into tell-like settlements or proper tells when either space was limited or for some other

(economic? cultural?) reason direct continuity of houses in the same location developed.[106]

Tell sites and their surrounding open settlements are dynamic systems. Their development has to be carefully considered. It was not uniform in terms of an older fortified 'acropolis' versus a younger and politically dependent open 'village'. At Vráble-Fidvár, for example, there is evidence of a complex sequence which defies notions of the continuous growth of such communities and a static relation of the tell and its outer settlement (fig. I-28). Starting from a rather modest Hatvan period settlement surrounded by the inner ditch (A), there is evidence of an outward expansion in Únětice times with a new outer ditch (C) and an outer settlement of up to 10 ha, followed by a contraction in subsequent Mad'arovce times

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[105] See Duffy (2014: 182–184) on the problem of telling apart distinct settlement loci or clusters of houses changing place through time from a large and truly simultaneously occupied outer settlement.

[106] Cf. Girić 1996: 398–399; Fischl in Visy/Nagy 2003: 160–161; Michelaki 2008: 357; Fischl/Reményi 2013: 731.
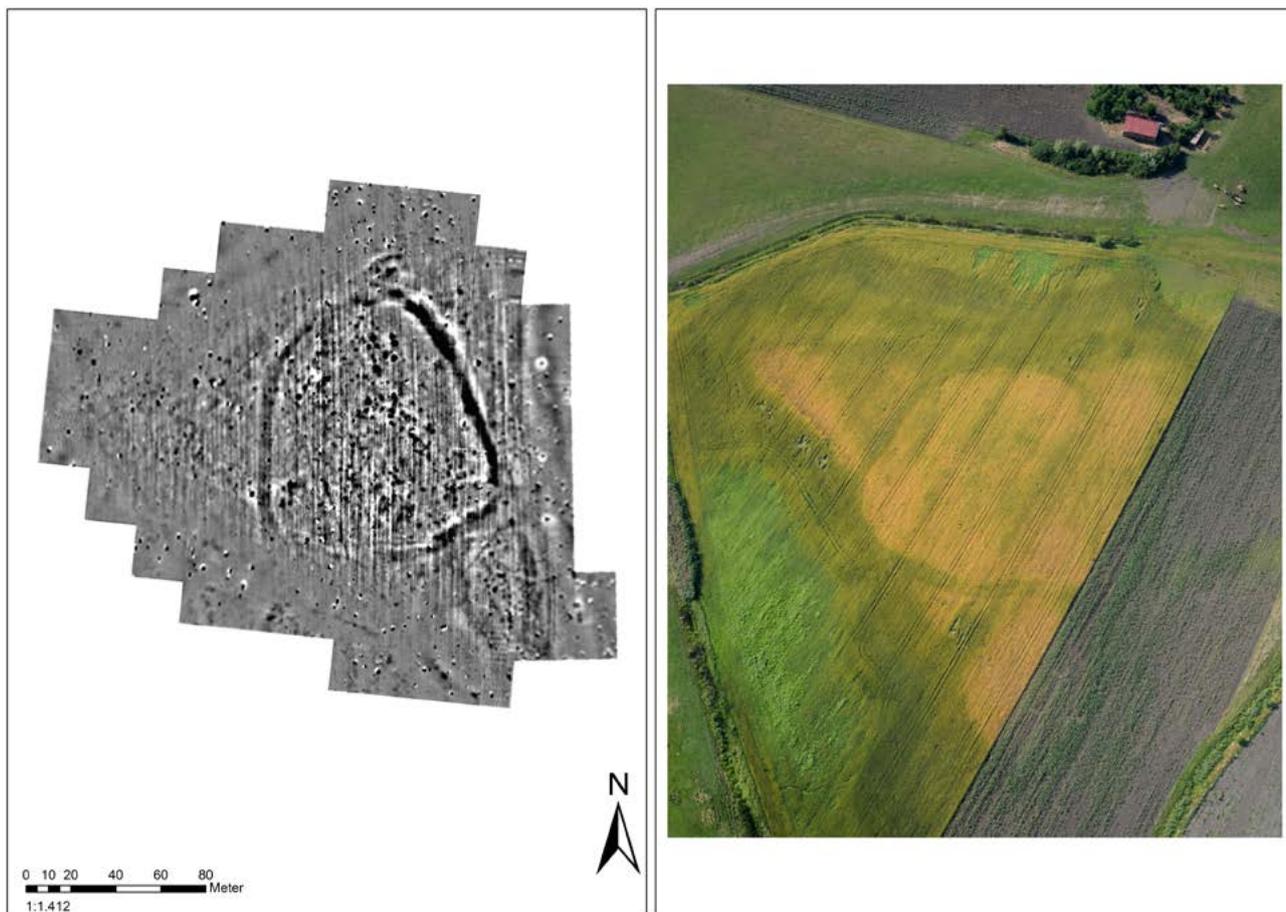
FIG. I-29: ANDRID-DEALUL TAURILOR/BIKA DOMB IN THE ROMANIAN IER VALLEY; OTOMANI CULTURE. MAGNETOMETER PLAN SHOWING SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY ON TOP OF THE OLDER DITCH AND AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF THE TELL-LIKE SETTLEMENT (AFTER MARTA *ET AL.* 2010: 126 FIG. 6, 127 FIG. 7).

and the construction of the final middle ditch (B).[107] On the other hand, on some Hatvan sites on the Borsod plain ditches were apparently backfilled during the subsequent Füzesabony occupation to allow for a greater number of houses, possibly with a new outer ditch and a surrounding open settlement, but so far there is no evidence of a contraction of the enclosed area in a later phase (e. g. Fischl 2012: 42–43; Fischl/Rebenda 2012: 494–495; Fischl/Kienlin 2013: 9–27). Similarly, from a number of other Otomani (-Füzesabony) tells and settlements such as Nižná Myšľa (Olexa 1982a: 394; 1982b: 332; 1992: 197), Včelince (Furmánek/Marková 2001: 106–107), Polgár-Kenderföld Kiscsőszhalom (Dani/Máthé/Szabó 2003: 93–94), Otomani-Cetăţuia, Sălacea (Ordentlich 1968: 149; 1969: 460, 464; Bader 1982: 56, 58, 60), Bakonszeg-Kádárdomb (Máthé 1988: 32; 1992b: 167) and Andrid-Dealul Taurilor/Bika domb (fig. I-29; Marta *et al.* 2010: 123–130) there is evidence from excavations and recent geophysical survey work that older ditches were backfilled

(at different Otomani phases), houses built upon them and settlement extended outward from the tell.[108] Certainly, this implies we are not dealing with a tell 'centre' and outward 'periphery' in exclusively functional or political terms. The question of 'prestigious' ditch versus building space for a growing community was apparently not just a matter of elite decision. Rather the building of such installations and their abandonment were communally sanctioned. Possibly, such was a consequence of broader cultural, societal and economic changes, which may as well have involved notions of how and where to live rather than just coercion and political control.

It is quite obvious that individual tell sites and their surrounding open settlements followed different trajectories. These are dynamic systems which we do not even understand in terms of 'mere' chronology and even less so in terms of their internal social, economic or political dynamics. The obvious variability encountered should not be subsumed to unilinear models that involve the evolution of political control and social differentiation in these communities. To conclude this section, let us briefly turn to settlement size instead, a more 'handy' albeit grossly simplified measure to cope with Bronze Age

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[107] See Bátora *et al.* (2012: 124–125, fig. 16) and Bátora (2013: 378, 382). Interestingly, in another recent publication members of the same project team suggest an earlier Makó/Kosihy-Čaka date *c.* 2700 cal BC for ditch A (their ditch 'I'; Nowaczinski *et al.* 2012: 293). This would be a rather singular early appearance of such a ditch in a Makó context. It should be carefully checked if, through bad luck, some sample material from a surface layer of Makó/Kosihy-Čaka date was radiocarbon dated that was only washed into the fill of younger ditch A at a later stage (cf. Gauss *et al.* 2013: 2956 fig. 13).

[108] See also Kovács (1998: 484–485), Gogâltan (2008a: 52), Dani (2012: 29) and Fischl *et al.* (2013: 358); for Vatya sites see Vicze (2000: 122).
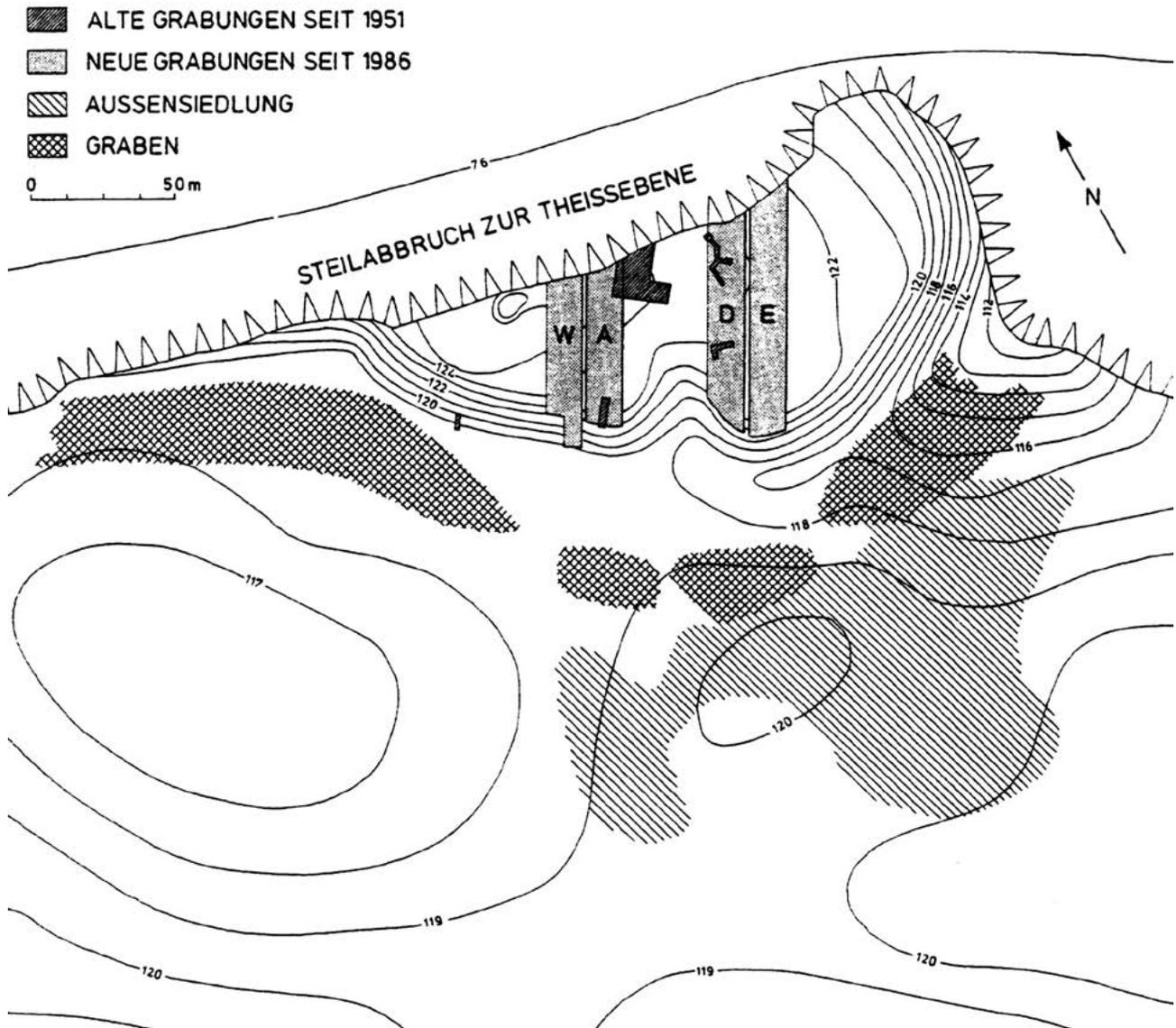
Fig. I-30: Mošorin-Feudvar; Vatin culture. Fortified tell settlement and outside open settlement (after Hänsel 2002: 82 fig. 11).

tells in a comparative perspective (cf. Gogâltan 2008a: 52; 2010: 35). Vatya tells range in size from below 1 ha to *c.* 5–6 ha (Vicze 2000: 121 tab. 1) – plus x, one should add, for possible settlement activity in their surroundings (Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012). A similar range is assumed for previous Nagyrév sites (Kalicz-Schreiber 1995: 136; cf. David 1998: 232), and Otomani tells cover an area from typically below 1 ha to occasionally some 7–9 ha (Horedt 1974: 208 fig. 2, 226–227; Bader 1982: 66) – again, plus x for outside occupation during some phases of their occupation. That 'x' according to recently published survey data from the Körös region may be considerable, since sites surrounding Otomani tells were occasionally found to extend over an area of up to 20–25 ha (Duffy 2014: 183 tab. 8.10; but see above on the problem to establish truly simultaneous occupation). For Vatya period Százhalombatta-Földvár the size of the outer settlement is given as 3 ha, i. e. slightly more than the size of the tell part of the site itself of 2.5 ha (Artursson 2010: 107); on other Vatya sites an outer settled area of even larger size

is argued (Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012). At the Vatin site of Mošorin-Feudvar the partly eroded tell is reconstructed to an original size of some 2 ha (Hänsel 1998a: 26) to which we have to add *c.* 1–6 ha for the different phases (horizons 12 to 13; Falkenstein 1998: 266–268) of its outside open settlement (fig. I-30). Most Hatvan sites – including tell and outer settlement – also range from below 1 ha to about 6 ha (see above). We are not well informed on the size of contemporaneous open non-tell sites. However in the Benta valley, at least, it was shown that these covered broadly the same size range as the tells, and may even have been much larger (i. e. Tárnok with 12.5 ha; Earle/Kolb 2010: 72–74; Artursson 2010: 106–108; Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012: 294–298). With regard to open Otomani sites away from tells in the Körös region, new survey data suggest they were somewhere between *c.* 0.5–5 ha in size (Duffy 2014: 180 tab. 8.7). None of this is beyond the limits of the Late Neolithic sites discussed above. At least in terms of mere size there is nothing that renders Bronze Age tells particularly 'proto-urban' – both in comparison
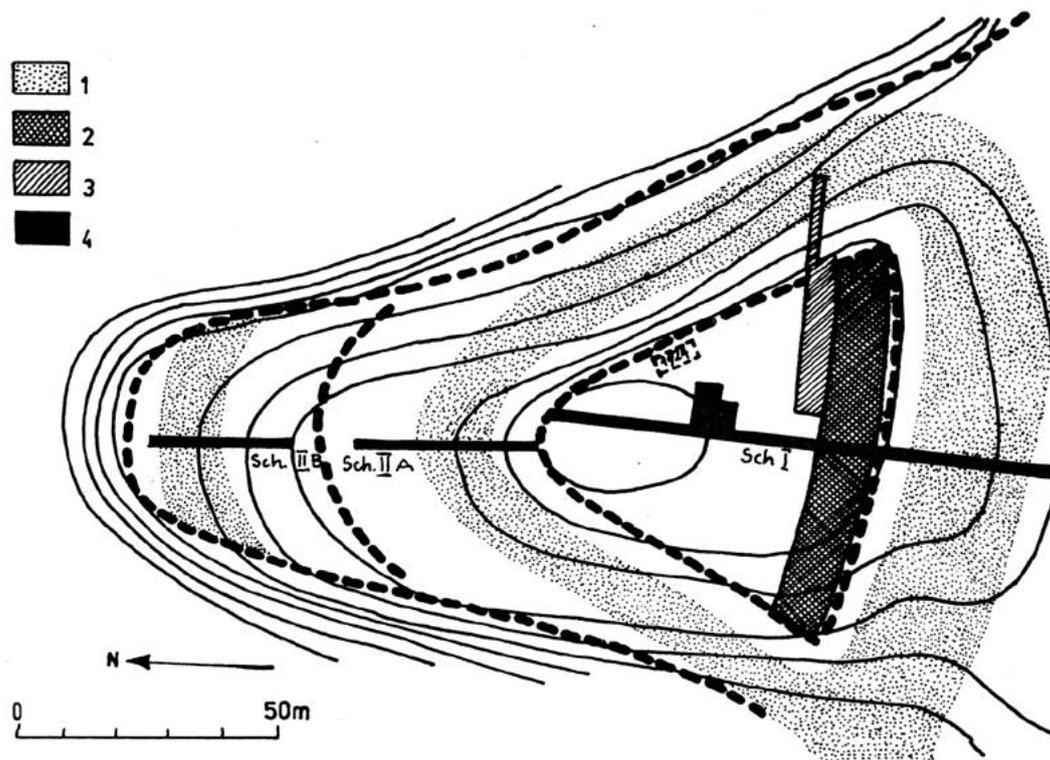
FIG. I-31: OTOMANI-CETĂŢUIA; OTOMANI CULTURE. 1: MASSIVE DITCHES SURROUNDING THE CENTRAL PART OF THE BRONZE AGE TELL SETTLEMENT (AFTER BADER 1982: 49 FIG. 2).

with contemporaneous non-tell sites and with tells of the preceding Neolithic.

I.3.2.3 Fortification, Demarcation and Internal Organisation

Details of fortification, of course, have traditionally attracted much attention. Most recently this topic has been covered in a series of review papers by F. Gogâltan (2005; 2008a; 2008b; 2010; see also Anders *et al.* 2010), so there is no need to go into detail here. Fortifications were fairly common throughout the Bronze Age tell-'building' communities of the Carpathian Basin. According to Gogâltan (2008a: 45; 2010: 36) from a total of 188 tell sites listed and examined almost 130 have some indications of being fortified. This number includes uncertain surface evidence from only topographic maps, etc. (some 100 sites). Excavations targeted at ditches and similar features have been carried out so far at just 26 sites. Among the fortified tell sites there is, of course, a lot of variation in terms of general layout and topography of fortification systems, as well as in construction details of ditches and ramparts. Broadly speaking, Bronze Age fortifications stand very much in a Neolithic tradition and typically consist of a ditch, or sometimes several in temporal succession, such as at Vráble-Fidvár (Bátora *et al.* 2008; 2009: 10–15; 2012: 114–120, 124–125; Nowaczinski *et al.* 2012) and ramparts, which may still preserve some remains of the original wooden structure built to support it (e. g. at Dunaújváros-Kosziderpadlás; Bóna 1992c: 150; see, however, Szeverényi/Kulcsár

2012: 307). Particularly massive ditches are recorded, for example, from sites such as Jászdózsa-Kápolnahalom (Hatvan; 13.5 m wide, more than 4 m deep; Stanczik/ Tárnoki 1992: 127), Košice-Barca (Otomani; 18 m wide, 2.5 m deep; Vladár 1973: 277), Sălacea (Otomani; partly 21 m wide, 7.5 m deep; Ordentlich 1969: 463; Bader 1982: 58) or Otomani-Cetăţuia (fig. I-31; Otomani; partly 20 m wide and 5–6 m deep; Bader 1982: 55–56). Chronology is often problematic (see above), but the decision to enclose a settlement by a ditch and rampart was without doubt taken again and again throughout the entire late Early to Middle Bronze Age of the Carpathian Basin. It was not a unified and short-term chronological horizon. Instead there is good evidence that some sites were fortified throughout their occupation, while for others this is only true for particular phases of settlement activities – both early in the sequence or towards the end.[109]

Apart from more or less massive fortifications, some of the well known and often quoted examples of Bronze Age tells have tightly packed houses arranged into neat order. As with any fortifications, this pattern is thought to indicate the widespread existence of organising authorities and 'political' control, when in fact there is considerable regional and chronological variation. Much of the evidence at hand clearly stands in a broad Neolithic tradition of settlement organisation and is suggestive of alternative avenues of interpretation (for discussion see below). Among the sites with houses arranged in parallel

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[109] See the various tell sites discussed in the contributions to Meier-Arendt (1992) and Gogâltan (2008a: 52).
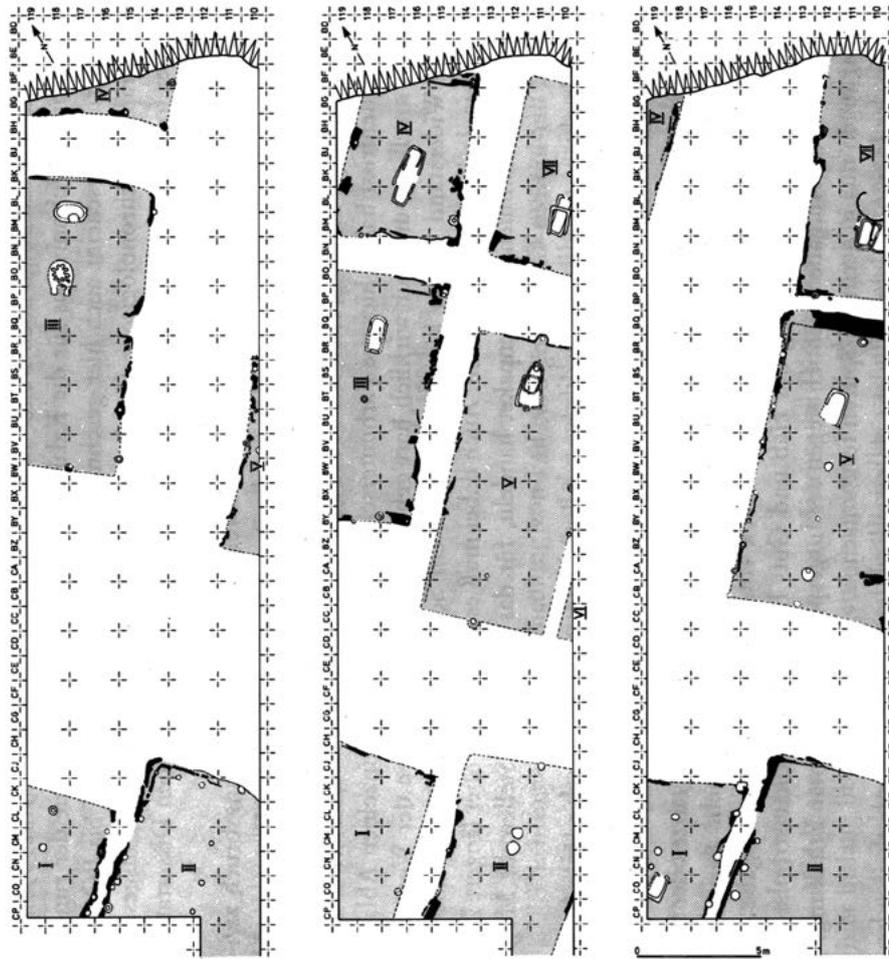
FIG. I-32: MOŠORIN-FEUDVAR; VATIN CULTURE. TIGHTLY PACKED HOUSES ARRANGED IN PARALLEL ORDER (AFTER HÄNSEL/MEDOVIĆ 1991: 69 FIG. 7).

order, and often located at distances down to just some 1–2 m, there are Mošorin-Feudvar (fig. I-32; Vatin; Hänsel 2002: 80–81 fig. 10), Füzesabony-Öregdomb (fig. I-33; Otomani-Füzesabony; Szathmári 1992: 135 fig. 92) and Košice-Barca (fig. I-34; Otomani; Furmánek/Veliačik/ Vladár 1999: 115 fig. 52). Other sites such as Tiszaug-Kéménytető, with at least two excavated house groups at a distance of 8–10 m (fig. I-35; Nagyrév; Csányi/Stanczik 1992: 117–119; Csányi in Visy/Nagy 2003: 143–144), Nitriansky Hrádok (Maďarovce; Furmánek/Veliačik/ Vladár 1999: 115–116 fig. 53) or Százhalombatta-Földvár (late Vatya/Koszider period; Vicze 2013b: 72), apparently have distinct clusters of houses instead, which are more or less clearly set apart. Depending on the density of occupation and general layout there may or may not be – as far as the available excavation data goes – evidence of (central) 'communal' places or open space for various daily activities.[110] There is evidence of continuity in general settlement layout and the location of individual houses throughout several phases, or even the entire lifespan of a site. At other sites there is change in the arrangement and

orientation of houses, or in the house to open space ratio through time.[111]

Despite frequent attempts to do so, there is too much variability in the organisation of social space and consequently of day-to-day activities to subsume Bronze Age tells under just one model of social or political organisation (for discussion see below). Apart from general variability that must not be rectified, from older excavation reports, in particular, it is often unclear how the comprehensive reconstructions offered relate to the actual evidence on the ground (e. g. the identification of houses and the missing proof of their contemporaneity). A prominent example is the often quoted rectangular 'proto-urban' layout of the Otomani-Füzesabony site of Košice-Barca (here fig. I-34). This is not at all well documented and probably the result of the combination of two distinct settlement phases in the published plan (Točik 1994; David 1998: 245–246). In addition, from small-scale

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[110] E. g. Túrkeve-Terehalom (Csányi/Tárnoki 1992: 162; cf., however, Csányi/Tárnoki in Visy/Nagy 2003: 160), Jászdózsa-Kápolnahalom (Tárnoki in Visy/Nagy 2003: 146) and Százhalombatta-Földvár (Sørensen 2010: 136; Vicze 2013b: 72).

[111] See various tell sites discussed in the contributions to Meier-Arendt (1992). Vatya tells, in particular, are noticeable for their large number of pits throughout the whole site, which is taken to indicate frequent shift of activity zones for living, storage or production, etc. (e. g. Jaeger/ Kulcsár 2013: 295, 299); see also Sørensen/Vicze (2013: 164–176) on the relocation of open areas and the activity zones of houses/households at Százhalombatta-Földvár.
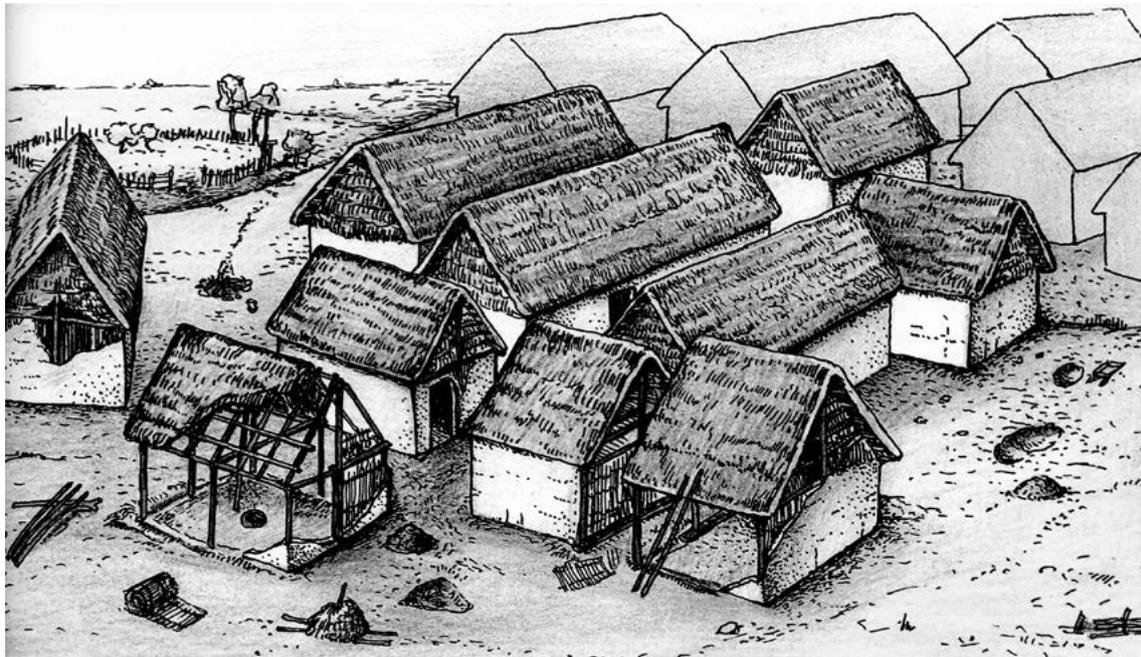
FIG. I-33: FÜZESABONY-ÖREGDOMB; OTOMANI-FÜZESABONY CULTURE. TIGHTLY PACKED HOUSES ARRANGED IN PARALLEL ORDER (AFTER SZATHMÁRI 1992: 135 FIG. 92).
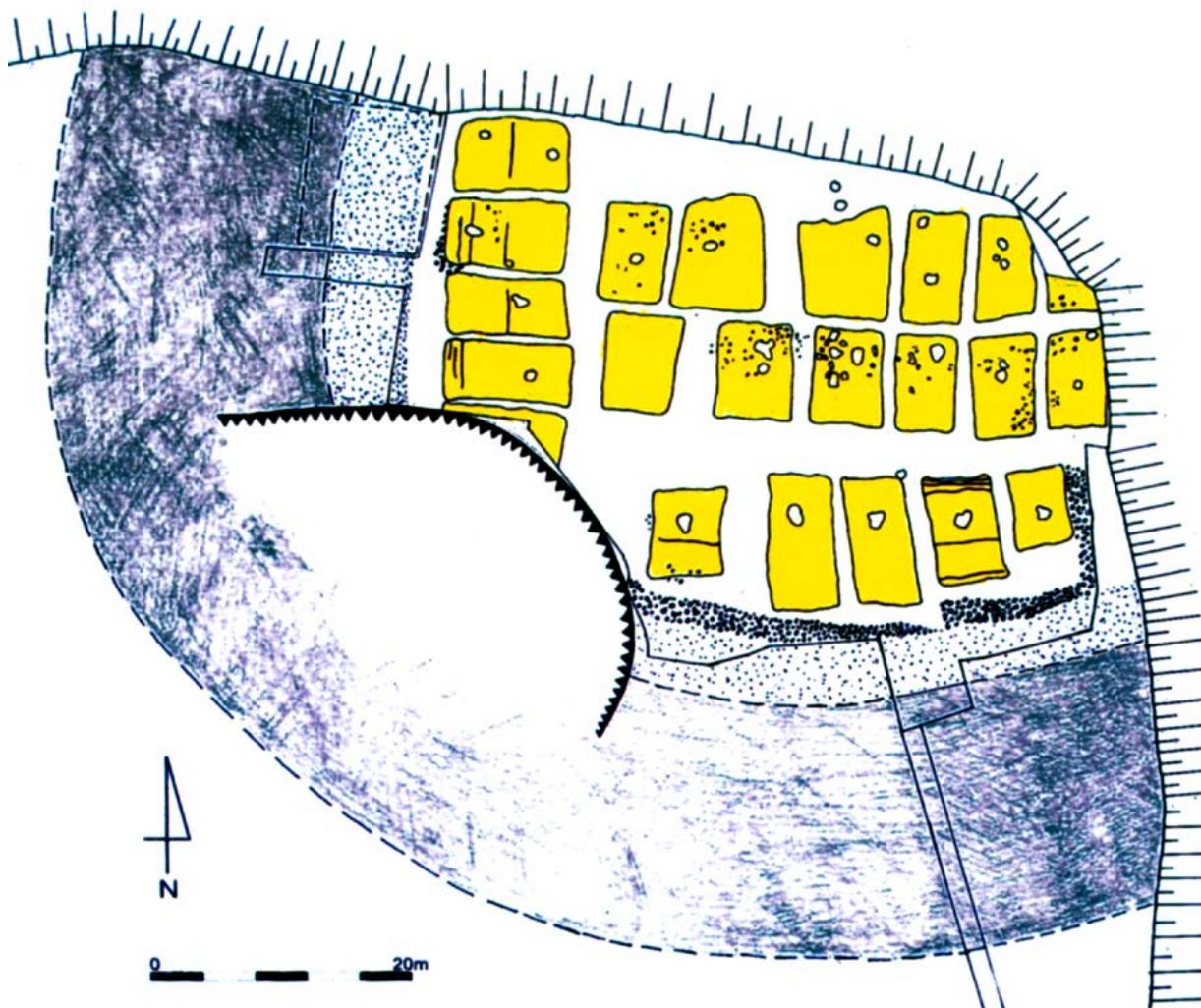
FIG. I-34: KOŠICE-BARCA; OTOMANI-FÜZESABONY CULTURE. TIGHTLY PACKED HOUSES ARRANGED IN PARALLEL ORDER (AFTER GAŠAJ 2002A: 20 FIG. 3).

Fig. I-35: Tiszaug-Kéménytető; Nagyrév culture. Spatially separated group of houses (after Csányi/Stanczik 1992: 115 fig. 75).

excavations only it often seems difficult to infer the overall settlement layout. However, even bearing in mind all these restrictions to interpretation, it would seem that surely most of the organisational options of Bronze Age tell-'building' communities were already available to their Neolithic predecessors as well (compare above). There was pottery-making, some metalworking and other 'crafts' going on, but they were not spatially separated and concentrated in a way suggestive of centralised control (see below). And there certainly is no evidence of a distinctly 'political' domain, such as palaces, administration and large-scale storage, or just any distinctly larger and richer buildings set apart from the rest.

I.3.2.4 Houses and Life on Tells

A trend towards smaller houses and household units than during the Late Neolithic has been claimed as a characteristic of Bronze Age tell communities (e. g. Artursson 2010: 101; Parkinson/Gyucha 2012b: 246). There is, however, considerable variation on both sides of the Neolithic to Bronze Age 'divide'. Neither are large multi-room compounds the rule on Neolithic tells (see above), nor are all Bronze Age houses much smaller than their predecessors.[112] Often at the same site there are houses of different size coexisting during the same

phase and/or there is change through subsequent (culture) phases (e. g. Békés; cf. Banner 1974: 20–41; Bóna 1974: 136–146). At (late) Vatya period Százhalombatta-Földvár there is evidence of the coexistence of two 'types' of houses: smaller houses of *c.* 5 m x 8–9 m in size with one room and one or more hearths; and larger two-room houses of *c.* 5 m x 10–11 m in size, where the hearth or hearths are situated in the larger room and the smaller one is thought to have been used for storage, etc. (Sørensen 2010: 138–139; Vicze 2013a: 759–760; 2013b: 72–73). At Százhalombatta most of the two-room houses are taken to be the result of remodelling, i. e. an extension added during the life cycle of the house. Yet, there is also evidence of houses built with an internal division from the start. Importantly, the excavators note that such differences in house size, their internal layout and the possible addition of another room do not reflect social differentiation, but rather changing needs and/or broadly speaking different 'capacities' of households through time (Sørensen 2010: 140–141; Vicze 2013a: 760–761; see also Sørensen/Vicze 2013). A similar pattern with the juxtaposition of smaller houses and larger multi-room ones is found at Tószeg-Laposhalom (Bóna 1992b: 107) and at Füzesabony-Öregdomb where the smaller houses are some 4 m wide and *c.* 5–6 m long, while the larger ones are extended on the long axis and some 5 m x 12–14 m in size (Szathmári 1992: 135–136; Szathmári in Visy/Nagy 2003: 156–157). Evidence of change through time comes, for example,

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[112] Cf. Gogâltan 2005: 167; Fischl 2006: 186; Sørensen 2010: 135; Csányi/Tárnoki 2013: 712–713; Fischl *et al.* 2013: 361.
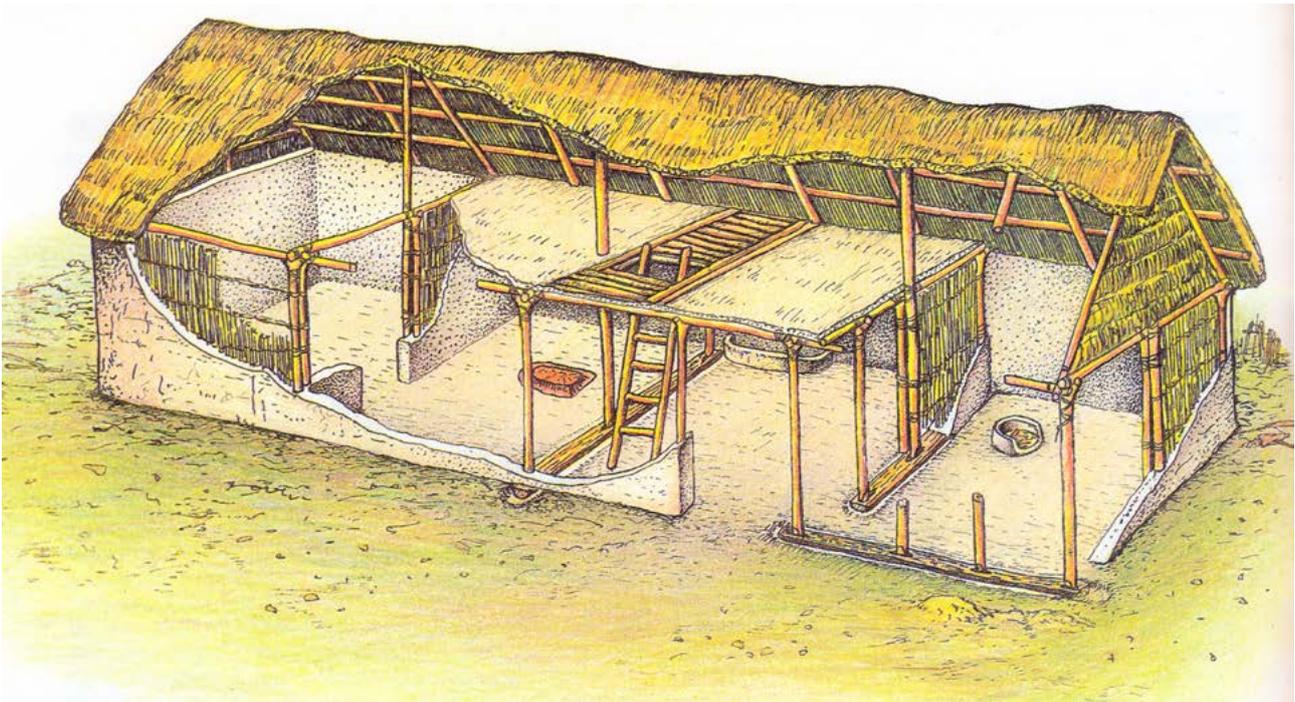
Fig. I-36: Túrkeve-Terehalom; Otomani-Füzesabony culture. Reconstruction of an elongated multi-room house (Csányi/Tárnoki 1992: 160 fig. 114).

from Százhalombatta-Földvár (Vicze 2013b: 73–75), or from Jászdózsa-Kápolnahalom where throughout Hatvan layers there are rather large multi-room houses in excess of 12 m in length, with a subsequent reduction in house size to *c.* 5–6 m on 10–11 m in Füzesabony times (Stanczik/Tárnoki 1992: 124–125; Tárnoki in Visy/Nagy 2003: 146–147). Finally, rather large elongated multi-room houses some 5–6 m wide and more than 10–12 m long are also known from the Otomani culture occupation at Túrkeve-Terehalom (fig. I-36; Csányi/Tárnoki 1992: 160–162; 2013: 709–713; Csányi/Tárnoki in Visy/Nagy 2003: 158–160) and Berettyóújfalu-Herpály (Máthé 1992a: 171). Vatin period houses at Mošorin-Feudvar are some 5–6 m on 9–12 m in size (fig. I-37; Hänsel 2002: 80).

Depending on their size and the number of rooms notions differ as to how many people lived in these houses: nuclear families and extended families have both been suggested.[113] It is assumed that storage took place on the house (= household) level. (Late) Vatya sites are certainly notable for the large number of storage pits near, or inside, the houses (e. g. Százhalombatta-Földvár; Poroszlai in Visy/Nagy 2003: 152; Sørensen 2010: 143; Vicze 2013a: 763–765). On the other hand, there is regional and chronological variation, and there may also be a more communal element. Thus, for example, in the outer part of the settlement at Vráble-Fidvár the geophysical survey suggests the existence of a separate storage area located between adjacent groups of houses (fig. I-28; Bátora *et al.* 2009: 10; 2012: 114–115, 120). It is possible,

therefore, that there was a decrease in household size when compared to some of the larger multi-room compounds of the Late Neolithic discussed above. But we should also expect variability – both in the Neolithic and Bronze Age phases. The Bronze Age 'household' may in fact have overlapped with the (nuclear or extended) family as the basic integrative unit (Sørensen 2010: 126), when there are neat rows of identical houses arranged at regular distance. However, there is also evidence from Bronze Age tell sites of more or less distinct clusters or groups of houses (see above) which may correspond to some of the older structural complexity with integration and cooperation on a 'household' level above that of the individual house units or nuclear family.[114] Most likely we see different integrative levels and processes at work. Even if there was a reduction of the 'household' to the individual house with associate storage in some communities, it is entirely unclear why this should have led to increased household competition (contra Parkinson/Gyucha 2012b: 246; for discussion see below).

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[113] E. g. Bóna 1992b: 107; Stanczik/Tárnoki 1992: 124; Szathmári 1992: 136; Csányi/Tárnoki 1992: 162; Sørensen 2010: 135–136; cf. Sørensen/Vicze 2013: 159–160.

[114] Note also the evidence from Late Neolithic wetland sites such as Arbon-Bleiche 3 on Lake Constance, where there is evidence that 'household' units in fact extended over several houses which were not necessarily situated adjacent to each other. Interestingly, it is suggested that there are different principles of integration at work: Some 'households' were made up by self-sufficient houses distinguished from their neighbours by their 'likeness', i. e. identical subsistence strategies, traditions of 'craft' production and raw material procurement, while others were 'complementary', i. e. composed of houses each 'specialising' in certain of the above mentioned activities, probably not being entirely self-sufficient but pooling and exchanging resources with the inhabitants of other houses of the same household (e. g. Doppler *et al.* 2010: 123–134; Doppler/Pollmann/Röder 2013: 122–128). So it is only with the best of evidence and site conservation, as well as with almost complete excavation of a site, that we can really hope to get an insight into the organisation of households, their integration and the activities carried out on this level.

Fig. I-37: Mošorin-Feudvar; Vatin culture. Reconstruction of Middle Bronze Age houses (after Hänsel/Medović 1991: 77 fig. 11).

Construction techniques of houses are variable and include more massive wooden posts to frame houses with walls constructed in wattle and daub technique, as well as thicker walls of clayey daub or 'Blockbau' technique – sometimes used alongside each other during the same phase of a site or even on the same building (e. g. Békés or Bölcske-Vörösgyűrű).[115] Plaster was applied to walls to protect them from decay, and there is some evidence at least of decorations applied to the (outside) walls as well (e. g. Tiszaug-Kéménytető; Csányi/Stanczik 1992: 116 fig. 76; Csányi in Visy/Nagy 2003: 143–144). Fixed installations inside houses comprise hearths and/or ovens and storage pits.[116] Grinding stones, pots for cooking and storage as well as various tools of chipped and ground stone, bone and antler point to the various different activities carried out inside and around houses (cf. Sørensen 2010: 143–145). All this stands very much in a Neolithic tradition. A notable exception is settlement burial and most categories of artefacts and installations thought (on Neolithic tells) to relate to cult and ritual activity. Thus, from the group

of Bronze Age tells there are just one or two examples where sanctuaries or shrines have been proposed,[117] as well as some potential 'sacrificial pits', clay 'altars' and models of chariots thought to belong to the ritual sphere (e. g. Berettyóújfalu-Herpály; Máthé 1992a: 172–173; cf. Kovács 1992c; Gogâltan 2012: 19–23). This would certainly imply a different and potentially more rational 'quality' of life on Bronze Age tells.[118] Without doubt there was change in aspects of 'cult' and 'ritual' from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age – most notable, of course, in the burial domain. However, we must be wary once more of projecting back our modern notions of both periods. On the Bronze Age side hoarding may just have replaced older kinds of ritual expression – although in the context of Bronze Age tells hoards typically receive a different historical or political interpretation (for discussion see below).

At Vatya period Százhalombatta-Földvár and some other sites evidence of pottery 'kilns' has been reported but is not generally accepted (e. g. Poroszlai 1992b: 153; cf. Fischl/

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[115] E. g. Banner 1974: 35–39; Bóna 1974: 143–146, 154–156; Poroszlai 1992a: 143; Sofaer 2010: 200–202; Csányi/Tárnoki 2013: 710–711; Vicze 2013a: 760–761.

[116] See the various tell sites discussed in the contributions to Meier-Arendt (1992); for good examples from the more recent excavations at Százhalombatta-Földvár see Sørensen (2010: 141–143) and Vicze (2013a).

[117] Most notable, of course, Sălacea; Chidioşan/Ordentlich (1975); cf. Bader (1990: 182–183), Gogâltan (2010: 38–39; 2012: 15–18), Daróczi (2011: 114–115) and Metzner-Nebelsick (2013: 339–340).

[118] See, however, in the meantime Gogâltan (2012) with a comprehensive review of the evidence of cult and ritual on Bronze Age tell sites in the Carpathian Basin.

Kiss/Kulcsár 2013: 10–11). Judging from the very large amounts of pottery recovered from all Bronze Age tell sites pottery production was a common activity. There are coarse wares but also finer ones, the production of which required a certain amount of skill, and the experience thus gained may have developed into a distinct potters' identity or 'status'.[119] By their distinctive styles and uses these may have become an important, since not generally reflected on, means of marking out identities and distinctions between groups and individuals at various levels (cf. Miller 1985: 161–205). According to the evidence of surrounding grasslands and the herding of sheep for wool (e. g. Ch. French 2010: 43–49; Vretemark 2010: 164–167) textile production was also important, although direct evidence is restricted to occasional loom weights and spindle whorls.[120] Other 'crafts', of course, include the production of tools from stone and flint, wood and antler, as well as metalworking and woodworking, for example in the construction of houses.[121] As for the Neolithic period, there is little direct evidence from Bronze Age tell sites for any of these, apart from their products. Most likely this is a consequence of the ephemeral nature of the installations required for such activities, if such were required at all. Furthermore, some spatial separation and functional differentiation of village space is likely with certain craft activities – as well as some such activities related to subsistence production – preferentially undertaken outside the more densely occupied parts of the site. Certain households, as well as entire settlements, may have pursued different strategies in subsistence economy and 'craft' production.[122] However, this should not be confused with true (fulltime) craft specialisation. Similar patterning also evident in Neolithic communities (see above) may be the result of various factors such as individual skills, family traditions and/or the origin of segments of a (village) group. Different people may have been drawing on different long-standing exchange networks to obtain a diversity of raw materials and work them in their own tradition (cf. Kienlin 2010: 84–117, 176–190). Metalworking is just one such activity that individual lineages may have pursued. It has rightly been stressed that the boundaries between different 'crafts', such as pottery production and metalworking, may have been fluid since skills or knowledge were easily transferred between different domains of production, and cooperation was required (Sofaer 2006).

In any case, from the ephemeral nature of metallurgy-related evidence there is little indication that it differed in scale and importance from other such 'crafts' or occupations. Typically, its remains comprise some moulds or blowpipes used in the melting and casting of copper

or bronze, more or less loosely scattered across both tells and open horizontal sites. Systematic surface survey may reveal some clustering that points towards specific activity areas where metalworking and related activities took place, such as at Vráble-Fidvár (Sýkorjaková 2010: 39–40, 53–56 figs. 5–18), but true 'workshops' are rare.[123] A notable exception comes from Mošorin-Feudvar, with a workshop building that preserved evidence for a wide variety of metalworking activities, such as crucibles, moulds and cores, slag and grindstones (for discussion in terms of craft specialisation see below).[124] Finally, evidence for another workshop comes from the Vatya site of Lovasberény-Mihályvár.[125]

I.3.3 Bronze Age Tell Settlement: Interpretation

From the evidence outlined in the preceding paragraphs no major difference in quality or scale between Late Neolithic and Bronze Age tell sites of the Carpathian Basin is apparent. This is not to deny culture change such as the decline of settlement burial after the end of Neolithic tells, and hoarding at Bronze Age ones instead; or the emergence of tin bronze metallurgy during a later phase of the occupation of Bronze Age tells; or the different historical setting of both periods, in particular the emergence of urban centres in the eastern Mediterranean during the Bronze Age. Yet, surely the settlement evidence from Neolithic and Bronze Age tell sites of the Carpathian Basin itself does not readily support a sharp division between both periods and major 'progress' in social and political terms on the Bronze Age side.[126] Variability in the lifespan of occupation, size, settlement layout and the organisation of social space are all as marked within both periods as is the case when the Neolithic and Bronze Age situations are compared. The evidence must not be used to set apart reified models of Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement structure and social organisation. In both cases we are dealing with communities based on agriculture and livestock breeding, with limited evidence of large-scale agricultural surplus and storage, or specialised craft

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[119] Sofaer 2006; 2010: 192–196; Kreiter 2007; Michelaki 2008: 373–377; Budden/Sofaer 2009: 203–205, 207–209, 214–217.
[120] For some examples, see the catalogue in Meier-Arendt (1992); see also Jaeger (2011b: 150–152).
[121] E. g. Sofaer 2010; Găvan 2012; 2013; Horváth 2012; Fischl/Kiss/Kulcsár 2013.
[122] See, for example, Gyulai (1992; 1993: 21–28; 2010: 93–107), Hänsel (2002: 80), Kreiter (2007: 124–145), Michelaki (2008: 373–377), Vretemark (2010: 167–169), Gogâltan (2010: 39), Fischl/Kiss/Kulcsár (2013: 11–16), Jaeger/Olexa (2014: 164–167) and Falkenstein/Hänsel/Medović (2014: 116–118).

[123] Cf. Bartík 1999; Bátora 2009; Molnár 2011; Găvan 2012; 2013; Horváth 2012.
[124] See Hänsel/Medović (2004); see also Hänsel/Medović (1991; 1992; 1998) and Hänsel (2002) for the archaeological context.
[125] Petres/Bándi 1969: 175 fig. 6; Kovács 1982a: 288; Horváth 2012: 56; Szerényi/Kulcsár 2012: 304; Fischl/Kiss/Kulcsár 2013: 13–14.
[126] A much more detailed discussion of a specific micro-region and its local sequence from the Late Neolithic to the Middle Bronze Age than can be given here has recently been published in Duffy's thoughtful and thorough study of the Körös region (Duffy 2014: 255–289). It is worth quoting here his conclusions at some length: 'A settlement hierarchy emerged in the Gyulavarsánd phase, but it would not be the first time there was a settlement hierarchy in the region. Given the broad comparability between the Middle Bronze Age and Late Neolithic and the little evidence of social inequalities in either of them, this is clearly not a good measure of regional political hierarchy despite its use as such by many archaeologists. [...] the existing evidence for house form and limited evidence for segmentation outside of the fortified sites suggests that Middle Bronze Age societies of the Körös region could have been strongly autonomous. Household data, coupled with the lack of centralization in craft production at the fortified sites, provide no compelling reason to believe that any village or domestic unit was subservient to, or lower ranked than, any other. Perhaps the development of segmentation did not greatly exceed that found in the Late Neolithic 3,000 years before.' (Duffy 2014: 282).

production, and with some exchange going on in exotic raw materials or objects (Jaeger 2011b). Some of these communities occupied places that eventually developed into multi-layer tell settlements. However, the reasons of this development are open to debate, and it is controversial what the 'centrality' of a tell opposite surrounding non-tell sites was about (see also Kienlin 2012a; 2012b).

Certainly, at many of the long-lived tell sites of both periods there was a concern with the demarcation of space, since they were enclosed by ditches and/or ramparts. These may have been simply fortifications to guard against frequent aggression, markers of a community's strength and success, or an expression of social and cultural identity as opposed to the outside world. Similarly, living on a tell may just be the result of its favourable topographic situation with respect to natural resources, or it may point to a concern with tradition and ancestry expressed by the continuous rebuilding of houses in the same place and the accumulation of settlement debris into an impressive mound. The workforce involved in the construction and maintenance of the ditches may point to some organising authority. The widely visible ancestry of such places may have provided an opportunity to draw on the symbolic capital accumulated. However it is entirely unclear if this involved individual or communal decision-making, if or to what extent individual aggrandisement was possible, or if we are faced with communal endeavours. There is little evidence of social differentiation and/or political hierarchisation from both the Neolithic and Bronze Age tells. Also, there is certainly no indication from these sites themselves that different interpretative frameworks should be required for their understanding – one on the cultural side, the other on the political. Yet, this is precisely what tends to happen because Bronze Age narratives are different from Neolithic ones (see above), and the predominant approach to Bronze Age tells seeks to understand them in terms of the development of (proto-)urban centres and their economic and political dynamics. Consequently there is a bias in the reading of the evidence, with undue emphasis put on the emergence of social differentiation and political inequality. Some of the problems involved in this interpretative framework will be discussed in the following paragraphs. Prominent among them there is, of course, the essentialising nature of the 'types' of socio-political organisation employed in such debates and the consequent linking of political, social and economical attributes, which distracts attention from a more complex ancient reality.[127]

I.3.3.1 Proto-Urban Settlement and the Mediterranean

The interest taken in fortified 'central' places and 'proto-urban' sites is, of course, a prominent feature of much Bronze Age settlement archaeology. The work of B. Hänsel (e. g. 2002) is just an example from this group, albeit a prominent one because the author explicitly makes use of the concept of 'proto-urbanity' to integrate into a coherent historical picture his long-standing interest and extensive fieldwork on Bronze Age sites throughout south-eastern Europe.[128] Towns or urban centres, according to Hänsel (1996: 241; 2003: 208–209; cf. Gogâltan 2010), should display some size and intensity of habitation. They should occupy a well-defined and demarcated space. They should have evidence of horizontal and vertical differentiation of their populace (i. e. craft specialists, warriors, religious experts, political leaders, etc.). They should maintain trade and exchange networks for the provision of exotic raw materials and staple goods, and they should function as a central place for surrounding second-order settlements that depend on them.

This is, of course, just another reformulation in a long line of attempts to define 'urbanity'. It is no use to enter matters of definition here, or a 'check-list' type archaeology trying to establish just how many 'urban' features according to any definition need to be present to establish the existence of towns or urban centres in Bronze Age Europe.[129] Rather, by having us ask down-to-earth questions like how many inhabitants a tell should have, or how large its territory should be to qualify as a (proto-)urban centre, this approach tends to conceal that the use of the ultimately Near Eastern-derived notion of 'urbanity' as such involves acceptance of some kind of core and periphery model (cf. Harding 2013). World-view is involved then, and prehistoric Europe is seen to develop along broadly the same lines previously taken by the ancient Near East or the Aegean Bronze Age. Although European communities and elites never quite reached the core area's scale and splendour, structural similarity is assumed when in fact there were different trajectories and fundamental differences in social and cultural development.

We will return to the problematic application of such centre and periphery models in Bronze Age archaeology at greater length below (see chapter II.3 with further references). This thinking fits in nicely with a traditional *ex oriente lux* paradigm in prehistoric archaeology and with widely held diffusionist notions of foreign influence and Mediterranean impact on European societies of prehistory. Both in the work of B. Hänsel (1996; 1998b; 2002) and others, such as, for example, K. Kristiansen and his collaborators (Kristiansen 1998; Kristiansen/Larsson 2005; Earle/Kristiansen 2010a) it is a corollary of this perspective that a major qualitative difference between the Bronze Age and the preceding Neolithic is assumed, while on the other hand continuity is suggested from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age. This involves bridging the

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[127] For example, the often used concept of a 'chiefdom' characterised by the combination of hereditary leadership, differential access to resources and redistribution; see also Duffy (2014: 20, 38–40) on the problematic use of such types of socio-political organisation and corresponding economic structures in Bronze Age research in the Carpathian Basin.

[128] Most notable, of course, in his work on the tell site of Mošorin-Feudvar (e. g. Hänsel 1998a; Hänsel/Medović 1991; 1998; see also Falkenstein 1998) and on the Castellieri type fortified hilltop settlement of Monkodonja in Istria (e. g. Teržan/Mihovilić/Hänsel 1998; 1999; Hänsel *et al.* 2009); cf. Metzner-Nebelsick (2013: 327–336).
[129] See Gogâltan (2010) for a comprehensive review of this debate.

temporal gap between the Early Iron Age heroes depicted in the Homeric epics and the Mycenaean Bronze Age, and it depends just as much on overcoming the spatial divide between the Late Bronze Age Mycenaean palaces and the wider hinterland of Bronze Age 'Barbarian' Europe.

Consequently, groups are linked which are widely different in social and cultural terms. After all, the Mycenaean palaces and beyond that, of course, Minoan palatial society, are not just the outcome of specifically European social 'evolution', oscillating somewhere between local 'big men' and more 'evolved' forms of chiefdoms. Rather they are firmly rooted in the tradition of eastern Mediterranean Bronze Age civilisation. They are part of a specifically eastern Mediterranean *koiné* and may be seen as the western outliers of truly Near Eastern style palatial cultures. As such they show a degree of structural complexity and political hierarchisation not otherwise evident, either in the peasant communities of Bronze Age Europe or during the subsequent Early Iron Age of Greece itself. However, such structural difference and specific historical context are denied, and Mycenaean-derived notions of Bronze Age society are extended to the rest of Bronze Age Europe. This is accomplished by reference to broad correspondence of formal traits, for example, the spiral ornaments[130] and to occasional import finds, such as rapiers in the Carpathian Basin and elsewhere, which in effect are largely de-contextualised. These are 'influences' and elements of material culture in a foreign context that may indicate contact and exchange of some kind.[131] However, as they are currently discussed, the interpretation of such finds or foreign elements depends solely on the position of Europe on the periphery of the Mediterranean world. Supposedly, their meaning and socio-political implications are fundamentally the same as in the centre, if somewhat watered down by increasing distance. The classic example here is, of course, Spišský Štvrtok, with its problematic evidence for functional differentiation inside the settlement and the supposed Mycenaean origins of its stone-built fortification (fig. I-38). As such Spišský Štvrtok is often referred to and had an important role to play in the older diffusionist debate.[132] However, the evidence is controversial. The stone wall may well prove to be of Iron Age date.[133] Even if it belonged to the Bronze Age

occupation it is entirely unclear if it was in fact understood and drawn upon in any way similar to, for example, the 'Cyclopean' walls of Mycenae and Tiryns (see discussion in chapters II.3 and II.4.2). As the beginnings of Bronze Age tell settlement in the Carpathian Basin predate the Mycenaean palaces, much of this debate is irrelevant anyway.[134] Even so, however, we see attempts to modify older diffusionist positions to allow for the results of radiocarbon dating.[135] To many the basic assumption still seems to stand that sites like Košice-Barca, Mošorin-Feudvar or Monkodonja can be modelled along Aegean prototypes and that there is broad correspondence in respect to basic structural features.[136]

I.3.3.2 Tradition, Demarcation and Political Predominance

Once this line of core and periphery argument is entered into a specific reading of the evidence is preferred that tends to confirm structural similarity with the Mediterranean. All alternative avenues to interpretation seem barred. For example, the sometimes massive ditches surrounding Bronze Age tell sites are fascinating to the proponents of this approach in terms of the workforce mobilised for their construction and the apparent necessity for Bronze Age elites and aristocracy to guard their wealth against specifically Bronze Age male warrior aggression (e. g. Hänsel 1996: 246; Gogâltan 2008a: 53; 2010: 37–38; Earle/Kristiansen 2010c: 223–234). Bronze Age tells, then, are discussed in a different frame of reference from Neolithic ones. They feature in the wider context of volumes on fortified Bronze Age settlement including quite different types of sites, such as hilltop forts, etc., from different regions and periods of Bronze Age Europe.[137] From this perspective, Bronze Age tells are perceived in terms of 'political economy', social differentiation and the emergence of political rule in 'proto-urban' societies of the Bronze Age. The question of their fortification (and in fact their status as a 'tell') narrows down to protection against Bronze Age warfare and the powerful statement of social and political inequality. This is most marked, of course,

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Štvrtok stone-built fortifications, see Jaeger (2011a: 132–137); see also Alusik (2012: 13).

[134] See, for example, Vulpe (2001), Kiss (2011: 226; 2012b), Fischl (2012: 46–47), Jaeger/Kulcsár (2013: 302–313) and Fischl *et al.* (2013: 364) on the absolute chronology of the Hungarian Early to Middle Bronze Age tell communities; the resulting problems with the notion of Mycenaean (even shaft grave period) 'predecessors' or 'influence' are obvious.

[135] See, for example, Hänsel (2002: 96) or the different horizons of Minoan and subsequent Mycenaean influence distinguished by Kristiansen/Larsson (2005).

[136] Interestingly, even in the most recent literature the difficulties involved in this approach are realised without drawing the obvious conclusions. For example, Gogâltan (2012: 17) rightly notes that the 'megaron' at Sălacea is older than its Mycenaean 'counterparts' (on structural differences of the two see Metzner-Nebelsick 2013: 340); yet in his conclusions ritual on the Bronze Age tells in the Carpathian Basin is still analysed in terms of Mycenaean religion (Gogâltan 2012: 23–25; see also page 46 with plate II).

[137] E. g. Chropovský/Herrmann 1982; Jockenhövel 1990; Belardelli/Peroni 1996; Earle 2002; Gancarski 2002; 2006; Czebreszuk/Müller 2004; Kristiansen/Larsson 2005; Czebreszuk/Kadrow/Müller 2008; Earle/Kristiansen 2010a; Müller/Czebreszuk/Kneisel 2010; Gogâltan 2010; Németi/Molnár 2012; Jaeger/Czebreszuk/Fischl 2012.

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[130] See David (2001; 2002) with older literature and discussion; more recently see Dietrich/Dietrich (2011), who suggest local origins for the 'spiraloid' motifs on fine wares of the Wietenberg culture (see already, for example, David 2007: 414). However, in good accordance with the old 'school' of Bronze Age research the authors maintain, that other, more prestigious groups of objects such as 'Mycenaean' swords do in fact indicate southern influences on the Bronze Age groups of the Carpathian Basin (see also Dietrich 2010; Metzner-Nebelsick 2013: 337–339).

[131] See, for example, O'Shea (2011) and Kiss (2011: esp. 231–233) on the development of exchange networks and the possibility of water transport during the Bronze Age of the Carpathian Basin.

[132] See, for example, Vladár (1973: 273–293; 1977: 186; 1981) and Bader (1990); for a slightly different, though equally embracing scheme that puts greater emphasis on the Eurasian steppes see Lichardus/Vladár (1996). See also Jockenhövel (1990: 213–216) and Harding (2006a: 465; 2006b: 105–107) (both these authors with a more differentiated position), Hänsel (1996: 246), David (1998: 244–251; 2001; 2007), Kristiansen/Larsson (2005: 128–129, 161–162) and Gogâltan (2008a: 52; 2010: 36–37).

[133] For a well-founded argument against a Bronze Age date of the Spišský
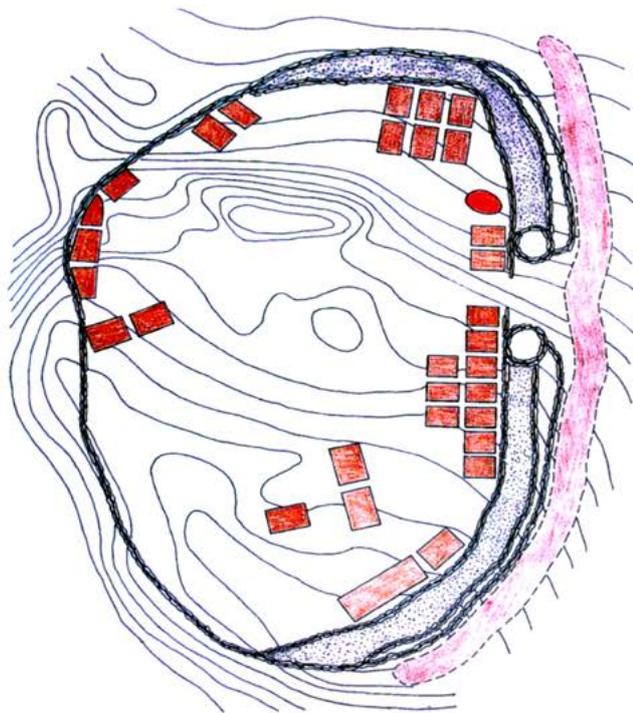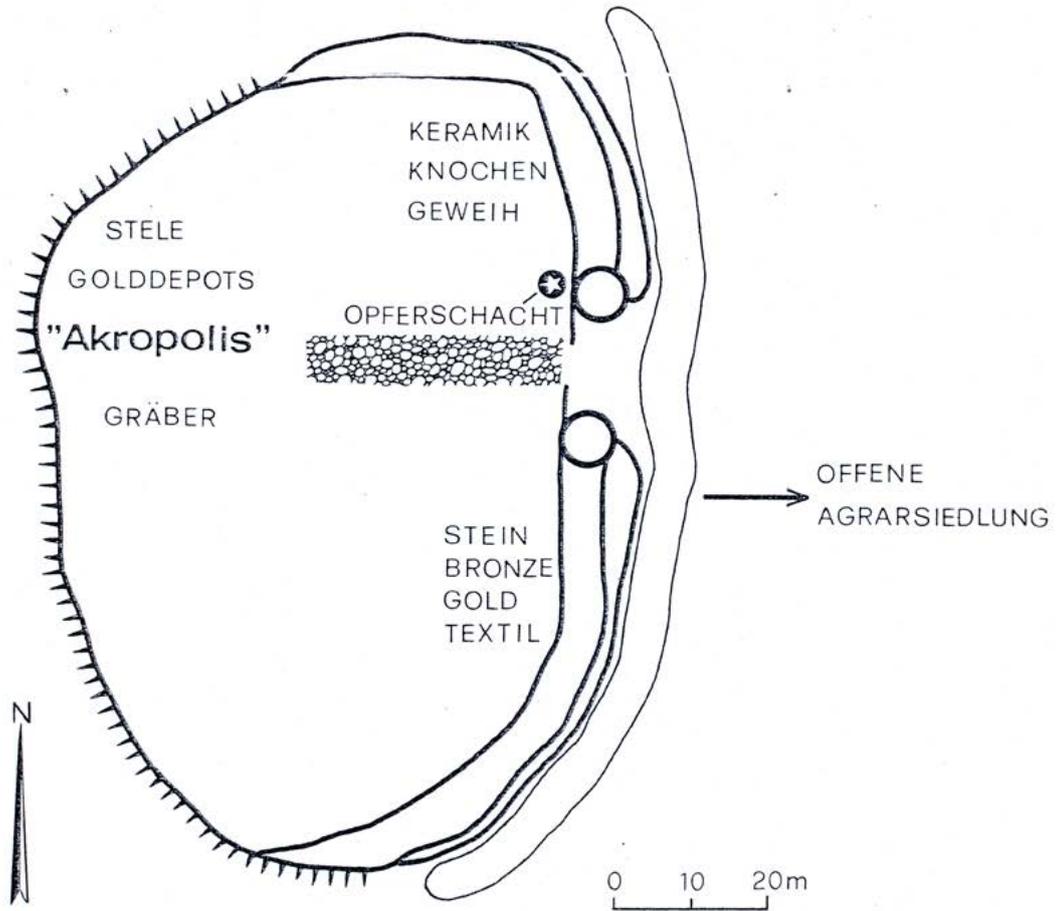
FIG. I-38: SPIŠSKÝ ŠTVRTOK; OTOMANI-FÜZESABONY CULTURE. SUGGESTED EVIDENCE FOR FUNCTIONAL DIFFERENTIATION AND STONE-BUILT FORTIFICATION (AFTER JOCKENHÖVEL 1990: 216 FIG. 4; GAŠAJ 2002B: 36 FIG. 6).

the deeper and wider the fortifications are – and with the singular and problematic evidence of stone-built walls presumably derived from Mycenaean origins (see above on Spišský Štvrtok).

However, despite the high number of potentially fortified tell sites there is clearly also a group of unfortified multi-layer settlement mounds (see above).[138] The predominant interest taken in the monumentality of fortification systems tends to distract attention from another major quality of these sites – namely that of being long-lived tell sites as such. Of course, these are the qualities emphasised in Neolithic debates. However, Bronze Age tell-'building' communities certainly also accumulated visibly many 'ancestral traditions' (see also Szeverényi 2004: 26; Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012: 291–292). Their way of living put equal emphasis on continuity. The additional spatial demarcation provided by the ditches may just have served to underline such traditions and identities developing instead of establishing political control. There may also have been more prosaic purposes, such as with some Maros and Otomani communities living on nearly inaccessible islands in the swampy Maros, Körös, Berettyó and Ier valleys, where protection against floods is another possible explanation.[139] We are not going to enter here into an argument on military aspects of defensive strategies, but surely ditches some 20 m wide at Jászdózsa-Kápolnahalom, Košice-Barca or Sălacea are beyond strict necessity (see above). The same seems to apply to more 'normal' sites, which may still have rather massive ditches and ramparts, such as around some Vatya or Hatvan tells. We enter, here, the domain of what P. Roscoe (2009: 72, 89–90) aptly termed 'social signalling' – but there must not be an *a priori* decision as to what precisely was communicated. Evidence of elites is found wanting (see below), and we cannot be sure these fortifications were 'impressive' only in political terms of individual leadership. They may as well have been designed to communicate the 'strength' of larger corporate groups. Possibly they served as much to prevent the outbreak of actual violence in potentially aggressive surroundings, as well as toward the community itself, to emphasise shared traditions and 'ancestral values' so frequently stressed in Neolithic research.

Clearly, the decline of settlement burial after the end of Neolithic tells implies a different and potentially more rational (= self-aggrandising and political?) 'quality' of life on Bronze Age tells. Without doubt there was change in aspects of 'cult' and 'religion' from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age – most notable, of course, in the burial domain. However, we must not too readily assume fundamental differences of both epochs, and on the Bronze Age side there certainly is a strange twist in our perception of the evidence: it has been shown above that the existence of 'sanctuaries' on Neolithic tells is controversial. Hence their absence on Bronze Age sites is not really a feature that sets

both periods apart. Most likely in both epochs there was no clear distinction between ritual and worldly spheres (see above). It is strange, then, to see how Bronze Age hoards feature in this discussion (fig. I-39). It is widely agreed in Bronze Age research that hoarding of metal items is a ritual practice, a phenomenon related to the communication of Bronze Age people with supernatural powers (e. g. papers in Hänsel/Hänsel 1997) – although, of course, it may also have carried strong social and/or political implications. Hoards, then, may mark out ritual landscapes and define social boundaries (e. g. Fontijn 2001/02; Hansen/Neumann/Vachta 2012), and their deposition may have been used to negotiate social relations in a broadly ritual context (e. g. Bradley 1990; Kristiansen/Larsson 2005). Whenever hoards occur on Bronze Age tells, however, interpretation is different, for these are perceived in strictly historical or social and political terms only. Their deposition is thought to relate to the destruction of tells by outside aggressors[140] or the hiding away of wealth that can be 'read' in terms of the social and political differentiation of tell communities.[141] Why, instead, should we not seek to understand hoards on tells in terms similar to those found in the outside world, and for that matter in terms of approaches familiar in Neolithic research: the marking out of social space by means of ritual, and the construction of narratives related to the ancestry of such settlement sites, where previous generations had already buried if not their dead but their most precious valuables dedicating them to the 'gods' or ancestors?

A related observation can be made with regard to continuity and tradition in more general terms. On both Neolithic and Bronze Age tells there is certainly an emphasis on the continuity of the whole settlement and the location of individual houses, as well as on demarcation vis-à-vis the outside world. However, it is only in Neolithic research that notions of place and ancestry are systematically explored (see, however, Szeverényi 2011). Clearly, pragmatic considerations were also involved in the choice of settlement location and the decision to rebuild houses in places that would not be flooded once a year (cf. O'Shea 1996: 40–43). Yet, it is only in Bronze Age research that pragmatics gain pride of place. Even in most recent studies making some reference to the importance of symbolism, 'descent', 'ancestry' and 'tradition' (Artursson 2010: 104, 106; Sørensen 2010: 138), eventually this boils down to 'ownership rights' (Artursson 2010: 101; Sørensen 2010: 137) in a society that is predominantly conceived in terms of political economies (Earle/Kristiansen 2010b; 2010c).

I.3.3.3 Order, Power and the Organisation of Social Space

Apart from more or less massive fortifications some of the better known and often quoted examples of Bronze Age

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[138] E. g. Füzesabony-Öregdomb; see Szathmári (1992) and Szathmári in Visy/Nagy (2003: 156); cf. Gogâltan (2008a; 2010).
[139] See, for example, Meier-Arendt (1992), Kovács (1998), Fischl (2003; Fischl in Visy/Nagy 2003: 160–161), O'Shea (2011) and Dani (2012: 29).

[140] E. g. Mozsolics 1957; Bóna 1992a: 34–38; 1992d: 58–64; cf. David 1998: 240–244; 2002: 10–33.
[141] See, for example, Bóna (1992d: 61), Earle/Kristiansen (2010c: 241, 254) and Gogâltan (2010: 38); compare, however, more recently Gogâltan (2012).

Fig. I-39: Dunaújváros-Koszíderpadlás; Vatya culture. Hoard III (after Bóna 1992c: 151 fig. 107).

tells have tightly packed houses arranged in neat order. As with fortification, this pattern is thought to indicate the widespread existence of organising authorities (e. g. Hänsel 1996: 246; 2002: 80–83; Gogâltan 2010: 37–38; Earle/Kristiansen 2010c: 222–223). In addition, a distinctly political domain is proposed that is thought to parallel the Mediterranean situation, when in fact there are no such things as palaces, administration and large-scale storage, or just any distinctly larger or richer buildings set apart from the rest, nor is there any good evidence of specialised craft production. There is considerable regional and chronological variation (see above), but clearly much of the evidence at hand stands in a broad Neolithic tradition of settlement organisation. It is suggestive of, or at least open to alternative avenues of interpretation.

It is world-view then that blinds us to acknowledging continuity from the European Neolithic to the Bronze Age and has us believe in Mediterranean style development instead. For how else can we accept the similarity of sites such as Mošorin-Feudvar, Košice-Barca, Nitriansky Hrádok (fig. I-40), or the most recent reconstruction of Százhalombatta-Földvár, which does not look significantly overcrowded and orderly (fig. I-41; Earle/Kristiansen 2010a: plate 8.2), with the urban centres of

the Near East or palace society of the Mycenaean Bronze Age,[142] when the entire settlement layout suggests an emphasis on the likeness of households and does not show up major differences (e. g. Mošorin-Feudvar and perhaps Košice-Barca)? Or when it points to segmentation and distinct clusters of houses, even in the most optimistic reconstruction (e. g. Nitriansky Hrádok), and where there is little or no indication of horizontal (e. g. craft production) and vertical differentiation (i. e. social inequality and political leadership) in the settlement remains at all?

This is not to say that the Bronze Age tell communities of the Carpathian Basin were egalitarian. Also, it is not suggested that we go back to a one-to-one reading of the archaeological evidence, i. e. small houses and absence of a palace equals equality. However, the way these tell communities organised their social space is informative of concerns other than competition among individuals or corporate groups and attempts to establish or to reproduce political hierarchies. We do not know when and where

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[142] See, for example, Hänsel (1996: 244–250; 2002: 79–83, 96–97), Furmánek/Veliačik/Vladár (1999: 120), Gancarski (2002), Kristiansen/Larsson (2005: 161–162), Earle/Kristiansen (2010c: 239–256) and Gogâltan (2010: 19–40). With a more differentiated position emphasising structural differences, see, for example, Jockenhövel (1990: 211–216, 228) and Harding (2000: 418–422).
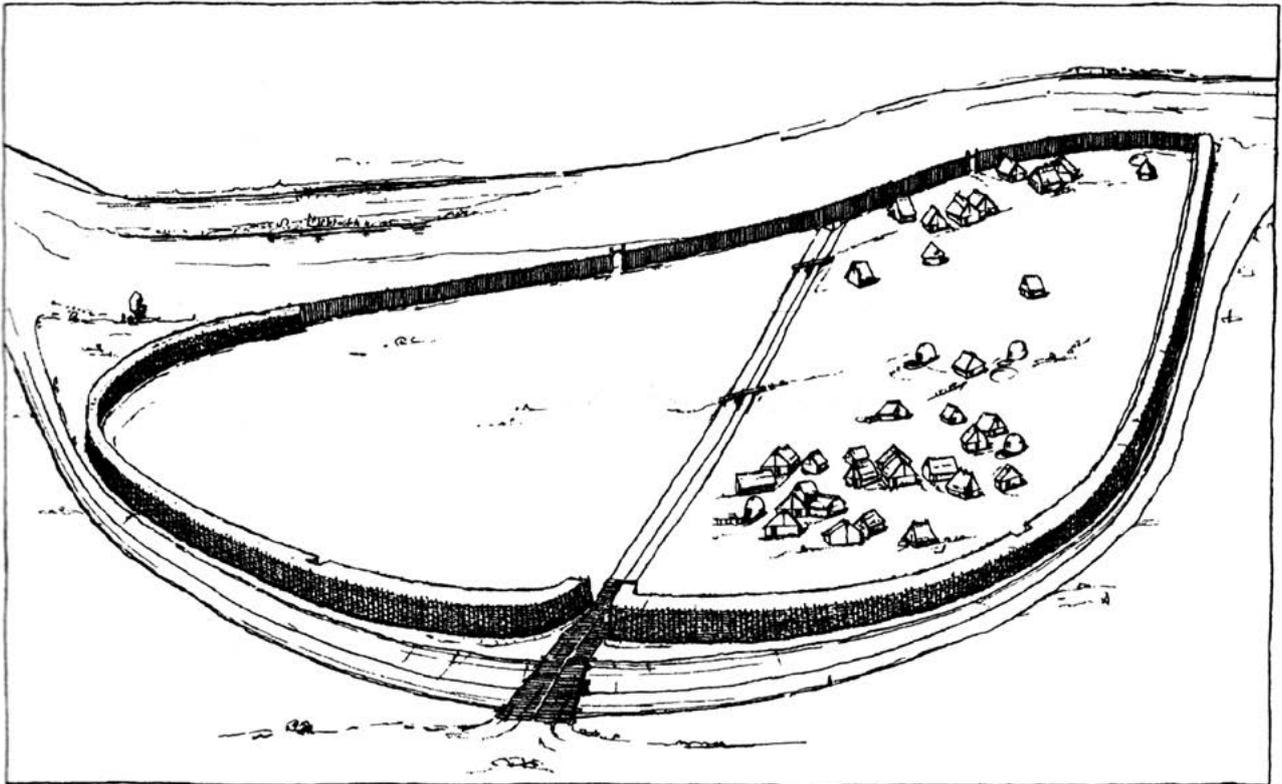
Fig. I-40: Nitriansky Hrádok; Maďarovce culture. Reconstruction of the Bronze Age settlement (after Točík 1981: plan 76).
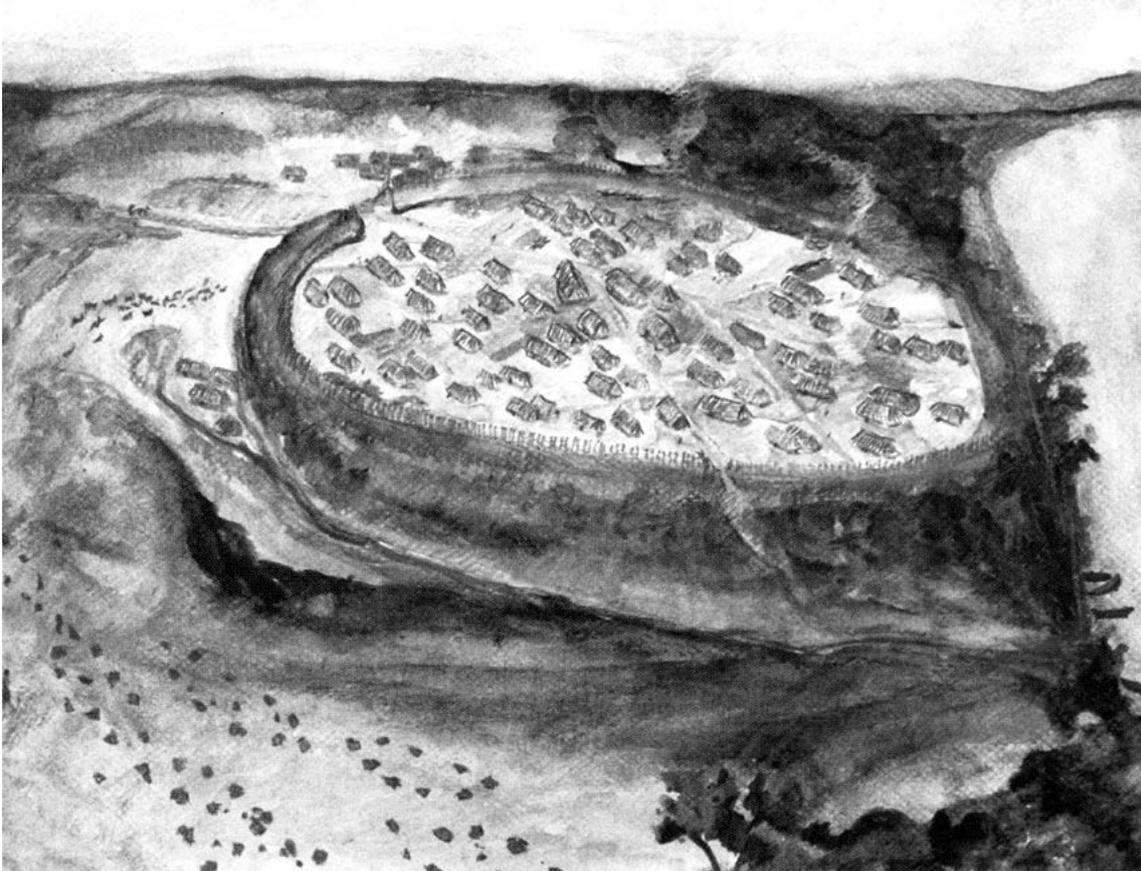
Fig. I-41: Százhalombatta-Földvár; Vatya culture. Reconstruction of the Middle Bronze Age settlement (after Earle/Kristiansen 2010a: pl. 8.2).

precisely decisions were made in Bronze Age tell-'building' communities and what groups of people were involved in various levels of decision-making. Yet, surely the 'feel' of it and the general outlook on the world was different from the deliberate architectural framing of political power and restriction of access evident in the (later) Mycenaean palaces (see chapter II.4.2 below for further discussion and references). By contrast, as well as obviously not featuring palaces, etc., the Bronze Age tells of Carpathian Basin seem to seek to include people, as well as setting them apart and regulating access to their central multi-layer tell area. Their demarcation by massive ditches is often beyond mere functional necessity for defence and may be indicative of attempts at signalling the 'strength' of an economically successful, well-ordered 'village' community (cf. Roscoe 2009). There is no difference between on-tell and off-tell households. Decision-making had to take place, on various different occasions, at some rather unspectacular open space, inside or around some house of average size, even if it belonged to the most economically successful (or otherwise influential) family or descent group of that phase, or at various locations outside the settlement. In any case it took place devoid of framing, but possibly in view of the focal point of the entire community, the tell, not just that of a particular individual or group. Also, the ever increasing height of the mound itself would have added to a sense of community and shared tradition vis-à-vis the outside world. Clearly, the widely visible ancestry of such places may also have provided the opportunity to draw on the symbolic capital accumulated. However, there were limits to such individual aggrandisement. Communal values were sanctioned and protected in the face of passing ambitions, which may have been negotiated every now and then in the off-tell burial grounds of these communities.

I.3.3.4 Internal Structure, Crafts and Functional Differentiation

If the social and political logic of space was different in Bronze Age Europe and the Mediterranean, the same can be said with regard to other aspects of the evidence, which tend to be drawn upon in supra-regional comparison, when in fact Neolithic analogies imply strong autochthonous traditions. For example, it was shown above that during both periods tells and their surrounding open settlements formed a dynamic system with many unknown variables. Yet, for the Bronze Age in particular, interpretation narrows down to the assumption of a hierarchical order of a fortified 'acropolis' versus a functionally and politically dependent open 'village' (e. g. Hänsel 1996: 244–248; 2002: 82; Falkenstein 1998: 268; Earle/Kristiansen 2010c: 220). Instead, the development that each of these sites took needs to be carefully considered. It was not uniform in chronological, economic, social or political terms. Similarly, if both on the level of the tell and the individual households a sense of continuity and spatial demarcation is thought sufficient to define 'proto-urban' structures (e. g. Artursson 2010: 104), then surely both the Neolithic and Bronze Age tells are 'proto-urban'. Or, rather, the term should be discarded as meaningless in a context largely

devoid of any additional evidence of functional and social differentiation. In both periods there was, for example, pottery-making, some metalworking and other 'crafts' going on (see above). However, they were not spatially separated and concentrated in a way suggestive of centralised control in the same way evident in Mycenaean society, from which notions of political hierarchisation and craft specialisation are transferred to a wider European context (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005).

The different trajectories encountered may best be illustrated by reference to the Feudvar workshop already mentioned above (Hänsel/Medović 2004), and the singular evidence it provides for the integration of (central or south-eastern) European metalworkers of the Bronze Age in their communities, which in itself points to the ephemeral nature of such activities. This is one of the very few workshops known *in situ* at all (fig. I-42). There is evidence such as crucibles, moulds and cores, slag and grindstones for a wide variety of metalworking activities (fig. I-43). Casting was done in closed two-piece moulds and in the cire perdue technique. The objects cast and worked include ornaments such as pins as well as weapons, and implements such as daggers, flanged axes, socketed axes, knives and sickles (Hänsel/Medović 2004: 88–90, 90–94, 96–98). By its size of about 5 m x 9.5 m, orientation and wattle and daub construction, the workshop building fits the regular layout and uniformity of the surrounding houses. There was no fireplace for cooking or structures for storage, however, nor was there any evidence of typical household production, such as weaving. Instead, a part of the eastern wall was missing, and in this open anteroom there was a hearth for metallurgical activities, with signs of intense heat and copper droplets providing evidence of casting. Unlike the surrounding houses there was a small court area to the south of the workshop building which was apparently used for working and finishing the copper objects and for the disposal of waste, such as the broken up moulds of cire perdue casting.

Since this workshop clearly was well organised, and there was considerable skill involved in the production of some of the objects, the excavators of this site suggest fulltime craft specialisation. Because there is no evidence of cooking and storage it is thought that the metalworker(s) were supplied with food by their customers. There was no stock of copper either, and it is assumed that the raw materials were provided by (well-off) customers and the production of (prestigious) copper objects closely followed their specifications. In short, Feudvar is seen as a 'proto-urban' settlement and central place for its surroundings, with evidence of craft specialisation, social differentiation and some kind of elite in charge of the smooth operation of the community and the whole settlement system (Hänsel/ Medović 2004: 86–87).

We will never know if there was a fulltime specialist at Feudvar, as suggested by the excavators. However, ethnography certainly implies that the range and 'complexity' of the objects produced is not a good guide

its size it is unlikely that a large number of individuals worked there at the same time. This does not preclude substantial output if casting and metalworking took place all the year round. Yet its operators may as well be imagined as members of a family or kinship group who contributed to metalworking activities according to age and gender, i. e. their experience, training, apprenticeship or initiation, and additionally were engaged in agriculture and related activities on a seasonal basis. Extra food may also have been supplied in exchange for their 'service' in metalworking, but it is unlikely that the workshop's 'inhabitants' totally refrained from food preparation. Since the workshop building is devoid of any traces of 'regular' daily life, such as cooking, one should rather take into consideration that its operators (the metalworker and his family?) actually lived in one of the surrounding houses. In any case, there was little distance between them or their workshop and their neighbours. The entire spatial layout suggests integration in existing notions of the Feudvar village community. If this was an itinerant founder and smith resident in Feudvar for a limited period of time only, one wonders how he could lay claim to a special workshop building, and why his installations fit so neatly into local schemes of order and architecture, instead of operating his craft somewhere in the vicinity. After all, it is likely that there was a local (family or kinship group) tradition of metalworking, although it is only visible archaeologically during this specific building phase. Even if copper was in fact supplied by the 'customers' these were not an elite. For from the variety of objects produced it is apparent that the needs of the local community in the widest sense were served, including ornaments and weapons or tools, none of which in themselves are particularly 'prestigious' objects.

By contrast, in Mycenaean society there is clear evidence of social differentiation, political rule, administration, redistribution or taxation, and control exercised by the palatial centres over both subsistence economy and craft production (e. g. Galaty/Parkinson 2007a). There are discussions whether and to what extent there was an 'informal' sector of economy below or alongside palace control.[145] After all, even Mycenaean palatial rule might not have been as effective as supposed.[146] However in some places there certainly were administered workshops attached to the palaces and operated by fulltime craft specialists who were supplied with food rations and raw materials and operated only for elite/palace consumption or exchange. We are informed on the operation of this system by written records and administrative texts. Yet this pattern is also clearly expressed by material culture, through the evidence of writing such as clay tablets as such, seals and storage, as well as by architecture and settlement layout. The palaces have surrounding towns opposite rural settlements, palatial buildings and courts

Fig. I-42: Mošorin-Feudvar; Vatin culture. Plan of the Early Bronze Age workshop in trench E (after Hänsel/Medović 2004: 89 fig. 2).

for this question.[143] Furthermore, there is other evidence to suggest an alternative reading of metalworking at Feudvar. The most obvious point relates to the situation of the workshop and its integration in contemporaneous settlement activities. There is no indication that at Feudvar there were marked hierarchies or political control. Accordingly, the workshop was not attached to any kind of elite neighbourhood or socio-political centre.[144] By

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[143] E. g. Rowlands 1971; Neipert 2006; Kuijpers 2008; cf. Kienlin 2010: 84–117, 176–190.

[144] See also Horváth (2012: 53, 58, 94) who comes to the same conclusion

for the practice of metallurgy on Vatya sites.

[145] E. g. Dickinson 1994: 77–88, 95–97, 153–164; Voutsaki/Killen 2001a; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 291–292, 295–298, 303–308; Siennicka 2010: 81–82; Pullen 2010.

[146] See, for example, Nakassis/Parkinson/Galaty (2011) and the forum 'Redistribution in Aegean Palatial Societies' in *American Journal of Archaeology* 115, 2011.
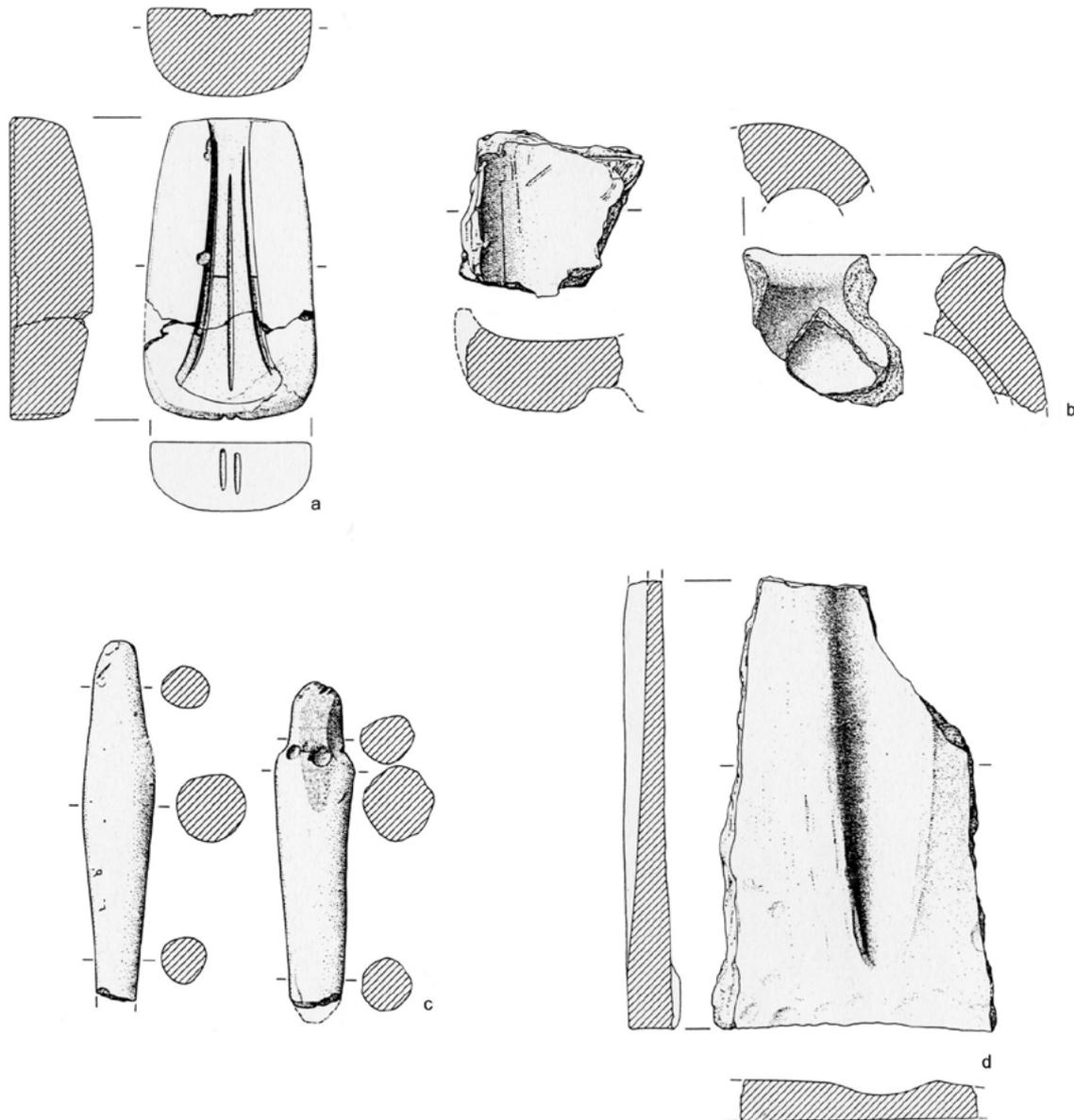
Fig. I-43: Mošorin-Feudvar; Vatin culture. Remains of metalworking activities from the Early Bronze Age workshop: a) mould, b) broken moulds for cire perdue casting, c) cores, d) grindstone; after Hänsel/Medović 2004: 104 fig. 7.1, 106 fig. 9.17/18, 107 fig. 10.1, 108 fig. 11.9/10).

associated with political and possibly religious leadership (e. g. Maran 2006a; Siennicka 2010). There were communal banquets, storage facilities, administration and attached specialist production units for exotic materials, luxury items or weapons. None of this is matched by the Bronze Age tell sites of the Carpathian Basin, nor by sites on the other controversial 'route' along which an eastern Mediterranean or Aegean pattern of differentiated society and settlement is thought to have spread to central Europe via the Adriatic Sea, Istria (with the site of Monkodonja) and the Alps.[147]

Hence, unlike the Mediterranean it is suggested that the casting and working of copper in the central and south-eastern European Bronze Age should be seen in the context

of already existing 'technologies' and intra-community household 'specialisation'. It is likely that the knowledge and skills involved were 'special' or complex enough to be handed down in particular families, lineages or clans only. So not every community member was able to cast and work copper. Possibly, metalworkers' knowledge of, and ties with, segments of far-off communities were closer than normally was the case, particularly so if they themselves had to procure copper from abroad. However, to a certain extent this may reflect the situation of working other materials such as stone, flint, wood or bone. Some of these were obtained from abroad as well, and also provide early indications of intra-community 'specialisation'. So initially metalworking may have been just one 'specialisation', or rather a preference among others (cf.

[147] E. g. Teržan/Mihovilić/Hänsel 1998; 1999; Hänsel 1996; 2002; Krause 2005; 2006/07.

Fischl/Kiss/Kulcsár 2013),[148] albeit one that developed into firm traditions and had a long-term tendency towards an increase in scale and a fulltime occupation in the later Bronze Age. Initially, at least, people may not have been working for their metallurgist, or have been obliged to keep the provision of a valued commodity going, but they may have been engaging with him (her?) in some communally sanctioned raw material procurement and production activity among others.

I.3.3.5 Centrality and Site Hierarchies

Finally, although estimates of population numbers differ widely depending on parameters applied (cf. Gogâltan 2010: 35–36; Earle/Kristiansen 2010a; Duffy 2014), there is no indication that Bronze Age tells saw a clear increase in numbers beyond the limits of Late Neolithic sites discussed above. Evidence of horizontal and vertical differentiation, i. e. craft production, social inequality or political leadership, has already been found wanting. In terms of mere size as well there is nothing that renders Bronze Age tells particularly 'proto-urban' – both in comparison with contemporaneous non-tells sites and with the tells of the preceding Neolithic.

In the Benta valley, for example, a large overlap in size and population numbers between tells and open sites is recorded, as well as great variability in both groups themselves (see above). Clearly, then, if settlement size and (estimated) population numbers are taken as an indicator of socio-economic complexity and political relationships, the greater 'centrality' of tell sites is not self-evident. Some kind of heterarchical structure is argued and the coexistence within one chiefly polity of different economic systems, one ultimately focussed on the 'central' Százhalombatta tell, the other on the 'central' open site of Tárnok (Earle/Kolb 2010: 72–78). However, the evidence is far from clear-cut in terms of different economic strategies on tells and horizontal sites, and the 'different sources of power and finance' proposed by the Benta valley team (Earle/Kolb 2010: 75). Most of this discussion is based on surface finds (mainly from open sites) and small-scale excavations only (mainly from tells), and the environmental impact and subsistence strategies of both types of sites are difficult to establish. This is not a problem specific of the Benta valley project alone that provided valuable environmental data. However, even the relatively high number of four pollen profiles that give a good impression of land-use and long-term change along the valley does not allow us to differentiate the subsistence strategies of individual sites (Ch. French 2010: 45–49). It is certainly true that the catchment area of the Százhalombatta tell was 'truncated' by the Danube (Earle/

Kolb 2010: 72). But it is not convincingly demonstrated that the river reduced the arable land accessible from the site below carrying capacity and 'trade' became a major economic factor instead. The social significance of prestigious hunting (Vretemark 2010: 166) is a topos of research that has already been dealt with above in regard to Late Neolithic tells. Hunting clearly was of minor overall importance – like in most Neolithic and Bronze Age communities. However, the precise percentage and change through time, as observed in the Benta valley (EBA: 8 %; MBA: 2 %), may as well indicate broadly cultural preferences or changing patterns of land-use rather than prestige. For example, it could be the effect of an increase in sheep husbandry for wool around 2000 BC (Vretemark 2010: 165) on the landscape, and the resulting absence of game in settlement surroundings. The fact that wild animals came to the tell 'in pieces' while domestic ones were driven there and butchered nearby (Vretemark 2010: 169) may just reflect different readiness to follow man to the cooking pot. In any case, it is certainly problematic to derive political dependency of surrounding sites and tribute paid to the central tell from the fact that domestic animals were brought in from outside (Vretemark 2010: 168–169, 173). Few Neolithic or Bronze Age sites, both open and enclosed, have evidence of stockbreeding inside the settlement, and we certainly have no positive evidence that people in surrounding open settlements managed domestic animals for use on the tell. It is equally possible that this was done at some distance by members of the Százhalombatta community itself. Throughout the Carpathian Basin and the Bronze Age there is considerable variability and small-scale adaptations of subsistence strategies to changing micro-environmental conditions.[149] We need to be aware, therefore, of local variation and decisions taken that do not match broadly generalising models of economic and political 'types'.

Furthermore, it is entirely unclear from the published evidence whether military power, if such was perceived as a separate domain beyond general male habitus at all, craft production and exchange were in fact concentrated on the tells.[150] The evidence for each of these is limited. It is not easy to see why 'power' and 'prestige' derived from them should have outdone 'wealth' and 'success' derived from other sources such as agriculture and livestock breeding.

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[148] Given the general paucity of evidence related to the on-site practice of metallurgy, i. e. the ephemeral and passing nature of such activities, it comes as no surprise that in Vráble-Fidvár (see above) it proved impossible to find and excavate a 'metal workshop area' (Gauss *et al.* 2013: 2945–2946, 2952). Rather, one is surprised that it is still possible to launch major projects on Early Bronze Age sites driven by such apparently unrealistic expectations as the wish to discover a centre of Early Bronze Age metalworking and exchange.

[149] E. g. Bökönyi 1988; 1992; Gyulai 1992; 1993; 2010: 93–107; Falkenstein 2009: 153–157, 159–161; Vretemark 2010: 164–169; Oas 2010; Jaeger 2011b; Németi/Molnár 2012: 53–72; Sümegi 2013; Fischl/Reményi 2013: 726–728.
[150] Evidence of horizontal and vertical differentiation, i. e. the presence of craft specialists, warriors, religious experts and political leaders, etc., at Százhalombatta and, of course, beyond is poor. In spite of intensive research carried out to precisely this aim, it is explicitly noted that no such differentiation could be observed: '*Alas, [...] it is not yet possible to identify distinct differences among households.*' (Sørensen 2010: 140–141; italics added, but mind the wording!) The reconstruction of a 'charioteer's house' and a 'new warrior elite', etc. (Earle/Kristiansen 2010c: 233–234) is entirely speculative and beyond the evidence available. It is clearly not shared by other collaborators in the same project, who consider different traditions at household level, but make it quite clear that the evidence of horizontal and vertical differentiation is poor (Sørensen 2010: 140–141; Sørensen/Vicze 2013: 159–160; cf. Vicze 2013a).

From Százhalombatta as well as from many other tells there is clearly evidence of metalworking, but it is small-scale.[151] The same kind of evidence comes from short-lived open settlements of the Bronze Age culture groups under consideration, for example, from the Maros group site of Kiszombor-Új Élet, or a number of Otomani and Vatya culture sites.[152] Thus, apart from sometimes scanty data, world-view is also involved when settlement hierarchies and a differentiation of activities between sites are argued (e. g. Earle/Kristiansen 2010a). A more reluctant view of the role of tells as economic and political centres has also been proposed.[153] For the Bronze Age as well it should be considered that the 'centrality' of tells may actually have been rooted in cultural notions of identity and tradition, which were evoked by continuously occupied sites that had started to develop into (fortified) tells with visibly considerable 'ancestry' and a clear demarcation of social space. Obviously, this is the approach suggested in discussions on Late Neolithic tell sites, and it is not claimed that both situations are identical. However, it may be more appropriate for the Bronze Age as well than an approach focusing primarily on economic and political predominance (Earle/Kristiansen 2010b; 2010c).

We also have to be aware of much regional variation, and simplified models will not take us far that set up a rigid division between culture and political economy. This may also be shown for Mošorin-Feudvar, which supposedly stood on top of a site hierarchy including political rule and functional differentiation between sites (Hänsel 1998a; Falkenstein 1998). From this perspective, the population of such 'proto-urban' tell sites is thought to have been involved in trade and craft production. Supposedly, it could not be supported without drawing on the agricultural surplus of smaller dependent settlements in their vicinities.[154] One wonders, then, how the system is supposed to have worked in the late Vatin phase, when all settlement activity on the Titel plateau was concentrated in Mošorin-Feudvar itself (see above). The concepts of 'centrality' and 'hierarchy' require some opposite to 'central' places, otherwise they are meaningless and disguise some different quality of the evidence at hand. Drawing on differences in pottery production and patterns of food consumption in various houses at Feudvar, some kind of 'synoikismos' has been suggested to account for the centralisation observed (Hänsel 2002: 80–82; 2003: 211–212, 214). Again, however, this process is thought to have involved elites, not otherwise evident in the archaeological remains, supervising the movement of people, when in fact the pattern observed is suggestive of segmentary structures like those encountered on Neolithic tells. Integration is not only achieved and order maintained by the agency of self-aggrandising individuals, and decision-making in tribal societies is located on various different levels (see Kienlin 2012a with further references). Hence, rather than focusing on increasing centralisation in political terms (and the occasional 'devolution' of such 'hierarchical' systems; see, for example, Hansen 2012: 222), we may want to ask what other preferences may account for aggregation and dispersal in settlement patterns. Living on a (fortified) tell, or in its surroundings, is a cultural choice that relates to both practical needs (e. g. economic strategies, frequent aggression) and less well definable values such as the emphasis put on group identity and tradition. The concept of tribal cycling mentioned above is just one approach to understand how such factors are accommodated by tribal societies without undue emphasis on the evolution of political rule.

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[151] E. g. Poroszlai 1992b; Bátora 2009; Sofaer 2010: 185–186; Molnár 2011; Găvan 2012: 64–65, 68–69; 2013; Horváth 2012: 53–58, 94, 104–105.

[152] See Papalas (2008: 40, 47–49), O'Shea (2011: 167–168), Szeverényi/Kulcsár (2012: 336), Fischl/Kiss/Kulcsár (2013: 13) and Duffy (2014: 103–108, 214–222).

[153] E. g. O'Shea 1996; 2011; Michelaki 2008; Dani/Fischl 2010; Dani 2012; Fischl 2012; Szeverényi/Kulcsár 2012; Duffy 2014.

[154] E. g. Falkenstein 1998: 268; Hänsel 2002: 80–82; Earle/Kolb 2010: 73–74; Vretemark 2010: 167–169, 173.

II. Europe and the Mediterranean: Dependency or Delusion?

II.1 'Fault Lines' and the Bronze Age 'Other'

When C. Renfrew (e. g. 1970a; 1970b; 1973c) proclaimed his famous 'Radiocarbon Revolution' and pointed to the existence of a 'fault line' in the traditional synchronisms between Europe and the Mediterranean (fig. II-1), he was drawing on the results of scientific dating methods to question an older diffusionist paradigm epitomised by the work of V. G. Childe (e. g. 1929; 1957). In particular, it was the demonstration of the autochthonous development of metallurgy in Europe that Renfrew was concerned with. In a series of studies he reviewed the chronological links traditionally drawn between early metal-using groups of the European Copper and Bronze Ages and the Mediterranean, as well as the Near East (e. g. Renfrew 1968; 1969; 1978; 1979). As a result Renfrew (1970a) came up with his equally influential 'isochronic map', which indicated the existence of independent core areas of early metallurgy in south-eastern Europe as well as on the Iberian Peninsula (fig. II-2). In this context scientific methods were employed not only for dating but also for provenancing, and to establish that various kinds of elaborately crafted objects, such as faience beads, were indeed of European origin instead of being imports from the technologically superior civilisations of the East (e. g. Newton/Renfrew 1970).

The 'New Archaeology' or 'Processual Archaeology', which sprang from these beginnings, however, was not just about the application of scientific methods to solve questions of chronology and origins. Rather, the archaeological record was attributed a quality of its own, which, it was claimed, was not adequately captured by quasi-historical narratives and by the use of related interpretative concepts such as migrations. Archaeological 'cultures' were no longer thought to 'behave' in analogy
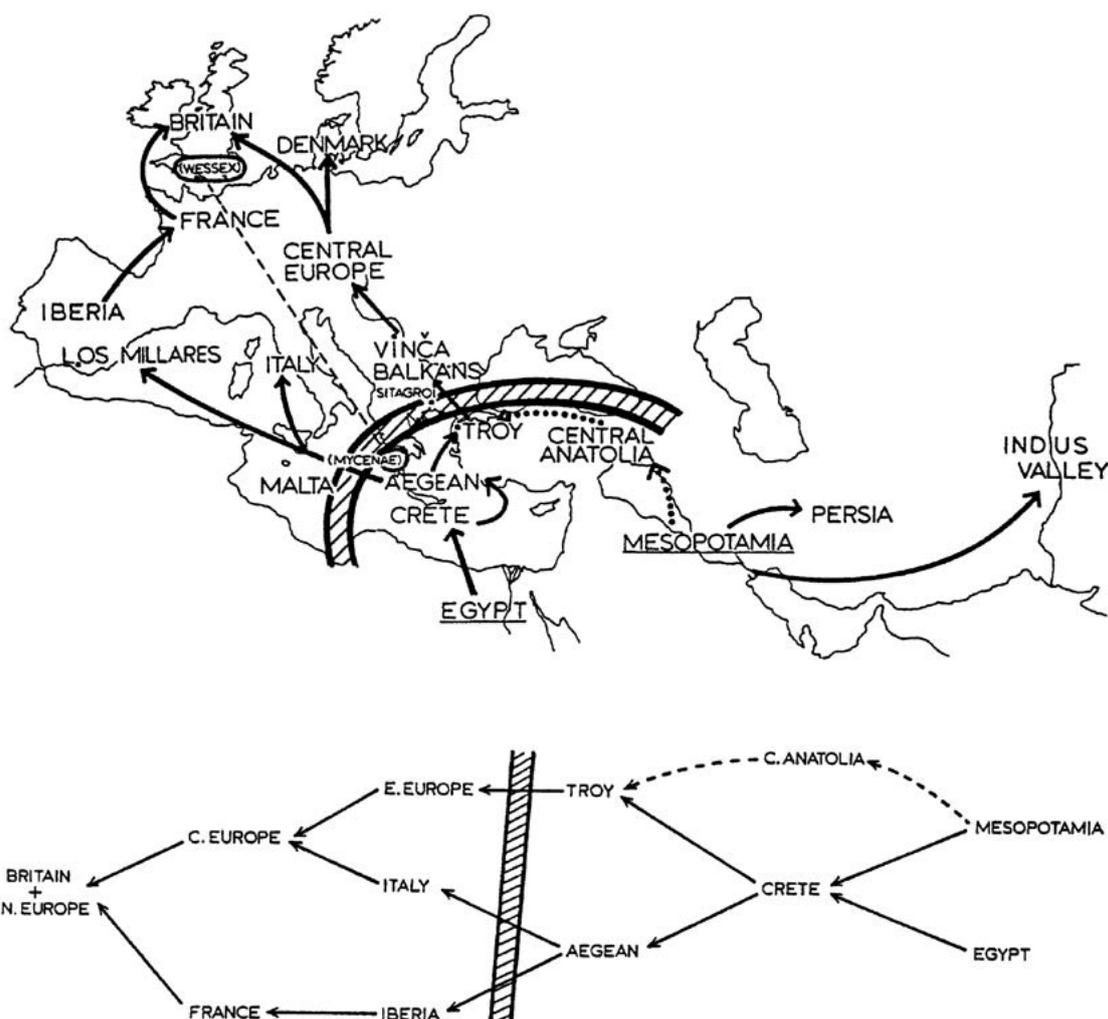
Fig. II-1: 'Fault line' in the traditional cross-dating synchronisms between Europe and the Mediterranean (after Renfrew 1970a: 289 fig. 3b, 291 fig. 4).
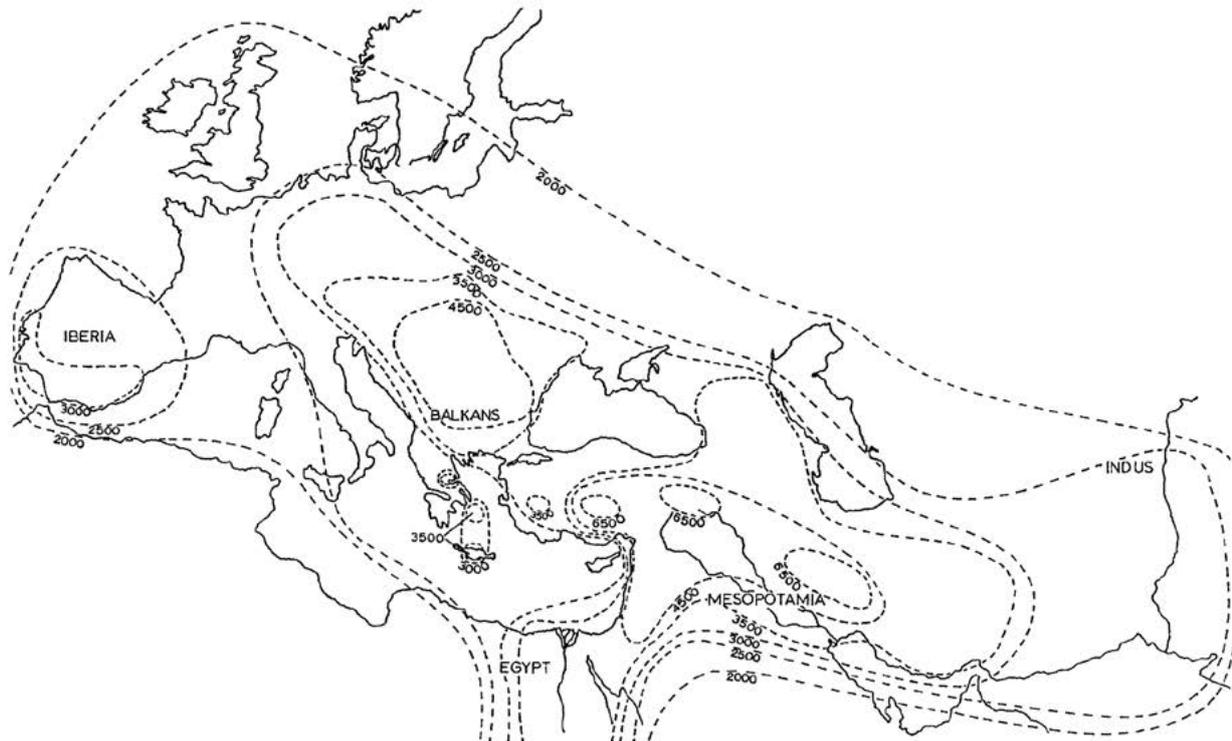
Fig. II-2: 'Isochronic map' indicating the existence of several independent core areas of early metallurgy in Europe and the Near East (after Renfrew 1970a: 307 fig. 10).

of historical 'actors', and diffusion was questioned as a model to account for culture change. Instead, attention was drawn to the dynamics of European 'peripheral' societies and their potential for social and technological development. Here lies the lasting credit of Processual Archaeology, and it is worth recalling Renfrew's (1973c: 112) original programmatic claim: 'What matters is not to know whether some ingenious idea reached the society in question from outside, but rather to understand how it came to be accepted by that society, and what features of the economic and social organization there made the innovation so significant'.

'Fault lines', then, are not an analytical concept, but merely a descriptive term that was launched in the first place to draw attention to problems in traditional cross-dating and the absolute chronology of European prehistory. It must not be used, of course, to deny interregional interaction and exchange, if there is corresponding evidence, and Processual Archaeology has been rightly criticised for neglecting the potential impact of a wider historical setting on local systems. In the meantime, however, there is a rollback with various brands of 'Neo-Diffusionism', derived from either traditional approaches or a reading of World System Theory and its modifications (fig. II-3). It is in this context that we see the return of grand narratives that have us believe in the dependency of European societies of the Bronze Age on the Mediterranean, and/or the convergence of both areas, without actually producing evidence to support such far-reaching claims.

The recent modelling of the 'chiefly courts' of the tell cultures in the Carpathian Basin (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 167) is a good example of the dangers involved in this kind of reasoning. The tell communities under discussion certainly seem to be located on the 'margin' of presumably more 'advanced' societies of the Mediterranean. They have, in any case, been discussed in this context, whereby different approaches can be observed. The economic impact of long-distance trade in metal and other commodities may be stressed, or the social dynamics of prestige good systems drawing on exotic foreign material culture (figs. II-4 and II-5). Besides, more recently, there has been a shift towards the 'intangible' (Harding 2013: 384), since what is thought to have linked centres and outer peripheries is no longer predominantly economy or politics, but rather ritual and cosmological power that travelling elites derived from esoteric knowledge and foreign objects (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005).

In such studies regional variability in both the 'core' and the 'periphery' is ignored and subsumed in the grand narrative given. At no point is an attempt made to study the appropriation and recontextualisation of foreign elements – material and immaterial – in the periphery. This kind of theorising falls short of more recent interaction studies, for example in Mediterranean Archaeology, where a much more complex picture of 'core' and 'periphery' relations emerges than just dependency, subordination and exploitation. Without denying contact and interaction, it is found difficult to demonstrate systemic dependency
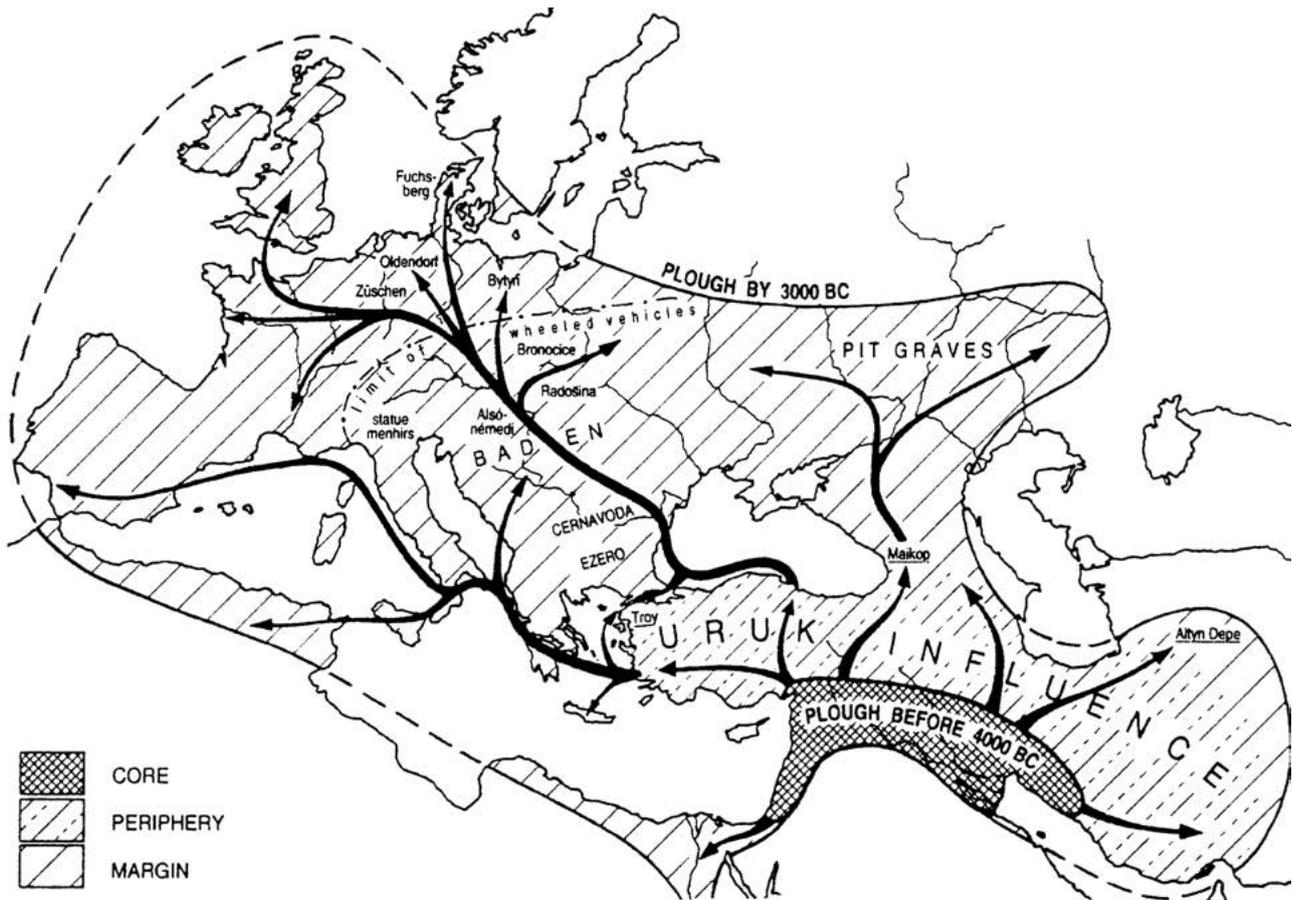
FIG. II-3: THE SPREAD OF THE USE OF ANIMAL TRACTION FROM THE NEAR EAST TO EUROPE DURING THE 4TH MILLENNIUM BC AS PART OF THE 'SECONDARY PRODUCTS REVOLUTION' (AFTER A. SHERRATT 1997A: 18 FIG. 0.5).

as previously put forward. Attention is drawn to the differential outcomes of contact and exchange depending on local valuations, specific historical trajectories and peripheral choice or agency opposite outside 'influence'.

In a metaphorical sense, then, the notion of a 'fault line' may be useful to remind us that the elegance of historical narratives and the consistency of world-view involved in archaeological writing do not adequately support claims to historical 'truth'. In a more down-to-earth sense the notion of a 'fault line' between societies of the Aegean Bronze Age and those further north, in the Balkans and into the Carpathian Basin, may allow us to consider that long-term stability of structural difference between groups coexisting in time and space clearly is a possibility, and that mere proof of contact and/or contemporaneity does not equal demonstration of 'core' impact on the less developed 'periphery'.

For this reason, in the preceding chapter core and periphery interpretations of the Bronze Age tell-'building' communities of the Carpathian Basin, mirroring the Mediterranean, have been challenged. It has been argued that we should not try to account for this type of settlement and the social and cultural life of its inhabitants in terms more or less explicitly derived from the palatial centres of

the Bronze Age Aegean and beyond. It has been suggested that instead Bronze Age research should take an interest in continuities from the previous Neolithic and may profitably look for inspiration in a different tradition of Neolithic research and post-processual approaches to Late Neolithic tell sites of the same region.

Consequently, it is taken as established that the beginnings of Bronze Age tells in the Carpathian Basin predate the Mycenaean palaces, and even the shaft grave period; and it is assumed that previous contact with Minoan palatial society, if any contact existed at all, was such that it did not significantly affect local trajectories. It is further assumed that there is no break in local development, say from the Early to the Middle Bronze Age in Hungarian terms, that may be related to a gradual expansion of Mycenaean influence and interest north. In other words, the position taken here is that Early and Middle Bronze Age tell-'building' societies of the Carpathian Basin developed largely on their own. We must refer, therefore, to the internal logic of these cultures for an understanding, for example, of their settlement, their use of material culture and their construction of social space, not to their foreign contacts south. The latter may be established by sporadic import finds, but they did not result in convergence – social, economic, ideological or otherwise.
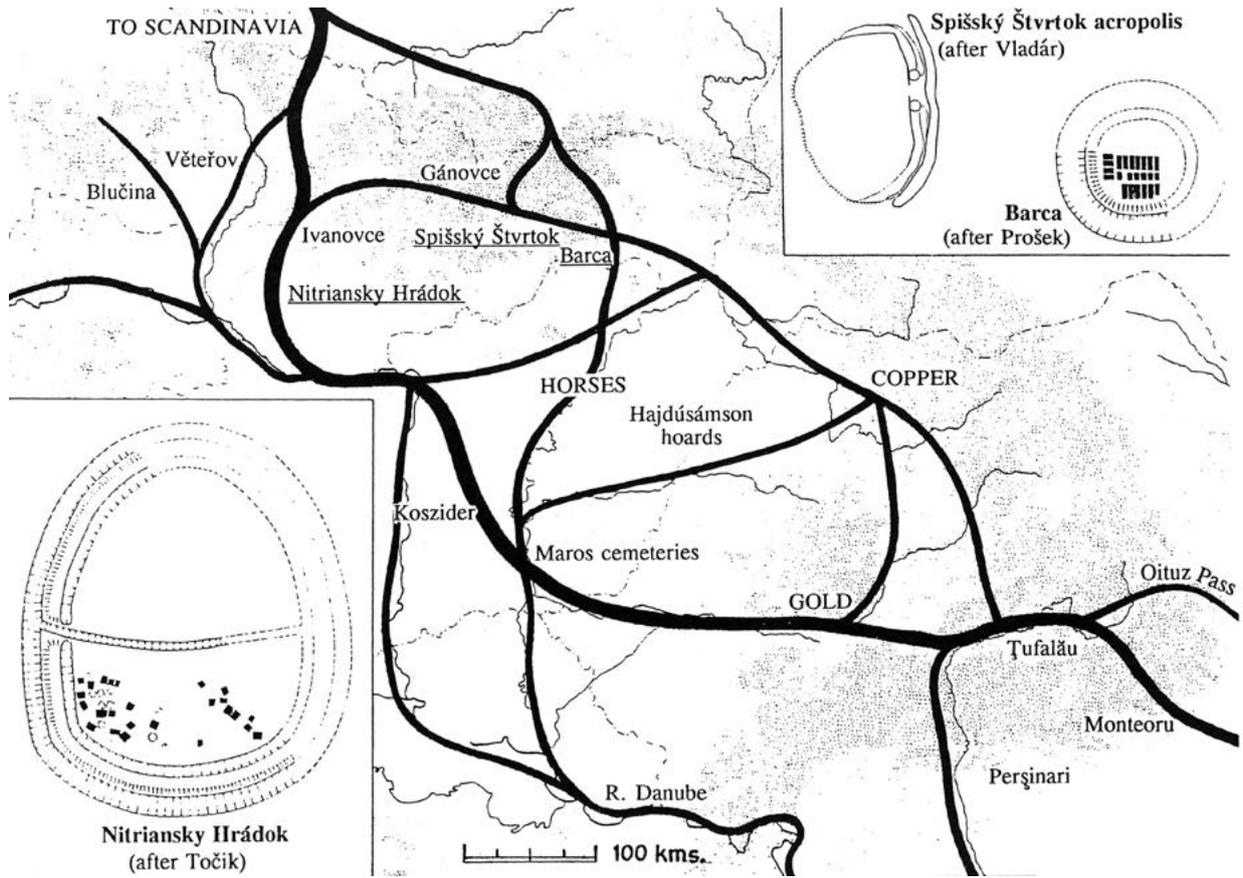
Fig. II-4: Bronze Age long-distance trade and fortified settlement in the Carpathian Basin (after A. Sherratt 1993a: 27 fig. 7).
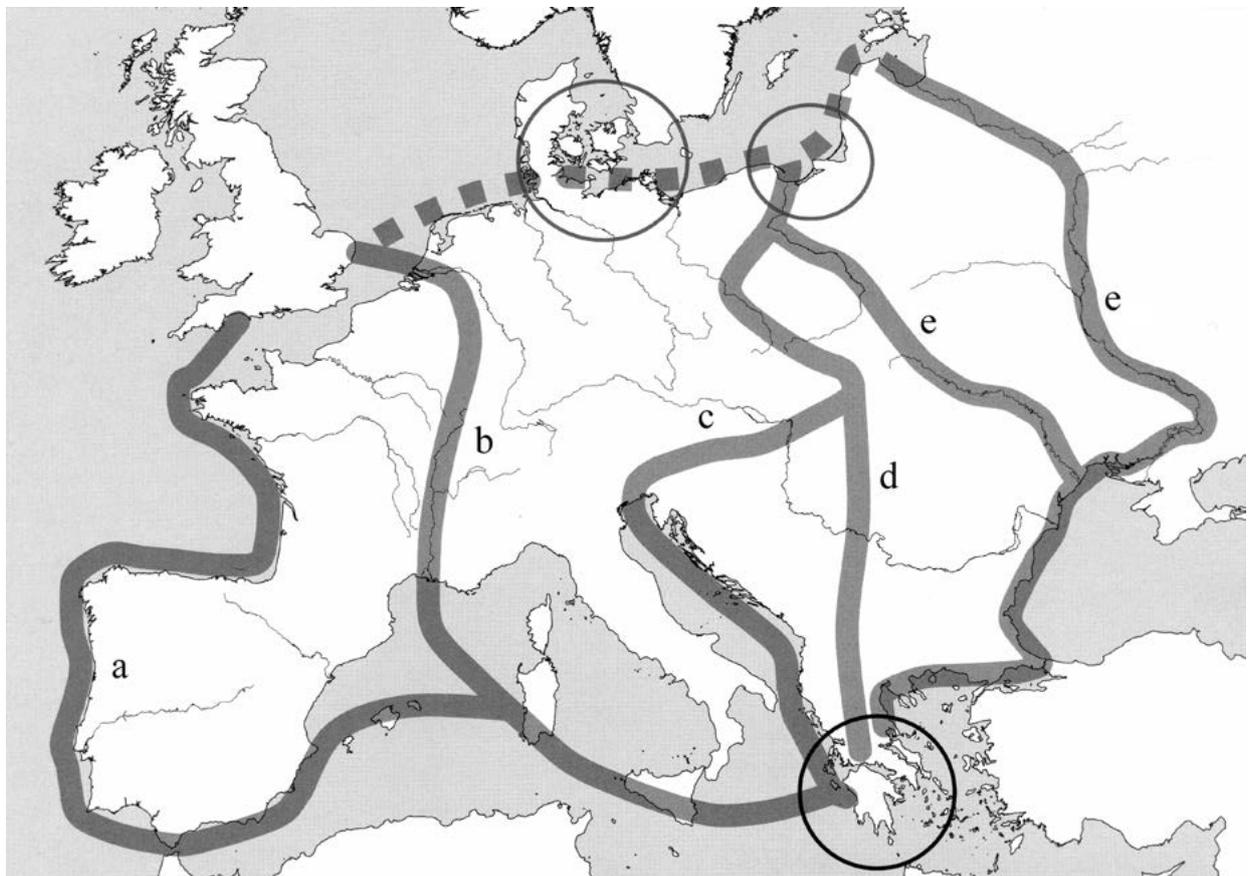
Fig. II-5: The routes of Baltic amber to Mycenaean Greece (after Czebreszuk 2013: 561 fig. 5).

Since this claim is clearly controversial, this chapter has a twofold aim. First, an attempt is made to deconstruct some widely held notions in Bronze Age research that each involves bridging the gap between socially and culturally distinct societies, widely set apart in space and/or in time, to produce the unified Bronze Age narrative commonly accepted. Second, it is argued instead for an approach that leaves behind essentialising concepts of 'core' and 'periphery' and allows for the variability and historicity of potentially interacting local groups – both from the Bronze Age Aegean and from 'Barbarian' Europe. To this end, in this part and the next of the present study, a structured comparison of local trajectories is aimed for, both in the Mediterranean and south-eastern Europe, with particular emphasis placed on the social use of space. It will eventually become clear that both regions expose cultural complexity, but it was only in the Mediterranean that this translates into the development of explicitly politically stratified societies.

The approach taken at deconstruction is by way of example. It will focus on the widely read synthesis *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005), which is thought to epitomise and exaggerate notions widely held in Bronze Age research, albeit not often expressed in such a straightforward manner. K. Kristiansen and Th. B. Larsson argue '[...] that the study of later European prehistory, and especially the Bronze Age, has failed to make convincing progress because among other things it is dominated by a farming or peasant ideology of immobility which is derived from a more recent European past. By implicitly assuming that prehistoric farmers were as immobile as their historic counterparts, archaeologists have failed to grasp the specific historic character of the Bronze Age: they have failed to recognise its "otherness"' (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 32, see also 367–368). Instead, the authors go on to suggest that the Bronze Age is characterised by a high degree of mobility and travelling to distant places, especially on the part of newly emergent warriors or 'chiefly' elites, and the transmission of foreign esoteric knowledge that these people were able to draw upon back home in order to enhance their social standing. Consequently, the Bronze Age is thought to have seen a far-ranging alignment of socio-political and ideological 'institutions' alongside the more conventional intensification of trade and exchange and the general economic upswing expected in the wake of bronze metallurgy (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 32–61).

In a way this is a particularly eloquent phrasing of a widely held view in Bronze Age research, which has it that the Bronze Age was qualitatively different from the preceding Neolithic and historically unique on a pan-European scale. We are led to expect the emergence of (proto-)urban settlements drawing an agricultural surplus from their surroundings, featuring craft production and exercising control of exchange with exotic objects and raw materials from abroad. Supposedly, there were peasants, craft specialists and those in charge – a warrior elite that developed new forms of male habitual expression,

amongst others, by their command of shining bronze weaponry; aggrandisers whose competitiveness propelled Bronze Age society onto a new stage of social evolution, ultimately in likeness of the urban centres of the ancient Near East or the palaces of the Bronze Age Aegean.

However, the work of Kristiansen and Larsson goes beyond most of this 'traditional' archaeological reasoning, for it is more consistently argued, and it features a powerful narrative and construction of a Bronze Age 'other'. This is why their study is so enormously attractive for some, and has attracted fierce criticism by others from the start.[155] Among several other points it has been noted that regional variability is systematically subdued up to the point that evidence to the contrary seems to have been deliberately ignored. The same certainly holds true for opposing theoretical approaches. Such problems are closely related to the specific narrative style of their presentation that in some places borders on epic writing instead of scientific prose. It is well worthwhile, therefore, to have a closer look at the strategies involved in the presentation of this particular Bronze Age 'other' and to draw attention to some alternative views.

There are different avenues that such an attempt at deconstructing *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* may take, not least the heavy reliance of Kristiansen and Larsson's study on the ethnographic work of M. Helms (e. g. 1979; 1988) to support their notion of Bronze Age 'travellers' and their impact on Bronze Age society (e. g. Kristiansen/ Larsson 2005: 2, 17, 39–41, 45–47, 51–57). Instead, we will focus here, firstly, on a specific reading of the Homeric poems throughout the volume. This has much the same effect as the reading of Helms of drawing attention to the agency of a specific type of 'alpha' male, to the neglect of an historically contextualised understanding of social action in Bronze Age and Early Iron Age societies respectively.

Second, turning back to what has been said above, Kristiansen and Larsson's argument heavily depends upon some kind of core and periphery model, with prehistoric Europe situated on the margin of Mediterranean urban or palatial centres which developed from the earlier work of one of the authors (e. g. Kristiansen 1987; 1998). In *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* such elements derived from World System Theory are still present, but there is a shift towards ritual and a Bronze Age elite ethos which supposedly held the 'system' together (cf. Harding 2013: 383–384). Very much like before, however, 'institutional' similarity, 'systemic' interrelation and the effect of contact on 'peripheral' society are still taken for granted rather than being demonstrated. Interaction and postcolonial studies imply that such an approach is problematic because the meaning of exotic objects in peripheral or marginal groups is taken to be identical with their origins instead of being understood as renegotiated in local contexts. In a more

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[155] For a critical review and assessment of this work, the problems it poses both on the empirical and theoretical side, see, for example, Harding (2006a; 2013) and Nordquist/Whittaker (2007).

general sense, we are led to believe in 'passive' peripheries versus overwhelming outside influence. Instead, we may choose to direct our attention at the different ways whereby foreign 'prestigious' objects were actually recontextualised, and at the active appropriation of foreign cultural traits into specific social and cultural contexts of 'Barbarian' Europe.

II.2 Homer, Heroes and the Bronze Age

II.2.1 Homer and Archaeology: Different Logics and False Expectations

It has been noted early on that '[m]ost of what Kristiansen and Larsson have to say on the Homeric poems is nonsense' (Nordquist/Whittaker 2007: 81). However applicable such a statement may seem, it cuts short a more complex issue. Kristiansen and Larsson are by no means the only archaeologists still to believe in the historicity of what Homer has to tell us about a 'Bronze Age' world that had long passed when the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were written down in the way we know them. Quite to the contrary, theirs is still the mainstream position, and this is how Early Iron Age 'heroes' and their specifically Early Iron Age aspirations and concerns enter the archaeological literature on the Bronze Age.[156]

Even without any particular expertise in ancient Greek history or philology and Aegean Bronze Age archaeology, however, it is immediately apparent that the issue of Homer and the Bronze Age is highly controversial among those specialising in this field.[157] It is no good for academic discourse to brush aside such competing paradigms in the nonchalant manner apparent in *The Rise of Bronze Age Society*. For Kristiansen and Larsson, this debate, which has been going on at least since the ground-breaking work of M. I. Finley in 1954 (e. g. Finley 1983: 199–245; 2002), clearly boils down to the usual ups and downs of theoretical fashions in philology and ancient history that will eventually be settled, with archaeological support, in favour of historical 'truth' – meaning in this case acceptance of the Mycenaean origins of the epics by all the overly critical disbelievers (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 229, 257).

This entirely misses the true issue at stake. Archaeologists and others involved in the broad field of material culture studies have long worked hard to establish a notion of material culture as being meaningfully constituted and of its significance for the construction of social 'reality'.[158] Material culture conveys cultural meanings, it shapes our habitus and is drawn upon in a specific discourse with a logic of its own. Things are 'potent' precisely because other than by linguistic statements their communicative potential is seldom consciously deliberated. Things cannot be 'read' like texts while still disclosing meaning, etc.

For Kristiansen and Larsson the same obviously does not apply to language and text. For their understanding of the Homeric poems is one of historical documents composed and finally written down at some stage to fix and convey true historical 'facts' (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 20–24, 60–61, 227–229, 254–257). In spite of all the distortions that may have occurred through time, the epics are expected still to retain most of their original 'true' meaning after many centuries. Somehow contrary to our readings from post-structuralism (e. g. Olsen 1990; Tilley 1990; 1991), this would seem to be a common misconception shared by many archaeologists, who tend to be fascinated by the superior 'quality' of written sources compared to the somewhat 'defective' material remains of past human activity at their own disposal only.

If archaeologists thus tend to deny a logic of their own to language and text, and to ignore intentionality in their use, quite contrary to their growing readiness to allow for it in material culture studies, the opposite is certainly true in ancient history and philology. To make this point quite clear, it is not claimed that an agreement has been achieved on the historicity of the Homeric poems. Obviously the opposite is true. However there is a strong tradition of research into the shifts of meaning that invariably take place through time in oral traditions and into the narrative strategies, further distorting any original meaning that possibly remained when such narratives are eventually cast into epic poetry and script.[159] To adherents of this approach the concerns of Homer when writing down the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were thoroughly Early Iron Age, and so was in large part his knowledge of the 'Bronze Age' world that he chose as a setting for his poems. It is argued he was drawing on myths and on what Bronze Age ruins may still have been visible at his time, rather than on historical 'facts' that were continuously handed down to him. Also it is shown that in composing the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* he was guided by a specific perception of the shortcomings of his own Early Iron Age society and the perceived necessity to establish moral standards of political leadership in the early Greek world.

It will be further discussed below why it is no good for archaeology to ignore such approaches. In the meantime, however, let us first turn shortly to what Kristiansen and Larsson have to tell us about the Homeric poems. At the very heart of their argument is the assumed continuity from Mycenaean times until the age of Homer of a specific social and political world depicted in the *Iliad*

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[156] E. g. Treherne 1995; Demakopoulou *et al.* 1999a; 1999b; Catalogue Karlsruhe 2008; Hansen 2013b; 2014.
[157] Compare, for example, the different approaches represented in the volumes by Latacz (2001), Cairns (2001), Ulf (2003a), S. Morris/ Laffineur (2007), I. Morris/Powell (2011) and Ulf/Rollinger (2011).
[158] See, for example, Tilley *et al.* (2006) and Samida/Eggert/Hahn (2014) with further references.

[159] See, for example, papers in Ulf (2003a), I. Morris/Powell (2011) and Ulf/Rollinger (2011); see also, in particular, Scodel (2002) and Montanari/ Rengakos/Tsagalis (2012).

and *Odyssey*.[160] This is established by reference to the supposed stability of proper names (people/gods and places) from Linear B times onwards and oral traditions in general: '[...] oral tradition was persistent and able to transmit songs and myths over half a millennium or more without major changes [...]' (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 22, see also 28).[161] Here, as throughout *The Rise of Bronze Age Society*, what is actually highly controversial, i. e. the origins and permanence of the Greek hexameter (e. g. Wiener 2007: 9–12; Grethlein 2014: 57–58 with further references), is depicted as a fact with only the slightest and/or distorting mention of contrary opinion. And if in doubt, archaeological evidence – in itself controversial, but apparently felt as more within the reach of authoritative statements by the authors – prevails over linguistic or historical considerations: 'The Iliad and the Odyssey on the other hand transmit a genuine Bronze Age ethos, supported archaeologically and textually. Thus, while we accept the historical context of their writing [...], we do not accept the far-reaching implications drawn from this about their age and origin, as it goes against the archaeology' (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 24). At least certain quarters of archaeology and ancient history would disagree[162] – but such is the attempt to immunise one's argument against any critique characteristic of meta-narratives such as *The Rise of Bronze Age Society*.

If over the whole of society there is continuity, of course, this also should apply to its parts, and here appear the Homeric 'heroes' – in their threefold incarnation as: a) an archetype of the Bronze Age 'warrior', 'chief' or 'traveller'; b) as a link to bridge the gap between the Early Iron Age and the Bronze Age; and c) in an illustrative use to throw light on various aspects of Bronze Age life and lend credibility to the overall narrative (e. g. Kristiansen/ Larsson 2005: 23–24, 61, 257).

The latter point, of course, also concerns the occasional reference by Homer to certain groups of objects such as weapons of Bronze Age date. These are accepted throughout *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* as evidence of the antiquity and overall continuity of the Homeric poems in the above sense (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 227, 247), rather than considering alternative options discussed in the relevant literature. Is it possible that we can see a conscious attempt by the author 'Homer' to give his poem the appearance of antiquity by reference to ancient objects (and places etc.)? Or, in a more general sense, have

references made to individual objects of great antiquity anything to say at all about the antiquity or the integrity of the whole story or poem (see, for example Patzek 1992: 186–202)?

However, another aspect is more important, namely the attempt to bridge the temporal, social and cultural gap between the Early Iron Age and the Bronze Age by reference to episodes from the Homeric poems. Take as an example a passage referring to Late Bronze Age seaborne trade, the famous Uluburun shipwreck off the coast of modern Turkey, and the journey of king Menelaus home from Troy mentioned in the *Odyssey*, which is explicitly thought to reflect Bronze Age trade routes and palatial exchange (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 101–105). This is all very nicely told, but in its catchiness it conceals that two different socio-political systems are bracketed, and their characteristic forms of interaction, trade and exchange are confused.

Uluburun is firmly set in a specific Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean system of exchange, where gift exchange among (palatial) elites and rulers established the conditions for more commercial forms of bulk exchange and trade (e. g. Yalçın/Pulak/Slotta 2005; Dickinson 2006a: 30–35; Pulak 2008). By contrast, what Homeric heroes do in order to acquire wealth is actually more akin to raiding parties and piracy (e. g. Ulf 2009: 86–87; 2011b: 265–269, 276). Advocates of this approach see a qualitative difference between the gift exchange taking place among Homeric 'big men' and the 'diplomatic' exchange of gifts circulating among the institutionalised political centres of the Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean. Kristiansen and Larsson, on the other hand, as may be expected, equate the two and inflate the whole system ultimately to the Baltic Sea (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 100, 104). On a related matter, it has been shown that Homer actually lacks a notion of large-scale warfare, such as may have occurred between Bronze Age Near Eastern kingdoms and urban centres. His ten-year struggle for Troy is in fact conveyed by drawing on elements from small-scale aristocratic revenge or raiding parties, and territorial conflicts between emergent *poleis* of the 8th and 7th centuries BC (Raaflaub 2003: 316–323; 2011a: 352–363; van Wees 2004: 153–165).

II.2.2 Alternative Readings

This list could easily be continued,[163] but let us turn instead to alternative readings of Homer, which seek to understand

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[160] See, for example, Kristiansen/Larsson (2005: 61): 'This new heroic cosmology is echoed in the first appearance of heroic texts, such as Gilgamesh, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and the Celtic myths and sagas. Although sometimes written down at a much later time, they maintain the cultural ethos of the Bronze Age, through the continued tradition of bards and religious specialists. These people maintained the mythological heritage of Bronze Age societies, an accumulating mythological time-space continuum [...] over centuries and even millennia [...]'.

[161] On a slightly different matter, Nordquist/Whittaker (2007: 82) point out that such passages indicate a problematic and outdated understanding of 'culture as a package' (see also, for example, Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 28).

[162] E. g. Snodgrass 1974: 125; I. Morris 2001: 68–76; 2011: 538–539; Bennet 2004: 90–92; 2011b: 511–514, 531–533; S. Sherratt 2010; Raaflaub 2011b: 625; Maran 2011b: 171; 2014: 176.

[163] For example, the Homeric horses of the Argolid as evidence of Bronze Age 'horse breeders and charioteers' from the Carpathian Basin to Sintashta and Hattusha (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 170), or the Bronze Age warrior's death as a 'trauma' illustrated by Patroklos and Hektor (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 240). Such is part of a narrative strategy found throughout *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* that generalises from illustrative but contingent events described by Homer, or individual archaeological findings to the 'nature' of Bronze Age society. An archaeological example of this procedure would be the reference to occasional multiple burials as evidence of the 'careless' disposal of these dead and consequently Bronze Age 'slavery' (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 133–135, fig. 48; for further discussion see also below).

his epic poetry in its own right, and to the implications of this approach for Bronze Age research. In a general sense, what authors adhering to 'Neoanalysis' and 'Narratology' do is to draw attention to the complexity of the *Iliad* in terms of its content and narrative structure that go much beyond 'simple' heroic songs.[164] In contrast to such older, predominantly oral traditions, it is argued that true epics like the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were deliberately composed in writing, and that this took place in a specific historical context. Such epics have a true author, even if we are not able to pinpoint him, and his way of creatively handling whatever older myths or songs and contemporaneous written sources were at his disposal was guided by his intention to comment upon, for example, specific ethical or moral issues of his own time (e. g. Scodel 2002: 13–16, 48–53, 88–89; Ulf 2003b: 279–283; 2009: 82; 2010: 297–301; 2011a: 17–20). Among such possible concerns of Homer, the avoidance or handling of internal conflict, the ethical foundations of legitimate leadership, and the limitations of mortal man's aspiration to honour, fame and memory have been identified.[165] Such issues may have become of widespread concern when social hierarchies began to consolidate after the 'Dark Ages' and aristocratic ideals were formulated and negotiated. They are to be understood, for example, in the context of Greek *ethnogenesis* and the construction of ancient Greek identity (Gehrke 2003: 70–77; Ulf 2011a: 21–22), and the confrontation of the 'Greeks' with the older and culturally more advanced civilisations of the 'Orient' – such as the expanding neo-Assyrian empire which may have added a sense of immediate political or military threat to this cultural encounter at more or less the assumed time of Homer (*c.* late 8th/early 7th century BC) (Lanfranchi 2011: 230–233).

If this is the case, Homer's *Iliad* is neither an historical document nor is it, however distorted, the result of a continuous tradition of oral poetry. Rather, it was newly created, and in doing so the author had at his disposal a number of different oral and textual sources. Additionally, he was in command of specific narrative strategies to confer meaning to or claim authority for his epic poem, and he was 'interacting' with his audience and its specific expectations and prior knowledge of the story material used (Scodel 2002: 1–41). Unlike what is implied by Kristiansen and Larsson (e. g. 2005: 60–61, 256–257), and believed by many archaeologists not directly concerned with the matter, there is some agreement that the society of the *Iliad* is broadly that of Homer's own times, or somewhat earlier only.[166] Indeed, such would have been the precondition for the general acceptance and the widespread interest taken in the poem (Raaflaub 2011a: 342–344, 348–350). Agamemnon wrongly claiming first Chryseis

and thereafter Briseis, and Achilles refusing to fight and almost bringing disaster upon the Greeks, were thus acting out and negotiating broadly Early Iron Age concerns of rightful leadership, elite conduct and elite obligations to their followers. This was expressed by drawing upon and reformulating older Greek songs, as well as eastern sources and epics, such as potentially the Gilgamesh (S. Morris 2011; Patzek 2011: 396–404), in a creative way that renders it both impossible and inappropriate to determine the historical 'truth' either of Homer's text itself, or indeed of the various traditions or templates he was using (Ulf 2010: 284–288).

There may have been a war waged by Mycenaean Greeks on Troy. Such may have taken place in today's Troad and in front of the Bronze Age walls of Hisarlik tepe. Some of those involved may have been called Achilles and Hector or Agamemnon and Priam. However, we would not be able to establish this from the epic poetry (nor indeed from the archaeological remains and ruins as well). First and foremost, this is an Early Iron Age creation loosely drawing on an unspecified 'Bronze Age' past or rather different Bronze Age 'pasts'. It features an impressive personnel of, at times, more than life-size 'heroes', and employing a specific style of artificial or 'secondary' orality to lay claim to antiquity and lend authority to the text and its argument (Ulf 2003b: 281–282; 2010: 299–300; 2011a: 20; see also Scodel 2002).

If this seems too aloof, one may also ask what Homer has to tell us of the Bronze Age? Does this, in fact, constitute 'true' historical knowledge which can be confirmed by other sources? 'Neoanalysis' and 'Narratology' imply that the choice of a setting and the *dramatis personae* are largely fictitious in the sense of being subject to relocation and recombination governed by narrative requirements. This is also precisely what emerges from recent debates on the importance of Bronze Age Troy, the historicity of the Trojan war, and lastly the controversial attempt at relocating Homer and his *Iliad* to Cilicia (Ulf 2003a; Ulf/ Rollinger 2011). It is possible that Homer had in mind a specific landscape and Bronze Age ruins in Asia Minor, with the Troad still ahead of other options. However, this 'original' landscape is superimposed by symbolic features corresponding to the internal logic of the poem and to the necessities of its plot. In effect any specific landscape that Homer may have borne in mind may be entirely unrecognisable in his *Iliad.* Or, the other way round, features mentioned in the text may find their match in reality with a number of different locations.

Much the same applies to the famous 'Catalogue of Ships' and the Mycenaean homeland of the Greek heroes and leaders, such as Nestor and Agamemnon fighting in front of Troy. With regard to Messenia and the palace of Nestor at Pylos, it has been shown that there is little match between the territory assigned to it by Homer and the territory of the Mycenaean palace at Pylos, and its subdivision known from Linear B tablets (fig. II-6; Eder 2003: 297–301; Dickinson 2007: 236; cf. Bennet 2011a:

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[164] E. g. Patzek 2003; Ulf 2003b; 2008; 2010; 2011a; Willcock 2011; de Jong 2011; Kofler 2011; Montanari/Rengakos/Tsagalis 2012; Grethlein 2014: 57–62.
[165] Patzek 1992: 129–135; Raaflaub 2009: 565–568; Ulf 2009: 84–85; 2010: 288–297; Haubold 2011: 376, 385.
[166] E. g. Ulf 1990; 2009; 2011b; I. Morris 2000; 2001; 2011; Finley 2002; Bennet 2004; 2011b; Dickinson 2006b: 116, 120; Raaflaub 2011b; Grethlein 2014: 59–62.
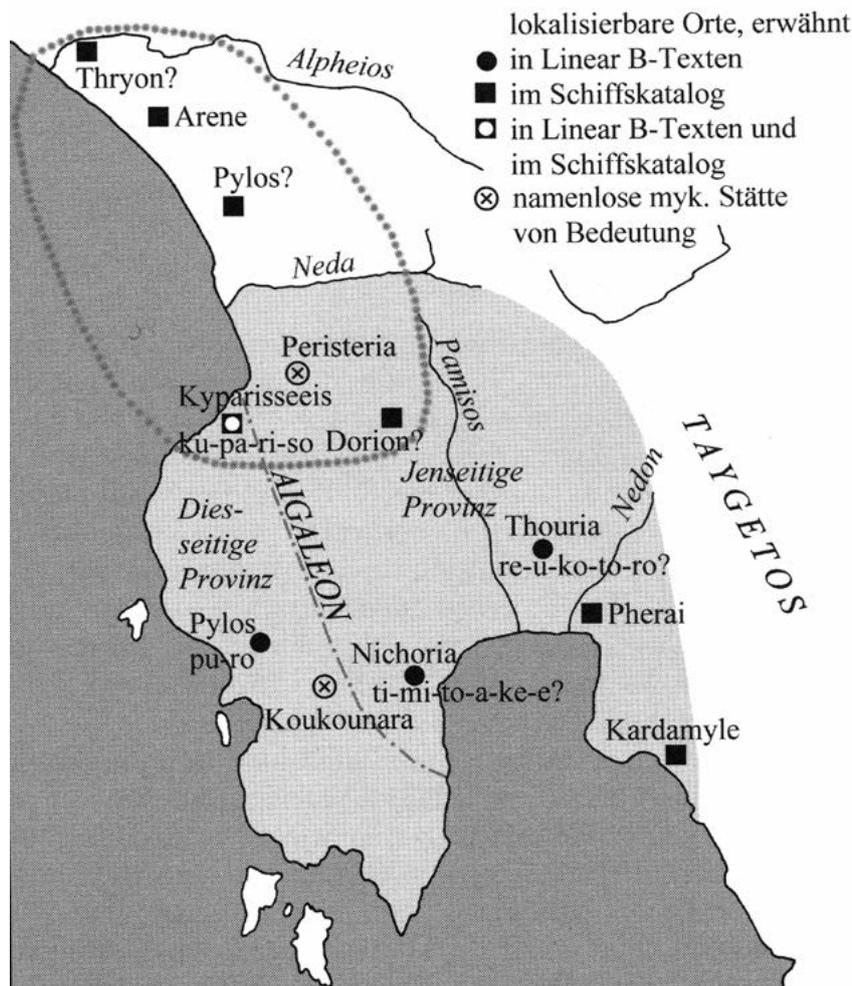
FIG. II-6: TERRITORY ASSIGNED TO THE PALACE OF NESTOR BY HOMER (POINTED LINE) AND TERRITORY OF THE MYCENAEAN PALACE AT PYLOS AND ITS SUBDIVISION AS DERIVED FROM LINEAR B TABLETS (SHADED GREY) (AFTER EDER 2003: 299 FIG. 1).

155). Rather it seems that the mention of Pylos in the *Iliad* is only vaguely reminiscent of the great importance of this polity during the Bronze Age, while the actual territory assigned to it reflects the historical setting from the 8th century onwards. Similarly, in the Argolid Homer's description of the political landscape is a complex mixture of references to Bronze Age ruins still visible in the landscape in his time, vague reminiscences of an earlier 'Bronze Age' heroic period, presumably later Greek myths and the political reality developing from Homer's times onward.[167] Argos features prominently in the 'Catalogue of Ships', despite the fact that it only expanded its rule over the Argolid during the Archaic period, while important Mycenaean centres, such as Midea, are missing. On the other hand, the remaining part of the Argolid, which is assigned to Mycenae, which, according to archaeological sources most likely dominated this landscape, at least during certain periods of the Late Bronze Age, is so small that it was apparently felt necessary to add to it further territories in Corinthia and Achaia to balance the central role of Agamemnon in both the myth and plot of the *Iliad*.

Quite clearly, it was important for the message intended to be conveyed that the *Iliad* be located in ancient 'heroic' times and settings, but the actual knowledge still available of that 'Bronze Age' period and landscape was limited. It was confused with younger myths and the importance of specific places in broadly (early) historical times more familiar to Homer himself. Much the same applies to material culture in general, with certain objects mentioned clearly being reminiscent of the Bronze Age, while the overall material setting was Iron Age and would have been broadly familiar to Homer and his contemporaries (Sinn 2003: 54–55 with further references such as the *Archaeologia Homerica* series). Again, the *Iliad* is not an historical document. Homer did not aspire to the greatest possible precision in his description of ancient times, but to an 'heroic' background that would have been plausible and in accordance with the expectations of his audience.

II.2.3 Implications for Archaeology

Even if some of this is still controversial, many of the arguments outlined above are widely accepted in ancient Greek history and philology. Archaeology is ill-advised, following Kristiansen and Larsson (2005) and others, in

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[167] Eder 2003: 304–306; Wiener 2007: 18–19; Dickinson 2007: 235; E. French 2013: 17–18.

their decision to ignore any more complex picture than suggested by their overly simplistic reading of Homer as directly referring to a Bronze Age past. Importantly, this is not just a question of our readiness to follow debates in neighbouring disciplines and to accept any logic of their own for narratives, poems and epics. Rather, neglecting to do so also impoverishes our understanding of genuinely archaeological data. In particular, by equating Homer's depiction of Early Iron Age 'heroic' society with the Late Bronze Age, we deny historical change and equalise what would otherwise appear to be fundamentally different societies.

Interestingly, this can be shown by reference to both textual evidence and material culture from the two periods. Contrary to the assertion by Kristiansen and Larsson (2005: 61 annotation 2, 229 annotation 18), Linear B texts not only throw light on different aspects of Late Bronze Age social reality than the Homeric poems are supposed to do, namely aristocratic life and deeds as opposed to daily life and administration. Instead, their mere existence is among the strongest evidence of fundamental differences in culture and society that one could think of (Finley 2002: 40). For these are administrative texts concerned with the management of a palatial economy and the upholding of palatial control over political territories (e. g. Galaty/ Parkinson 2007a; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008) – whereas Homeric heroes generally seem unaware of script as such and certainly of its administrative potential. Theirs is by and large a preliterate society, from which poet-writers like Homer were only just about to emerge, and with script initially put to quite different usages than during the Late Bronze Age, i. e. the foundation of a common Greek identity, the negotiation of moral standards, or just the commemoration of past heroes – choose whatever you prefer.

One may continue then and ask what the 'heroes' of both periods actually did and how this was mediated through material culture. At first glance, then, we see a similar interest in the bodily and material expression of warlike 'alpha' male identity, and a focus on the remembrance of past heroes and heroic deeds. Nevertheless, the notoriously rich burials in the Mycenaean grave circles and the interest taken by Homer in heroes fighting to attain eternal fame in the face of certain death, getting killed and elaborately buried honourably (most prominent, of course, Patroclus in the *Iliad*) are rooted in quite different cultural traditions and social contexts. Surely, the elites we encounter in the Mycenaean grave circles had also developed from modest beginnings and from a Middle Helladic social background, which for a long time had discouraged any such aggrandising behaviour and elaborate individualising burial ritual (Wright 2008; Maran 2011a: 285–286; Dickinson 2014: 68). However, eventually there clearly was a tradition and a genealogy of leadership and elite families. Grave circle A at Mycenae was continuously drawn upon in order to legitimise claims to tradition and ancestral power. At some later stage it was monumentally framed and enclosed within the 'Cyclopean' Late Helladic

IIIB wall of Mycenae. The shaft graves as such were followed by generations of lavish tholos tombs. However this system worked in detail, and whatever the duties and rights of the *wanax* and *lawagetas* at the peak of Mycenaean political hierarchy actually were, we see nothing of this kind among the Homeric elites.

For these heroes, be they referred to as kings or *basileis*, more like 'big men' they are caught up in constant negotiation of their standing vis-à-vis their peers and followers (e. g. Ulf 1990: 85–98; 2003b: 274; 2009; 2011b; Raaflaub 2011b: 633–636, 643–646), and they are engaged in activities such as raiding and piracy that would not seem entirely appropriate in a system of orderly taxation, palatial control and economy (Dickinson 1994: 81; see also Wiener 2007: 8–9). In the end, Agamemnon has to give in to Achilles' claims, and it becomes increasingly clear that he is in no way superior to his fellow leaders – rather to the contrary (Ulf 2011b: 273). So among Homer's Iron Age heroes the overall impression is one of the fragility of political leadership and social eminence (Ulf 2009: 83–86, 88–92; 2011b: 260–261, 263–264, 269–274; Grethlein 2014: 60). This stands in marked contrast to the development of Mycenaean palaces and their gradual elaboration, which eventually resulted in a sophisticated architectural framing of political power (e. g. Maran 2006a; 2011b; 2012a; Siennicka 2010). The palaces at Mycenae, Tiryns, Pylos and elsewhere all have evidence of different economic and political practices than those suggested by Homer for Early Iron Age society. The palatial control of parts of the economic domain, of production and the circulation of goods, was well established.[168] There was a distinctly political domain, and participation was denied to large sectors of the population, note the unequal access to Mycenaean courtyards or the central megaron, and the restricted participation in institutionalised feasting going on there. Political hierarchies were stable and inscribed into administrative texts, as well as into architecture and material culture, all of which would in turn have reinforced related practices and the perception of inequality.[169]

Against this Bronze Age background, it does not really matter how one wishes to refer to positions of social and political leadership during the 'Dark Ages' and in Homeric times – be they 'big men' or simple 'chiefs'. It is the structural difference from the preceding Late Bronze Age that matters, and that is apparent in all aspects of material culture including architecture and textual evidence. Admittedly, attention has been drawn to the possibility of an earlier beginning, already in LH IIIB, than previously expected of the problems encountered by the Mycenaean palatial system (e. g. Deger-Jalkotzy 2008: 387–392, 396–398, 403–406). There are debates as to the causes of the disaster that eventually struck the palatial centres and brought an end to their political and

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[168] E. g. Voutsaki/Killen 2001a; Galaty/Parkinson 2007a; Shelmerdine/ Bennet 2008; Pullen 2010; Nakassis/Galaty/Parkinson 2010; Bennet 2011b: 520–523.
[169] For an overview see, for example, the handbooks by Dickinson (1994), Shelmerdine (2008a) and Cline (2010).

economic system at the turn to LH IIIC (e. g. Dickinson 2006a: 24–57; 2010). There are also clear indications of an afterlife of Mycenaean society from a number of sites, in particular from the Argolid itself with Mycenae and Tiryns (e. g. Morgan 2009; Maran 2012a). Also, it is disputed when precisely discontinuity occurred, traditions were lost and the Bronze Age world became a foreign 'other' to new (Early Iron Age) elites and population in general: already during LH IIIC or some time later during the 'Dark Ages'?[170] However, beyond all this there is broad agreement that there actually was discontinuity, and that we see a historical break and decline. This must not be concealed by projecting backwards in time Homer-style 'heroes' and Homeric society in general to the Mycenaean period.

J. Maran (2011a: 284–287; 2014: 172–175) has argued that the specific 'bellicose' character of Mycenaean warrior elites was actually an intercultural 'misunderstanding' in consequence of their knowledge of a more militaristic appearance of Minoans abroad than we tend to recognise, with our focus put on the remains of the 'peaceful' inner side of Minoan culture on Crete itself (see also Dickinson 2014: 68–70). In any case, the development of Mycenaean palatial society and the specific habitus of the Mycenaean warrior or 'hero' was contingent upon specific historical conditions, such as, for example, their early interaction with the more 'sophisticated' Minoan palaces on Crete. The same, of course, applies to the Iron Age 'heroes' described by Homer, who were living in a different historical setting, who potentially held different values and notions of the world, and who were drawing upon different networks of exchange and knowledge of an outside world than their predecessors (cf. I. Morris 2000: 195–256; 2011: 543). There is neither linear social evolution, nor does history repeat itself. And there is no archetype 'hero' irrespective of social and cultural context.[171] Even if male aspirations to heroic grandeur were universal, human agency is firmly tied to historical context (e. g. I. Morris 2000: 231–232). There is no immutable outcome to any such aspirations and social strategies.

The Toumba building at Lefkandi (Popham/Calligas/ Sackett 1990; 1993), or the Late Helladic IIIC building T on the acropolis at Tiryns, may be taken to exemplify what had remained and what newly emerged from the ruins of Late Bronze Age Mycenaean Greece. Building T, in particular, shows that tradition and claim laid to the ruins of the Bronze Age palace at Tiryns were still important for what elites remained and had to negotiate their social standing. However, in terms of visibility, accessibility and its lack of monumentality, this architecture offered entirely different options to be drawn upon in social and political discourse than previously was the case (Maran 2011b: 173–174; 2012a: 158–160; 2012b: 126–130; 2014: 176–183). This is the proper context for a discussion of the origins of Homeric social order, the context from which Homeric heroes emerge, and against which their actions and specific concerns evident in the *Iliad* have to be understood. They are thoroughly Iron Age, not Bronze Age. Any meta-narratives that try to bridge the cultural and social gap between the two epochs lead us astray.

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[170] E. g. I. Morris 2000: 77–106, 195–256; 2011: 543, 558–559; Maran 2011b: 171–175; 2014: 176–177.

[171] Contra S. Sherratt's (1990: 815–821) 'heroic generations' and her assumption that '[...] in terms of the social ethos and mores of their specifically heroic ideals [...] the differences are likely to be less marked, and not easily distinguishable [...]' (S. Sherratt 1990: 817), which effectively sets up a timeless type of 'hero'.

II.3 Bronze Age 'Centre' and 'Periphery'?

If Kristiansen and Larsson's (2005) account of the Bronze Age 'other' heavily relies on bridging the gap between the Early Iron Age Homeric heroes and the Mycenaean Bronze Age, it also strives to overcome the divide between the Late Bronze Age Mycenaean palaces and wider Bronze Age 'Barbarian' Europe. The result is much the same as in the above example of Mycenaean and Homeric society, for groups are linked which are widely different in social and cultural terms: Mycenaean and beyond that, of course, Minoan palatial society firmly rooted in the tradition of eastern Mediterranean Bronze Age civilisation and the peasant or 'proto-urban' communities of the wider south-eastern and central European hinterland.

In essence, this is close to the traditional *ex oriente lux* paradigm, since it assumes foreign influence and Mediterranean impact on prehistoric European societies. For this reason, *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* has been rightly classified 'neo-diffusionist' (Chapman 2013a: 331). Its authors certainly take sides with all those scholars specialising in the European Bronze and Iron Ages who are spellbound by the impressive palatial or urban centres of the Mediterranean and the Near East that coexisted with their own less 'impressive' objects of study. However, while for many adherents of this approach it is simply a matter of fact that evidence of contemporaneity and *contact* with the superior societies of the eastern Mediterranean equals eastern *influence* on the less sophisticated but receptive groups of 'Barbarian' Europe, for Kristiansen and Larsson things are somewhat more complex. They subscribe to some kind of a core and periphery model that seeks to account in explicitly systemic terms for the effect of interregional interaction and asymmetric exchange on European Bronze Age societies. This kind of thinking goes back to World System Theory as proposed by I. Wallerstein (2011 [1974]), and basic assumptions central to the original model are still perceptible in the various modifications that seek to adapt this approach to precapitalist societies.

In order to understand the second narrative strategy in *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* under discussion here, it is necessary, therefore, to review some central tenets of World System Theory, its adaptations and its current applications.[172] It will become clear that often 'systemic' interdependence is not adequately demonstrated. Our understanding of specific local trajectories requires an approach that encompasses the internal logics of culture systems and the agency of individual people or social groups. It cannot be replaced by the outside view or the supposed logic – be it economic or other – of the structural

components of an overarching abstract interregional system. Instead, an emphasis on local agency vis-à-vis foreign contact or foreign goods is required, and a focus on local recontextualisations and revaluations of material culture, as well as externally-derived immaterial concepts.

II.3.1 World Systems in Archaeology

'World System Theory' after I. Wallerstein (e. g. 2011: xvii–xxx, 3–17, 347–357) represents an attempt to account for the emergence of underdevelopment in the wake of European colonisation and imperialism in terms of structured interaction, systemic (economic) dependency, geographical division of labour and unequal exchange. It is argued that all of these were to the disadvantage of peripheral societies which were confronted with an industrialised, politically 'superior' European core area represented by colonial powers such as Spain, Portugal, France and, in particular, Great Britain. This was an advance over previous accounts for the 'rise of the West' in essentialising terms of an inherent superiority of European culture and society, as well as over earlier 'Dependency Theory' (cf. Rowlands 1987: 1–3; Champion 1989b: 2–9). Yet, Wallerstein himself was accused of morally 'well-meant' Orientalism (Washbrook 1990: 492), because his periphery is assigned the role of passive victim to European expansion. It is denied internal social or cultural dynamics and agency in opposition to outside invaders, foreign material culture, or immaterial concepts such as imperial rule, ideology or religious beliefs (Sahlins 1994: 412–413; Stein 1999a: 16–23; 1999b: 154–157).

Setting aside the criticism aimed at the adequacy of World System Theory to understand the structure and development of *modern* core and periphery relations themselves (e. g. Wolf 2010: 22–23, 297–298; Sahlins 1994: 412–416; Kümmel 2001: 23–24), it is somewhat surprising that this approach was so readily accepted into the archaeological discourse. Wallerstein (2011: 15–129, 162, 301–344) himself had made it quite clear that he regarded his World System as the consequence of an historically specific constellation, i. e. industrialisation and the development of capitalism in the modern West. With regard to earlier, pre-modern periods his position was akin to substantivism in that he thought such economies and their potential interaction qualitatively different from modern times.[173] He claimed that, at best, political structures or 'world empires' may have evolved in pre-modern times. These lacked, however, the technological and organisational potential to establish stable structures

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[172] See Kümmel (2001) and Harding (2013) for an in-depth discussion of some of the aspects and problems of World System Theory in archaeology only touched upon here superficially.

[173] Cf. Rowlands 1987: 3; Kohl 1987: 13–14; Champion 1989b: 5–8; Galaty 2011: 9.

of economic domination that extended over wider areas for any extended period of time (Wallerstein 2011: 15–17, 348–351; cf. Champion 1989b: 6).

In view of these limitations, the impact of Wallerstein's World System Theory on archaeological thought can only be understood as a response to the then prevalent Processual Archaeology with its heavy emphasis on local trajectories. World System Theory was adopted to shift back focus to the importance of long-distance interaction, interregional exchange, and the effect this may have had on local systems (e. g. Rowlands 1987: 3–11; Champion 1989b: 1–2). Given Wallerstein's own reluctance in these matters, an important strand of this debate is concerned with the applicability of his model to pre-modern groups. Most of this ultimately refers back to J. Schneider's (1991 [1977]) influential review, where it was claimed that Wallerstein had unduly limited the range of his own model by denying the exchange of luxury goods a similar impact on local economy and society, as suggested for bulk exchange of raw materials and industrial goods in the modern World System.

Subsequently, there was a pervasive use of various brands of ethnographically-derived 'prestige good economies' to account for the emergence of inequality in prehistoric European groups. Not every such attempt to identify a 'prestige good system' in operation is linked to wider notions of the society in question being situated on the 'periphery' of a Mediterranean or Near Eastern civilisation or 'core' area. However, both debates are close in their joint interest in the structuring potential of foreign-derived (prestige) goods on social relations (cf. Rowlands 1987: 4–8; Champion 1989b: 8, 11–13; Kümmel 2001: 26–33, 73–76). The spread of World System terminology was favoured by the ready-made mechanism that this model provided to account for the nature and perceived effect of structured interregional interaction by reference to elite exchange of valuables. Thus, more and more constellations of prehistoric European groups, and beyond, are discussed in terms of 'core' and 'periphery' or 'margin' (cf. Chase-Dunn/Hall 1991; Hall/Chase-Dunn 1993), although they would seem widely different in terms of their internal organisation, as well as with regard to the mechanisms and intensity of their interaction.[174]

Of the authors of *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* it is K. Kristiansen, in particular, who is known for his long-standing interest in the application of such core and periphery models in archaeology. It is necessary, therefore, to have a look at some of his various relevant studies over the last decades in order to highlight the difficulties with this approach in a European context. Since central tenets of World System Theory have become increasingly blurred, this discussion will revolve around two slightly different aspects – namely problems with the notion of 'systemic' interdependence and passive peripheries

related to more 'orthodox' applications of World System Theory, and the supposed convergence on a pan-European scale of a distinctly Bronze Age elite ethos and ideology characteristic of more recent works which transcend World System Theory proper.

Kristiansen's use of World System Theory has been rightly classified as 'macrohistorical' (Kümmel 2001: 90, 94–97), since in his work elements of World System Theory are incorporated into ever wider syntheses of the evolution of European societies of the Bronze and Iron Ages (see also Kienlin 1999: 109–123). Starting on a relatively modest scale, in his paper on 'Center and Periphery in Bronze Age Scandinavia', Kristiansen (1987: 81–84) drew on Ekholm and Friedman's (1985: 114–115) concept of dependent and independent structures to allow for regional variability in prehistoric Europe. Unsurprisingly, Scandinavia was declared dependent on central Europe. Both areas were thought to have been linked by an unbalanced exchange of bronze objects that peripheral Scandinavian elites were claimed to have drawn upon to attain their status. This is, of course, the classic prestige good exchange modification to Wallerstein's original model that is widely used in archaeology, although Kristiansen (1987: 77–79) from the beginning added a distinctly ritual 'flavour' by reference to the work of M. Helms (1979; plus, of course, in Kristiansen's subsequent work, reference to Helms 1988; 1993; 1998). Thus, economically derived power, social pre-eminence derived from control over (foreign) prestigious objects and 'mythical' power related to outside contacts, control of wondrous foreign objects and esoteric knowledge attached to them all tend to be set into one (Kristiansen 1987: 77). From Wallerstein this takes the interest in systemic dependency and unbalanced exchange (although of a different kind than in the original) – elements that also feature prominently in Kristiansen's subsequent papers, and in his major work *Europe Before History* (Kristiansen 1998). Here, the logic of the system and the mechanisms involved are the same as before, namely asymmetric elite exchange networks (e. g. Kristiansen 1998: 249–252). However, the scope of the study is widened to comprise a Bronze Age and (Early) Iron Age World System that is thought to have incorporated entire Europe and the Mediterranean (Kristiansen 1998: 359–419). In addition, there is an explicit interest taken in cyclical evolutionary patterns that is also derived from World System Theory (e. g. Kristiansen 1998: 50–53, 407–417). Finally, in the 2005 synthesis *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005), all of these elements are still present, yet as has already been pointed out above, there is a distinct shift towards the 'intangible' (Harding 2013: 383–384; see also Galaty/Tomas/Parkinson 2014), since centres and peripheries are linked by ritual, esoteric knowledge and foreign objects that travelling elites obtained from abroad, not merely by economy or politics (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 4–7, 10–13, 20–31; see also Kristiansen 2011). Much of this reasoning leaves World System Theory behind, most clearly in that concern is no longer so much with dependency, but rather with convergence, since in the end it is fundamentally the same

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[174] E. g. Kristiansen 1987; 1994; 1998; Frank 1993 (including the comments to Frank's paper); A. Sherratt 1993a; 1993b; 1994; 1997a; Parkinson/Galaty 2009a.

Bronze Age ideology, with its accompanying symbols and institutions, that is detected all over the Old World during the Bronze Age (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 142–250).

II.3.2 Alternative Perspectives on Prehistoric 'Peripheries'

It is certainly true that prehistoric groups must not be studied in isolation if we want to come up with a realistic understanding of their development. It is also true that evidence for trade or exchange and the presence of foreign (prestigious) objects need to be accounted for, and their significance for local people and economy has to be evaluated. Yet, if World System Theory may theoretically hold any promise for explaining at least some such constellations, in practice its explanatory power is severely hampered by the common failure to demonstrate the presence of systemic inter-linkage and the operation of specific intra-system mechanisms central to the applicability of this approach. Such problems have, of course, been noted for some time now, both by adherents of World System Theory themselves and by their opponents.[175] They refer to key assumptions of World System Theory and may be roughly summarised as follows: a) problems of definition and delimiting perceived 'core' area(s) and 'peripheries' including problems of demonstrating structural difference between the two in aspects relevant to the operation of the system;[176] b) failure to demonstrate *structured* interaction and systemic (economic) dependency between perceived core and periphery (instead of mere contemporaneity, general contact and exchange); c) partly related to points a) and b), failure to demonstrate asymmetry in structured interaction to the disadvantage of the periphery (e. g. division of labour and terms of trade favouring the core) and consequent dominance of core polities and elites over peripheral groups (e. g. Kohl 1987: 16; Stein 1999a: 23–24; 1999b: 155–159; 2002: 904–905); and d) failure to establish why (and how) 'asymmetric' exchange – as defined by the contemporary archaeological observer – should always translate into growing disparity between core and periphery (Kümmel 2001: 86–88; Dietler 1990: 353–358; 2005: 59–61; 2010: 48–49). This latter point, of course, refers to the unproven assumption that peripheral 'prestige good systems' will politically end up in competition and 'spiralling asymmetries', while economically specialisation serving unequal exchange will in the long-run have a devastating effect on peripheral society and cause decline relative to the core of the system.

Before turning back to the European situation, it is interesting to note that much of this criticism of World System Theory was launched early on in Near Eastern Archaeology – i. e. in an area where the outside observer would have expected comparatively little difficulties in the

application of World System Theory (e. g. Algaze 2005; Beaujard 2011). If anywhere in prehistory, should not the emergent urban centres of Mesopotamia or the Egyptian civilisation qualify as core areas? Should they not have dominated their respective peripheries, such as Anatolia or the Zagros mountains, in economic terms by supplying elaborately crafted goods and textiles in return for raw materials such as metal, stone or wood unavailable on the floodplains? And should not this constellation bear the greatest potential to resemble a modern colonial encounter with its systemic interdependence and exchange, to the disadvantage of less developed peripheral groups? Yet, it is here that some of the more prominent critiques of World System Theory launched their attacks.

For example, Ph. Kohl (1987; 2011) has repeatedly demonstrated that World System Theory does not adequately describe structured interaction in the ancient Near East. In particular, he has drawn attention to the presence of multiple cores and the absence of a marked 'technological gap' between core areas and peripheries. The presence of multiple cores, instead of just one in Wallerstein's modern World System, and their inherent instability would have allowed peripheral polities an unpredicted degree of 'freedom' and options in negotiating terms of trade with core areas that is not matched by the original model (Kohl 1987: 16). Given that in addition most technologies involved were still easily transferable, or even originated from the periphery, Kohl suggests it is unlikely that there was a structural disadvantage to peripheral groups. It is hard to see then why interaction, which certainly took place between various groups on different levels of complexity, should have been on unequal terms and favoured peripheral 'underdevelopment' (Kohl 1987: 16–24; 2011: 81–82; see also Kümmel 2001: 70–73). With its emphasis on exchange and technology, this may still be thinking in the same broad economic categories that were also employed by Wallerstein. Yet the important point is certainly valid, that the efficacy and the asymmetry of an exploitative modern World System should not be transferred to (pre-)historic groups all too readily.

A related criticism was formulated in various studies by G. Stein (1999a; 1999b; 2002; 2005b; 2005c), who concluded that applications of Wallerstein's World System Theory (and its various modifications) tend to exaggerate the power of the core and the effect of unequal exchange on peripheral economy and society. Importantly, this critique goes beyond mere demonstration of the different structural logics of prehistoric interregional interaction and modern core and periphery relations, a point that is also acknowledged by the advocates of archaeological World System models. Rather, the important objection is raised, that foreign symbols of power and prestige may be employed in peripheral groups without consequent economic and political modifications (Stein 1999a: 36–37, 44–46; 2002: 905–908). This runs counter to the commonly supposed logic of such prestige good systems and World System Theory, but Stein (1999b: 155) makes it quite clear that '[...] the specific effects of external forces from the

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[175] E. g. Rowlands 1987: 3, 11; Kohl 1987; 2011; Champion 1989b: 14–15, 18; Sahlins 1994; Stein 1999a; 1999b 2002; 2005a; Gosden 2001; Kümmel 2001; Dietler 2005; 2010; van Dommelen 2005; 2006; 2011; Galaty 2011; Harding 2013; Ulf 2014; Galaty/Tomas/Parkinson 2014.
[176] For example, geographical division of labour or the existence of a 'technological gap' between the two; see, for example, Kohl (1987: 16–18; 2011: 81–85).

core vary widely because they are mediated differentially through local ideologies'. Prestige goods, too, are socially constructed and subject to continuous renegotiation rather than being 'immutable social facts' (Stein 1999a: 36) which will always prompt the same mechanism of social dynamics and modifications to economic structure. In each case, therefore, it has to be demonstrated rather than assumed that elite demand for exotic symbols of power and prestige in fact led to an increased dependency on a more 'civilised' core area (Stein 2002: 907–908).

In essence, Stein suggests that a) the ability of 'core' states to exert power – both direct coercive power and indirect economic power derived from the successful manipulation of rates of exchange – was strictly limited by distance under prehistoric conditions; and that b) our emphasis on asymmetric exchange (be it bulk trade or exchange of valuables) prevents us from recognising internal difference and dynamics of peripheral societies (Stein 1999a: 44–64; 1999b: 159–165; 2002: 905–908; 2005c: 145, 168–170). In fact, peripheral needs and local understandings have an important role to play in the acceptance and adaptation of foreign goods or ideologies. For this reason, an approach to the study of interaction is called for that sees interaction '[...] as the observed outcome of short-term decision making by multiple individuals and institutions with different, overlapping, and often conflicting goals' (Stein 1999b: 160). This would be an approach that, instead of essentialising 'peripheral' groups into a uniform 'periphery' that falls victim to core expansion, '[...] allows for the roles of individual agency and multiple forms of social identity as key factors affecting political economy and developmental trajectories [...]' (Stein 1999b: 160).[177]

A corresponding critique of World System Theory is advanced by a growing number of authors from the field of Mediterranean or Near Eastern Archaeology, who seek to integrate interaction studies with a broader postcolonial concern (e. g. Said 2003; Bhabha 2004) with agency and the negotiation of local identities in specific historical contexts.[178] The outcome of this line of thought can be observed in recent volumes such as *Interweaving Worlds. Systemic Interactions in Eurasia, 7th to 1st Millennia BC* (Wilkinson/Sherratt/Bennet 2011) or *Materiality and Social Practice. Transformative Capacities of Intercultural Encounters* (Maran/Stockhammer 2012). It is only a minority of authors who still adhere to simple notions of systemic dependency, core dominance and external causation to account for economical and cultural change in 'peripheral' groups (e. g. Beaujard 2011). More often, central tenets of World System Theory and its applications

in archaeology are critically reviewed. In numerous case studies a much more complex picture of 'core' and 'periphery' relations emerges than just dependency, subordination of the latter and 'the development of underdevelopment' (Frank 1966; see also Frank 1993; contra, for example, Kohl 2011: 80–81).

Drawing on the earlier finding, that in prehistory even politically centralised and economically strong 'core' states lacked the technological and infrastructural ability to project their power over large distances (Stein 1999a: 55–64; 1999b: 160–165), there is a growing awareness that culture, too, in the form of local traditions, local values, systems of knowledge or notions of the world and society may delay or forestall core dominance over peripheral groups (e. g. Gosden 2001: 243; Wengrow 2011: 136–137, 141; Bachhuber 2011: 164–171).[179] Without denying contact and interaction, these authors find it difficult to demonstrate systemic dependency as previously put forward and turn away from the study of interaction in mere economic terms (cf. van Dommelen 2005: 113–115). Instead, attention is drawn to the differential outcomes of contact and exchange depending on local valuations, specific historical trajectories and peripheral choice or agency opposite outside 'influence'.[180] On different levels of study this may range from employing the concept of heterarchy to characterise asymmetric, yet non-hierarchical relations between core and peripheral polities (e. g. Flammini 2011: 210–212) to an explicit concern with the agency of individuals or social groups in the adaptation of foreign ideologies or objects (e. g. Legarra Herrero 2011: 271–273; Maran 2011a: 284–289).

It is increasingly agreed upon, that neither comprehensive concepts, such as an ideology of legitimate political power, social strategies and practices, nor symbolically charged objects, such as valuables or prestige goods, are likely to remain unaffected in their specific meaning and potential to be drawn upon in local discourse when transferred from 'core' to 'periphery'.[181] Rather, there is, in the first place, on the receiving side an active choice for selecting concepts or objects that 'fit' into existing notions of the world or social strategies.[182] And, second, any foreign element that makes its way is likely to undergo an act of 'translation', i. e. an active reinterpretation of its meaning and an effective recontextualisation to establish its specific positioning and role in local practice and discourse.[183] For

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[177] See also Stein (2002: 905–908; 2005b: 7–9, 24–31), Gosden (2001: 242–249), van Dommelen (2006: 106–107, 112–120), Dietler (2010: 52–53), Galaty (2011: 8) and Silliman (2013: 489–491, 495–497).
[178] Prominent, of course, is the work of M. Dietler (e. g. 1989; 1990; 1997; 1998; 2005; 2006; 2010), who has repeatedly shown that the potential of Mediterranean influence and imports to bring about social and economic change in its 'hinterland', including Early Iron Age Hallstatt Europe, is overemphasised by the advocates of core and periphery models. See also numerous papers throughout Knapp/van Dommelen (2014).

[179] That is to say – following Dietler (2005: 56; 2010: 46) – 'superior' high culture does not in every case, like water, flow downhill.
[180] E. g. Dietler 1989: 127–128, 134–136; 1998: 297–301; 2005: 61–67; 2006: 224–227; 2010: 50–53; Gosden 2001: 242–249; van Dommelen 2005: 116–118; Broodbank 2011: 28–29; Galaty/Tomas/Parkinson 2014: 158–162, 170–171; cf. Sahlins 1994: 414–416.
[181] E. g. Dietler 2006: 228–229; Knapp/van Dommelen 2010: 5–8; Legarra Herrero 2011: 268–269, 276–277; Maran 2011a: 282–284.
[182] See, for example, Dietler (1989: 134–136; 1998: 303–307; 2006: 232–235) on the selective acceptance of Mediterranean imports – wine and high-status drinking gear – into the Hallstatt area and their incorporation in local political strategies and feasting practices.
[183] Dietler (2006: 225): '[...] cross-cultural consumption is a continual process of selective appropriation and creative assimilation according to local logics that is also a way of continually (re)constructing culture.' See also Dietler (2005: 62–64; 2010: 53), Greenberg (2011: 232–233),

certain, this is not an easy matter to study archaeologically and the appropriation of foreign elements may turn out to be highly variable depending on local cultural and social context, as well as on the group(s) of person(s) involved. However, such reinterpretation did occur and divergent valuations, as well as the specific use made of foreign objects in new fields of social discourse, clearly have to be taken into consideration. Hence, for example, it cannot be taken for granted that some foreign 'prestigious' or 'sacral' objects automatically received the same appreciation in peripheral groups and were drawn upon to support elite claims to exotic foreign knowledge.[184] This is all the more true, when such objects had 'dripped' down some contingent line of exchange rather than being handed over directly with an accompanying narrative to support their significance (Bachhuber 2011: 166; Legarra Herrero 2011: 274). Both 'import', by whatever means, and local emulation involve a transformation of meaning (e. g. Stein 1999a: 66), and neither systemic interdependence nor asymmetry of exchange is an indispensable consequence of contact (e. g. Dietler 1989: 135–136; Stein 1999b: 157; 2002: 907–908; Kohl 2011: 80–81). The effect of contact and exchange, therefore, must not be taken for granted. The occurrence of foreign-derived immaterial notions and material culture has to be studied by reference to their actual use in a new context. Foreign elements have to be understood in terms of their specific reworking by local communities and individuals. Their potential to destabilise local traditions and social order must not be unduly emphasised.

With few exceptions, such as the work of M. Dietler (1989; 1998; 2005; 2006; 2010) referred to above, little of this theoretical development has so far been applied to the European 'periphery' of a supposed prehistoric World System.[185] This is particularly true for Bronze Age research, which in the wake of spectacular finds, such as the Nebra sky disc, rather sees a return to the old *ex oriente lux* paradigm in recent years.[186] To many, of course, who never subscribed to the processual paradigm of autochthonous development (e. g. Schauer 1984, or papers in Kolloquium Mainz 1990), this is simply the return to what they have known all along,[187] and *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* is

hailed from this side for its elegant and comprehensive review of our perceived state of knowledge.[188] It can also be taken, however, to exemplify the pitfalls resulting from such a widespread ignorance of more recent interaction studies. Yet, let us turn first to World System 'orthodoxy' and its impact on the earlier work of K. Kristiansen, since this is where the problems start. In fact, most of the general criticism applies here that was directed against archaeological reasoning inspired by World System Theory during the last decades (see also Harding 2013).

For example, systemic dependency between Europe and the Mediterranean, or between different parts of Europe, is not demonstrated anywhere. Instead, the existence of a system is proclaimed, and its development through time and its specific regional expressions are discussed in terms of the internal logic of the system and the approach taken (e. g. Kristiansen 1998: 13–14, 52, 56, 359–394). The same applies to 'world economy' and asymmetric exchange. Referring to Kristiansen (1998: 56–62), one may ask which Bronze Age polities in Europe beyond the Mycenaean palaces themselves had ever obtained territorial control and did exert military and economic power beyond that territory, thus constituting an early economic system? And why should exchange between such 'cores' and 'peripheries', if any, have been asymmetric (e. g. Kristiansen 1998: 252)? Already in the debate following Wallerstein's (2011) original publication it was noted that he had failed to demonstrate why exchange between core and periphery should always be asymmetric and to the disadvantage of the periphery, and why the whole capitalist World System should be doomed to expand (cf. Kümmel 2001: 23). The same criticism applies to its archaeological variant with prestige good exchange, supposedly drawing peripheries into a spiral of elite competition and growing dependency on core valuables (cf. Dietler 1989: 130, 135; 1990: 357–358; 2005: 60–61; Kümmel 2001: 87–88).[189] This is an approach that systematically fails to acknowledge local agency in the appropriation of foreign elements (see above). Also, it is certainly unclear why mere 'contact' should bring about culture change in the margin. For example peripheral elites in the Carpathian Basin may well have been drawing on Mycenaean ornaments and armour. Yet, (early) Mycenaean elites themselves had come to depend for their social reproduction, for instance,

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Bachhuber (2011: 164–171), Legarra Herrero (2011: 269–273), van Dommelen/Rowlands (2012: 21–27) and Knapp (2012: 43–46).

[184] See Bachhuber (2011: 160): 'We are [...] at risk of imposing archaeological knowledge of the origins of exotic objects and materials onto the knowledge of the ancient consumers of exotic objects and materials [...]'. In a similar vein, see also Panagiotopoulos (2012) showing that the exotic 'otherness' of foreign objects may have worn off rather quickly, and they actually were held in esteem for quite different reasons in their new local context.

[185] See, for example, a recent study by Găvan/Gogâltan (2014) who set out to test applicability of World System Theory on the Bronze Age Carpathian Basin. On empirical grounds they eventually opt against core and periphery models to account for the role of sites like Pecica-Şanţul Mare, while from the perspective advocated here such approaches are seen as theoretically flawed and their application to prehistoric situations as such is thought problematic.

[186] See, for example, papers in Meller (2004) and Meller/Bertemes (2010); compare, however, Rowlands/Ling (2013).

[187] This group can also be characterised by their attempts to reconcile traditional chronological links between Europe and the Mediterranean with the long radiocarbon chronology – most prominent perhaps in

meticulous studies by S. Gerloff (1993; 2007; 2010).

[188] Interestingly, in archaeometallurgy there is a similar reaction to processual claims for an autochthonous development of metallurgy, for example, in the Balkans (e. g. Renfrew 1969). A younger generation now argues in favour of diffusion and single core development on the basis of a review of relevant finds which accumulated throughout Eurasia since Renfrew's original studies (e. g. Roberts/Thornton/Pigott 2009). On the other hand, there are still those who use new excavation data and scientific analyses to argue against diffusion and for multiple core development (e. g. Radivojević *et al.* 2010).

[189] See Dietler (1998: 298) on the Iron Age situation: '[...] it is a serious analytical error to assume that asymmetrical relations or structures of power that ultimately appeared in later periods were necessarily a feature of the first stages of the encounter rather than a product of a subsequent complex history of interaction and entanglement.' Without question this also applies to earlier Bronze Age Europe, when evidence of contact and exchange with the Mediterranean is much weaker and even less likely to have been 'systemic' than during the Iron Ages.

on amber from the north and in part elaborately crafted exotic objects from Minoan Crete (e. g. Maran 2011a: 284–289; Rutter 2012: 79–82). It is entirely unclear if in such exchange any side would have been in a stronger position, or if this is the right question to ask at all. For Mycenae it has been shown that amber objects, which ultimately derived from Wessex, were put to different uses other than just jewellery, as in their country of origin. The meanings ascribed to them where different, possibly magic or apotropaic. We see evidence of a complex process of 'translation', which also affected Minoan-derived objects, rather than just simple transmission of foreign objects and their associated meanings (Maran 2011a: 289; 2013: 147–151, 157–159, 161).

The same certainly applies to 'Barbarian' Europe. The movement of goods and objects is the result of the negotiation of specific needs and interests on both sides involved in exchange. These interests may be economically, socially and/or culturally motivated. We do not know how these motivations are distributed on the 'core' and 'periphery' sides respectively. We cannot be sure that our perception of 'asymmetry' in such systems adequately reflects emic notions that both 'partners' held of the relative 'success' of exchange, and their respective 'gain' drawn from contact and the objects, knowledge, etc., that were obtained. We see relatively few groups of exotic objects and materials moving to and fro in Europe. It has been called into question whether social reproduction is likely to have come to depend on such exchange (Dietler 1998: 297; Kümmel 2001: 87–88). Under prehistoric conditions interaction is contingent upon innumerable imponderabilities, and the consumption of foreign objects may have unintended consequences beyond the foresight of social actors (Dietler 2006: 229–230). Hence, there has to be positive evidence that it was possible to rely on outside contacts – be it bulk trade or exchange in valuables – for the social reproduction of local systems. In prehistoric Europe, at least, this would seem a risky business (cf. Dietler 1989: 132). It is unlikely for practical reasons (distance, means of transportation, etc.) that peripheral status in the sense of World System Theory was ever achieved.

For precisely this reason, in more recent work, the systemic status of 'Barbarian' Europe is reduced to that of a 'margin' (e. g. A. Sherratt 1993a; 1994), and Europe is understood to have remained largely unaffected by direct dependency from an eastern Mediterranean core in a prehistoric World System (cf. Harding 2013: 383). Here, once again, a line can be drawn from the beginnings of World System Theory to the present if one considers the notions of what a 'periphery' (or a 'margin') actually is. It was E. R. Wolf (2010: 23 [1982]) who drew attention to the fact that 'periphery', for Wallerstein, is a catch-all term for traditional groups who no real interest is taken in (cf. Kümmel 2001: 24). Much the same applies to 'margin'. The vagueness of this term makes application of core, periphery and margin terminology attractive. However, it also marks the almost complete deflation of World System Theory in

(European) archaeology of most of its original content (cf. Harding 2013: 384–385).[190] For what else other than loose unspecified 'contact' remains when marginal society does not experience structured interaction, systemic (economic) dependency, geographical division of labour and unequal exchange? This is the state of the art that A. Harding has in mind when he describes the approach taken by many current applications of World System Theory: '[...] identify trade networks, place them within a WST framework, but ignore the need to demonstrate that there was a system of any sort in operation, let alone a "world system", with the specific conceptual baggage that the term brings with it.' (Harding 2013: 384). Irrespective of our theoretical approach, be it derived from World System Theory or other, in order to produce meaningful statements on past culture contact and interaction the impact of foreign-derived material culture, if any, on local systems needs to be carefully considered. The presence of exotic objects as such does not prove that exchange of whatever kind was asymmetrical and to the disadvantage of a presumed periphery or margin.

II.3.3 Beyond Neo-Diffusionism: Implications for Bronze Age 'Barbarian' Europe

It would seem that little harm is done by such an application of 'World System Theory' if it did not carry forward from both older diffusionism and World System Theory the conviction that somehow 'contact' makes a difference and will affect culture and society on the margin. In doing so it invites us to neglect local variability. We fail to consider the different groups of people involved in interregional interaction and the importance of cultural traditions that affect the readiness and the way foreign 'influence' is integrated in a local context. Hence, it can still be said that the presence of a Mycenaean sword or spiral motive in the Carpathian Basin equals the adoption of Mycenaean warrior ideology, while, for example, in Minoan studies Egyptian scarabs and other items in Cretan tombs are understood to be drawn upon in a specifically Minoan way to express local identities and negotiate social power.[191]

On a higher level, therefore, studies like *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005) are a brilliant example of the dangers and the rhetorical strategies involved in Neo-Diffusionism and World System Theory inspired reasoning. The grand scale of the narrative and its distance from the evidence on the ground tend to immunise underlying theoretical assumptions against critical assessment. Regional variability is ignored. The recontextualisation of foreign elements – material and immaterial – and the actual strategies of their use in the periphery are not explicated in any detail. Instead, by and large the meaning of foreign objects and goods is taken for granted (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 29,

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[190] A related point is made by Stein (1999a: 24–25) and Kohl (2011: 80) with reference to the modifications to World System Theory for archaeological use as suggested by Hall and Chase-Dunn (e. g. 1993). See also, for example, Kardulias (2009) and S. Sherratt (2009).

[191] E. g. Wengrow (2009: 147–150) and Legarra Herrero (2011: 269–271); see also the above quoted paper by Maran (2013) on the Mycenaean appropriation of amber.

142–150). With regard to the above mentioned findings of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Archaeology, such convergence and largely identical meanings on both sides should come as a surprise. In any case, this assumption would require careful demonstration. The same holds true for Kristiansen and Larsson's claim that they are able to identify social 'institutions' from their (symbolic) material remains (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 10–31), and for their conviction that the intact transmission of such symbolic structures or institutions is easier the more complex the package of related knowledge and skills actually is (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 21–22, 28–29). Rather the opposite seems likely with regard to current approaches that stress the renegotiation and the transformation of identities, of meaning and practice in contact situations. Kristiansen and Larsson's is an invitation to *believe* in identical meanings and institutions throughout Bronze Age centre and periphery. Postcolonial studies, on the other hand, would stress the 'fuzziness' of social life and the 'hybridity' or rather the process of 'hybridisation' of material culture and social practices as a result of contact and interaction.[192] Either way, this has to be demonstrated by reference to specific situations of contact, to the local consumption of foreign material culture, and the social context in which such interaction takes place. It is here that Kristiansen and Larsson take refuge in empathy and authoritative statement rather than provide a careful examination of the archaeological evidence: '[...] Bronze Age society was obsessed with travel and esoteric knowledge brought home from outside. [...] The city-states of the third and second millennia BC shared with less developed prestate societies a developed mythical cosmology to describe and have direct contacts with the outer world.' (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 43). It is possible or even likely that Bronze Age space was '[...] loaded with dangers, monsters, myths and powers [...]' (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 43). Yet, it is certainly not demonstrated *which* dangers, monsters, myths and powers, and whether they were the same throughout Europe and the Mediterranean.

The resulting kind of narrative is catchy, while at the same time suspending basic rules of archaeological procedure. A narrative strategy is employed that uses specific pieces of evidence (e. g. some multiple burials and victims of aggression in an otherwise highly standardised Early Bronze Age burial tradition) to illustrate 'institutions' that thereby attain the status of confirmed historical 'fact' (i. e. Bronze Age slave labour and warfare; both examples

taken from: Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 133–135). Rather, one could argue that the examples chosen are contingent upon specific historical circumstances and run counter to the findings of a broader contextual analysis of the Bronze Age groups under discussion.[193] A fairly typical example of this procedure and the decontextualisation of foreign elements, the meaning of which is taken for granted, is provided by the following passage on the Bronze Age 'tell cultures' of the Carpathian Basin:

'Visitors to the chiefly courts in the north-western Carpathians during the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries BC would have met a shining world of painted/decorated houses in east Mediterranean imitation, chariots, new weapons and new exotic rituals of drinking and feasting [...] The chiefly courts of the tell cultures combined a strong innovative local tradition in pottery and metalwork with exotic cultural traits from the Minoans and Mycenaeans, whom they met regularly at some of the trading points. Even script – the mysterious powerful script – did they want to adopt. Not for recording their possessions or tribute payments [...] but as a powerful, esoteric ritual.' (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 167).

This is itself epical writing, not scientific prose, but more importantly it follows the general pattern of argument criticised above. Script, we learn, was adopted in the chiefly courts of Bronze Age tell communities of the Carpathian Basin. What chiefly courts, one may ask then, and what evidence of script?[194] However, let us dwell instead on the supposed implications of this 'finding': Bronze Age communities in the Carpathian Basin are thought to have adopted fundamental institutions of Minoan/Mycenaean civilisation, such as 'exotic rituals of drinking and feasting'. Other elements, such as writing and script are thought to have been adapted to local context and somehow transformed to a 'powerful, esoteric ritual' (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 167). Yet, in total, it is suggested we see a process of adoption and convergence, and this 'shining world' in 'Mediterranean imitation' is clearly thought to have seen the direct transmission of religious and social institutions (e. g. Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 150–167). Now, one might argue, that even if the tell communities under discussion had in fact used Mediterranean script, this use as 'mysterious signs of powerful and esoteric ritual' would point to the exact opposite of what Kristiansen and Larsson suggest: namely recontextualisation and appropriation into a local context and local practices different from the Mediterranean rather than the transmission of institutions (e. g. palace administration; see above on the economy of Mycenaean palaces).

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[192] Compare, for example, van Dommelen (2005: 116–118, 136–140; 2006: 118–119), Dietler (2010: 51–53), van Dommelen/Rowlands (2012: 25, 27–28), Knapp (2012: 33), Ackermann (2012: 11–14), Stockhammer (2012; 2013) and Silliman (2013: 489–491, 495–497) with different opinions on the usefulness of concepts like 'hybridity', 'hybridisation' or 'creolisation' in archaeological research. Dietler (2010: 52–53), for example, warns us that simply classifying an object as 'hybrid' is not an analytical operation, but that the postcolonial emphasis on agency enriched by an explicit concern with materiality may help to advance our understanding '[...] how and why some practices and goods were absorbed into the everyday lives of people, while others were rejected or turned into arenas of contest, and how those objects or practices triggered a process of cultural entanglement and transformation'.

[193] See, for example, Kienlin (1999; 2010; 2012b). Kristiansen and Larsson (2005: 132–138) themselves are, of course, aware of evidence to the contrary (for example: 'Somewhat against this picture we have the local settlement evidence around the mines. It suggests working camps with little or no evidence of hierarchy [...]' [Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 133]), but it is usually subordinated to the great historical narrative, i. e. in this particular case to the rise of Bronze Age metallurgy and social differentiation.

[194] For a detailed discussion see also Kienlin (2012b).

A related point can be made regarding the notion of cyclical patterns in the broad tradition of World System Theory, which supposedly linked the Mediterranean and European development (e. g. Kristiansen 1998: 359–391, 412–419; Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 105–107, 211–212). Apart from essentialising groups such as the 'Minoans' and the 'Mycenaeans', and overt simplification in the presentation of Mediterranean and European sequences,[195] there is no demonstration other than broad contemporaneity why and by what mechanism change in one part of the 'system' should have affected society in another. Again, it is the narrative strategies involved that require deconstruction. We are used to accept a phrase like '[...] the three phases [*of Minoan/Mycenaean development and contact; TLK*] outlined above also correspond to important changes in European Bronze Age societies' (Kristiansen 1998: 364) as a meaningful statement that implies systemic integration and parallel cycles of social evolution. It is not. Instead, we are faced with a narrative structure that masks the failure to establish meaningful links between 'core' and 'periphery' and to explicate the mechanisms of systemic interaction thought crucial for cyclical change.

It is not argued here that the impact of interregional exchange on local systems is irrelevant. Yet, surely, it has to be demonstrated rather than just assumed, and it is only one facet of a more complex ancient reality. Whether in a more traditional sense the economic impact of long-distance trade in metal and other commodities is stressed or instead the social dynamics of prestige good systems drawing on exotic objects, advocates of Neo-Diffusionism have us believe in social and cultural dynamics and ultimately in convergence in consequence of contact and exchange. That is to say, they use the evidence of personal mobility, and/or objects moving to and fro, to bridge the gap between structurally different communities and societies, in our case between the Bronze Age Aegean or the wider eastern Mediterranean and the 'Barbarian' hinterland of prehistoric Europe. In the preceding paragraphs it has been argued that this approach has to be counterbalanced by an awareness of the complex processes involved in the recontextualisation of exotic foreign objects. Particular attention must be paid to the ways these were actually drawn upon by social actors in specific local contexts. Beyond local meanings and uses of foreign objects, however, the more important implication of this critique is that we are clearly entitled to assume long-term stability of local traditions and the continued existence of structurally different societies and cultures, even if some kind of contact and/or exchange between them can be established.

A comparable narrative strategy disguising structural difference was identified above with regard to the use of Homeric heroes as a blueprint for Bronze Age Mycenaean

society. The inherent contradictions of this approach were indicated by reference to the stark contrast in the organisation of social and political space in Mycenaean palaces such as Mycenae or Tiryns, and the quite different architectural setting and options to negotiate claims to social pre-eminence during subsequent post-palatial (e. g. the LH IIIC building T at Tiryns) or Early Iron Age times (e. g. the Protogeometric Toumba building at Lefkandi). Now this line of thought can be taken up and developed further. We should no longer offer essentialising narratives of 'cores' and 'peripheries'. Instead of glossing over variability both in the Bronze Age Mediterranean and in 'Barbarian' Europe, and instead of forcing different traditions of living onto the Procrustean bed of supposedly universal 'political economies' (e. g. Earle 2002 ; Earle/Kristiansen 2010a), we should opt for an impartial comparison of divergent local trajectories. Particular emphasis should thereby be placed on the social use of space (as well as, of course, of 'indigenous' material culture in general), for surely it was rather the built environment of Bronze Age communities that reflected and shaped commonly accepted values and perceptions than the occasional (foreign) prestigious item, be it from (precious) metal or amber, etc. It was architecture and social space in settlements that framed daily life as well as ritual and social action. These were the object of first-hand experience and the obvious resources to be drawn upon in social discourse. By their mundane presence they may have been predestined to encourage traditional notions of the world, of the self and the community, while distracting attention from alternative options and discouraging practices potentially at odds with traditional values.

It can be shown, then, that both areas, the Mediterranean and 'Barbarian' Europe, feature complex societies and cultural complexity. Yet, it is only in the Mediterranean that, with the Late Helladic Mycenaean palaces already referred to above, is there evidence of the emergence of explicitly politically differentiated societies. Even in the Mediterranean, however, this development did not take the form of linear socio-political evolution from simple to most complex and hierarchically structured societies. Rather, starting with the Early Bronze Age (Early Helladic II) corridor houses (cf. Hägg/Konsola 1986), for example the House of the Tiles at Lerna in the Argolid, we witness the possibility of quite distinct forms of complexity and historically specific notions of community and decision making. It does not really matter for the argument developed here, if one considers the House of the Tiles as the seat of a simple chief in charge of redistribution, or if one envisages a group of lineage heads feasting (e. g. Renfrew 1972: 108–109, 389–390; Pullen 1994: 43–46; Maran 1998: 193–197). Rather, it is the sophisticated differentiation of social space into broadly 'public' and more 'private' sections (e. g. Shaw 1987: 61–65, 75–79; Wiencke 1989: 503–505; Pullen 2008: 32–35) which is

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[195] E. g. notions like the 'Mycenaeans' taking over the 'Minoan' trade empire (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 88), or the rise of the Mycenaeans being linked to 'their conquest of the Minoans' (Kristiansen 1998: 363), fortified Minoan towns and palaces, purposive Minoan 'colonisation' or a Minoan maritime 'thalassocracy', etc. (Kristiansen/Larsson 2005: 96–97).

noteworthy; and even more so the manifold options this architecture offered for involvement and the actions of individuals or groups of people, the numerous possibilities to assemble, to show and to withdraw from sight, etc. (Peperaki 2004; 2010). As in the above discussion on Mycenaean and Homeric society, it is the irrefutable difference that matters: the inherent openness of the corridor houses to be drawn upon on different occasions and in response to individual or collective aspirations,[196] as opposed to the ultimate focus of Late Helladic palatial architecture on just one person, the *wanax*, and his 'court'; the utterly different ways people were supposed (or were able) to move in and around the House of the Tiles than on the citadel of Tiryns; the different perceptions of social 'reality', and one's options to act upon it, that a corridor house would have encouraged rather than at the central megaron of Pylos and other Mycenaean centres.

The sequence from the Early Helladic corridor houses, via the Late Bronze Age Mycenaean palaces to the Toumba building at Lefkandi, is important precisely because the internal logic of the architectural remains and of social space is so entirely different. Archaeology is called on to study such historically specific constellations, not to reduce them to a cyclical pattern of albeit unsuccessful onsets towards the same 'type' of hierarchical society. It is certainly important to know, who was in charge of the Early Helladic corridor houses or Mycenaean megaron buildings respectively, which kind of authority and/or power he, she or they were in command of, and if it was derived from control over agricultural surplus, craft production and/or control of prestige goods, etc. Yet, the application of such supposedly timeless or universal categories falls short of an appropriate understanding of the historically specific quality of social space and architecture; an understanding of this specific architecture as a medium of social action by past human beings and their social and cultural 'reality' thus created (cf. Barrett 1994; Barrett/Damilati 2004).

Finally, for the same reason, we must be wary not to model the Bronze Age tell communities of the Carpathian Basin in likeness of Mediterranean civilisation. Every occasional import find of Mycenaean origin which may come to light in Bronze Age groups to the north must not be used to overcome the fundamental divide that sets palatial society of the Aegean Bronze Age apart from such segmentary 'tribal' groups. Rather than being a weak reflection of palatial society, and like the Mediterranean sequence itself, it can be shown that Bronze Age settlement in the Carpathian Basin is a complex and variable phenomenon – in chronological and regional terms, as well as in socio-political and cultural ones. This tends to be ignored when likeness with Mediterranean developments is expected and in the words of M. Dietler (1998: 297) '[...] otherwise sensible scholars [start] to see things that are not there and to ignore crucial developments [...] in an effort to impose [*foreign*; *TLK*] structures [...].' Any perception of such long-lived settlement mounds in prehistoric 'tribal' communities that is solely derived from a narrow view of Mediterranean palatial prototypes and has us focus on economic and/or political dominance is reductionist and misleading.

The Aegean sequence outlined above certainly is not linear. Rather, it is characterised by the rise and decline of the corridor houses and the Mycenaean palaces respectively, each showing quite distinct features of social (and political) complexity. By contrast, the European sequence may expose more of a continuous development (see below). Far into the Iron Age 'Barbarian' Europe may have seen 'tribal cycling' rather than upward bound 'social evolution'. In any case, however, there is no overarching pattern or logic of development that binds both regions together – Bronze Age 'Barbarian' Europe and the Bronze Age Mediterranean. Approaches that have us believe so impoverish our understanding of prehistoric Europe and the Mediterranean respectively.

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[196] See, for example, Peperaki (2004: 226): 'A sense of complexity "in the making" is evoked, that is contingent on expedient and strategic action. Such complexity arises not simply from the drawing of lines between social categories, but more essentially from the provision of ways in which some of those boundaries could at times be crossed or even blurred. It is achieved by establishing a co-operative atmosphere ("outbursts of togetherness" [...]), while also leaving room for skillful and timely demonstrations of authority, and by allowing competing interpretations and constructions of social reality.'

II.4 The 'Emergence of Civilisation', or just: Contingency and Culture Change in Bronze Age Greece?

II.4.1 Early Helladic Lerna: 'Complexity in the Making'

So-called 'corridor houses' (Shaw 1987) dating to the advanced Early Helladic II period (EH IIB, *c.* 2500/2400–2300/2200 cal BC; cf. Wiencke 2000: 656; Shelmerdine 2008b: 4 fig. 1.1) are known from, or at least have been suggested, at a number of Early Bronze Age sites in mainland Greece most notable, of course, Lerna in the Argolid, Kolonna on Aegina, Akovitika in Messenia, Thebes in Boeotia, and Zygouries in the Corinthia.[197] The first corridor house discovered, and still the best preserved example, is the House of the Tiles at Lerna (fig. II-7), a multi-layer settlement site on the west coast of the Gulf of Argos (e. g. Caskey 1955; 1958). The House of the Tiles and the other buildings in this group share certain distinctive features, prominently, of course, their eponymous 'corridors' (and the flights of stairs therein) running alongside the larger central rooms of the (two-storeyed) building and a certain architectural 'complexity' or even 'monumentality' that sets these structures apart from their surroundings and from the 'normal' architecture of their period. There is clearly some temporal depth in the occurrence of Early Helladic II corridor houses,[198] as indicated by the stratigraphic succession of the earlier 'Building BG' and the House of the Tiles at Lerna itself (Wiencke 1986; 2000: 185–186, 213–216), or the 'Weisses Haus' (fig. II-8) and its predecessor, the 'Haus am Felsrand' at Kolonna on Aegina (Walter/Felten 1981: 12–22; Felten 1986; Shaw 1987: 65–69). Similarly, there is some variation in architectural details, in layout, in size and in general 'complexity' that may correspond to an older and younger date of the respective structures in the development of corridor houses during the Early Helladic II period. Thus, the 'Weisses Haus' and the House of the Tiles, in particular, are thought to be the most complex and 'developed' representatives of corridor houses. On the other hand, smaller or less complex structures like the 'Haus am Felsrand', the Fortified Building at Thebes (fig. II-9) or Building A at Akovitika are thought less 'developed' and hence presumably earlier (e. g. Themelis 1984: 342, 347; Shaw 1987: 75–79; 2007: 141 tab. 1, 151; Wiencke 2000: 301; 2011: 347).

Irrespective of such attempts at sequencing the known corridor houses (Shaw 2007), what appears to be a relatively sudden occurrence of this full-fledged

architectural 'type' during an advanced stage of the Early Bronze Age (Early Helladic IIB) prompted questions as to possible Near Eastern influences and models for this kind of architecture (e. g. Themelis 1984: 350–351; Kilian 1986: 68–70). Instead, other authors seek to demonstrate an autochthonous development in Greece itself. It is suggested that the corridor house type architecture is derived from the tradition of previous Early Helladic domestic buildings (e. g. Pullen 1986a: 75; 2008: 28–29; Wiencke 2000: 298–304, 649–650; Maran/Kostoula 2014: 141). Similarly, the more or less abrupt disappearance of corridor houses at the turn to Early Helladic III has given rise to debates on the historical background of the culture change observed. Thus, while previously the arrival of Indo-European speaking Greeks had been dated to the beginning of the Middle Helladic period (cf. Pullen 2008: 38–41), J. Caskey (1960: 293–294, 301–302) used the evidence from his excavations at Lerna to point out that major discontinuity in fact had occurred already at the turn from Early Helladic II to III, when the House of the Tiles was burned and its ruins covered by a mound formed of its architectural debris (Banks 2013: 23–31). Hence, the 'coming of the Greeks' or rather of the Greek speaking ancestors of the Mycenaeans was thought to have taken place with Early Helladic III, and a continuous development was suggested into the Middle and Late Bronze Age.[199]

More importantly for our present purpose, given their unprecedented architectural elaboration the House of the Tiles, and other corridor house structures subsequently discovered, feature prominently in debates on the evolution of social and political differentiation in Early Bronze Age society of mainland Greece and ultimately in the wider Aegean. Already J. Caskey thought he had uncovered an Early Bronze Age 'palace' illuminating an important step in the development of human civilisation, although he was careful to point out that in fact little was known of the actual political organisation of the Lerna community (e. g. Caskey 1955: 119–120; 1958: 143–144). Ever since, this point has been subject to controversial debate with suggestions ranging from farm buildings that were home, supposedly, to extended families in broadly peasant communities (e. g. Felten 1986: 24–26), via men's houses or multi-functional communal buildings (e. g. Walter/Felten 1981: 20; Themelis 1984: 340–341, 351), to the administrative and political centres of a stratified chiefly society (e. g. Pullen 1986b: 81–83; 1994: 45–50; 2008: 34–35). A clear majority of authors would opt, of course, for an interpretation of the corridor houses as the seat of

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[197] Hägg/Konsola 1986; Shaw 1987: 59–60; Maran 1998: 193; Pullen 2008: 32–33.

[198] Note also the long duration and development of the Early Helladic period in total, estimated to *c.* 1000–1100 years, of which *c.* 200–300 years are attributed to EH IIB (Shelmerdine 2008b: 4 fig. 1.1; Pullen 2008: 19, 24–36).

[199] See Forsén (1992) and Maran (1998) for in-depth discussion of this 'Wendezeit FH II/FH III' and related problems.

Fig. II-7: The House of the Tiles at Lerna. General view during excavation (after Wiencke 2000: 214 fig. I.49).
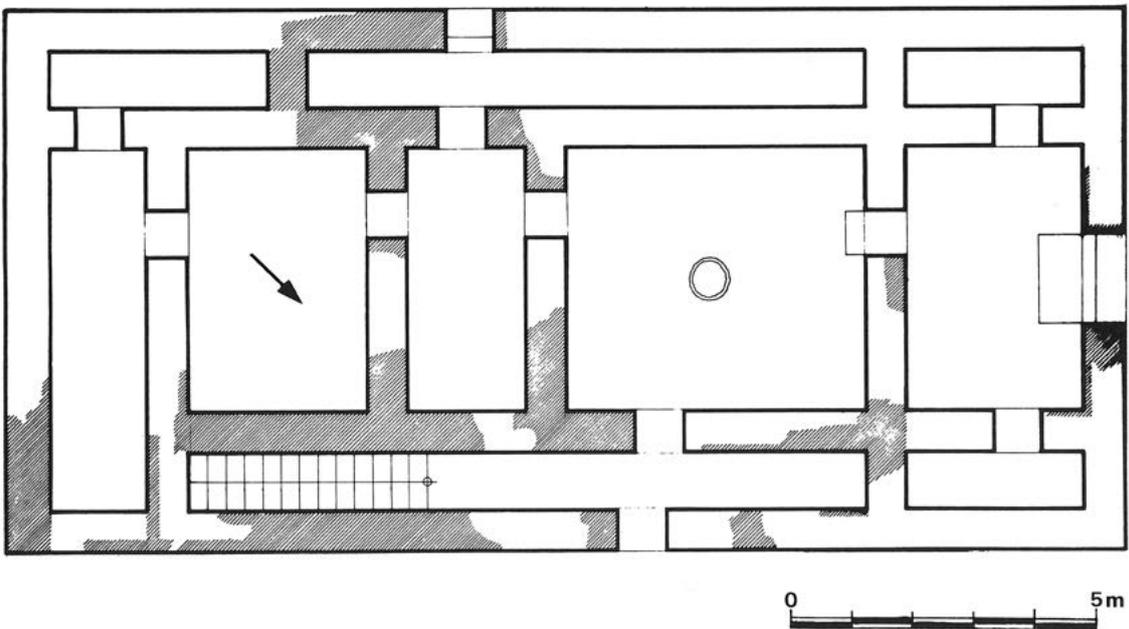
Fig. II-8: Plan of the 'Weisses Haus' at Kolonna on Aegina (after Felten 1986: 22 fig. 9).
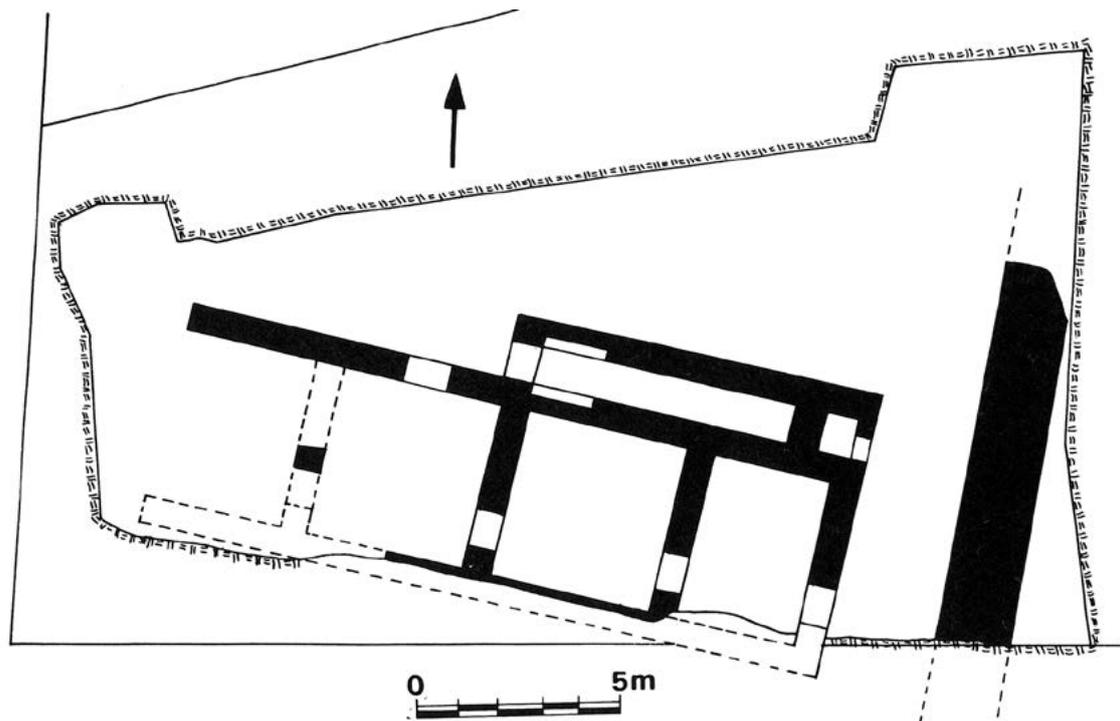
FIG. II-9: PLAN OF THE FORTIFIED BUILDING AT THEBES (AFTER ARAVANTINOS 1986: 58 FIG. 53).

a privileged segment of Early Bronze Age society and the location of some kind of administrative tasks (cf. Shaw 1987: 78–79; Wiencke 1989: 497, 503–508; 2000: 301–304, 650–652; Maran 1998: 194–197). This position was heralded, of course, by C. Renfrew (1972: 363–364, 386–390), who thought the House of the Tiles a redistributive centre in a chiefdom type society. He thereby aligned Early Bronze mainland Greece with the 'emergence of civilisation' in his main area of concern, the Cyclades and the Aegean. Furthermore, he ultimately took the Early Bronze Age evidence to foreshadow the later Minoan and Mycenaean palaces with their evidence of palatial control of production and exchange.[200]

In what follows no attempt is made to decide which model or 'type' of society suggested before best fits Early Bronze Age reality. No claim is laid to yet another authoritative interpretation of the architectural remains and finds from the Early Helladic II corridor houses. However, in line with the general argument outlined above and with more recent 'readings' of the Lerna evidence (Peperaki 2004; 2010; Weiberg 2007; Pullen 2011), the reader is invited to bear in mind that the questions we ask have a direct impact on our perception of the archaeological evidence. The more all-embracing our models, the less comprehensive becomes

our understanding of the material remains we ought to be studying. This criticism is hardly new, but since 'check-list' type, 'holistic' approaches to social evolution (cf. Yoffee 1993: 60–65; McIntosh 1999: 2–9; Duffy 2014: 38–40, 45–66) are still widely used in Bronze Age archaeology it is worthwhile to dwell on this point and have a look at the kind of argument involved. To name just one early example, C. Renfrew's (1972) reference to the House of the Tiles in *The Emergence of Civilisation* quoted above was actually more of a passing mention than a comprehensive discussion. Yet, this was enough to set up a debate in terms of 'chiefs' and 'redistribution', precisely because these are 'types' of socio-political organisation and corresponding economic structures which invite the reader to abstract from a more complex finding or, conversely, to draw the broad picture from a few pieces of evidence available only. Thus, corridor houses are perceived in total rather than in minute detail of the different perceptions and actions which their complex architecture may have encouraged. It is as such that their 'impressive' architecture is felt surely capable of a public function and 'chiefly' representation. Similarly, while subsequent studies have shown that the use of seals and the consumption of sealed goods at Lerna potentially involved a larger group of people and a strong communal element (see below), is not the initial impetus still to be felt that evidence of sealing surely is enough to infer administration, centralised control of economic activities and redistribution?

We are thinking and analysing, then, in terms of the same broad and supposedly universal categories applied to so many other prehistoric situations. We end up with the

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[200] See Renfrew (1972: 390): 'These large central buildings at Lerna [*Building BG and House of the Tiles; TLK*], together with the fortification wall, would in any case indicate some degree of central authority. The sealings give the strong presumption that some kind of redistribution of goods was taking place [...]. The existence of some ruler or chief, on whose authority dues were collected, or under whose patronage exchanges were transacted, seems indicated. [...] We see, therefore, that the first palaces of Crete had precursors in several parts of the Aegean.' See also, for example, Maran (1998: 196–197) with the same tendency.

Early Helladic corridor houses conceptualised in broadly the same terms as the later Mycenaean palaces, which they thus come to foreshadow, albeit in a somewhat less perfect manner and on a smaller scale (e. g. Maran 1998: 197). We are essentialising from rich and diverse evidence, however indirect, of past knowledge, actions and intentionality. And we are equating cultural manifestations that are historically unique and the material possibilities they provided (cf. Barrett 1994: 1–6; Peperaki 2004: 219), when instead we should be trying to develop an understanding of what is specific about the House of the Tiles when compared, say, to the much later palace at Late Helladic Tiryns, just a few kilometres to the north-east across the Gulf of Argos and the Argive plain.

The site of Lerna in the western Argolid has a long history of occupation that extends back well into Neolithic times (Caskey 1958: 136–139, 143; Wiencke 2000: 641; 2010: 660–661). It is unclear if settlement was continuous at the turn to Early Helladic I. In any case, there are few finds let alone architectural remains attributable to this period (Early Helladic I and early EH II or Lerna III, phase A). Comparable to many other sites in mainland Greece it is only during an advanced phase of the Early Bronze Age (i. e. Early Helladic II) that we witness a general increase in the 'quality' of architectural remains and more broadly speaking of material culture (e. g. Pullen 2008: 21–30). This development is related, of course, to the 'emergence of civilisation' and the 'international spirit' in the wider Early Bronze Age II Aegean world (Renfrew 1972: 34). At Lerna various phases of a fortification system and an older corridor house, the so-called Building BG (Lerna III, phases B and C), as well as the House of the Tiles dated to Lerna III, phase D are attributed to this period (Wiencke 2000: 642–653). Since only about 20 % of the Lerna mound estimated to *c*. 1.2 ha have been excavated (Wiencke 2010: 660), there is no way of knowing if the fortification surrounded the entire settlement or just a part of it. Little is known, too, of the overall layout of the site beyond the excavated part featuring the famous two successive corridor houses, as well as some traces of previous occupation in their place and some house structures contemporaneous with Building BG (see below). In any case, the fortification with a stone-built socle and an upper wall of sun-dried mud brick, which may also have served as a terracing for the uneven original surface, has a complex history of (partial) destruction and renewal. Sections of it were built separately during subsequent phases, towers were added and modified (tower B, then tower A plus, perhaps, an additional west tower), gateways were reorganised and rooms were established on the inner side of the wall which were used for domestic activities and storage (Wiencke 2000: 12–17 plans 3–8, 89–131; 2010: 661–663).

In the interior of the (later) fortification there is at first some rather ephemeral evidence of rectangular or slightly curved building remains only (Lerna III, late phase B; Wiencke 2000: 13 plan 4). This is followed, potentially, by a more massive predecessor to Building BG that had already broadly the same orientation as the subsequent corridor which took its place (Lerna III, early phase C; Wiencke 2000: 14 plan 5, 646). Also, prior still to both the fortification system and the corridor house Building BG, an open space was established and paved with pebbles and stones (Lerna III, late phase B) that was not built upon during subsequent phases (Wiencke 2000: 41–184, 642–647; 2011: 347). Thus, when Building BG was erected prior to Lerna III, mid phase C, there remained an open space or terrace in between the front of the corridor house and the fortification, which had a gate (room A) in this section allowing direct access to Building BG and the space in front it (Wiencke 2000: 15 plan 6). Only somewhat later in this area two buildings were constructed, both of them thought related to the nearby corridor house, which, during a rather extended lifetime, apparently saw some modifications itself (fig. II-10): House CA, which is reconstructed as a three-room building, like those known from other contemporaneous sites, and Room DM, the architectural remains of which are not well preserved but which provide important evidence for the storage of bulk foodstuff in sealed pithoi (Wiencke 2000: 131–145, 650–651; Pullen 1994: 44–45; 2011: 221).

Building BG itself, which is interpreted as a somewhat less complex forerunner to the House of the Tiles, has only been excavated in part. Since its northern end is unknown, we do not know its total length and overall layout (fig. II-10). The corridor house is aligned in a broadly north-south direction, with its front[201] facing south towards the open space and the fortification already mentioned. The width of the building is almost 12 m, comparable to the later House of the Tiles, and its preserved length is about 17 m (Shaw 1987: 64–65; Wiencke 1986; 2000: 186–197, 646). We know of at least three central rooms aligned in a row, plus possibly a fourth one in the unexcavated northern part, if the comparison with the subsequent House of the Tiles applies. Unlike the House of the Tiles, however, the southernmost room of Building BG was deeper (4.25 m x 5.5 m), and there are no indications of a southern front wall. This room, therefore, is seen as a kind of 'vestibule' opening south towards the open space in front of Building BG, with possibly a supporting column only in the southern front of the building. Corridors *c*. 0.8 m to 1.1 m wide and divided into sections by cross-walls were situated along the eastern and the western long walls of the building. Again, unlike the House of the Tiles, the southern end of these corridors lay open and would have augmented the impression of openness and the orientation of Building BG towards the southern place in front of it. Due to subsequent clearing and levelling for the House of the Tiles only the dry-stone foundations of Building BG survived, which are said to be less uniform in width and construction than for its successor, albeit of comparable thickness and clearly up to supporting a second storey (Wiencke 2000: 186, 193). Though little evidence remains, the upper parts of the walls apparently consisted of mud brick. Schist slabs

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[201] Judging from a comparison with the House of the Tiles and the evidence of the so-called 'vestibule' (see below).
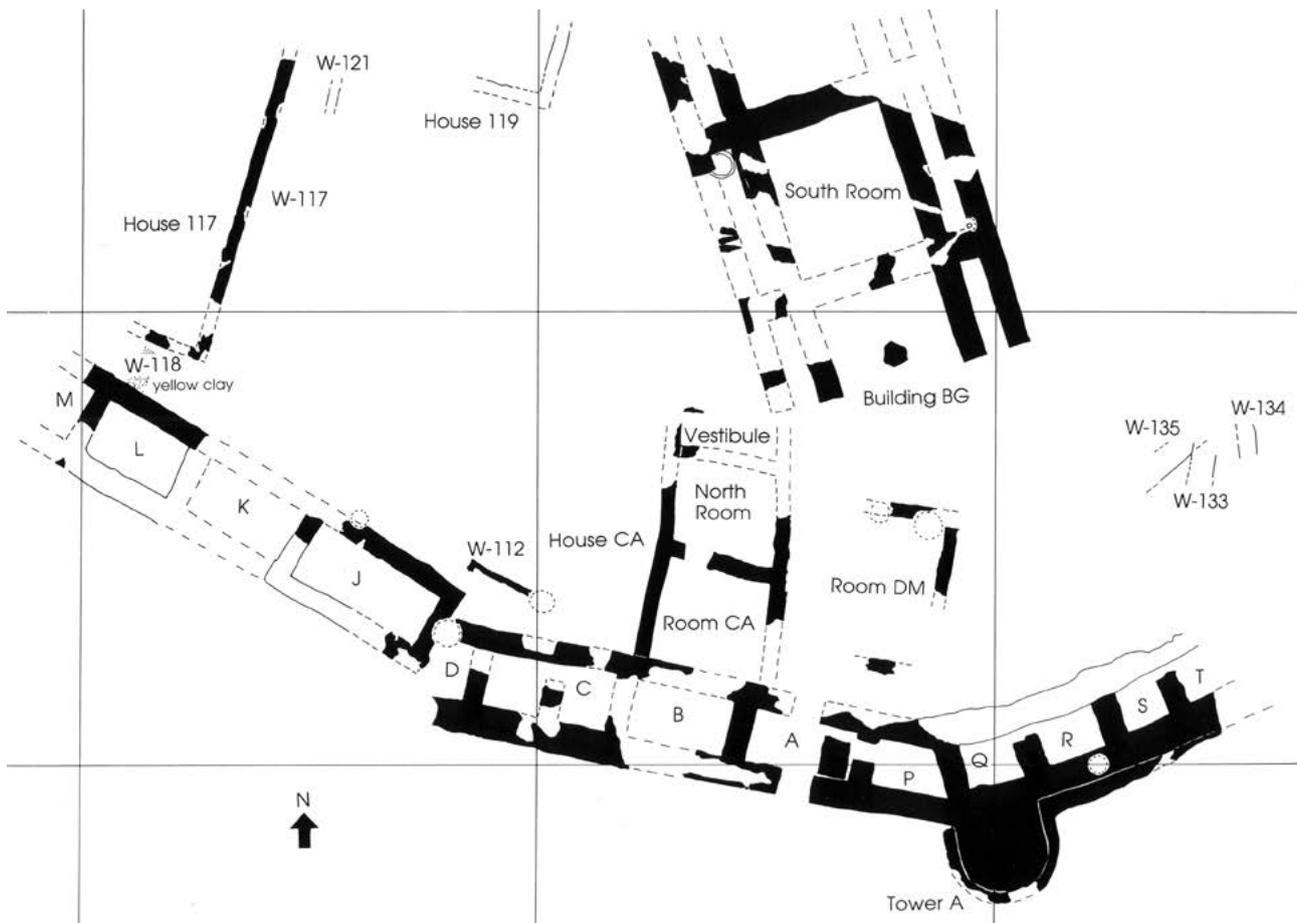
FIG. II-10: LERNA III, LATE PHASE C WITH THE CORRIDOR HOUSE BUILDING BG (AFTER WIENCKE 2000: 16 PLAN 7).

were used for the roofing (Wiencke 2000: 186, 194–195, 646). Since most original floor levels were destroyed we are not well informed on activity patterns in Building BG. The notable exception is a decorated terracotta hearth *c.* 1.15 m in diameter uncovered *in situ* in a section of the western corridor, which for this reason is called the 'Hearth Corridor' (Wiencke 2000: 191–194). This would seem an unusual setting for a hearth, and in fact part of a wall had to be demolished to place it in this position. It is assumed, therefore, that this placement was secondary and provides evidence of refurbishments in the building which may have involved the construction of a new hearth in one of the more 'formal' central rooms. Nonetheless, the hearth was still used in its final position in the corridor for a certain period of time, since it was found filled with ash, and there is evidence that the clay packing in which it was set was exposed to heat (Wiencke 2000: 193, 646).

There is some disagreement in the older literature if Building BG was immediately followed by the House of the Tiles, or if in the meantime there were smaller houses in existence in this area.[202] However, from the final publication of the Lerna architecture and stratigraphy it is likely that once it had been occupied by the 'formal' architecture of a corridor house (Building BG) there was no

return to 'normal' domestic architecture at this part of the site (Wiencke 2000: 196–197). Building BG was more or less directly and purposively replaced by the House of the Tiles (see also Wiencke 2010: 663). This involved a shift in orientation, though, that is not accounted for, because unlike Building BG, which it partially superimposes, the House of the Tiles is aligned broadly east-west in direction (fig. II-11). It is possible that this realignment was related to changing sunlight requirements falling into the doors and potentially the lightwells or windows of the House of the Tiles. It may also be a consequence of activities expected to take place in its immediate surroundings to the north and south (see below; Shaw 1987: 64). Importantly, however, despite its different orientation with its front facing east, the House of the Tiles is aligned towards broadly the same open space that had already been in existence prior to Building BG and which had certainly been the focus of whatever daily activities or more formal acts were carried out in front of its vestibule (Weiberg 2007: 40–42, 46 fig. 12, 48–57; Pullen 2011: 221–223). It is unclear, too, if any, or if so which parts of the fortification system were still standing when the House of the Tiles was built (e. g. Shaw 1987: 61). Wiencke (2000: 213, 647) suggests that some sections may have been still intact while others may have been in ruins and awaited rebuilding. Since House CA and Room DM did no longer exist, even if parts of the fortification were still standing to some height, the House

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[202] See Shaw (1987: 64–65) with reference to Caskey (1959: 204).
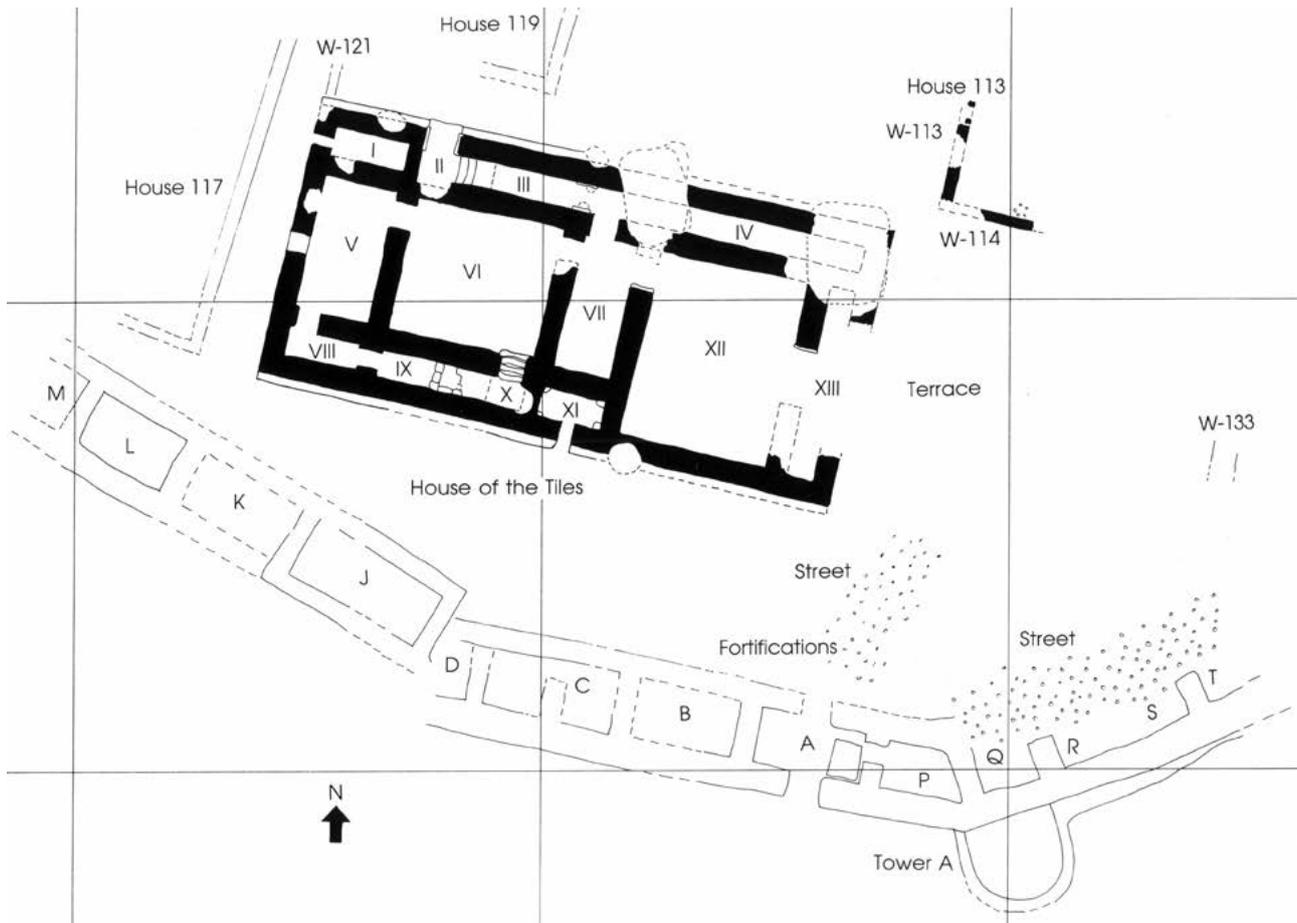
FIG. II-11: LERNA III, PHASES C/D AND D WITH THE HOUSE OF THE TILES (AFTER WIENCKE 2000: 17 PLAN 8).

of the Tiles certainly had plenty of open space around it (Wiencke 2000: 283–287). It would have offered an imposing aspect when approached either from in between the houses of domestic quarters at some distance or from outside the actual settlement.

In spite of such open questions, it is well established that some time during Lerna III, late phase C or early phase D, Building BG was taken down and levelled. In its place a somewhat more sophisticated building of the same type was subsequently constructed. The House of the Tiles is an impressive rectangular structure, *c.* 25 m long on the east-west axis and *c.* 12 m wide (Shaw 1987: 61–64; Wiencke 2000: 213–243, 291–298). Like its predecessor Building BG, at its centre is a flight of rectangular rooms (now four, plus a smaller 'anteroom'; see below), and there are corridors on the north and south side of the building, which in this case preserved evidence of the lower steps of staircases leading up to a second floor (see below). There are some interesting modifications, however, that set the House of the Tiles apart from less complex corridor houses proven (Building BG) or assumed to be earlier, such as the Fortified Building at Thebes (fig. II-9; Aravantinos 1986; cf. Wiencke 2000: 301). Some of these features are not found in its closest parallel, the 'Weisses Haus' at Kolonna on Aegina either (fig. II-8; Walter/Felten 1981: 14–21; Felten 1986; Wiencke 2000: 298).

Starting on the eastern side, the deep open vestibule of Building BG was replaced by the rather narrow anteroom XIII, which would have provided and/or controlled access to what is thought the main 'public' room (XII) on the ground floor (fig. II-12). The outer doorway of room XIII, which communicated to the open space in front of the building, is not preserved. It may or may not have been wider than the inner one leading on to room XII (cf. Caskey 1958: 128 fig. 1; Shaw 1987: 62 fig. 3; Wiencke 2000: 306 fig. I.103).[203] In any case, this eastern side is thought the actual front of the building. This interpretation is supported by the much smaller entrance at the opposite western side leading into room V, by the broadly 'public' nature of room XII (Pullen 1986b: 79–90; 2008: 33; Shaw 1987: 62–64, 78–79; Wiencke 2000: 299, 302; see below for discussion) and by the obvious orientation of rooms XII and XIII combined towards the traditional place in front of this side of the building. Unlike the 'Weisses Haus' at Kolonna, in the House of the Tiles neither room XIII nor room XII have an accompanying corridor on their southern side. This solution provided additional space for whatever activities were taking place in room XII (compare figs. II-8 and II-12). The importance of this room is deduced from its

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[203] Similarly, the north-eastern corner of the House of the Tiles is largely destroyed by a Late Bronze Age shaft grave (Wiencke 2000: 244 plan 32). It is unclear, therefore, if there was a door or opening at the east end of room/corridor IV (Shaw 1987: 62; Wiencke 2000: 215).

which provided space for storage, etc., depending on the most likely reconstruction of the second floor and the existence of a lightwell in this place or not (Shaw 1987: 62–63; Wiencke 2000: 228–229, 299). If there was a lightwell, of course, room VII would have received light from above, but it would still have been smaller than the adjacent rooms XII and VI to the east and west. For this reason, room VI is seen as the more likely candidate for broadly domestic (or 'private') activities. This interpretation is supported by its relatively secluded position, i. e. by its accessibility only via other rooms of the interior. Room V, in particular, with the much less impressive western entrance to the House of the Tiles already mentioned above, may have functioned as a kind of anteroom to the 'private' part of the ground floor and room VI (Shaw 1987: 78–79; Pullen 2008: 33; Wiencke 2000: 302).

Although there are parallels in Early Helladic domestic architecture, from which the corridor house most likely developed and which may feature broadly comparable flights of several rooms as well as off-centre doorways (e. g. Shaw 1987: 65, 75–78; Wiencke 2000: 649–650; Pullen 2008: 28–29), their size and the quality of their architecture clearly set the group of corridor houses apart from their predecessors and contemporaneous buildings. Their general arrangement points to an otherwise unknown level of architectural complexity. This becomes most evident, of course, when turning to the additional possibilities provided by the 'corridors' and the consequent sophistication of spatial arrangements and potential patterns of circulation. Thus, while from a down-to-earth perspective the corridors provided a practical solution to locate the stairways of these two-storey structures without impeding on the main rooms, they also allowed further distinctions to be made. In the House of the Tiles there are two staircases, one in the northern corridor ('room' II) and one in the southern one ('room' X) (fig. II-12). Unlike the otherwise closely comparable 'Weisses Haus', where the western door allows access to both floors and which for this reason seems to feature a less strict distinction between 'private' and 'public' space (fig. II-8; Shaw 1987: 66; Wiencke 2000: 299), at Lerna the northern stairs are accessible only from the outside. This corridor received the more careful finish and is thought to have provided access to a 'public' room (20) on the second floor corresponding to room XII below (Shaw 1987: 63–64; Wiencke 2000: 215, 218–219). The southern staircase, on the other hand, was accessible by passing through the inner 'private' room VI only. It may have allowed a similar distinction between rooms accessible to different groups of peoples and/or designated to different kinds of activities (like on the ground floor) to be carried on to the second floor (see below). Sections of the corridors not occupied by the staircases were set apart by cross-walls and turned into potential 'storage' rooms. These, too, possibly allowed distinctions to be made and to regulate patterns of movement in and around the corridor houses, since there are such features accessible from the inside and such opening towards the outside of the building only (Shaw 1987: 62–63, 66; Wiencke 2000: 215). In the House

Fig. II-12: The House of the Tiles at Lerna. Ground floor (a) and suggested reconstructions of the second storey (after Shaw 1987: 62 fig. 3).

size, from the quality of its wall plaster, from the presence of wooden facings and potentially doors that would have regulated access, and, in general terms, from its central position in the circulation patterns reconstructed for the entire building (see below). The existence of a central hearth is likely from a comparison with the 'Weisses Haus' (fig. II-8) and may be indicated by a shallow depression excavated. However, no actual remains of a hearth were uncovered *in situ* (Shaw 1987: 62; Wiencke 2000: 215, 236–242). Importantly, as one moves on from room XII towards the inside of the building the doorways are set off-centre to the right-hand or northern side, a feature that is thought related to the control of visual axes, and that may have contributed to the 'privacy' of the following rooms (Shaw 1987: 65; Wiencke 2000: 215, 298; see below for discussion). The first of these, room VII, is actually rather small. It may have been more like a rather dark passage

FIG. II-13: RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HOUSE OF THE TILES (AFTER SHAW 1987: 64 FIG. 5; PEPERAKI 2004: 221 FIG. 12.4).

of the Tiles, the latter group is represented by room I on the north-western corner and more prominently, of course, by room XI, which provided evidence of seal impressions and pottery so important for the discussion on the function of the building as a whole (fig. II-12; see below). Another feature of the ground floor should be mentioned here, since it may bear some relation to what was stored in rooms I and XI and to what end it was used, namely the existence of exterior benches set against at least the western half, or possibly the entire northern and southern side of the building (Wiencke 2000: 243). Whether such installations were for 'leisurely sitting', for people awaiting access to the building, or if they were themselves the focus of social transactions or 'public' activities etc. (e. g. Shaw 1987: 63), their presence provides evidence that this building not only attracted people 'in', but was clearly built in some way to 'interact' with its surroundings and to relate to whatever activities were expected to take place in the open ground around it.

The existence of a second floor is suggested by the strength of the foundations and the ground floor walls (Wiencke 2000: 293–295): it is proven, of course, by the surviving remains of the staircases (see above). We may also be reasonably sure for static reasons that the general layout of the rooms on the second floor corresponded to the one on the ground floor, i. e. that the main inner partition walls were set on top and in continuation of those supporting them from underneath (fig. II-12). It is also widely accepted that most likely above the ground floor

corridors and on top of the outer walls of the building there were galleries or verandas rather than upper corridors and massive outer walls (fig. II-13).[204] Beyond this, there are some differences in opinion as to details of the most likely reconstruction of the upper floor. For example, it is debated if such galleries were continuous around the entire building, or if they were barred off, at least at the staircases, and consequently there were different sections to the veranda assumed (cf. Shaw 1987: 72–75; Wiencke 2000: 299–301). Similarly, different solutions have been proposed for the small central room VII on the ground floor (see above) and its parallel, room 18, on the upper floor. There may have been a normal ceiling in between them and a proper roof on top, which would mean that both rooms were not adequately lit from a modern point of view. Alternatively, there may not have been a (continuous) ceiling, i. e. in room 18 there was no floor at all or only in a part of it (most likely in the north), thus creating a lightwell for room VII underneath (fig. II-12b and c). Such different reconstructions have an effect on the patterns of circulation possible throughout the building and on the upper floor in particular. Thus, for example, with a proper lightwell in room 18 circulation between the two major upstairs rooms 17 and 20 would be cut off. This would make up for a rather sharp division of 'private' (17) and 'public' (20) rooms on the second floor, while alternative reconstructions assume an internal connection between

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[204] E. g. Walter/Felten 1981: 17 fig. 10; Felten 1986: 24, figs. 8 and 10; Shaw 1987: 72–73; Wiencke 2000: 292–293, 298–299; Pullen 2008: 33–35.

both domains on the upper floor comparable to the ground floor (cf. Shaw 1987: 73–75; Wiencke 2000: 299–301). In any case, with the evidence from the staircases already discussed above and with the likely existence of upper galleries, it is quite clear that some of the 'public'/'private' distinction apparently established on the ground floor was continued onto the second floor as well. In this context, too, attention may already be drawn to the specific quality of the second floor verandas, which may not only have enabled movement between the lower and the upper level of the building and between various rooms on each level. Rather, they may have attracted people and activities in themselves that may or may not have been related to what was going on in the surroundings of the building at the same time, activities which may or may not have been noted and commented on by those present and involved in both settings (e. g. Shaw 1987: 79; Peperaki 2004: 220–222; see below for discussion).

Apart from the evidence provided by room XI, there are relatively few finds from the House of the Tiles. Right from the start, this provoked questions if the building had ever been completed and properly used before it was destroyed in the massive fire responsible for the good preservation of the mud bricks and at least a part of the walls (e. g. Caskey 1955: 117, 119). For example, the plastering of the interior walls was apparently never completed throughout the entire building (e. g. Caskey 1958: 129).[205] On the other hand, there is at least some evidence from rooms V and VI through to room XII for proper occupation with food preparation and/or consumption as well as, for example, textile production and the working of obsidian (Shaw 1987: 61–62; Wiencke 2000: 301–302).[206] From the finds at hand, a relatively short lifespan of the House of the Tiles during Lerna III, phase D is inferred (Wiencke 2000: 213), but the reason(s) of its destruction, of course, remain unclear. There is, however, the rather exceptional finding that the burned debris of the building was heaped onto a mound centred on the ruins of the House of the Tiles and surrounded by a ring of large pebble stones (Wiencke 2000: 310 fig. I.107b; 2010: 664; Banks 2013: 23–31). Originally thought to indicate the violent arrival of a new (Greek) Early Helladic III population, who set an end to the Early Helladic II 'civilisation' of the corridor houses, but for whatever reason wanted to commemorate at least the House of the Tiles (e. g. Caskey 1956: 164–165), in the meantime this historical scenario has been dismantled. The mound is attributed already to Early Helladic II/Lerna III, i. e. to people whose motivation to build it and keep the memory of the corridor house alive was still rooted in close knowledge of its original meaning and function (Banks 2013: 1–2, 23). On the other hand, such traditions are now thought much less long-lived than was previously assumed. While subsequent apsidal buildings

of Early Helladic III and Middle Helladic date, such as the 'Chieftain's House' and its successors, at first glance seemed to avoid the mound covering the House of the Tiles (cf. Banks 2013: 34 plan 4, 37–42), rather prosaically this is now understood in terms of the weak subsoil that these remains of a glorious but faded past would have provided (Banks 2013: 30–31).

Early Helladic corridor houses in general and the House of the Tiles in particular are fascinating. They are so because of their architectural 'sophistication' and because of their relative 'monumentality' vis-à-vis other contemporaneous buildings. Both aspects readily combine with other 'outstanding' features of the archaeological record of the period (e. g. the existence of fortification systems, the rise of metallurgy, etc.) to support notions of social differentiation and the often quoted 'rise of civilisation' in the wider Aegean world during Early Bronze Age II. It is certainly true that the Early Bronze Age of the Aegean saw changes in many aspects of life, and the corridor houses are prominent in pointing towards an increase in the cultural and social 'complexity' of the communities in question – with complexity understood in a very general sense to denote '[...] the myriad, diverse relationships, the ways they interconnect and create new contingencies and how they are mediated through objects, individuals, and communities, creating the complex social realities embedded in all societies at all scales' and '[...] as a conceptual tool for thinking about how societies integrate [...]' (Wynne-Jones/Kohring 2007: 2–3). This term, it will be understood, seeks to avoid competing concepts from the popular field of social evolution.[207] Accordingly, it has already been suggested above that what is truly fascinating from the perspective advocated here is *not* that the Lerna community and the House of the Tiles already exposed features found again later on in the Minoan or Mycenaean palaces. Rather than subsuming the evidence at hand to some preconceived idea of the type of society encountered, it is suggested we allow for what is truly unique and seek to develop an understanding of the actual material remains of an historically specific social and cultural configuration of the Early Helladic II world.[208]

To this end, let us turn first to the famous seal impressions from room XI of the House of the Tiles and the changes in their interpretation over the last almost 50 years. This is certainly not meant as a criticism of J. Caskey or M. Heath, writing some time during the 1950s, nor indeed

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[205] Incidentally, this finding may suggest that some caution is required in 'translating' the presence and the quality of wall plaster all too readily into different status or public versus private functions of the respective rooms and corridors.
[206] Activites related to daily life are also inferred from the finds at other corridor houses, e. g. the 'Haus am Felsrand' and the 'Weisses Haus' at Kolonna (e. g. Walter/Felten 1981: 12, 20; Shaw 1987: 69).

[207] Cf. Ehrenreich/Crumley/Levy 1995; McIntosh 1999; R. Chapman 2003; Kohring/Wynne-Jones 2007; Kienlin 2012a.
[208] E. g. Barrett (1989: 305): 'Material culture represents the material universe which was partially available for humans to draw upon as a medium for action. [...] As such material culture is the medium of discourse (the code) by which social relations are negotiated and reproduced; it is meaningful. That meaning would have been known to the people involved in that discourse, although their subjective knowledge of the code will have varied. Archaeologists cannot recover that particular subjectivity. However an understanding of the code is archaeologically possible if we think through the specific contexts (i. e. relationships) which the material code structured in a particular discourse. Such an understanding constitutes historical knowledge and we are able to perceive the reproduction and transformation of the code.'

to any subsequent author discussed, but it is illuminating to note how easily the practice of sealing or at least the presence of sealed objects initially translated into the notion of an ultimately Near Eastern style palatial administrative system (e. g. Caskey 1955: 119; 1958: 143–144). The relatively high number of distinct motifs of individual seals used may or may not be remarkable, then, depending on one's notion of the volume of the 'palatial' economy encountered. Yet, clearly it was felt important to stress the stylistic homogeneity of the group of seals and the local clay used in the sealings (Heath 1958: 120). By implication, then, we are dealing with just one centralised Lerna administration, handling in fact a rather high initial estimate of sealed containers (cf. Pullen 1994: 43 tab. 1), so high a volume, indeed, that the limited storage capacity of room XI was felt a problem (Heath 1958: 83). Was there more space for storage provided upstairs, where upon destruction of the building the sealed goods were looted, the sealings were broken, fell down when the whole structure collapsed and became part of the debris recovered from room XI? Or were there additional storage rooms nearby (Heath 1958: 81–83; Maran 1998: 196)?[209]

Redistribution in a chiefdom-type society, the next popular model to account for the economy and society of the corridor houses anticipating later Minoan and Mycenaean palaces (Renfrew 1972: 291–297, 363–365, 389–390), puts similar demands on the evidence of sealing at Lerna. This approach, too, tends to favour a 'unitarian' perspective, i. e. a clearly bounded group of people acting on behalf of a political 'centre' or central person(s) and monitoring the directional flow of a rather large volume of goods towards the chiefly sphere of interest and back again in return for services or loyalty. Ever since the original publication of the sealings (Heath 1958) and the model proposed by C. Renfrew (1972), however, one may say the sector of Lerna economy thought to have been embraced by central or chiefly administrative control is on the decline, and conversely the number of individual seal owners assumed and their role in society is on the rise (see, for example, Wiencke 1989: 504–505; 2000: 302–303, 651; Pullen 1994: 43–45; 2008: 34). This is due, on the one hand, to the repeated restudy of the actual evidence of sealing at Lerna (e. g. Stewart 1988; Aruz 1994; Weingarten 1997). It is also due, however, to a theoretical shift, at least in certain quarters, towards a concern with (individual) agency in the Lerna community and less interest taken in the identification of (static) elites (e. g. Peperaki 2004; 2010; Maran/Kostoula 2014).

From room XI there is evidence of the use of 70 different seals (i. e. seal designs on the surviving more than 100 seal impressions), some of them applied to different types of containers, i. e. presumably to seal different kinds of

goods, and *vice versa* more than one seal was occasionally used on an individual container (see already Heath 1958). We do not know for sure what was stored and sealed, but from the kinds of containers deduced, most of them organic chests or boxes and baskets as well as a smaller number of jars, storage of bulk foodstuff is now thought unlikely by most authors (e. g. Wiencke 1989: 505; 2000: 302; Pullen 1994: 44–45; 2008: 34; 2011: 222–224; Weingarten 1997: 149–155, 160–161). This stands in contrast to the earlier Room DM, where pithoi were sealed during Building BG times which apparently held larger quantities of foodstuff (Pullen 1994: 44–45). We clearly have to be aware of the possibility of some kind of monitoring of bulk foodstuff during Early Helladic II times. Interestingly, however, neither from the House of the Tiles itself nor from other corridor houses is there any indication that such activities would have been central to the conception of this type of architecture, i. e. there are no large storage rooms or evidence of the use of script for central administrative purposes, such as in the later Minoan palaces, etc. In fact, while the sealed containers in room XI no doubt indicate a certain (albeit limited) volume of stored goods, for example processed foods, raw materials or finished products such as textiles (cf. Pullen 2008: 34), most finds in general recovered from corridor houses point essentially to the same aspects of daily life evident in 'normal' buildings as well: the preparation of food and its consumption, plus possibly some evidence of more formalised feasting as well as some craft production (Shaw 1987: 62, 69, 78–79; Wiencke 1989: 505; 2000: 301–302, 651; 2011: 349–352).

The interpretation of this pattern, of course, is subject to debate. While it is widely accepted that the Lerna system of sealing remained well below the intensity of Near Eastern bureaucracy and administrative control (e. g. Wiencke 1989: 505; 2000: 302–303; Weingarten 1997: 147–150, 160–161; but see Maran 1998: 194, 196), opinions differ on how precisely the Lerna community was organised. In a way, D. Pullen (1986b: 81–83; 1994: 45–46; 2008: 34–35) is closest to the original Renfrew model when he suggests that in Lerna room XI valuable goods were stored which were claimed by a local chief as tribute or taxation and intended for subsequent redistribution to ensure the loyalty of his followers. The underlying reading of the seals here is 'decentralised' in that they are thought the property of a larger elite group and used to mark their own or their dependant's respective tribute to meet their chief's demands. Command over the goods thus collected, on the other hand, is thought 'central' and up to the 'chief' alone, even if his administration obviously did not unpack and reseal whatever goods had come under their control. In this argument, the former point, i. e. command of seals by a larger group of people such as, for example, lineage heads or elders, is certainly in accordance with the archaeological record. The latter point and the assumption of ultimately just one political authority at Lerna, on the other hand, is more difficult to prove. This is an obvious point of departure for those arguing that whatever 'contributions' found their way into the House of the Tiles actually may have remained under the control

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[209] As Peperaki (2004: 224) rightly notes, the possibility that only the broken sealings were stored in room XI did not initially receive proper attention – presumably because of an emphasis on large-scale storage and truly administrative practices where sealings would be supposed to protect administered goods rather than being the actual means to keep track of them (cf. Pullen 1994: 43–44).

of a larger group of (elite) peers (Aruz 1994: 222–226; Weingarten 1997: 150, 161; cf. Wiencke 2000: 303–304, 651; Pullen 2011: 223–225). From this perspective, rather than circulating in a redistributive system, whatever goods were stored in room XI were used to stage events such as communal eating and drinking (i. e. feasting) that would have retained a certain openness with regard to possible outcomes and the aspirations of individual participants. Rather than simply expressing and reproducing some kind of abstract institutionalised inequality, on such occasions various groups of people or individuals would have found an opportunity to negotiate their standing vis-à-vis other, while at the same time communal values may have been maintained and strengthened (Peperaki 2004: 222–225; 2010: 256–257; Weiberg 2007: 56–57; Maran/Kostoula 2014: 151–154).

There are differences in theoretical approach involved here that may not be easy to resolve, even should new data become available. Indeed, since there are major shortcomings in our knowledge of the sites under discussion, of their finds and of their architectural remains, some of the questions raised may be beyond the archaeological record for some time to come. For example, how can we discuss if there was a single chief for each site resident in the corridor house when we cannot even be sure from the limited excavated areas that there was in fact only one such building on each site at any given time (cf. Shaw 1987: 79; Wiencke 1989: 504; 2000: 650)? However, the point here is to suggest that despite all their shortcomings there is actually some 'progress' in our approaches to the past. 'Monolithic' approaches relying on normalised representations of past social 'structure' and the archaeological record itself underlying such concepts are increasingly replaced by more fine-grained contextual 'readings' of the material remains and an awareness of variability that would seem much closer to life as once lived and experienced by past people.

This is broadly the development outlined above for the interpretation of the evidence from Lerna room XI, from 'sealing' as such as evidence of 'administration' or 'redistribution', to an awareness of the necessity to account for the possibility of numerous non-resident seal owners each providing a limited number of sealed containers and goods. One may still opt for a scenario, then, that has a single authority monitoring past transactions by storing the broken seals from former tributes. However, alternatives shift into focus more readily and may be found supported by contextual information. In our case, this would be the evidence of feasting provided by the pottery assemblages (e. g. Wiencke 1989: 505; 2000: 651; 2010: 664; Pullen 2011: 222–224), and the obvious possibility that whatever 'provisions' reached the House of the Tiles were sooner rather than later consumed in predominantly communal events instead of being placed at the strategic disposal of some resident elite or chief for an extended period of time (Peperaki 2004: 222–225; 2010: 254–257). In following this approach there is at least a chance that what is actually specific about the historical setting and past lives we want

to study will receive due attention rather than being reduced to the status of a mere illustration of a preconceived idea of past society.

This advance becomes particularly marked when turning to the total architectural evidence of the House of the Tiles, instead of focusing on room XI and its contents only. Our concern with the sheer size and monumentality of such corridor houses, or the related 'Rundbau' at Tiryns (Kilian 1986), is reductionist, even if one may broadly agree with the assumption '[...] of an economically and politically organized society of a certain complexity [...]' (Wiencke 2000: 650) and '[...] the existence of an organized system, [...] confirmed by the House of the Tiles itself and by the fortifications, a system that ought to entail a degree of social ranking and controlled planning [...]' (Wiencke 2000: 651; see also Wiencke 2011: 349). It is reductionist because like in so many other situations it has us enter in some kind of 'check-list' archaeology: we may find, then, that the time, resources and skills involved in the construction of such buildings are all indicative of some kind of authority (e. g. Wiencke 1989: 504–505; 2000: 650–652); we may also see evidence that this system involved feasting, typically on an elite level; we may note and be slightly worried that no storage and redistribution of bulk foodstuffs was directly involved, as in later Bronze Age palaces; and we may conclude that the system ran on exotic goods and valuables instead (e. g. Pullen 1994: 45–46; 2008: 34; 2011: 223, 225). Yet, all of this falls short of what is truly specific about the corridor houses in general and their most 'advanced' representative, the House of the Tiles, namely a concern with the organisation of social space unique in this manner and an approach to architecture as a highly flexible means to structure social interaction and communication. This was achieved in a way very much different from everything seen before or afterwards. Attempts at historical understanding should be directed at this specific expression of complexity in social space, and what, in a rather simplified way so far, has been referred to as a distinction made between 'public' and 'private' space.

It was a major advance in our understanding of such buildings when it was first suggested – actually long before any explicit call for a 'spatial turn' in archaeology – that at least in the more 'developed' corridor houses, such as the 'Weisses Haus' and the House of the Tiles, distinct patterns of attendance and circulation had been established (see, in particular, Pullen 1986b; Shaw 1987; Wiencke 2000; cf. Pullen 2011: 221). There were rooms probably accessible to different groups of people. Such distinctions may have applied both in daily life and brought into even sharper focus on special, more formal occasions. These interpretations draw on the architectural elements already mentioned above, such as the differences in the quality of the wall plasters and floors, the presence or absence of decorated hearths, differences in the size of doorways and their position, access to some rooms from inside or outside the building only, as well as on the pottery assemblages thought indicative of feasting, etc. It

was only at this stage that some of the truly remarkable features of the corridor houses received proper attention. Focusing again on the House of the Tiles, the existence of 'storage' rooms accessible only from the outside falls into this category; the access to the large upper room 20 via a staircase from outside the building, while the upper room 17 was accessible via inside rooms on the ground floor only; or the 'offset' position indicated by the doorways and doors of the 'formal' room XII from the other rooms on the ground floor (fig. II-12). There are, of course, different reconstructions of architectural details (see above). Correspondingly, interpretations differ in certain aspects: would there have been a connection between the main rooms on the upper floor, or were they divided by a lightwell with obvious effects on the patterns of circulation possible (cf. Shaw 1987: 74–75; Wiencke 2000: 300–301)? Would all the upper rooms potentially have been perceived in terms of greater 'privacy' (cf. Shaw 1987: 78–79)? Or was the 'public' versus 'private' divide cutting across both floors, and was the upper room 20 more 'exclusive', then, in broadly socio-political terms rather than offering the intimacy only of greater 'privacy', etc.?

However, such differences hardly matter in view of the overall pattern identified, and the concomitant insight that corridor houses are not monolithic structures, be they conceived as 'public' buildings or some kind of elite 'residence'. Instead, it became feasible how this architecture may actually have 'worked' in providing a setting that structured both daily life and more formal occasions. On a theoretical level, what remains problematic here are static distinctions made between different 'kinds' or 'types' of rooms, and the unclear status of *our* notions of 'private' and 'public' space in a Bronze Age context. For this reason, in more recent work by O. Peperaki (2004; 2010), in particular, an even more dynamic understanding is advocated (see also Weiberg 2007; Pullen 2011). The focus is put on the mutability of corridor houses such as the House of the Tiles, which would have provided multiple, temporally specific settings for social interaction (e. g. Peperaki 2004: 219–222, 226–227). Furthermore, attention is drawn to the ambiguity of this kind of architecture. On the one hand, social actors would have been able to draw upon this architectural setting in pursuit of their own ends. Thus, multiple levels of distinctions could potentially be established between the participants in any activities taking place in the various rooms of the building itself and in its surroundings. On the other hand, such asymmetries would have been balanced by a sense of community evoked by the relative openness of this architecture for most of the time. Thus, corridor houses bear many indications of general accessibility – mind, of course, the open 'vestibule' of Building BG, but the House of the Tiles, too, with its various entrances, rooms opening towards the outside and balconies may for most of the time have given an impression of general 'permeability'. Feasting, communal eating and drinking would have strengthened collective memory and may have reminded people of the joint effort involved in construction, or of any gatherings that had taken place at this focal site of

their settlement previously (Weiberg 2007: 48–57; Pullen 2011: 220–225; Wiencke 2011: 350–352).

Starting, again, with the suite of 'public' rooms on the eastern half of the ground floor ('anteroom' XIII and room XII; fig. II-12) particular attention is now drawn to elements such as the wooden jambs and doors, which may not only have served to establish static distinctions and to regulate access to central room XII both from the 'private' inside of the building and from the exterior place in front of it. Rather, such architectural features, which also include the wider doorway and raised threshold between room XII and inward room VII (Wiencke 2000: 229), may have served to heighten awareness of transitions from one setting to another, of the movements of groups of people or individuals and of the temporal sequence of events (Peperaki 2004: 219–222). What matters here is not a claim to know exactly what actions would have taken place and what they would have meant to the people attending. Comprehensive knowledge of such aspects would not even have been available in the past, since a building like the House of the Tiles may have 'invited' different sets of practices depending on the occasion and the participants. Also there would not have been any fixed meanings attached to what was taking place that would have been evident to all those involved. Rather, it is the unique quality of this architecture to frame various levels of social interaction, and to allow for different strategies and understandings of events by those participating, that this approach aims at: '[...] it is probably from this very potential to create and blur multiple distinctions, and occasionally to separate or unify different groups of practitioners, that the building may have derived part of its significance' (Peperaki 2004: 222).

Thus, for example, rather than just being the ones 'entitled' in a static sense to participate in whatever 'type' of feast was taking place (cf. Dietler/Hayden 2001), any group of persons who found themselves involved in potentially more formal activities of elevated social meaning in room XII, or in upstairs room 20, would have had a wide range of options to interact with their surroundings and those without. They may have employed these options differentially during subsequent temporal stages of a single event or on different occasions, steering somewhere in between communally accepted notions of appropriate conduct and aspirations, driving individuals or groups of people to manipulate the outcome of such events in their favour. To keep all doors closed in order to establish exclusivity of an event and its participants would be an obvious strategy, albeit certainly not the only one possible or even the one most likely to occur in this context. For it is rather its mutability and its inherent openness on various levels that is characteristic of the House of the Tiles (Peperaki 2004: 219–220): Doors may have been opened at some stage through an event, people may have moved in and out of the eastern ('main') entrance, or they may have disappeared into more 'private' parts. They may have ascended via the northern staircase to take part in an important event in the upstairs 'public' room 20. They may

have descended after their 'business' was done, or just during any interruption that might have occurred. In doing so they would have passed along the upstairs balconies, up and down staircases and through different rooms. All this moving around would have provided ample opportunity for a differentiated interplay of people and multiple acts of communication. Passing along one of the upstairs verandas, was it important to be seen by everybody on the exterior, but ignoring their presence? Was there an emphasis, at least, on visual communication such as holding on for a moment or two, standing there, being seen and returning any gestures directed at one from below? Or was it, at other times and on different occasions, all casual moving to and fro, with a word exchanged here or there?

This is certainly not to imply a ruler stepping out onto the balcony of his residence and addressing his people (cf. Felten 1986: 24), but to stress that most of what was taking place inside the House of the Tiles may somehow have articulated on the exterior as well. Such is a specific quality of this architecture, not a chance result of Mediterranean climate or some functional or static requirements. Quite to the contrary, there are strong indications, such as the open space maintained around it, the outside benches or the 'storage' rooms I and XI opening to the exterior, that people were clearly meant to remain in the surroundings of the House of the Tiles for some time (Weiberg 2007: 46 fig. 12, 48–57; Pullen 2011: 221, 224).[210] This may have been the case on an everyday basis as well as during more formal events and feasts. Architectural provisions were made to support any such outside activities related to the building by supplying whatever objects or goods were required, or by allowing people (and any things they carried) to move about unhindered between the exterior and the inside of the building. No doubt any such activities or movement would have been subject to traditions and rules of conduct, and they may have been used to establish various distinctions between (groups of) people (see above; Peperaki 2004: 220–221). Again, it is no use asking what norms precisely and what distinctions, since we do not know what kinds of persons were involved and exactly what kinds of activities were taking place. However, it is important here to bear in mind that such are not static phenomena anyway (Peperaki 2004: 221–222, 226–227). In daily life as well as during any more formal events that may have involved the attendance of a larger and more diverse group of people than normally present,

the building would have taken on different meanings, and it would have provided different avenues to social action. Rules of appropriate conduct, as well as the ability of individuals to bend them and draw upon the architectural setting to their own advantage, would have been subject to permanent negotiation and redefinition. Such processes at times may have involved angry debate and fighting. More often they may have remained below the threshold of conscious deliberation and were governed 'simply' by routines shaped and acted out in permanent interplay with the architectural framework provided and any other individuals present – such as when we 'know' who ought to pass through this door first, or who ought to occupy that seat, etc.

What is truly remarkable about the House of the Tiles, and what may bring us as close as we can get towards an understanding of the Lerna community, is the relatively high density of 'formal cueing devices' for framing social action on the one hand (Peperaki 2004: 220), and what would appear a relatively low level of determinacy on the other. The former point, of course, relates to the presence of all those distinct architectural features discussed throughout this section, which may have guided perceptions and been available to individuals or groups to be drawn upon in social action. The latter, referred to above as a distinct 'ambiguity' when it comes to the tension between distinctions made and community encouraged, will become more apparent in the following chapter – for it is precisely what Mycenaean palaces lack. These overwhelm instead of subtly inviting, and they seek to reduce indeterminacy by discouraging alternative understandings or deviant action. To illustrate this point, let us just consider the location of the House of the Tiles, apparently set apart from other structures of the contemporaneous Lerna settlement, and its 'monumentality'. Depending on the occasion (formal/informal?, etc.) and the person approaching (high status/low status? local/foreign? male/female?, etc.) this may clearly be perceived differently: from physical separation and attempted intimidation to an invitation to approach and linger close to an obvious focal point of the Lerna community.[211] It is more difficult to conceive of such rather different perceptions when approaching the Tiryns megaron complex. However, one does not have to resort to empathy to note the difference, if one recalls instead the

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[210] It is subject to debate if their 'isolated' position (with regard to a surrounding open space devoid of other architectural remains [e. g. Lerna; see above] and/or a location close to the supposed or proven edge of the settlement [e. g. Thebes; Aravantinos 1986: 60–61, figs. 53 and 54]) is a universal feature of corridor houses (see discussion in Maran 1998: 195–196; cf. Wiencke 2000: 650). Often, there is a lack of good stratigraphic information to judge from (just note the situation at Lerna, where despite careful excavation the status of the fortification during the lifetime of the House of the Tiles is unclear [see above]). What is more important, however, is that such debates suffer from a static understanding of the architectural remains and random perceptions how we are to understand such 'isolation': is it an argument against a 'central' political or economic function of the structure (Felten 1986: 25–26); or is it the other way round with isolation 'supporting' monumentality and special 'meaning' (Maran 1998: 195)? It is suggested below that such should not be thought of as opposing and static categories.

[211] From this perspective it is unfortunate that Maran (1998: 196–197) should argue for the existence of a 'Korridorhaus-Architekturkomplex', i. e. a complex of rooms or buildings related to the corridor house in functional and/or social terms. This is certainly not proven nor even likely from the evidence available. At Lerna, for example, 'House' CA and Room DM only co-existed with Building BG during a certain period of its existence. They are unlikely, therefore, to be an integral and indispensable part of a 'corridor house complex', and we are certainly not well informed on the relation of these structures to the corridor house in functional terms, etc. For the House of the Tiles there is little to no evidence at all of any such accompanying buildings in the immediate surroundings (see above). It is the ill-conceived comparison with later Mycenaean palaces (here: Maran 1998: 197) that has us expect the existence of a 'Korridorhaus-Architekturkomplex' and neglect what is specific about the Early Helladic corridor houses in the first place – namely, the distinct absence of any such surrounding suite of functionally related buildings or rooms. For the same reason any direct 'equation' of Early Helladic corridor houses with the megara of Troy II is problematic (see Themelis 1984: 339–340).

multiple entrances to the House of the Tiles, the benches on two sides of the building, etc. Such is not an attempt to enforce a specific way of approaching, and a rather weak hint only at appropriate conduct in the surroundings of the House of the Tiles, when compared to the Mycenaean palaces.

It is certainly not claimed here that there is a straightforward match between society and architecture, but we are entitled to ask what the above observations have to tell us about the Lerna community and, by extension, on other sites featuring corridor houses. It seems, then, that the inherent openness and the indeterminacy of the House of the Tiles as outlined take us exactly to the heart of current debates on social 'complexity', the concomitant reaction to 'holistic' models of social evolution, and the deconstruction of 'types' of socio-political organisation packaged with specific economic practices: we see the monitoring of foodstuffs potentially without (chiefly) redistribution in a classic sense; the importance of feasting that did not necessarily result in spiralling asymmetries, but may as well have supported communal values and traditions; monumentality of architecture despite a lack of corresponding differentiation in other domains of life and death; an obvious concern with the regulation of social space, but without an explicit focus on a clearly demarcated group of elite persons; a shifting threshold between discursive 'statements' by means of material culture or architecture, and routines unknowingly shaped and framed by the corridor house structures under discussion; and distinctions made between individuals or groups of persons without yet conceding that the negotiation of such conflicting claims was transformed into the reproduction of permanent social and political inequality, etc. As O. Peperaki (2004: 226) aptly put it:

'The House of the Tiles now emerges as what it may have been – a 'multiplex interpretive site' [...], which both provided the frames or settings within which various forms of human action could be initiated and conducted meaningfully, and was itself evaluated and defined by means of this action. In this way, we may also move beyond the static image of Lerna as a "central place" *dominating* a territory, in favour of a *place* to and from which different people may have moved to fulfil particular needs or obligations and to promote and pursue different *aspirations*.'

II.4.2 Mycenaean Palaces: 'Architectures of Power'

In the ancient Greek historian Thucydides' famous account of the Peloponnesian war, the author in his introduction comparing this war to previous Greek conflicts and the Trojan war touches upon a broadly archaeological question in considering the future visibility of the ancient towns of Athens and Sparta. This passage from book 1.10 of the *History of the Peloponnesian War* reads as follows:

'Now seeing Mycenae was but a small city, or if any other of that age seem but of light regard, let not any man for that cause, on so weak an argument, think that fleet to have been less than the poets have said and fame reported it to be. For if the city of Lacedaemon were now desolate and nothing of it left but the temples and floors of the buildings, I think it would breed much unbelief in posterity long hence of their power in comparison of the fame. For although of five parts of Peloponnesus it possess two and hath the leading of the rest and also of many confederates without, yet the city being not close built and the temples and other edifices not costly, and because it is but scatteringly inhabited after the ancient manner of Greece, their power would seem inferior to the report. Again, the same things happening to Athens, one would conjecture by the sight of their city that their power were double to what it is.'

The argument developed here anticipates, of course, the elegant saying that 'absence of evidence is not evidence of absence' in the English speaking archaeological world, and Thucydides was certainly right in predicting that the remains of ancient Sparta would look poor compared to those of Athens and not adequately reflect that both poleis were equally strong opponents in the Peloponnesian war. However, in erroneously confusing different domains of ancient life Thucydides may also be taken to forestall a problematic line of modern archaeological thinking that ultimately distorts historical understanding and, through the backdoor, invites us to believe in the former presence of things which were actually never there.

Let us consider the first point related to the domains of architecture and power. It was already H. J. Eggers in his introduction to prehistoric archaeology, first published in 1959, who pointed out that Thucydides was asking the wrong questions here (Eggers 1986: 255, 271–276). For it is not, in fact, differences in military power and political control over other poleis or large territories of ancient Greece that we see reflected in the archaeological remains of Athens and Sparta, but rather differential investment in the symbolic representation, for example in public buildings, temples, etc., of various potentially overlapping social and cultural domains. All of these not do necessarily correspond in their symbolic or material expressions, and they may be deliberately emphasised or not. Thus, the members of any polity or wider culture group may opt against conspicuous presentation of its strength or any other aspect of its social and cultural life (and consequently poor archaeological visibility). Alternatively, expressive material culture, including architecture, may be perceived as a way to enhance an awareness of any of these aspects. For this reason, the 'militarist' polis of Sparta is largely invisible archaeologically, while the later state and military power of Rome are not. Athens, on the other hand, stands out due to a building programme which sought to express broadly cultural superiority rather than mere coercive power.

This may take us on to the second point indicated above, namely parallels in and implications for archaeological thinking. If Thucydides fails adequately to grasp the difference in the future archaeological remains of Athens

and Sparta, this failure ultimately stems from a normative perception of culture and society as some kind of 'package' and corresponding preconceived ideas what precisely material culture should reflect. Such notions are still widely found in modern archaeology. They impoverish historical understanding, because what we should be doing is allowing for variability in the archaeological record and accounting for different strategies in the use of material culture for symbolic expression, drawing on all the contextual information available, not taking refuge in the mystifying category of archaeological 'invisibility', or filling in the blanks right away.

There may be a problem for archaeologists, certainly, if the architectural remains to which Thucydides refers tend to conceal the military and political strength of Sparta. However, to realise that this is the case by reference to contextual evidence – be it from graves and depositions, or written sources indicating the strongly ranked and warlike propensity of Spartan society – itself constitutes historical knowledge and establishes an important characteristic of this culture. Thus, in lamenting the weakness of architecture to live up to expectations derived from other kinds of evidence, in this case of course from direct observation by the author himself, Thucydides misses the important point that material culture actually conveys an alternative truth on the specific cultural predisposition of Spartan society to decline the display of individual and collective wealth or power (by means, at least, of architecture) and to organise their social space 'after the ancient manner of Greece' instead. Thucydides' focus on the architectural reflection of power and the lack of it on the Spartan side, distracts his attention from other equally important domains of culture and society. It limits his understanding, at least as far as the passage under discussion is concerned, of a more complex Athenian and Spartan reality.

We have touched upon similar problems in the preceding chapters. They are closely related to the impact of 'holistic' models of social evolution on archaeological thought, and the same 'packages' of economic practices, social structure and political rule being sought in the archaeological remains of widely different culture groups and communities. We mean, then, to know beforehand what kind of society we are confronted with. We focus our attention on only some of the domains of ancient life, typically the ones we expect to be prominent for whatever reason, and which – like Thucydides – we consequently miss if 'misrepresented'. Going one step further than Thucydides, however, we all too often tend to make up for any perceived shortcomings by claiming archaeological 'invisibility' instead of considering what this lack of evidence has to tell us in terms of ancient choice and the specific emphasis, or lack of it, on the symbolic (material) elaboration of different aspects of prehistoric life that we ought to study.

Varna is a case in point, and the presumed archaeological invisibility of subsequent Copper Age elites (see chapter I.2.4). The various attempts discussed in preceding sections to bridge the gap between societies widely set apart in space and time are yet another: the House of the Tiles at Lerna exposing 'complexity' specific and somewhere beyond 'chiefdom' and 'redistribution' categories (chapter II.4.1), as well as all the different attempts at linking the palaces of Mycenaean Greece to 'Barbarian' Europe by inflating limited archaeological evidence of objects moving to and fro to a much larger postulated volume of original trade not preserved archaeologically, and further into cultural assimilation and similar political institutions (see chapters I.3.3 and II.3). Instead, first and foremost, all of these examples require an approximation in their own historically specific terms, or rather the ongoing attempt to understand what these may be in the first instance.

Having said this, it should be obvious that in turning to the palaces of Late Helladic Mycenaean Greece it is by no means implied that these are a 'logical' outcome of Middle Helladic social evolution after the demise of Early Helladic 'civilisation'. No attempt is made to review the Middle to Late Helladic archaeological sequence of mainland Greece or to explain the rise of Mycenaean Greece.[212] However, the author would subscribe to the position that the Mycenaean palaces are the spectacular, if unique, outcome of a specific historical constellation of the eastern Mediterranean, including Crete and the Minoan civilisation during the second millennium BC (e. g. Wright 2008: 242–243, 251–252; 2010: 810–815; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 290–291; Voutsaki 2010a: 107–108). Similarly, it is by no means implied that Mycenaean Greece is in any way a model on which to evaluate the earlier corridor houses of mainland Greece or any contemporaneous societies of 'Barbarian' Europe. All of these could only be found wanting and to have failed to reach comparable heights of socio-political evolution. To the contrary, it is suggested that we 'use' Mycenae as we should be using the notorious Hawaiian chiefdoms, wrongly imposed upon us as a universal stage of social evolution, namely as an extreme and historically specific example of 'political economy', i. e. for once all, or at least most, features put forward by advocates of this approach as truly being present and coalescing in one historical setting. Understood in this way Mycenaean society may become a foil against which better to appreciate difference and the different logics of 'traditional' prehistoric societies, instead of failure to live up to an ideal state (see also Wolpert 2004: 127–127). This may help to develop a more fine-grained understanding of the different uses of social space in culture groups and communities that are 'complex', but hardly 'hierarchical' or even on their way to anything broadly Mycenaean-like at all.

Finally, without arguing for a strictly reflectionist approach to archaeological material remains, but certainly moving in this direction as far as the extreme poles of social organisation are concerned, Mycenae may then also provide us with an impression of the options available to

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[212] See, for example, the syntheses covering Middle Helladic and Late Helladic (Mycenaean) mainland Greece by Rutter (2001), Wright (2008; 2010), Voutsaki (2010a; 2010b), Shelton (2010) and Wiersma (2014).

truly hierarchical systems to interfere with both the lives of their populace and their environment, and *vice versa,* with the expenditure required in material as well as symbolic terms to reproduce such systems. None of this is found in the communities of its wider European hinterland, while the Mycenaean palaces themselves may well be seen as a faint reflection of the Bronze Age urban civilisations of the Near East. For this reason, it is suggested that in comparing Mycenae with both its Early Helladic predecessors and Bronze Age communities of the Carpathian Basin and beyond we should be wary of misrepresentational 'absence of evidence ...'-style arguments. We can learn from the different ways that space was structured in social life and drawn upon for its reproduction in traditional peasant communities and palatial centres respectively, but we should not be looking for equivalents, transfer or assimilation. To repeat this point, which should be strikingly obvious anyway with reference to the burial evidence otherwise neglected in this volume: if there are several generations of lavish tholos tombs all the way up to the walls of Mycenae on the one hand (see below), and off-site cemeteries of different size with inhumation burials or cremations and some statistically detectable variation in the 'richness' of grave furnishings in the Carpathian Basin on the other, it is simply misguided to ask if any significant hierarchies may have been disguised by the burial customs of our tell-'building' communities, or how far they had come on their way to structural similarity with Mycenaean palatial society. For these are utterly different ways of dealing with death and society, and any lineage head or even 'chief' buried, for example, at Mokrin or Dunajvaros Duna dülö (e. g. Girić 1971; Wagner 2005; Vicze 2011), who may have received an additional dagger, sword, or a somewhat more elaborate ornament in his grave, would have held an entirely different view of the world, of his origins and legitimation, of his community and of his options to manipulate social life, or draw upon the resources of his group than the *wanax* of Mycenae – even if he had had a chance to see anything like the walls of 'well-built' Mycenae in his younger days.

So-called Mycenaean 'palaces' of the Late Helladic period (LH IIIA/B; *c.* 1445/1415–1190/1180 BC; cf. Shelmerdine 2008b: 4–5; Siennicka 2010: 70) are known from the eponymous site of Mycenae, from neighbouring Tiryns, and possibly Midea, in the Argolid, from Pylos in Messenia, from Thebes and Orchomenos in Boeotia, as well as possibly from a number of additional sites, such as Athens in Attica or Dimini in Thessaly.[213] Not all of these are equally well preserved (e. g. Athens), or their status as a true 'palace' is subject to debate (e. g. Gla), so that the best examples to illustrate the characteristics of this type of site are still the classic ones: Mycenae and Tiryns, well visible and known throughout antiquity for their 'Cyclopean' walls, rediscovered for a modern (western) archaeological public early on in the 19th century, famous ever since H. Schliemann hit upon Grave Circle

A in 1876, and with a more or less continuous history of archaeological research until the present day (e. g. E. French 2010: 671–672; 2013: 18–23; Maran 2010: 722–723); and Pylos, rediscovered comparatively late and with systematic archaeological work in the palace since 1939, when C. W. Blegen at the very beginning of his work discovered what is still the most complete archive of any mainland Mycenaean centre, and extended later on to the surrounding landscape (e. g. Blegen/Rawson 1966: 7–8, 95–100; Davis 2010: 680–681). Each of these sites has a complex history of occupation. While all of them share certain features which we regard 'typical' of a Mycenaean palace, both as an architectural type and with regard to the 'palatial' economical and political system behind the architectural remains,[214] there are also some distinct differences that may relate to the specific history of each site and/or to differences in their function, social and political organisation, etc. (see below). Furthermore, it is important to note here that not only was the palatial architecture discussed below dynamic, in the sense of providing a stage for social action and being drawn upon for political representation, etc., but the palace itself, or parts of it as well as surrounding building complexes and its fortifications, were subject to frequent refurbishment and repeated rebuilding. So any plan discussed can only be a static snapshot of an 'architecture of power' under permanent modification in order to meet changing demands on the broad fields of elite representation, cult, administration, storage, production, defence, etc.

As already pointed out, we are not going here into explanatory details of culture change at the turn of the Middle to Late Helladic periods, and the reasons for the rise of Mycenaean Greece. It is important, however, to bear in mind that there are two sides to this story that we have to be aware of: the specific historical setting and, broadly speaking, the role of the outside world;[215] and the importance of time and the middle- to long-term culture process. Middle Helladic society has been described as segmentary, kinship-based and household-oriented (Voutsaki 2010b: 87–92). It may already have been 'latently stratified' but 'masking' whatever inequality there was (Maran 2011a: 285–286), and it is certainly likely that male authority already rested on their prowess as hunters, warriors, or leaders of raiding parties (Wright 2008: 238–239, 242–243; 2010: 810–815; Shelton 2010: 140). Arguably, however, it was only the contact with Minoan Crete and the eastern Mediterranean that was established by such travelling parties, or later by potential mercenaries, that ultimately propelled mainland Greek communities to the rank of 'palatial' society (cf. Voutsaki 2010b: 93–105; 2010c: 75–83; Maran 2011a: 285–287;

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[213] Dickinson 1994: 78; Crowley 2008: 261–262; Siennicka 2010: 70; Hitchcock 2010: 203–205.

[214] Cf. Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 290–291; Siennicka 2010: 70; Nakassis/Galaty/Parkinson 2010: 242.

[215] The contingencies resulting from a situation whereby Minoan interests abroad combined with the importance of manipulating external contacts for early Mycenaean elites are nicely indicated by S. Voutsaki (2010a: 108): 'The sudden wealth acquired by a couple of families in Mycenae cannot be seen as the result of gradual enrichment and growth but should be attributed to cunning political manoeuvres by opportunistic leaders'. See also Wright (2010: 814–815).

FIG. II-14: PLAN OF GRAVE CIRCLE A AT MYCENAE (AFTER MARINATOS 1986: 163 FIG. 28).

Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 290). Thus, although aspiring mainland elites were in some sense selective in their use of foreign-derived material culture and turned influences and foreign culture traits to their own ends (e. g. seals and iconography; Crowley 2008: 260–261, 277–282), the emerging Mycenaean palatial system owed much to its Minoan predecessors, not least sealing, script and the role of palaces as centres of administration (e. g. Shelton 2010: 144). Although, presumably, Minoan 'corporate' strategies of political rule were replaced by the individualising 'network' ones of the Mycenaeans (Nakassis/Galaty/ Parkinson 2010: 240), and the megaron complex took the place of the central courtyard in the earlier Minoan palaces, from this perspective the above articulated view is supported that the Mycenaean palaces ultimately are the historically specific, westernmost representatives of eastern Mediterranean Bronze Age 'civilisation'. Irrespective, however, of such foreign 'prime movers' and social or economic templates, it is the opportunity

it provides to trace the gradual build-up of a stratified and politically centralised (palatial) society that makes Mycenaean Greece such an interesting object of study. This development, which also saw differential regional trajectories (Wright 2006b; 2008: 242–251; Shelton 2010: 141–142), contrasts strongly with anything seen in the wider European hinterland that is so often erroneously linked to the Mycenaean Bronze Age. It is suggestive that truly hierarchical systems in this specific Mediterranean tradition, and possibly beyond, take some time to develop and are likely to show some kind of material expression corresponding to the level of socio-political differentiation achieved and, indeed, required for its reproduction.

On the burial side, indications of social differentiation and competition among emerging elites considerably predate the evidence of the construction of the Mycenaean palaces themselves. An, as yet, exceptionally early, rich Middle Helladic II shaft grave from Kolonna on Aegina belongs

FIG. II-15: GRAVE CIRCLE A AT MYCENAE (PHOTOGRAPH: LEONIE C. KOCH).

to this context and is thought to foreshadow the later Mycenaean ideal of elite male prowess (Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997; Wright 2008: 242; Voutsaki 2010a: 107). However, it is Mycenae itself, of course, that provides the best evidence for ever more elaborate elite burials, covering the entire sequence towards fully stratified palatial society (e. g. Schofield 2007: 33–47; Wright 2008: 245–250; E. French 2010: 672–676). To begin with, during Middle Helladic III a group of still rather simple pit graves was set apart in Grave Circle B from the wider prehistoric cemetery that extended west of the (later) acropolis of Mycenae (Crowley 2008: 259; E. French 2013: 31–35). Eventually there were 25 graves in Circle B, among them fourteen more elaborate shaft graves for multiple burial, which, in parallel to their 'architectural' elaboration and the first decorated *stelae* used to mark them on the surface, saw an increasing investment in the number and quality of grave goods used to distinguish the deceased of the particular social group that chose to bury their dead in this separate burial ground (Voutsaki 2010c: 76–83).

All elements are already evident here, which were of continuing importance for Mycenaean elite burial and became ever more elaborated over subsequent generations: spatial separation and multiple burial of members of 'elite' families or kin groups; architectural elaboration and the

increasingly lavish use of precious grave goods; and the continued importance of such burials for subsequent generations, both as a monumental 'marker' of power and pre-eminence and as a focus of ritual activity related to the ancestors. The subsequent Grave Circle A, in particular, with its exceptionally rich shaft graves of Late Helladic I date, epitomises and carries forward all these aspects (figs. II-14 and II-15; e. g. Crowley 2008: 259–260; E. French 2013: 37–40, 79–80). This is true, not only because of its lavish grave furnishings, which so stimulated H. Schliemann's imagination, but even more so because of the evidence it provides for the lasting importance of these graves for the legitimation of generations of Mycenaean elites and rulers to come (Bennet 2004: 98–99). For not only were these graves visible, and may have supported claims to ancestral traditions for some two to three hundred years after the last burial had taken place, but they were important enough to become part of a major Late Helladic IIIB building programme.[216] Thus, with the western extension of the Cyclopean wall of Mycenae Grave Circle A became included inside the fortified acropolis, and by the addition of a stone enclosure and other features, it was turned into an impressive 'ancestral' monument

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[216] Wright 2006a: 62; Crowley 2008: 265; E. French 2010: 673, 675; 2013: 56; Lupack 2014: 171–174.

immediately adjacent to the ramp leading up from the new Lion Gate to the palace towering above.

At this time, shaft graves had long been replaced at Mycenae and beyond by tholos tombs as the favourite form of the local elites' high-status tombs. Although most of them were robbed already in antiquity, these monumental signs of wealth, power and genealogical tradition convey much the same message as the previous shaft graves. In addition, they may give us an impression of the development of social stratification and different local trajectories in Mycenaean Greece. Derived from Middle Helladic mainland burial mounds and/or earlier Minoan prototypes, tholos tombs in mainland Greece first appeared in Messenia in Middle Helladic III and spread subsequently to wider areas, including the Argolid, Laconia, and Attica.[217] They are found during Late Helladic I, and particularly Late Helladic II times at a number of Mycenaean regional centres, such as Mycenae itself, Tiryns, Prosymna and Midea/Dendra (LH IIIA) in the Argolid, some of them fortified, where they are thought to have been built by the members of wealthy and influential local elite families or lineages, apparently heading these competing polities (Wright 2008: 238, 245–247; Crowley 2008: 268; Hitchcock 2010: 205). Somewhat later the use of tholos tombs seems to have become even more restricted, and it has been suggested that we are seeing here a consolidation of regional hierarchies completed in Late Helladic III, with just a very few first-order political and administrative centres, where such tombs were still used by the highest ranks of Mycenaean society.[218] From Messenia there is good evidence from Linear B tablets and regional survey data that Pylos became paramount among a number of previously independent secondary centres. There was a sophisticated administrative system, with the Pylos territory divided into two large provinces, each with an hierarchically arranged system of smaller dependent sites.[219] In the Argolid, for lack of surviving comparably rich written sources, and because of the presence of at least two major fortified centres, the political landscape of Late Helladic IIIB is less clear and subject to debate (cf. Wright 2008: 246–247; Bennet 2011a: 156–157). On the one hand the dominant role of Mycenae and a unified political territory under its control is advocated, covering the whole of the Argolid (e. g. Maran 2006a: 83–85); on the other it is considered that Tiryns may have been in command of an independent territory of its own, at least for some time during the Late Helladic period (e. g. Dickinson 1994: 78; Galaty/Parkinson 2007b: 12; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 299).

In any case, Mycenae features an exceptional series of nine tholos tombs dated from Late Helladic IIA to Late Helladic IIIB, which certainly testifies to the importance of this site and the success of its ruling families (E. French 2013: 10 fig. 1, 41–44, 69–71). Since all of these tholoi were robbed, their suggested chronological sequence is an approximation only, based upon the assumption of increasing architectural refinement. The famous 'Treasury of Atreus' belongs to the typologically 'youngest' group of tholos tombs, with carefully dressed ashlar masonry and a relieving triangle above the doorway, or stomion, etc. (fig. II-16), which overlaps with the building of the first fortification wall. However, more important than chronological precision of the dating of individual graves is the general impression of the surroundings of Mycenae, which was shaped by the gradual addition of generation upon generation of such monuments. The older Grave Circles A and B have already been mentioned, and now a series of impressive tholoi was constructed, imprinting upon the landscape palatial predominance, or claims, respectively, by their occupant lineages to the ancestry of their power and wealth. Upon approaching Mycenae from the plain below, ascending along a carefully built road and even crossing a bridge built to pass the stream running down the valley (Dickinson 1994: 163 fig. 5.34; Siennicka 2010: 75), one would not only have been impressed by the successive phases of the 'well-built' walls of Mycenae, in particular, of course, by the final extension to the west of the acropolis in Late Helladic IIIB. Rather, one would also have had to pass impressive building complexes, such as the 'West House Group' already in the lower town (see below; cf. Siennicka 2010: 78–80), and interspersed with them several elaborate tholos tombs, most prominent, of course, the 'Treasury of Atreus' and the tombs of 'Clytemnestra' and 'Aegisthus' (fig. II-17). This is symbolic political communication, drawing attention to the long line of past powerful rulers and the abiding splendour of their houses (e. g. Wright 2006a: 59–60; 2006b: 17–18; Siennicka 2010: 83; Lupack 2014: 171–174). The resulting '"distributed" narrative of dynastic power' (Bennet 2004: 99) would have been almost inescapable for anyone approaching from this direction. It is not the chance result of looking for a suitable burial place randomly in the landscape. The deep dromoi opened directly onto the road, and with their accurately crafted and ornamented facades provided a hint of the impressive interior architecture of these graves, with their corbel vaults hidden from everyday sight.[220] This, too, was not a short-time concern, but one clearly aimed at future generations. Like the monumentalisation of Grave Circle A, these tholoi were continuously drawn upon, and even reworked, to provide a focus for socio-political and ritual action – just mind the later addition of a secondary facade to the 'Tomb of Aegisthus' from the oldest group of Mycenaean tholoi (E. French 2013: 41).

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[217] Cf. Dickinson 1994: 224–226; Wright 2006a: 57–58; 2006b: 16–17; Schofield 2007: 57–58; Bennet 2007a: 32–34; Crowley 2008: 260; Cavanagh 2008: 328–335; Davis 2010: 683.

[218] Dickinson 1994: 227; Wright 2008: 246–247; Cavanagh 2008: 335; Nakassis/Galaty/Parkinson 2010: 242; Davis 2010: 683–684; Shelton 2010: 145.

[219] Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 299–301; Davis 2010: 681; Shelton 2010: 142; Bennet 2011a: 151–155.

[220] For a similar situation at Pylos, with the dromos of 'Tholos IV' pointing towards a gateway in the early Mycenaean fortification of the site, see Blegen *et al.* (1973: 95–110), Wright (2006b: 9, 11), Bennet (2007a: 33–34 with fig. 3.4, 36–37), Davis (2010: 684) and Murphy (2014: 212–213, 216). Murphy (2014: 209–212, 216–218) argues that, unlike Mycenae, at Pylos there was a shift from earlier power strategies focusing on the burial domain to the domestic arena, i. e. the palace, and feasting organised by the *wanax*, and the tholos tombs lost their previous importance for the legitimation of palatial power.
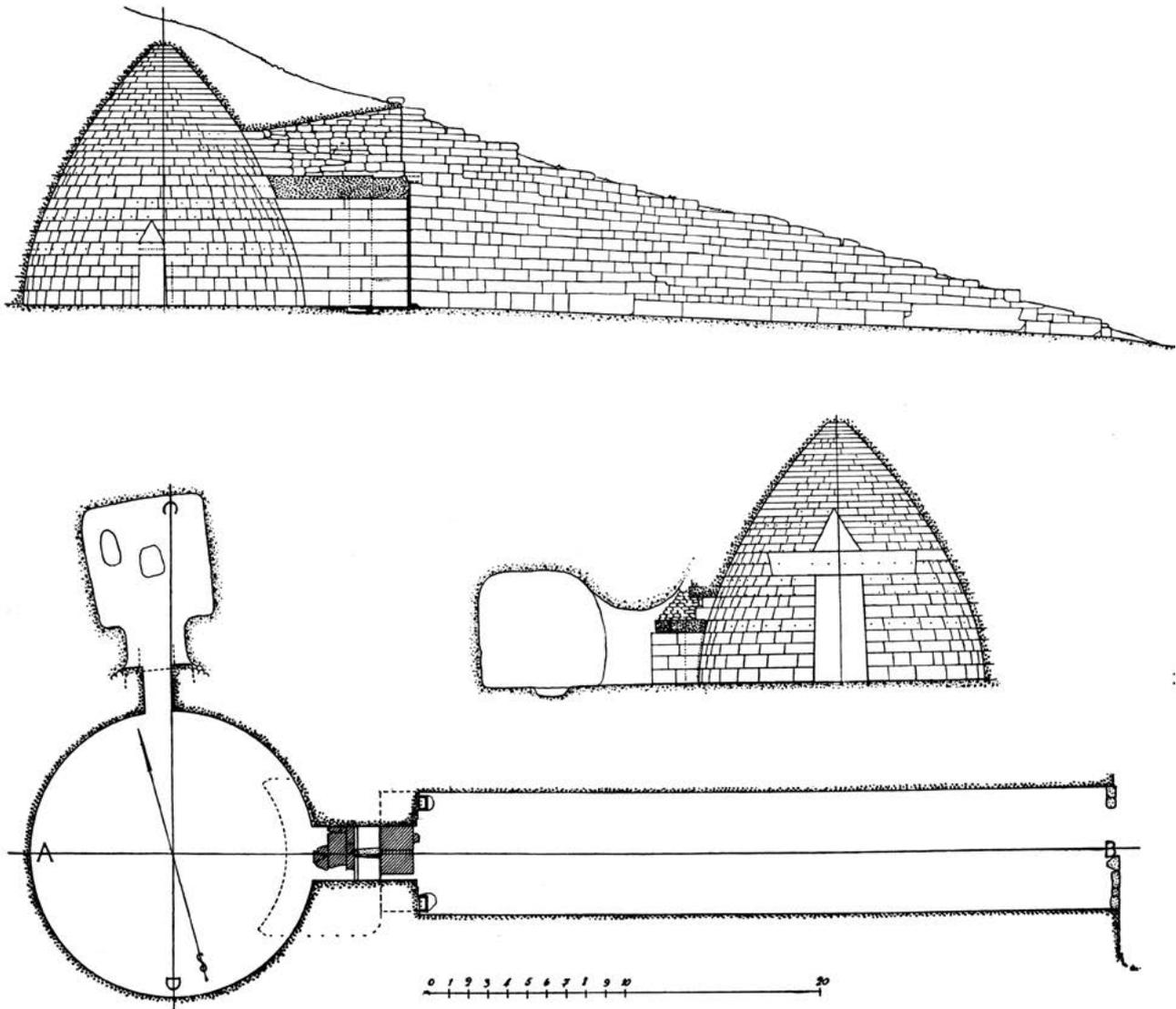
FIG. II-16: PLAN AND SECTION OF THE 'TREASURY OF ATREUS' AT MYCENAE (AFTER MARINATOS 1986: 165 FIGS. 31–33).

Turning to architecture and the spatial organisation of these Late Helladic palatial centres, broadly the same concern with authority, power and their timeless representation are immediately apparent, if one thinks of the elevated and widely visibly location on hilltops or rocky outcrops preferred for such sites. Their imposing Cyclopean walls fall into the same category,[221] which clearly sought to symbolise strength and superiority beyond their immediate defensive function to everybody approaching them (fig. II-18).[222] We are not equally well-informed, however, on the early predecessors from which this architecture developed, since most of the well-known architectural remains surviving at the 'classic' sites of Mycenae, Tiryns and Pylos belong to the later phases of these palaces' development (cf. Wright 2006b: 25–41; 2008: 250). Pylos, for example, during earlier phases (LH II to IIIA) possibly featured a complex of three buildings arranged around an open court rather like the preceding Minoan palaces than the typical Mycenaean or Late Helladic ones to follow (Wright 2006b: 14–15 fig. 1.3, 21; 2008: 250; Davis 2010: 683; cf. Dickinson 1994: 153). On the other hand, Mansion I at the Menelaion in Laconia, dated to Late Helladic II, with its central hall and anteroom, adjacent corridors and side chambers is often referred to as an early prototype of Mycenaean palatial

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[221] Like the general layout of the palaces (see below) in this respect, too, there is some variation. For Pylos apparently was fortified only during an earlier phase of the palace, while the final palace did not have a Cyclopean wall comparable to Mycenae or Tiryns (e. g. Dickinson 1994: 160–161; Crowley 2008: 262).

[222] See, for example, Dickinson (1994: 78–79, 160), Crowley (2008: 265–266), Siennicka (2010: 72) and Hitchcock (2010: 206, 208). From a late phase of their existence (LH IIIB), however, from a number of palatial centres such as Mycenae, Tiryns and Athens there is evidence of extensions and modifications to their fortifications, often designed to ensure water supply, which are often attributed to defensive needs and a potential feeling of increasing danger and conflict (e. g. Dickinson 1994: 81, 162–163; Crowley 2008: 262; Deger-Jalkotzy 2008: 388–389; E. French 2010: 677; 2013: 101–102; Maran 2010: 726–728).
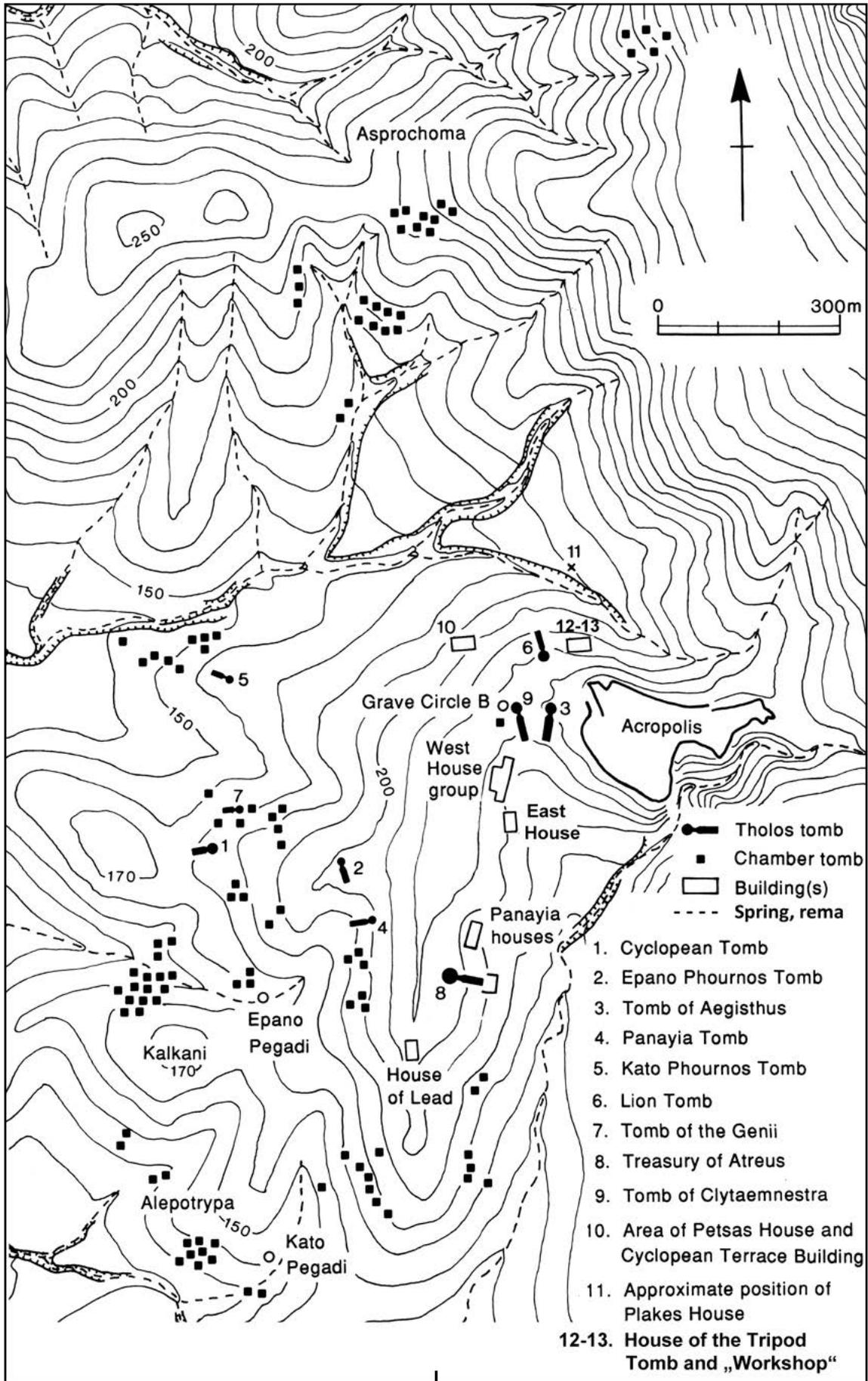
FIG. II-17: THE SURROUNDINGS AND LOWER TOWN OF MYCENAE WITH VARIOUS 'GENERATIONS' OF THOLOS AND CHAMBER TOMBS INTERSPERSED WITH BUILDING COMPLEXES (AFTER SIENNICKA 2010: 73 FIG. 2).

Fig. II-18: The 'Cyclopean' fortification of Tiryns with the West Staircase (photograph: Leonie C. Koch).

architecture (Dickinson 1994: 153; Wright 2006b: 12 fig. 1.2a, 20; 2008: 246–247, 250; Hitchcock 2010: 202–203). The 'megaron' as such, of course, part of Mansion I and central to every later Mycenaean palace proper (fig. II-19), is an old building type with its roots at least extending back to the Early Bronze Age Aegean world (e. g. Hitchcock 2010: 201–202). Characteristically Mycenaean, however, what previously was a free-standing building of a certain architectural quality and with clear elite connotations (e. g. Ünlüsoy 2006), is now integrated into a larger and functionally differentiated building complex (fig. II-20). The Mycenaean megaron, then, is the central unit of a larger 'palace' complex (e. g. Wright 2006b: 8; Dickinson 1994: 153–157; Crowley 2008: 262–267; Hitchcock 2010: 203), with the decorated hearth and the throne in its main room clearly pointing to its specialised use for the representation of power, elite gatherings, feasting and decision-making (for discussion see below). Its rich fresco decoration, and the material culture associated with it, all support the notion of formal and high-status activities taking place in the central hearth room. The entire megaron complex, with an anteroom and porch supported by columns, a large court in front, ideally surrounded by colonnades and accessible via a propylon, would have served to reinforce exclusivity and to regulate access.

All palaces have additional rooms or buildings related to the central megaron in political, economical and functional terms. There are recurring features in this group, and the presence as such of rooms, entire wings or buildings devoted to craft production, storage, administration, cult and related activities, is a defining feature of all Mycenaean palaces. There is, however, also considerable variability in the development and layout of different palaces (Wright 2006a: 61–62; 2006b: 18–28; Crowley 2008: 262–267; Hitchcock 2010: 203–204). The spatial organisation or distribution of activities related to the functioning of the palaces as an administrative centre was different, depending apparently on various factors such as the previous building history, the topography of the site, or specific notions held by local elites how social or political space should be organised, including different ways to integrate foreign architectural elements into a specifically Mycenaean-style 'architecture of power'. Thus, for example, Mycenae, Tiryns and Pylos all have evidence of a second 'throne room' or a 'lesser megaron', but if such was a necessity for the 'working' of the palace, or a reflection of its highest political offices,[223] the actual architectural solutions found

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[223] It has been suggested that the *wanax* and *lawagetas* duality derived from Linear B is reflected in the 'bipartide' structure of the palaces with two adjacent megara or halls like at Tiryns and Pylos (e. g. Kilian 1984;

Fig. II-19: The megaron of the Mycenaean palace at Pylos with storage facilities and the central throne room (after Panagiotopoulos 2008: fig. on page 32).

Fig. II-20: Plan of the Mycenaean palace at Pylos in Messenia (after Dickinson 1994: 156 fig. 5.31).

FIG. II-21: PLAN OF THE MYCENAEAN PALACE AT TIRYNS IN THE ARGOLID
(AFTER DICKINSON 1994: 155 FIG. 5.30).

although of a different character with scenes of warfare in Hall 64 instead of processions and feasting, and in Room 46 there was a central hearth as well.[224] At Mycenae, where the preservation of the central megaron complex is not very good, a corresponding room may even have been located in the neighbouring House of Columns only (fig. II-22; Dickinson 1994: 154; E. French 2013: 59, 61–62). Similarly, supposedly Minoan architectural elements make their appearance in quite different locations and functional contexts, such as the Grand Staircase at Mycenae, the above mentioned 'banquet' Halls 64/65 in the west wing of Pylos or the *polythyron-like* access to the anteroom of the Tiryns megaron (Wright 2006b: 14, 21; Mühlenbruch 2010: 99). Like other groups of Minoan material culture (e. g. frescoes and seals; Dickinson 1994: 164–168, 188–193; Crowley 2008: 269–280), these elements can only be said to have been used piecemeal to enhance the representation of Mycenaean elites' power and prestige and the (architectural) 'sophistication' of their palaces, which otherwise relied on rather different strategies of communicating political and economic predominance.

Generally speaking, the palace at Tiryns during its final Late Helladic IIIB2 building phase may be taken to provide the clearest surviving example of Mycenaean notions of hierarchically structured, orderly social and political space (fig. II-21). The multilevel palatial building was rising on the upper citadel, towering above the lower citadel with architectural remains featuring evidence of administration, craft production as well as storage, and both these parts of the site were surrounded by massive Cyclopean walls (e. g. Maran 2010: 726–728). The palace itself integrated the two megara already mentioned, with additional rooms presumably for elite living and palatial political and administrative activities, as well as for storage, which is also assumed, for example, in the corbel vaults of the adjacent south and east galleries. Access to this entire architectural ensemble was carefully controlled and, during this final phase, guided along a narrow passage in between the outer Cyclopean wall and the terracing wall of the upper citadel, and on towards the central megaron by passing through two propyla and additional courtyards (see discussion below).

By contrast, Mycenae, at first glance, looks less orderly, which is due in part to the rather steep hill on which this palace is situated and the different levels of terraces for building this entailed. There is, however, a comparable concern with providing an impressive aspect and guiding access upon approaching the central palace and megaron complex from below. Again, this would have been most clearly discernible during the latest building phase (LH IIIB; Crowley 2008: 265–266; E. French 2010: 675–677; 2013: 52–64, 95–99), entering the citadel via the Lion Gate, passing Grave Circle A, the Cult Centre, etc., and up via a system of ramps or stairs to the palace (fig. II-22). Somewhat unlike Tiryns, however, discrete building complexes

differed widely: at Tiryns there is the clearest evidence for the coexistence of two adjacent megara, one large, one small, and each accessible via its own colonnaded court, for two successive building phases (fig. II-21; Maran 2010: 725–726). At Pylos during the final Late Helladic IIIB building phase of the palace, on the other hand, there are at least two 'candidates' for the function of an auxiliary 'megaron': The suit of Halls 64 and 65 in the Southwestern Building surviving from an earlier building phase (Wright 2006b: 15 fig. 1.3), and Room 46 located in the east wing of the main building and accessible both from outside the complex and from the central court in front of the main megaron (fig. II-20; Blegen/Rawson 1966: 197–203, 247–259). Both had wall-paintings like the central megaron,

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1988; Wright 2006b: 20); this has not been universally accepted (e. g. Dickinson 1994: 154) or modified like in J. Maran's (2006a: 84–85) proposal that the smaller subsidiary megaron may have been the seat of some kind of governor or deputy in charge of the Tiryns palace during the absence of the true paramount rulers resident at Mycenae.

[224] Lang 1969: 208–211, 214–215; Dickinson 1994: 154–156; Davis/Bennet 1999: 106–110, 115–118; Bennet 2004: 99; 2007b: 12–17; Thaler 2006: 103; Davis 2010: 686.
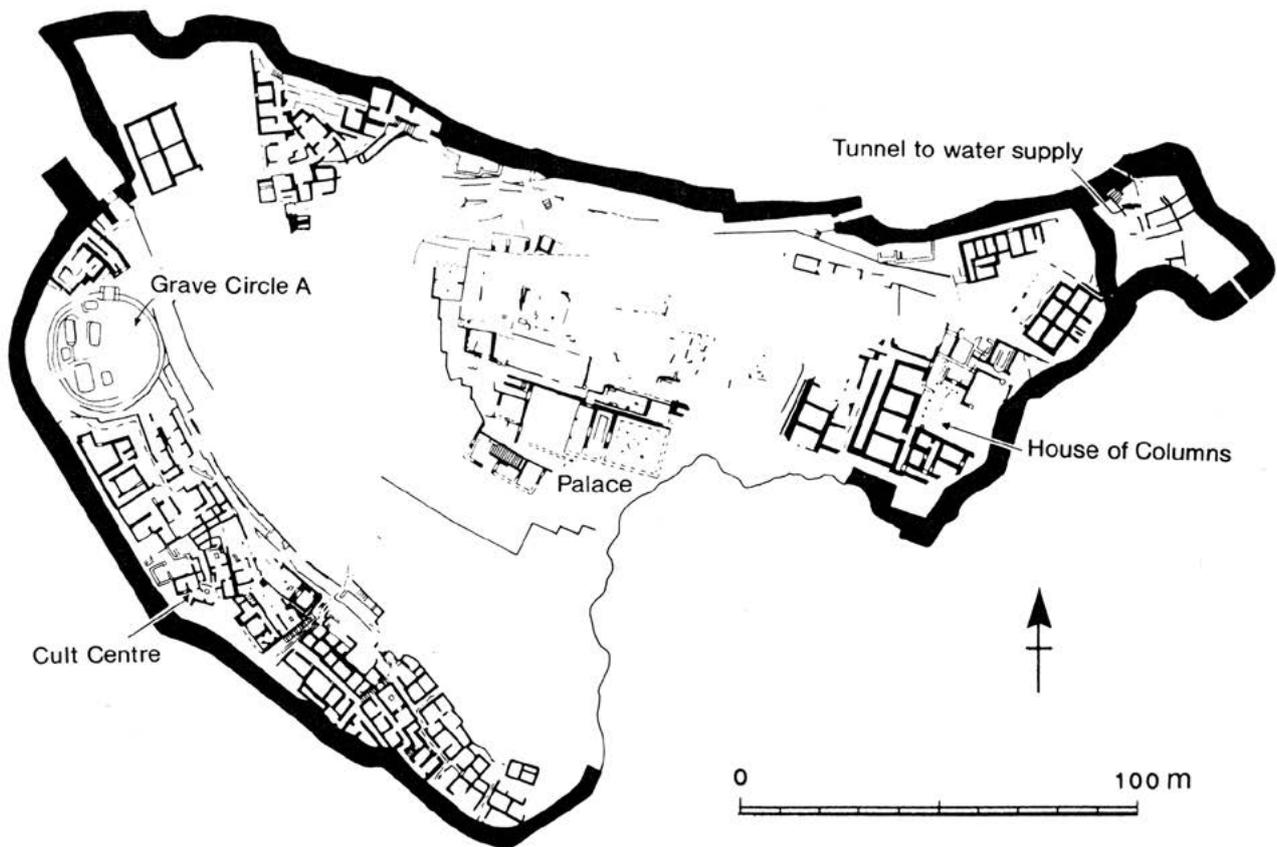
FIG. II-22: PLAN OF THE PALACE AT MYCENAE IN THE ARGOLID (AFTER DICKINSON 1994: 154 FIG. 5.29).

functionally associated with the palace are found on various levels throughout the fortified acropolis and beyond in the open lower town (fig. II-17). This different arrangement may have been due to both the topography of the site and to the larger scale of such activities controlled by the palace at Mycenae. The precise function of some of these building complexes is disputed, and each has a dynamic of its own with different building phases and potentially the relocation of activities (E. French 2010: 673–677). In any case, however, there is clear evidence of magazines, specialised craft production and workshops dependent on the palace, both on the acropolis, for example the 'House of the Columns' and the 'Artisans' Quarter' (E. French 2013: 61, 98–99), and in the lower town, for example the buildings of the 'West House Group' (e. g. Deger-Jalkotzy 2008: 388; Siennicka 2010: 79–82). Additionally, there are also rooms or buildings devoted to other activities such as storage, residence and small-scale domestic production, or cult, most prominent among the latter, of course, the Cult Centre itself (E. French 2013: 84–92). Importantly, such evidence for functional differentiation comes both from the archaeological remains, such as the raw materials kept in stock, or production debris, and from written Linear B sources. It is indicative of a rather differentiated system of palatial control and variable degrees of social and economic 'distance' to the palace. Thus, for example, in the buildings of the West House Group in the lower town (fig. II-23), there were artisans living and working who where clearly handling exotic raw materials, such as

the ivory finds from the West House Group (or, for that reason, the 'Ivory Houses') counting into the thousands, supplied by the palace and worked into precious objects for elite use or exchange (Dickinson 1994: 157; Crowley 2008: 266; Siennicka 2010: 81; E. French 2013: 67–68). According to Linear B texts, the same also holds true for the production of prestigious weaponry and other precious metal objects designated to elite consumption. Raw materials and provisions of foodstuffs supplied to the artisans working in such facilities were monitored by sealing and Linear B tablets (e. g. Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 303–306). Similarly, palatial control extended to commodities such as wool or olive oil (e. g. the 'House of the Oil Merchant') for the centralised production of high-quality textiles, or perfumed oil for external palatial trade and exchange. By contrast, other domains of subsistence and craft production remained beyond palatial interest, or were less closely monitored by palatial administration (see also below). An example from this group is provided by the 'Panagia Houses' close to the Treasury of Atreus in the lower town of Mycenae, which by the somewhat lower quality of its architecture as well as by its inventory (i. e. lack of script, etc.) has been identified as a 'private' building complex further remote from the palatial sphere and economic control (Crowley 2008: 266; E. French 2010: 675; 2013: 68; Siennicka 2010: 80).

Finally, a similar pattern can be identified at Pylos, where there is extensive evidence of both storage rooms and
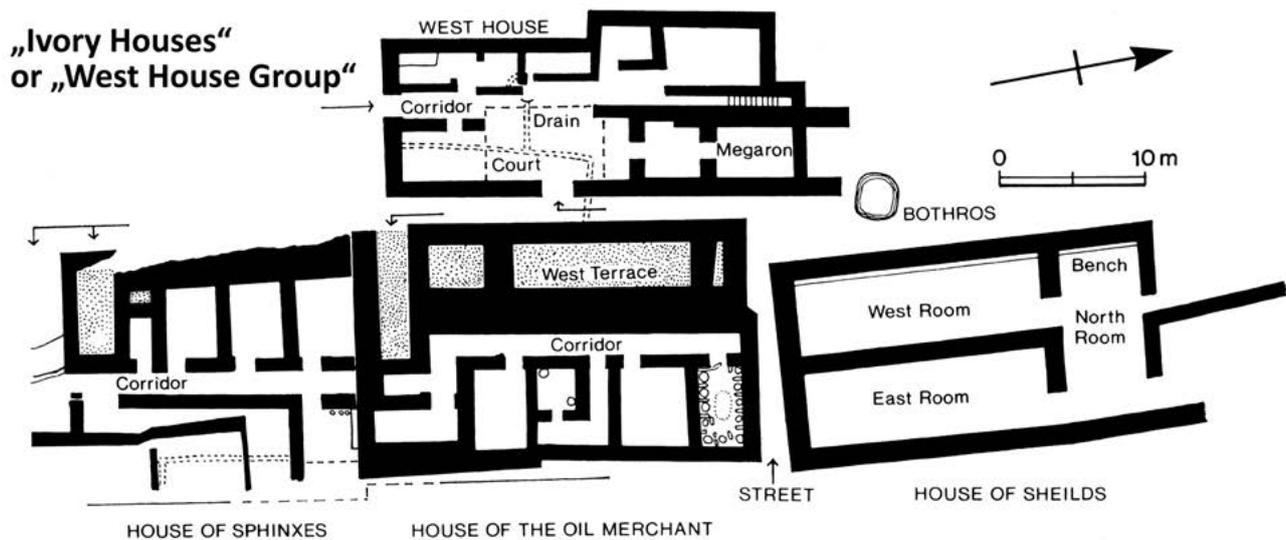
FIG. II-23: THE BUILDING COMPLEX OF THE WEST HOUSE GROUP IN THE LOWER TOWN OF MYCENAE (AFTER SIENNICKA 2010: 80 FIG. 6).

workshops integrated into the main palatial complex and located in separate buildings close by (fig. II-20; Blegen/Rawson 1966; Davis 2010: 685–686). Here, too, the exact function of these complexes is not always clear, note the supposed 'palace workshop' and chariot production in the 'Northeastern Building'.[225] Others, such as the 'Wine Magazine', are identified more clearly, both by the archaeological evidence of storage jars and seal impressions marked with the Linear B correlate for wine (Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 295–296; Davis 2010: 686). From Pylos, too, there is the only certain 'archive' complex identified in mainland Late Helladic Greece, comprising two rooms, one presumably for the scribes themselves and the other for the (short-term) keeping of the documents they had produced to monitor the status of current administrative and economic transactions (Bennet 2001: 27–31; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 297–298; Davis 2010: 681–682, 685). Its location, directly beside the entrance to the main court, in front of the megaron, may be taken to reflect the importance of writing and administration for the operation of palatial economy and the efficiency of palace rule. The same certainly holds true for a number of storage rooms communicating to the various courts of the palatial complex and the central megaron itself, where large numbers of pottery sets have been found that are thought related to the practice of feasting (Bendall 2004: 112–124; Thaler 2006: 98, 105–106; Bennet 2007b: 13–14; Davis 2010: 684–686) – another central element of Mycenaean social and political organisation that we have to return to below.

Due in large part to the evidence from Linear B documents, written in an early form of Greek, our knowledge of Mycenaean social and political organisation by far exceeds what we know of prehistoric Bronze Age societies from other parts of Europe. However, since these are not, for example, 'proper' historical documents or codices of law, but for their most part administrative notes monitoring a rather limited set of typically short-term economic transactions of interest to the palace, our knowledge derived from this source is somehow biased and limited to certain aspects of Mycenaean social and political life only.[226] Broadly in line with the archaeological evidence (e. g. the graves [see above] or palatial architecture [for discussion see below]) although, of course, of a different quality (see, for example, Cavanagh 2008: 334), we are informed by the various officials and their titles or positions mentioned, that Mycenaean society was a strongly hierarchical one which comprised a hierarchy of impersonal offices, i. e. positions at least in part independent of their holder's personal merits, charisma and prestige or kinship connections, and a functionally differentiated populace of warriors, craft specialists, as well as non-elite peasants and dependent labourers (e. g. Killen 2006; Schofield 2007: 138–143; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 290–295). Even so, however, we are not comprehensively informed of the rights and duties of the different offices referred to. On top of the palatial hierarchy there was certainly the so-called *wanax,* who was in charge of palatial administration and economy, appointed other officials, and apparently had an important role in organising and sponsoring public ritual and palatial feasting (Shelmerdine 2007: 40–46; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 292–293). Less clear are the responsibilities of the 'second man' in the state, the *lawagetas*, who may have had a military function alongside other duties, down for example to the *basileus*, who was in charge of groups of workers, and not yet a 'king' as implied by the later classical Greek usage of the word (Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 293–294).

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[225] Cf. Blegen/Rawson 1966: 299–325; Bendall 2003; Thaler 2006: 104; Bennet 2007a: 34; Shelmerdine 2007: 43; Schon 2007: 134–139; 2014: 105–109.

[226] In addition, the preserved tablets typically represent distinct time slices only, such as a late phase at Pylos when the archive was destroyed by fire (see Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 291–292 and Siennicka 2010: 70–72 with further references).

More interesting, in our present context, is the information provided on the extent of palatial power and the actual control exercised by palatial administration over different spheres of life and economy. Mycenaean palaces, such as Mycenae, Tiryns or Pylos, were in the centre – in spatial and architectural, as well as ideological terms – of a 'polity' in the sense of a 'politically organised society', or a distinct social 'configuration of political and economic power' (Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 289–290). Only from Pylos, however, is there evidence that this would have corresponded to a more or less fixed territory, while the existence of true boundaries, if any, of other Mycenaean polities is unclear (Bennet 2007a: 30–31 with fig. 3.1; Wright 2008: 245–247; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 290–291, 299–301). This corresponds, on the internal side, with more recent attempts at modelling Mycenaean political rule and the working of palatial economy, since there is a growing consensus that palatial control was 'selective', and large sectors of daily life and economical activity may actually have been going on unmonitored and outside the sphere of palace interest.[227] There were differences in the economic organisation of major palatial centres, but Mycenaean political economy in general, it is argued, rather than featuring the classic redistribution of bulk foodstuffs relied on the 'mobilisation' of a clearly defined set of goods and commodities towards the palace, where they were used to finance the working of the palatial institutions and to reproduce the political order of the polity. Thus, for example, agricultural products were of interest only insofar as they were required to support palace controlled production of luxuries for representation, gift giving and external exchange, military expenditures or palace-sponsored ritual and feasting. This, it seems, only affected a part of the total agricultural production. Olive oil, wine and wool were produced under palatial control, or probably more often by independent local producers, and claimed as a tribute by the palace, where they were directly consumed or turned into high-quality end products such as perfumed oil or fine textiles for palatial use or exchange. Similarly, only few sectors of luxury craft production, depending on a high level of skill and exotic raw materials to be obtained only by the palatial elites, were under direct supervision and located in workshops close to the palace itself, where they were manufactured into prestigious luxury items for elite representation or exchange. Other crafts, such as general metal working or pottery production, were more widely distributed throughout different 'ranks' of settlements. They were only in part centrally monitored and supplied with raw materials (e. g. copper and tin), or not subject at all to palatial control, such as the production of ceramics.[228]

What is emerging here is a differentiated picture of Mycenaean society, somewhat different from earlier 'holistic' models linking political power to redistribution, etc. Instead, far from total palatial control there was apparently a certain degree of 'freedom' for both elite group members' and 'commoners'' activities and aspirations, both within and beyond the institutionalised palatial system of political economy (e. g. Dickinson 1994: 85–86; 2006a: 37–38; Nakassis/Galaty/Parkinson 2010: 246–247). As such, the administrative and economic systems of Mycenaean palaces were clearly drawing on Near Eastern predecessors (Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 290; Shelton 2010: 144). However, it was not a simple copy but rather an adaptation to local Greek conditions – both broadly environmental ones, such as Mediterranean climate and the limited size of territories, and social ones, insofar as these palaces were the specific result of continued interaction among Mycenaean elites themselves, their knowledge and interpretation of foreign 'worlds' that they may have been visiting, and the wider populace back home in the polities developing under their rule. Compared to 'group-oriented' or 'corporate' Minoan Crete, the specific Mycenaean style or strategy of political rule, which developed from small-scale Middle Helladic communities organised around competing kinship groups (Wright 2008; 2010; Voutsaki 2010b; 2010c), has been characterised as 'individualising' and 'networking', since it set a premium on individual rule and the mediation of social interaction – internal as well as external between competing centres – by the command and exchange of exotic or elaborately crafted valuables (Galaty/Parkinson 2007b: 9–13; Nakassis/Galaty/Parkinson 2010: 240–244). It is such local Late Helladic notions of elite representation and the setting required for the reproduction of their authority, which are most clearly reflected in the specifically Mycenaean 'architecture of power', that we will turn to in the following paragraphs.

It has been noted for some time that Mycenaean palaces are not only 'impressive' in the sense of reflecting the resident ruler's power – which they obviously do as well – but in a much more complex way draw upon architectural means and sensory impressions to bodily prescribe an adequate mode of approach on visitors and shape their perception of socio-political 'reality', as well as their own position in the order of things. In a general sense, the layout of the palaces of Mycenae and Tiryns has been described by the early advocates of this approach as 'centripetal', with the main passages, propyla and courts increasingly 'pulling' people in towards the central megaron complex. At the same time it potentially denied access and heightened an awareness – for most of those approaching – of their own inferiority in contrast to the importance and meaning of whatever activities were going on within the central hearth room – hidden to most of the people for most of the time (Wright 2006b: 39–40; Maran 2006a: 79–80). Processions and palace-sponsored feasting have been suggested as the obvious occasions on which such notions could have developed, and they are widely accepted as important elements of Mycenaean ritual and

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[227] E. g. Dickinson 1994: 81–86; 2006a: 35–41; Voutsaki/Killen 2001b: 1–3; Shelmerdine 2006: 73–74; 2007: 43; Galaty/Parkinson 2007b: 4–5; Halstead 2007: 70–72; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 291–292, 306–308; Siennicka 2010: 71, 79–82; Nakassis/Galaty/Parkinson 2010: 244–247; Nakassis 2010: 127–130, 138–139; Parkinson/Pullen 2014: 74–75, 79; Schon 2014: 104–105; Bennet/Halstead 2014: 272–274.
[228] E. g. Dickinson 1994: 83–84; Voutsaki 2001: 196–197; Shelmerdine 2006: 79–84; 2007: 43–45; Schon 2007: 136–139; 2014: 105–109; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 303–308; Parkinson/Pullen 2014: 77–79.

the legitimation of social hierarchies and political power.[229] Beyond such 'formal' events, however, which were clearly meant to be framed by the palatial architecture and to show individuals moving along passageways and remain in their 'appropriate' courtyards (see below; Maran 2006a: 80), the specific effect palatial architecture sought to achieve would certainly have been felt to varying degrees and to different effect on more mundane occasions as well. Depending on the status of people present and their respective outlook, this may have involved anything from the everyday perception of most non-elite persons from the environs, never allowed there themselves, of an inaccessible complex of palatial buildings towering on top of the massive walls of the citadel, and home to mysterious events and secret workings of power, to the 'dwarfing' of the palace's own population by their occasional dealings in the wider citadel area, or impressing the envoys of foreign powers requesting audience of the *wanax*.

J. Maran, in particular, and his collaborators, by their analyses of the architectural remains and associated finds, extending the work of J. C. Wright (e. g. 2006a; 2006b), have considerably refined our understanding of the actual 'workings' of this palatial architecture.[230] Maran's is the most fine-grained reconstruction of the way a visitor to Tiryns and Mycenae would have taken to the central megaron in terms of the performative quality of the architecture and the open spaces he or she would have had to pass (fig. II-24), and the deliberate use of architectural means to guide movement and evoke a feeling of awe and the 'mysteries' of these sites (Maran 2006a: 81).[231] Entering, for example, via the main gate of the Tiryns citadel, approached from outside via a ramp, with the towering Cyclopean wall to the right, immediately upon passing through the gate the true massiveness and the extreme width of this fortification would instill awe and 'require' adequate appreciation. Having thus entered the citadel, the visitor was led towards the left and into a narrow ascending passage between the outer wall and the terracing of the upper citadel. He or she then faced yet another impressive gate and a smaller second one further on, which had to be passed through before the first widening of the route occurred, and the visitor entered a still fairly small outer forecourt. With the colonnades on top of the east gallery to the left, to continue upwards our visitor now had to turn sharp right towards the impressive outer propylon and move on from the brightness of the forecourt, flooded with sunlight, into the shadow of the propylon's halls (e. g. Maran 2006a: 81–82; Mühlenbruch 2010: 95–99). Stepping out again into the sunlight, one is eventually aware of the much larger and more spacious second, or interior, forecourt. Proceeding, the visitor turns right again, and once more experiences a sequence of light-to-dark-to-light sensations by passing across the court,

through the smaller inner propylon, and on into the great colonnaded court in front of the main megaron. Once more the visitor is forced to turn, for instead of directly facing the propylon the megaron complex too is set slightly off axis. Passing the stone altar, set in line with the megaron, our visitor would have moved across the wide sunlit court and on via the porch and anteroom into the richly decorated focus of palatial representation, the main room with its painted floor and walls, the hearth and throne.

Such framing of movement and perception, associated with various gates and propyla where access could be granted or denied, is not the chance effect of defensive needs, unspecified elite representation or administrative functions located in this complex. Rather, it is plausibly argued that the repeated shift of axes, thresholds, the succession of narrow passages and wide courts, as well as the contrast of dark and light episodes, were all deliberately employed to embody and heighten an awareness that one was moving into ever more exclusive zones of added ritual meaning and political importance.[232] Supporting evidence, that we are truly dealing with a carefully devised architectural structure, which on various levels acted so as to guide movement and determine perception, comes from numerous other architectural cues working in broadly the same direction, although potentially on different levels of deliberation. For example, 'liminal' points were marked not only by the gates or propyla, and eventually by the front porch of the central megaron itself, but also by employing conspicuously coloured conglomerate blocks for the main gate, the inner propylon, and the entrance to the megaron (fig. II-24; Maran 2006a: 82–83). Like the play with dark/light and narrow/wide contrasts, this would have been yet another 'signal' that one was about to cross an important symbolic threshold, provided in this case by the intrinsic visual properties of the material used itself. Whether it was also realised by most people that this was in fact 'non-local' stone pointing to the territory of Mycenae is another question, referring to a higher level of prior knowledge and symbolic sophistication (Wright 2006a: 59–60; Maran 2006a: 82). Similarly, different levels of communication can be discerned with regard to the quality of the floors and the wall-paintings or frescoes tentatively restored only recently to their original positions in the central part of the Tiryns palatial complex (e. g. Maran 2012a: 152–158; see also Kilian 1984 for Pylos). Upon entering the citadel, initially one would have been 'accompanied' by the massive Cyclopean stone blocks so important for the perception of the strength of Mycenaean palaces from the outside – a 'message' even, at least to later Greeks, of supernatural powers required to build these walls. Passing on towards the central megaron, at some point there was a change in the medium applied (Maran 2006a: 83), and colourful frescoes may in general terms have been reminiscent of the architectural sophistication of previous Minoan palaces and have supported claims to comparable Mycenaean splendour. In line with other elements of the

[229] E. g. Wright 2004; 2008: 244; Palaima 2004; Halstead/Barrett 2004; Maran 2006a: 78; Nakassis/Galaty/Parkinson 2010: 242–243.

[230] E. g. Maran 2006a; 2012a; Thaler 2006; Mühlenbruch 2010; Stockhammer 2010.

[231] For a comparable 'reading' of the palace at Pylos in terms of 'space syntax analysis' and diachronic change in the organisation of social space, see Thaler (2006: 96–100).

[232] Maran 2006a: 80–81; 2012a: 150–151; Wright 2006a: 60–62; Thaler 2006: 100–101; Mühlenbruch 2010: 97, 99.
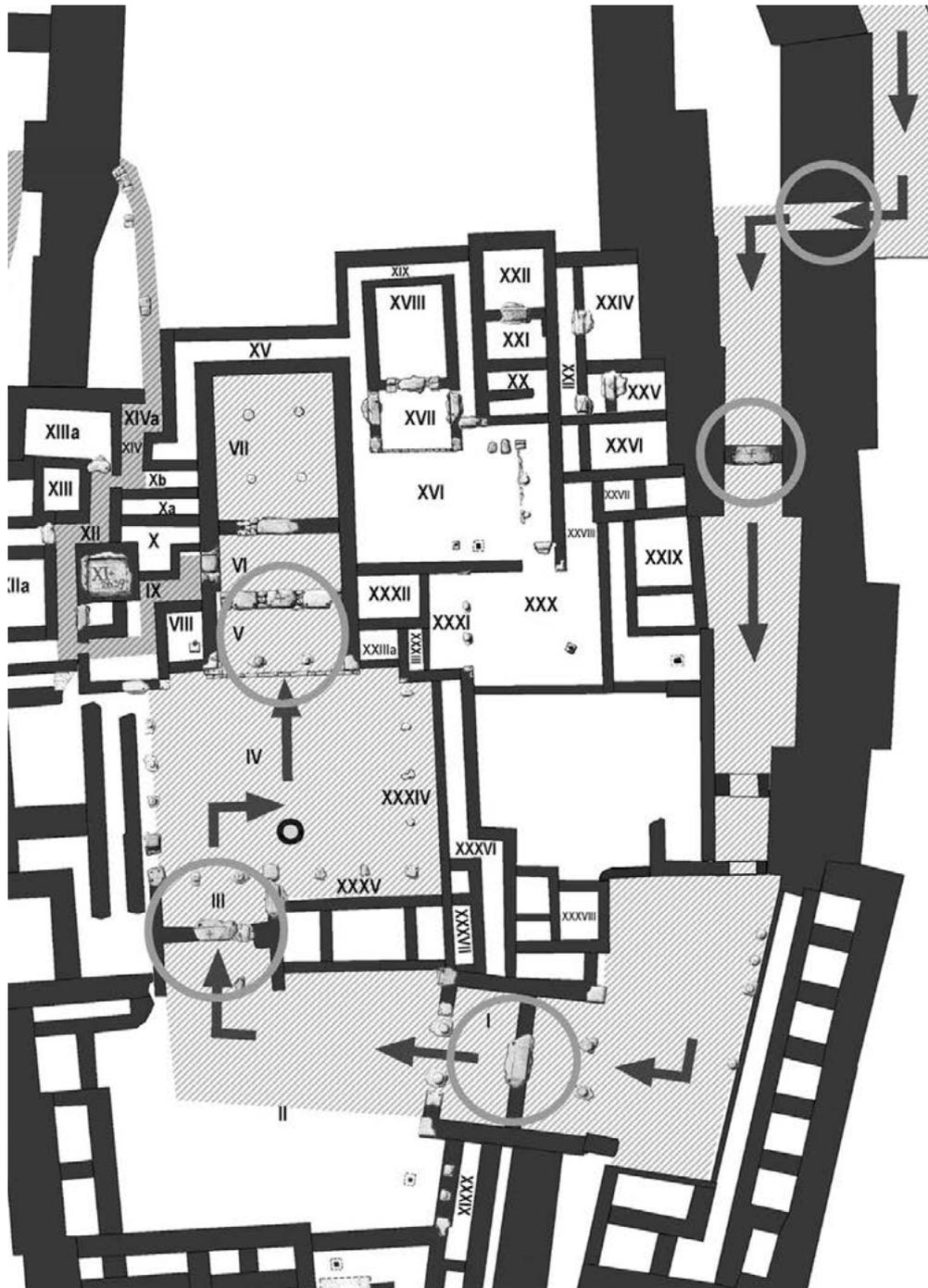
FIG. II-24: THE UPPER CITADEL OF THE MYCENAEAN PALACE AT TIRYNS. CIRCLES INDICATING 'LIMINAL' POINTS USED TO CONTROL ACCESS AND INCREASE EXCLUSIVITY AS ONE MOVES TOWARDS THE CENTRAL MEGARON (AFTER MARAN 2012a: 151 FIG. 1).

building programme, the increasingly higher quality and more careful finish of the floors and wall-paintings, as one moved in towards the megaron and into its 'throne room', would have more or less subtly underlined the growing importance of things happening there and of those attending (Maran 2012a: 154). A more direct hint, on the other hand, as to those allowed access, their attire and the kinds of activities they were participating in, comes from the scenes depicted on the frescoes themselves. At Tiryns, the fresco of the great women's procession has been attributed to the front porch and the anteroom of the

great megaron (Maran 2012a: 156–158). In this position it would, for most of the year, have recalled the real processions passing into the megaron this way on formal occasions and religious festivals, as well as reminding the actual participants of the solemnity of such rituals and the necessity to comply with the required code of conduct.[233] Similarly, from the central megaron at Pylos there are

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[233] See also, of course, the frescoes of tribute bearers and processions in the propylon providing access to the main court and in the central megaron at the palace of Pylos (e. g. Lang 1969: 190; Thaler 2006: 102–103; Davis 2010: 684).

the remains of frescoes showing pairs of elite members drinking – a direct reflection perhaps of the real feasts taking place in the megaron and its surrounding courts, as well as of the importance of palace-sponsored feasting for the reproduction of social and political order.[234] Unlike Tiryns, with its early excavations from which little pottery survived, at Pylos it is even possible to demonstrate how social differentiation 'operated' during such events, and larger groups of people would have experienced exclusion, while others, and increasingly fewer numbers, were invited in and confirmed in their claims to privileged access and participation in the 'workings' of the inner spheres of the palace (Thaler 2006: 97–106; Wright 2006b: 39; Bennet 2007b: 13–14). There are pottery assemblages recovered *in situ* from storage rooms or pantries opening to the different courts and to the central megaron itself, which show a decrease in the number of pottery sets provided (i. e. in the anticipated number of people allowed access), and a corresponding increase in the quality of wares supplied (i. e. presumably in the status of the participants in the feasting) as one moves in from the outer courts to the central megaron complex itself (Bendall 2004: 112–124, 126–128; Thaler 2006: 98, 105–106; Stockhammer 2010: 107–109).

It is worth recalling here the above characterisation of the Early Helladic corridor houses and their comparison with Mycenaean palaces (see chapter II.4.1). Like the earlier corridor houses, the Mycenaean palaces, too, certainly feature a high number of formal 'cueing devices' for guiding perception and social action (Peperaki 2004). Unlike corridor houses, however, they expose so many such cues that hardly any 'ambiguity' is left. For even if this aim was not always achieved and the palaces were not 'totalitarian' (see above), this is at least what Mycenaean palatial architecture aimed at: a high level of determinacy; individuals or groups of people being overwhelmed; alternative understandings being discouraged or ruled out; and possibilities of social action reduced for most participants to affirmative action and compliance with prescribed social norms.

Accordingly, Mycenaean polities provide comprehensive evidence of a politically structured hierarchical society and a functionally differentiated population way beyond any such development in the wider Bronze Age European hinterland. This evidence is of different quality – material and immaterial – and it comes from different realms of life and death, such as architecture, administration, subsistence economy, craft production, or burial. Although palatial control is thought 'selective' and power may have been contested among members of the elite (see above), in comparison with wider Bronze Age Europe the perception of living in a differentiated and hierarchically structured polity surely was exceptionally strong and pervasive on an otherwise unknown scale. It would have been epitomised by the monumental representations of power such as the

Cyclopean walls and the palace buildings themselves. It would have been widely felt and recognised – not least perhaps by the massive infrastructural projects the palaces undertook, such as the Kofini dam at Tiryns redirecting the flow of the Manessi river, the artificial harbour at Pylos, or the drainage of the Kopais basin, presumably controlled by the citadel of Gla, all of which affected the wider landscape itself and conveyed palatial control even over rivers and mountains.[235]

For the reproduction of their economic and political system in the first instance, Mycenaean palaces, of course, relied on the administrative control of important sectors of the economy, the mobilisation of goods and commodities for palatial consumption, etc., as well as on coercive power. This way or that, all these foundations of Mycenaean power find some archaeological reflection, such as evidence of large-scale storage or workshops under administrative control (i. e. featuring Linear B tablets). Besides these more practical aspects of political economy, however, the system for its legitimation and reproduction of palatial authority also heavily relied on symbolic politics and elite representation. The most pronounced evidence for the operation of this aspect of the political system comes, of course, from elite burial, the warlike attire of male leaders, or their role as patrons sponsoring palatial feasts as shown in wall-paintings, as well as the specifically Mycenaean palatial 'architecture of power' discussed above. The palaces, from this perspective, were not only the locations where administrative activities took place, where political decisions were taken, and where power was exercised; rather, they were themselves the monumental materialisation and expression of that power (e. g. Wright 2006b: 37–41; Shelmerdine/Bennet 2008: 291), and they provided the appropriate setting for public ritual and socially motivated palace-sponsored feasting. They were both framing the operation of the political sphere, and they were drawn upon themselves in the reproduction of that order. In short, Mycenaean palaces were essential for the continued existence of the entire political system, and this was both expressed and achieved by use of elaborated architectural means that were developed and deliberately employed to this end.

As such, Mycenaean palaces and political economy were historically specific. They featured the adaptation of some key elements of their Near Eastern predecessors to local Greek conditions – mind the lack of comprehensive control over subsistence production or the absence of classic redistribution (see above) – and a specific style of elite representation reflective of specifically Late Helladic notions of power and elite habitus. From another perspective, however, Mycenae is well in line with the Bronze Age societies of the eastern Mediterranean and the wider Bronze Age Near East, all of which feature material culture (including architecture) expressive of the social differentiation and the political hierarchisation 'achieved',

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[234] E. g. Wright 2004: 155–167; Thaler 2006: 102–103, 107; Shelmerdine 2007: 41–42 with fig. 4.2; Stockhammer 2010: 109; Davis 2010: 685–686.

[235] Dickinson 1994: 162–163; Schofield 2007: 88, 96, 100–101; Crowley 2008: 268–269; Maran 2010: 728; Davis 2010: 686–687.

and actively used by local elites for their reproduction. There may well be stratified societies 'invisible' in these terms and/or relying on different strategies of elite legitimation and the reproduction of the political sphere, but it is thought likely that truly hierarchical systems will have some such impact on the outside world, and for their continued existence would require some broadly comparable material and symbolic expenditures. Hence, while it is not claimed that such material expression of more or less strongly hierarchical systems, and *vice versa* the importance of material culture for the reproduction of such systems are universal features, a system of this kind certainly was in existence in the ancient Bronze Age Near East, including Mycenaean Greece. It did not feature precisely the same traits in both regions, rather it took the form of historically specific cultural configurations. Such a system was clearly absent, however, from wider 'Barbarian' Europe beyond, where there is nothing similar in terms of a truly hierarchical system, control of large sectors of daily life and production, mobilisation of workforce, massive interventions with the environment, or the corresponding expenditures in both material and symbolic terms required for its reproduction.

Mycenae, that is to say, is historically specific, but it is also part of a wider eastern Mediterranean Bronze Age *koiné* of urban or palatial societies. As such it followed a different trajectory than 'its' wider European hinterland. We can 'use' Mycenae, therefore, as a counterbalance to set the different logics of traditional prehistoric societies into sharper light. We should not, however, expect likeness or assimilation. As already pointed out above with reference to the group of Early Helladic corridor houses, we are ill-advised subsuming such historically specific manifestations of the human condition under grand narratives of social evolution and an analysis in terms of timeless categories of social and economic organisation of supposedly universal applicability.

II.4.3 Greece After the Mycenaean Palaces – Decline or Difference?

For whatever reason(s) the Mycenaean palaces were destroyed towards the end of Late Helladic IIIB (*c.* 1190/1180 BC),[236] the social world that followed was very different from before. With the physical destruction of the palaces and the end of palatial rule most of the social and cultural institutions that had previously structured people's lives and their perceptions of the world disappeared.[237] The former Late Helladic polities vanished, no longer providing sustenance and security. Political authority and palace-controlled ritual were discredited as they had clearly failed to avert disaster and guarantee stability of the old order. Overall population numbers declined, while those who had outlived the collapse were more mobile than before.

In an increasingly unstable world people sought prosperity and shelter abroad, or in a smaller number of surviving settlements such as Tiryns or Lefkandi, which consequently increased in size if not complexity.[238] The highest ranks of Mycenaean political hierarchy, in particular, dissolved, and writing and administration came to an end. What elites remained or formed anew were caught up in the constant renegotiation of their standing in the face of rival claims to authority and a population ever ready to withdraw from coercive power, since there was little left to lose by moving on and settling somewhere else.

This is not an example of gradual decline or unspecified 'devolution', but rather an historical break which separates two distinct social and cultural configurations. Still, there is some disagreement precisely when discontinuity occurred. In view of the numerous indications of a post-palatial recovery in the Late Helladic IIIC Argolid in particular, it is argued that the final decline did not take place until some time later during the 11th century BC (e. g. Dickinson 2006a: 60–61). In a similar vein, I. Morris (2000: 218–238, 311) suggested that it was only with the Protogeometric Toumba building and the Lefkandi 'hero' (*c.* 1000–950 BC; Popham 1993b: 101) that a new paradigm of elite discourse was established, and Early Iron Age elites attempted to re-impose order on the social world. From this perspective, Lefkandi first established a new tradition of thinking about the past and present, and to transcend the dismal present by claiming 'kinship', at least in death, for some of their most outstanding leaders with the past heroes of mythical Mycenaean times. On the other side, it is argued that most attempts to 'preserve Bronze Age ways' (I. Morris 2000: 232) would have been vain from the start, i. e. from the very moment the palaces were destroyed: Thus, for example, J. Maran (2011b: 171–173) argues that the highest ranks of Mycenaean society were virtually extinguished, and with them all knowledge of the actual operation of palatial rule and the secrets of its ideological foundations and ritual legitimation would have been directly lost. Post-palatial elites, that is to say, were not only lacking the knowledge of script and the resources for a proper rebuilding of the palaces (e. g. Dickinson 2006a: 61), but there was no more competence in, and no more need of administration, nor the elaborate architectural framing of power as seen before. The entire logic of the post-palatial social world was different, elite strategies had changed, and their 'political' aspirations were directed towards different ends. These aims could be achieved at certain locations, such as Tiryns, by reference to the ruins of a 'glorious' past (see below), but they were not the same as before, and they are not properly understood in the political and economic terms of the palatial past.

Such different perceptions of (dis-)continuity in Late Helladic IIIC, or the following periods, stem from a peculiar ambiguity of the archaeological remains themselves, which on the one hand feature direct reference made in

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[236] See, for example, the discussion of relevant theories and further references in Dickinson (2006a: 41–57) and Deger-Jalkotzy (2008: 387–392).

[237] Cf. I. Morris 2000: 195–256; Dickinson 2006a: 58–78; Deger-Jalkotzy 2008: 392–407; Maran 2006b; 2011b; 2012a; 2012b.

[238] E. g. Evely 2006; S. Sherratt 2006: 307–309; Lemos 2006: 525; Maran 2010: 729–731.

post-palatial times to the ruins of a palatial past, and on the other reflect profound change in the social practices related to the post-palatial replacements at the old centres of power. This ambiguity, which ultimately refers to widely different social and cultural formations unfolding in the same places, and sometimes even drawing on the same albeit modified architectural remains, accounts for the particular interest in the decline of distinct Mycenaean polities and their succession by only weakly bounded post-palatial communities. It also brings us towards the end of our short survey of (mainland) Greek trajectories during the Bronze Age – thought as a background and foil against which, in the second part of this study, an attempt is made to improve our understanding of Bronze Age communities in the Carpathian Basin, which developed in an entirely different historical setting and were drawing on different pasts, different traditions and material conditions. For the Greek sequence discussed is, in fact, historically specific from a number of perspectives. There was profound discontinuity in social and political structure and even in the (objective) knowledge of the operation of palatial administration and rule still available after the collapse (e. g. Maran 2011b: 173–174). Yet, unlike other European prehistoric societies, there clearly was a 'glorious' past with its physical remains scattered all over the landscape. Post-palatial society certainly showed deliberate reference back to former greatness – be it in terms of deprivation, 'trauma' and a feeling of 'sad decline' (Dickinson 2006a: 66, 69, 71–72; I. Morris 2000: 237–238), or as a means for new elites to support their claims to leadership by exploiting the past to their own advantage (e. g. Maran 2012a: 158–160). As such, culture and society of post-palatial Greece can only be properly understood by reference to the specific notions different segments of that society developed of an increasingly remote and incompletely understood palatial past, and, of course, the way they drew upon its material remains. At the same time, attitudes towards the palatial past may well have differed. Certainly not everybody would have liked to see his or her freedom and ambitions subjected to palatial control restored (cf. Dickinson 2006a: 66; Deger-Jalkotzy 2008: 403–404). In any case, nothing remotely like palace rule and administration was ever attained again. So, although it emerged from the ruins of the Mycenaean palaces, this society clearly was very much different from its predecessor. It has to be understood in its own terms – from the plain lack of resources available to extend the exertion of individual or collective power to larger polities as was previously the case, via newly developed notions of legitimate leadership and its appropriate representation to the permanent necessity to negotiate rather than to enforce any claims to authority developed on this basis.

This development is epitomised in architectural terms in the Tiryns sequence of the Late Helladic IIIB central megaron (fig. II-24 above) and the subsequent post-palatial Building T constructed in its place early in Late Helladic IIIC (Maran 2000; 2006a; 2010; 2012a; Mühlenbruch 2010): the proximity sought to the ruins of the previous palace, and even their partial reuse, yet the

very different options for social action which the new building and its surroundings provided and the different logic of social space involved. Building T was constructed on the upper citadel of Tiryns after the partial clearing and levelling of the ruins of the central part of the Mycenaean palace. It shared the eastern wall with its predecessor, the Mycenaean central megaron, but it was narrower and featured a different layout, with a smaller almost square anteroom facing south and an elongated main room to the north, with two aisles divided by a row of columns along its central axis (fig. II-25). With its predecessor, whose place was no doubt deliberately occupied to claim tradition (see below), Building T also had in common its threshold, which previously had divided the porch and the anteroom of the Mycenaean megaron, and the column base *in antis*. Importantly, however, gone was the central hearth and there was to be no more elaborate decoration of the new building with frescos and features (Maran 2010: 729–730; 2011b: 173; 2012a: 158–160). Although there may still have been a portable hearth in use (Mühlenbruch 2010: 97), with this rearrangement Building T – in line with a number of other more 'formal' buildings of Late Helladic IIIC date, such as the restored 'megaron' of this period on the lower terrace at Midea (Walberg 2007: 63–67, 197–198)[239] – had clearly lost an important function and 'aspect' of the previous Mycenaean megaron it replaced. It is no use speculating on the original meaning of the large decorated 'ceremonial' hearth central to the Mycenaean megaron, but it was clearly at the focus of perception of everybody allowed access to the central 'throne room'. Most likely, it was drawn upon and used accordingly in social action, in ritual and feasting. Building T also, which is thought a 'communal hall' housing elite gatherings and feasting (e. g. Maran 2010: 729; 2011b: 173; 2012a: 158, 160),[240] may not have been accessible to every member of the surrounding community and may have maintained a certain degree of exclusivity. However, there was certainly no comparable level of 'secrecy' to whatever was going on inside. No attempt was made to control access and guide perception as with the previous Mycenaean palatial complex, with its courts, propyla and numerous symbolic 'markers' of elevated socio-political meaning as one approached the megaron (see above). Quite to the contrary, Building T stood isolated on the upper citadel of Tiryns, and there is evidence that its visibility from the surroundings was even deliberately enhanced by clearing parts of the adjacent ruins of the citadel (fig. II-26; e. g. Maran 2012a: 152–160). Particular attention was paid in this process to the central court of the previous Mycenaean palace. It was cleared, the ruins of surrounding walls and colonnades taken down, and the round altar in the main axis of the Mycenaean megaron was restored and turned into a square platform. This platform is thought by J. Maran

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[239] See also, of course, in this context Megaron W in the lower town of Tiryns, plus a number of similar representative buildings of post-palatial date from other sites (cf. Dickinson 2006a: 104–106; Walberg 2007: 67; Deger-Jalkotzy 2008: 397; Maran 2010: 731; Stockhammer 2010: 109–111).

[240] More or less good evidence of post-palatial feasting also comes from the lower town at Tiryns and the lower terrace in the citadel of Midea (Stockhammer 2010: 109–114; Walberg 2007: 67).
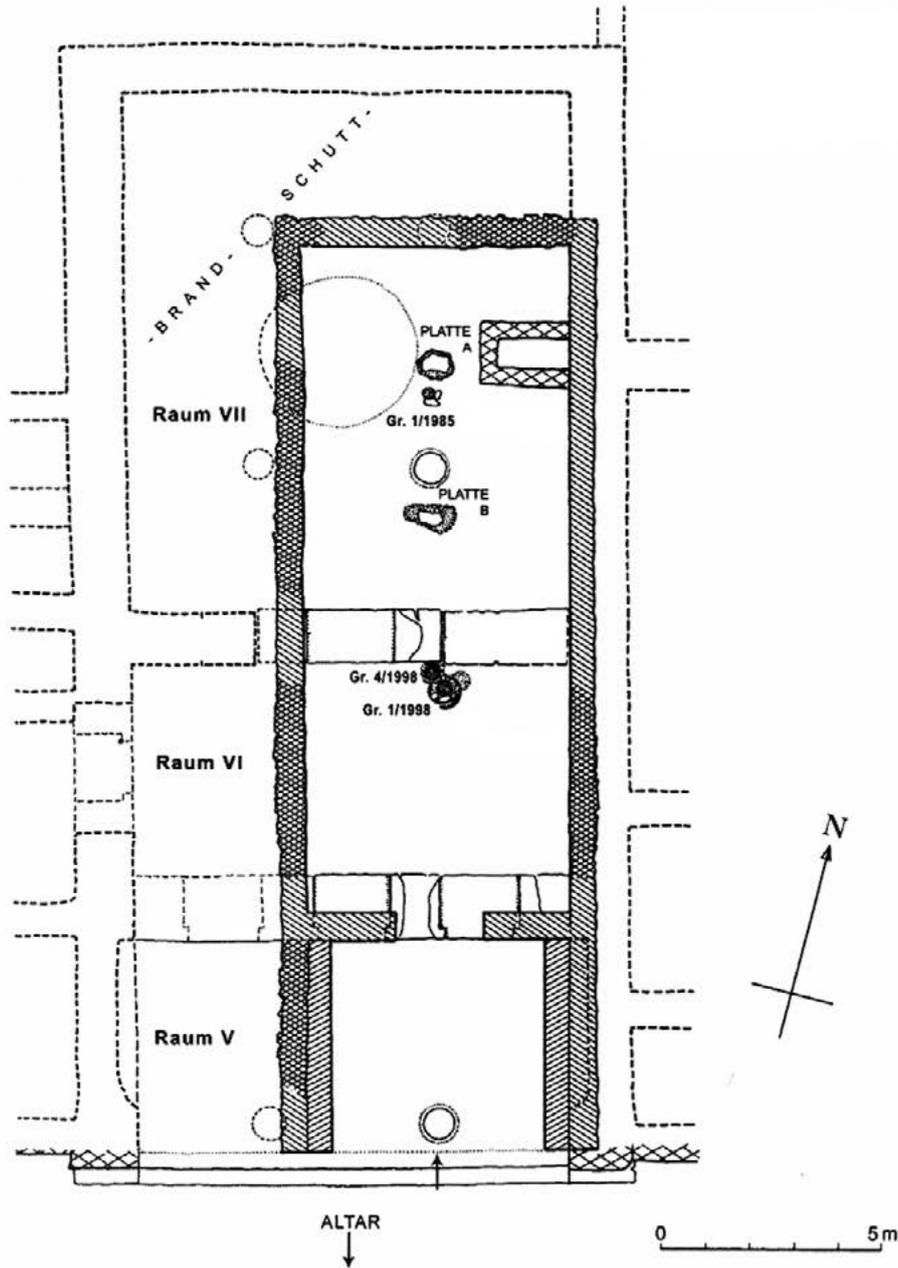
FIG. II-25: PLAN OF THE LATE HELLADIC IIIC BUILDING T IN PLACE OF THE PREVIOUS CENTRAL MEGARON ON THE ACROPOLIS AT TIRYNS (AFTER MARAN 2000: 2 FIG. 1).

(2011b: 173; 2012a: 159–160; 2012b: 126–129) to have taken on – albeit in a different social context – some of the social and ritual significance, for example in the socially motivated preparation of food, previously focused on the 'ceremonial' hearth inside the Mycenaean megaron. Maran (2011b: 173–174; 2012a: 159–160) recognises in this reference to the monuments of past 'splendour' and their partial restoration a strategy of post-palatial elite groups, potentially those with local roots, to claim genealogical ties with palatial times in order to improve their standing and gain legitimation for the future. He further argues that such ultimately spatially-derived claims to (constructed) traditional authority expressed, for example, on the

occasion of ritual and feasting in and around Building T, may have been contested by other elite groups. Possibly of different descent, these may have been trying to establish an alternative discourse drawing on exotic foreign heirlooms or *keimelia* (e. g. the Tiryns treasure; Maran 2012b: 121–126) in order to claim privileged access to foreign contacts and esoteric knowledge (e. g. Maran 2011b: 174–175; 2012b: 128–130; see also Stockhammer 2010: 111–114).

In the void left by the collapse of palatial rule such symbolic fighting among unstable, second-order elites, attempts to attract followers to a particular cause, and the negotiation of controversial claims to authority, are in fact likely. The

Fig. II-26: Reconstruction of the Late Helladic IIIC Building T on the acropolis at Tiryns (after Maran 2012a: 160 fig. 6).

important points here are, however, that no group would have had the means to impose their rule or world-view upon the others, and the inherently unclear outcome of any such 'fighting' – for this is also reflected in the architecture and social space of the period. It is of particular interest, then, to see just how different from Mycenaean times the social logic of space, and the opportunities for social action it provided, became in post-palatial times. For despite the choice of a traditional place, the highest point of the Tiryns citadel, and broadly the same type of building restored, i. e. a megaron, there clearly were widely different notions of the social domain involved. Different strategies were pursued by ritual and feasting in the open outside Building T compared to the older 'Mycenaean feast' in broadly the same location. In particular, whatever individual or elite group was 'heir' to the *wanax*, in the new architectural setting it was no longer possible, or intended, to withdraw the operation of the political domain from sight, or to establish exclusivity in terms of denying access to the citadel and the surroundings of Building T. Clearly, not every potential bystander would have played an active role, but contrary to previous Mycenaean practice the reproduction of the social world now would have had a distinctly 'public' and controversial feel. In Mycenaean times, even if members of the elite were agents in pursuit of their own advantage and there were sectional interests (see above), the ideology and message conveyed amongst other media by architecture were different. On a practical level controversy was withdrawn from sight; the operation of palatial rule and administration was hidden behind

walls and mystified by being linked to unseen ritual; and the power of the palace from the outside would have been conceived as monolithic (or perhaps more appropriately: Cyclopean). In post-palatial times, on the other hand, the outcome of the social process was open, with at least potentially a different 'winner' every time a feast took place or ritual performed. The operation of the political domain and its controversial nature were exposed. Aspiring elites no longer representing permanent 'institutions' indeed depended on such recurring opportunities to boast their claims and demonstrate their prowess to potential followers.

The contrast is striking, then, both in comparison with the much earlier corridor houses and with the preceding Mycenaean palaces. There is no underlying evolutionary logic at work here, and the mere fact that these societies unfolded at different times in broadly the same regional setting does not tell us much about their specific character and operation. Difference prevails, and we see historical development contingent upon numerous factors beyond archaeological 'control'. There is no justification for subsuming these groups or communities under an analysis in essentialising terms of supposedly the same social and economic institutions, more or less well 'developed'. All buildings and architectural settings discussed in this chapter served as a formal focus for their communities, they were not just 'normal' residential architecture of their period. They did so, however, in entirely different ways informative of the changing human dispositions

and practices of their respective period, as well as – on a more abstract level – of the different social and cultural configurations of their times. Thus, for example, post-palatial Building T clearly lacks both the complexity of the corridor houses and the high-level of determinacy evident in the Mycenaean palaces. The corridor houses were 'complex', but with a high level of indeterminacy, in the sense of providing a relatively flexible setting for social action that could potentially be drawn upon by different groups of actors on various occasions and to different ends without rigidly determining the outcome of social action (see chapter II.4.1). By comparison, Building T is less 'complex' in the sense that it gives the impression of being conceptualised with regard to a more restricted range of activities and occasions – whether we may think of it a 'communal hall' or the 'meeting place' of some Late Helladic IIIC lineage heads or other elites. As such, it also features a certain degree of indeterminacy or 'openness' to the outcome of social action taking place (see above). Unlike the corridor houses, however, one gets the impression that this openness may not (only) have been the correlate of a specific social configuration that was agreed upon. Rather it may (also) have been the consequence of the weakness of competing elite groups and their failure to assert their power over larger sections of their communities. Aspirations, that is to say, were most likely different and historically specific in both periods, if not the actual means of social actors to realise them.

On the other hand, of course, we must not too readily assume that everybody, or just a majority of post-palatial people, elites and commoners, aspired to a return of the palaces, or what they imagined palatial rule had been (see above). Building T is not just a failed attempt to restore a Mycenaean palace, but it also stands for a new social and cultural reality. Hence, it may not only have been for lack of resources or craftsmanship that Building T 'failed' to reach the same level of determinacy previously seen in the Mycenaean palaces, with the main megaron integrated into a sophisticated architectural setting, all designed to overwhelm and discourage opposition (see chapter II.4.2). Rather, Building T also reflects changing notions as to how the ritual and political focus of a post-palatial community should 'work', and conceptions of the adequate framing of social competition that may effectively have been going on there most of the time. From this perspective, its lack of monumentality and the conspicuous absence of formal 'cueing devices', found in such high density in the previous palaces, may actually have been a precondition and a correlate for Building T to be accepted and agreed upon as the appropriate setting to negotiate competing (elite) interests with unclear outcome, as well as potentially to become the focus of broader notions of identity in the Tiryns community of post-palatial times.

In a broader perspective, and in comparison with the prehistoric societies of wider 'Barbarian' Europe and the Bronze Age tell communities we are about to return to, the post-palatial Greek sequence, like its Mycenaean forerunner, is historically specific for a number of closely related reasons: first, the comparatively high level of competition among the remaining or newly emerging elites, and a specific historical setting in which this could be acted out by reference to the remains of a more 'glorious' palatial past (see above); second, partly in relation to this first point, the continued existence of a distinctly political domain and its impact on social space and architecture (e. g. Building T discussed above), which has no direct parallels in the wider Bronze Age or Early Iron Age European hinterland; and, third, the continued importance of contact and interaction with the wider (eastern) Mediterranean world. Not all of these aspects are equally well visible in the archaeological record throughout the 'Dark Ages' that followed the Late Helladic IIIC 'recovery'. There are also clear ups and downs, for example, in (elite) mobility and the availability of eastern Mediterranean imports throughout the 12th to 9th centuries BC, which only saw a gradual revival of travel and the inflow of foreign prestigious objects (cf. I. Morris 2000: 238–256; Dickinson 2006a: 196–218; Fox 2009: 45–72). In sum, however, they contributed to the foundations of the classic Greek world, a development that is, no doubt, unique on a global scale. From the very beginning, therefore, what we see in the earliest 'Dark Age' stages is widely different from the social and cultural configurations found in the wider European prehistoric hinterland beyond the area of immediate Mediterranean impact. To conclude this section this will be illustrated by reference to the Toumba building at Lefkandi, on Euboea, and the famous rich burials it contained. It is not claimed thereby that Lefkandi is in any way typical. Quite the contrary, both the building of the 'heroon' and the cremated 'hero's' burial, together with the inhumation of his female companion, or 'suttee', are so far unique in their middle Protogeometric context (c. 1000–950 BC; Popham/Calligas/Sackett 1990; 1993; cf. Harrell 2014). Euboea may have been flourishing somewhat ahead of other Greek regions during the 'Dark Ages', and its communities certainly re-established and entertained extensive foreign contacts ahead of others.[241] Nonetheless, the Toumba building and the two burials uncovered within it may exemplify more widely held notions of people and the world propagated by emergent elites in an attempt to mediate their aspirations and 'Dark Age' social and cultural reality.

The Toumba building is situated on a hilltop overlooking the fertile Lelantine plain and the sea, about 500 m from the neighbouring Xeropolis settlement known from excavations to have been occupied from Early Bronze Age to Early Iron Age times (e. g. Lemos 2006: 517–523; 2008). The apsidal Protogeometric building, which was heavily damaged prior to systematic excavation in the early 1980s (Calligas/Popham 1993), had been constructed on a levelled platform using mud brick on a stone socle (Coulton 1993: 36–38). It is oriented in roughly east-west direction, with its entrance facing east. It was about 50 m long and c. 14 m wide, including a veranda of wooden

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[241] E. g. I. Morris 2000: 238–239; Dickinson 2006a: 207–215; Evely 2006; S. Sherratt 2006: 307–309; Lemos 2006: 517, 525–526; 2008: 186–188; Fox 2009: 53–65.
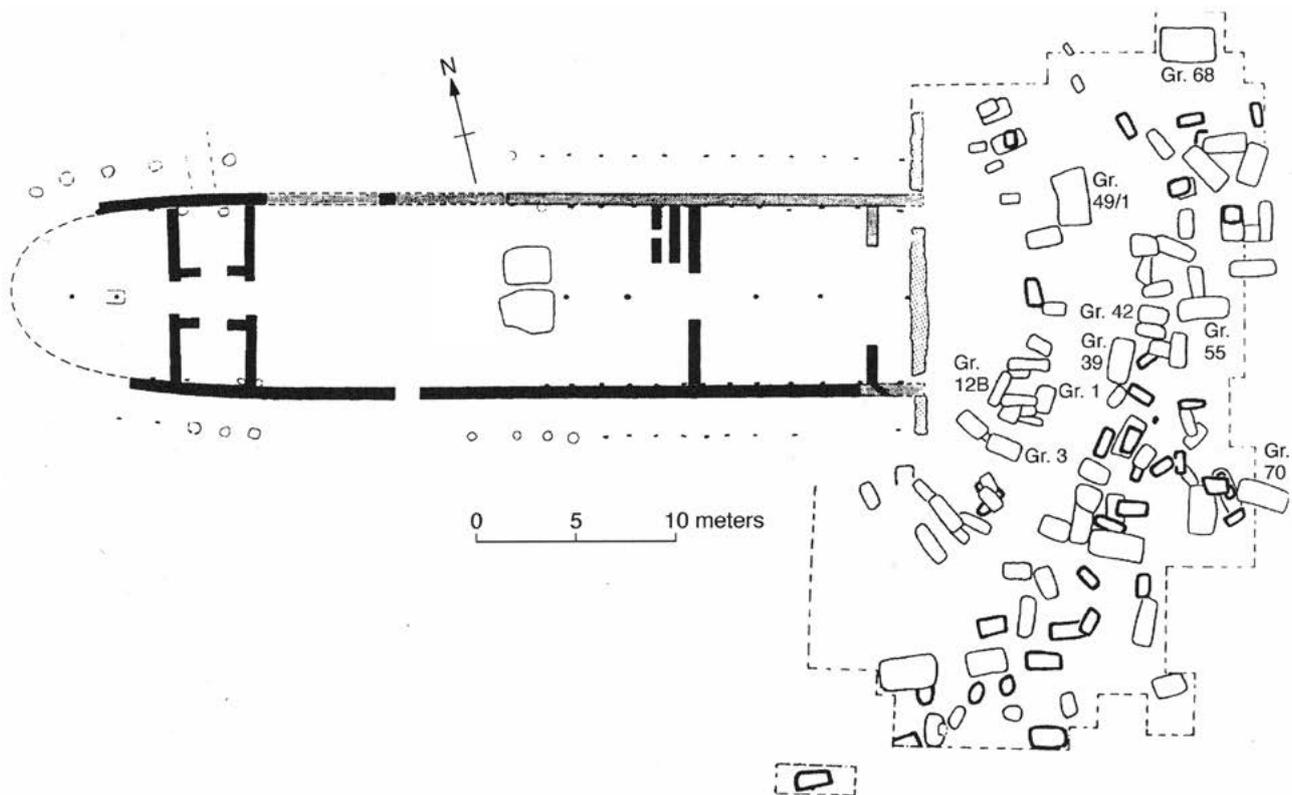
FIG. II-27: PLAN OF THE TOUMBA BUILDING WITH THE 'HERO' BURIAL AND THE ADJACENT LATER CEMETERY AT LEFKANDI ON EUBOEA (AFTER I. MORRIS 2000: 220 FIG. 6.5).

posts. The veranda ran along its north and south sides as well as around the apse, and the building is reconstructed with a thatched roof (figs. II-27 and II-28; Popham 1993a; Coulton 1993). In the interior the Toumba building features a division into three distinct 'zones'. To the east there is a shallow porch connected by a broad opening to the so-called 'east room'; both are thought to be related in functional terms (see below) since they basically form one roofed, but relatively open, entrance part to the building (Popham 1993a: 8–12; Coulton 1993: 51). From the east room, via a doorway in the main axis, the large central room is entered, which is an impressive 22 m in length (Popham 1993a: 13–17). Although heavily damaged by bulldozing, in this room several 'installations' were uncovered. The south-east corner, for example, revealed a clay box filled with ashes and bones, while in the north-east corner there were the remains of two walls thought to have supported a staircase. The existence of a hearth in the centre of the room has been argued for: it is certainly implied by analogies from other sites but it has not been proven as the floor in this part of the room was destroyed prior to excavation (Coulton 1993: 50–51). The existence of a central hearth might also explain why the most famous feature of the central room was located slightly off-centre, towards the east. Two burial shafts had been cut there, more than two metres deep, from the original surface into the loose conglomerate bedrock, the northern one containing the skeletons of four horses, while in the deeper and more complex southern one were found the cremated remains of a male 'warrior' in a bronze urn and the inhumation of

a richly adorned female (Popham 1993a: 17–22; Harrell 2014). The warrior was laid to rest with (and identified as such by) an iron sword, a spearhead and a razor. His urn was a bronze amphora originating from Cyprus and dated to the Late Bronze Age, i. e. it was already some 200 years old when it found its way into the Lefkandi burial (Catling 1993: 86–92). Archaising and orientalising elements were also contained among the rich jewellery accompanying the female skeleton, and both burials were marked on the surface by a large krater showing a tree-of-life motif bearing eastern connotations.[242] Finally, as one moves west into the third rear section of the building, the features include a corridor about 1.5 m wide with two adjacent rooms (north and south) and the western apse room with a number of distinct pits surviving in the floor, which are thought to have held pithoi, and point to a use of this part of the building for storage (fig. II-27; Popham 1993a: 22–27; Coulton 1993: 50).

Due to poor stratigraphic information, it remains a matter of debate, even among the excavators, whether the Toumba building was actually the dead warrior's home, or 'residence', in life, or whether it was only constructed after his death – a monumental funerary building, or 'heroon', imitating a house to honour the dead couple.[243]

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[242] Popham/Calligas/Sackett 1990: 25–26; Popham 1993a: 16–17, 19–21; cf. I. Morris 2000: 219–221, 228–229; Lemos 2008: 186–188.
[243] Cf. Coulton 1993: 49–59; Popham 1993b: 97–101, esp. 101; Crielaard/Driessen 1994; Mazarakis Ainian 1997: 54–57; Pakkanen/Pakkanen 2000: 249–251; I. Morris 2000: 219–221; Lemos 2006: 521; Dickinson 2006a: 107–111.
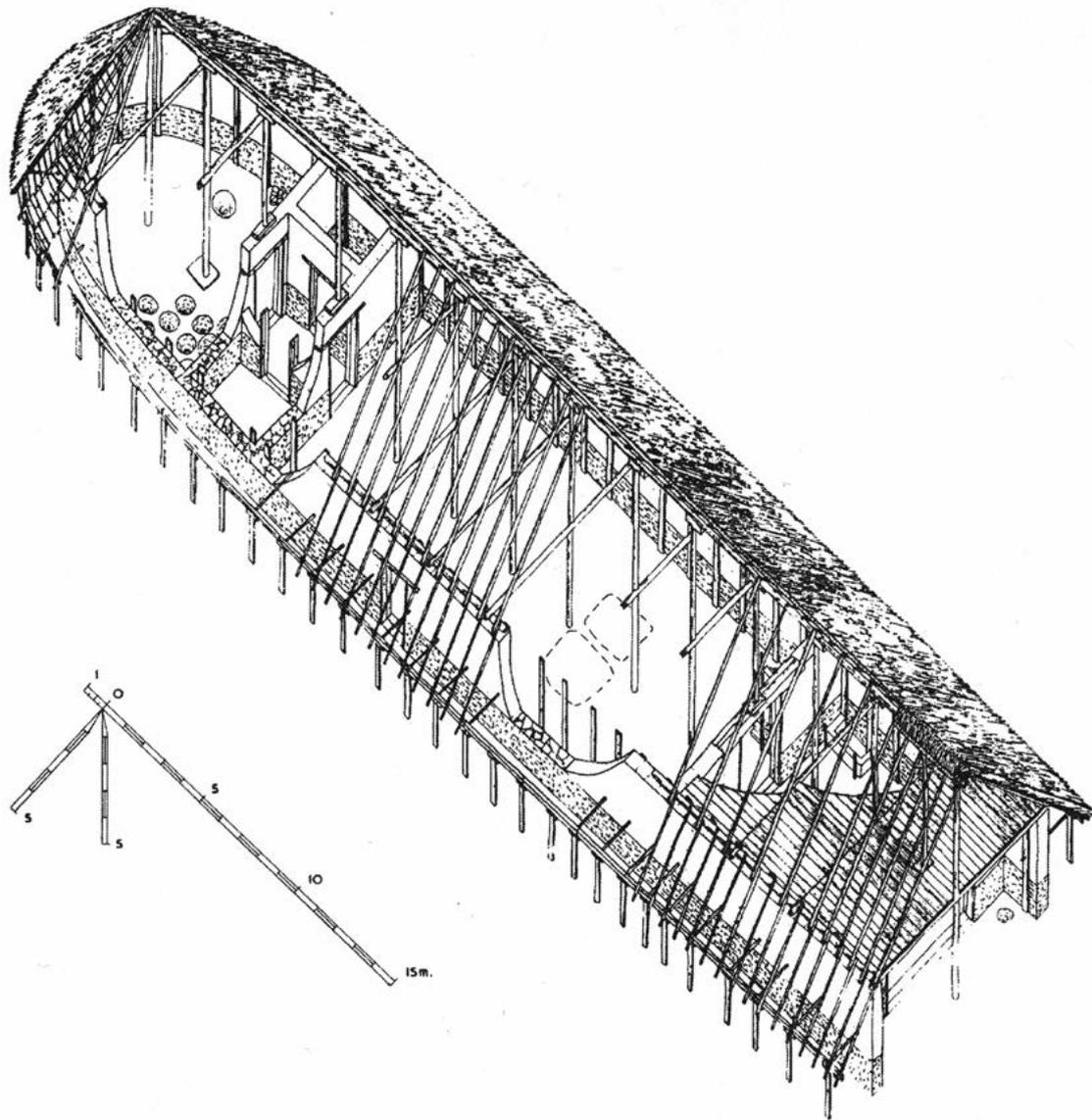
FIG. II-28: RECONSTRUCTION OF THE TOUMBA APSIDIAL BUILDING AT LEFKANDI (AFTER I. MORRIS 2000: 223 FIG. 6.8).

There are some indications that use, if any, of the building did not extend over a prolonged period of time (e. g. Popham 1993a: 12; 1993b: 98; Dickinson 2006a: 107), but the general paucity of associated finds, other than in the graves, may also be related to the careful clearing of the building upon turning it into a funerary monument for the dead 'hero' (cf. Coulton 1993: 52; Crielaard/ Driessen 1994: 260–262). In any case, it is known that the building, which may have been previously damaged (Popham 1993b: 98), was at some stage partly dismantled, its roof and upper walls taken down, a wall constructed blocking the eastern entrance, and then systematically filled in to form an elongated mound covering its ruin and the rich burials in its former central room (Popham 1993a: 29–31; Coulton 1993: 52–56). Subsequently, this eponymous mound became the focus of the so-called Toumba cemetery, a group of comparatively rich and, in part, elaborately constructed graves assigned to a local elite group thought to have been deliberately associating

themselves with the 'heroon' and claiming descent from the powerful dead buried there.[244]

Both the size and the complexity of the Toumba building, and the richness of its graves, are largely unparalleled in contemporaneous Greece. They feature prominently, therefore, in debates on Early Iron Age social differentiation,[245] and from the start similarities with the Homeric epics have been noted. The Lefkandi hero's burial is thought to foreshadow, for example, the Homeric funeral of Patroclus – with the cremation of the hero, the placing of his ashes in a metal urn and the sacrifice of his horses and other rites.[246] Such approaches invariably suffer from the unclear status of the Toumba (funeral?) building and

[244] Popham/Lemos 1996; cf. I. Morris 2000: 238–239; Dickinson 2006a: 191–193; Lemos 2008: 182–188.
[245] E. g. Kistler/Ulf 2005; I. Morris 2000; Dickinson 2006a; Ulf 2007; Catalogue Karlsruhe 2008; Morgan 2009.
[246] Cf. Popham 1993a: 22; I. Morris 2000: 235–237; Lemos 2008: 186; Morgan 2009: 47.

from the outstanding character of the Toumba burials when compared to contemporaneous burial ritual, apparently stressing the internal homogeneity of the ruling 'class' (I. Morris 2000: 231–238). There are also differences in detail from Homeric burial and the temporal gap, at least to the writing down of the epics. Hence the declaration by I. Morris (2000) that the construction of the Lefkandi building and burials was a paradigmatic event marking the invention of a new tradition of elite self-assurance.[247] Arguably, however, the importance of Lefkandi does not stem from its potential to overthrow our notions of Early Iron Age elite burial and social structure, and it does not really depend on whether this building was constructed for burial only or if it was actually lived in. The significance of the site lies in its clues to some of the specific concerns of the Early Iron Age Lefkandi community and its leaders, their dispositions, the norms guiding their actions, and the limits to their aspirations.

Let us begin with what we do not see. The Toumba building is not an example of a specific architecture of power. Rather, both its apsidal plan and its tripartite division stand in a broad tradition of domestic architecture (Coulton 1993: 56–57; I. Morris 2000: 218–228; Dickinson 2006a: 107–111). The Toumba building, then, is a monumental and admittedly rather complex version of a house which we may well envision was occupied by an 'elite' family and their dependants. The excavators themselves, despite their interpretation of the building as a replica for burial use only, provide us with a detailed functional analysis of the different parts of the house: from pithoi storage in the apse, via storage, or another archaeologically invisible activity, such as sleeping, in the adjacent north and south rooms, to the large central room, presumably with a hearth and taken to be the main 'living room' of the house, and eventually to the east room and open porch thought suitable, by their well-lit open construction and installations, for different domestic activities, such as ritual, the preparation of food, and craft production (Popham 1993a: 8–17, 22–27; Coulton 1993: 49–52). We are confronted therefore with elaborate and skilfully built architecture, either for everyday living or for representation and 'conspicuous consumption' in burial (Dickinson 2006a: 107), that featured provisions for elite daily living, as well as providing a suitable setting for more political aspects of the inhabitants' elite role. Such a role would be expected to include gatherings or feasting – particularly bearing in mind the spacious central room, private on some occasions, but which was easily accessible via the large open east room and able to accommodate a larger group of people for other events of a more 'formal' or 'public' nature.

The Toumba building, as a result of this specific merging of broadly 'private' and 'public' domains, differs from both the Mycenaean palaces and from post-palatial 'political' settings, at least as exemplified by Building T on the acropolis of Tiryns. Mycenaean palaces, of course, feature a clear functional differentiation, with their central megaron most likely devoted more or less exclusively to ritual and/or political activities and the adjacent rooms or building complexes reserved for elite living, administration, storage, production, etc. (see above). By comparison, we see at Lefkandi a reduction in the structural complexity of the architecture that corresponds well with the contrast of palatial and subsequent 'Dark Age' society deduced from other sources, such as from the lack of writing and administration in the latter period. The post-palatial Late Helladic IIIC picture is less clear, for feasting apparently also took place in more domestic contexts (e. g. S. Sherratt 2006: 307; Stockhammer 2010: 109–114). However, if its interpretation as a 'communal hall' for elite gatherings applies (see above; e. g. Maran 2010; 2012a), we have at least from Building T evidence of an exclusively 'political' setting: if Building T was in fact a focus for communal ritual and an arena for elite competition, instead of (also) being occupied for living, this would stand in marked contrast to the Toumba building, where presumably the daily lives and social reproduction of just one elite couple, family or (kinship?) group were accommodated in one building. There is structural difference, then, in the architectural setting of both examples, but given our poor knowledge of their archaeological context it is unclear what this implies in social terms. The (so far) unique size and monumentality of the Toumba building certainly suggest that there was something 'special' about the warrior (and his wife) laid to rest there which predisposed them to this exceptional style of burial and to the claims raised on this occasion by those who buried them (e. g. I. Morris 2000: 228–238). If the Toumba 'hero' had in fact lived in this building, or if it is a 'true' if exaggerated copy of his actual residence, his ability to 'draw in' the political domain to his own hearth may still be the contingent result of his individual success or prowess. If it was a more general feature of his times and was practised in a greater number of elite households – as opposed to the gatherings on the traditional, but more 'neutral', ground of Building T not directly controlled by any participant group – it may point to a greater stability of such elite groups, an increasingly more self-confident perception of their own standing, and a different style or capacity to regulate and control the relations to their followers and dependants.

I. Morris (1987: 1–10, 93–96) argued that 'Dark Age' Greek communities were controlled by an elite 'class', set apart – as far as the archaeological evidence goes – from the majority of the population by the fact that they received a formal burial at all, while at the same time emphasising the internal homogeneity of their elite group and discouraging conspicuous consumption upon burial (cf. Dickinson 2006a: 174–195; Morgan 2009: 44–48). In a rather sophisticated argument he later goes on to suggest that the Lefkandi burial did not erode this ideological

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[247] See, for example, I. Morris (2000: 237): 'This burial stands at the head of a millennium-long cultural tradition. The Lefkandians announced that the man under the mound was a hero, transcending the race of iron. [...] we see that the power of this burial was precisely that it was not the kind of funeral that a warrior or king of around 1000 BC might be given. It was part of the invention of a new tradition. The 'heroic age' was not the Mycenaean age, and never had been; it was a creation of the final years of the eleventh century, a mirror in which the new elites defined themselves.'

structure but rather reinforced it, and that it was only some time later, at the turn to the 9th century BC, that a revival of long-distance exchange and the growing availability of exotica undermined this symbolic system and resulted in growing elite competition upon burial (I. Morris 2000: 231–233, 238–256). Yet, surely, Lefkandi itself already points to an awareness that symbolic 'fighting' was possible and profitable – and it was so not only in the burial domain, but also in life and in architecture: it is unclear if the neighbouring cemetery of Palia Perivolia was already in existence when the Toumba building was constructed (Crielaard/Driessen 1994: 263–264), and it is certainly not proven that all the surroundings of the Toumba hill would have been conceived exclusively in terms of death and burial opposite a neighbouring domain of the living.[248] Even if the Toumba building was ultimately constructed to accommodate the 'hero's' burial, the form chosen still was that of a house of the living, even if potentially monumentalised beyond reality, and there are strong indications that the building, or at least large parts of it, stood upright on top of the Toumba hill for a certain period of time before it was dismantled and turned into a burial mound. So any narratives related to the place would have recalled both the monumental building (or residence) of the past 'hero' and its transformation into the burial mound still visible in later times. There was an awareness, that is to say, that claims to splendour and prowess could be played out in the domain of architecture, even if the only means found was the 'mere' monumentalisation of a building otherwise comparable to 'normal' architecture (Dickinson 2006: 110). The Toumba building thus plays on the same theme as did the Mycenaean palaces previously, including its location on a hilltop widely visible from the surroundings and emphasising its monumentality. Unlike Mycenae, however, this architectural arrangement was not to last, and it was possibly not even intended to; it was ultimately in the domain of death and burial only that the Toumba site achieved permanence as a location, where lasting claims to pre-eminence could be formulated by subsequent generations who buried their dead in the rich graves of the Toumba cemetery (Popham/Lemos 1996).

We have seen, then, in this chapter – drawing mainly on settlement evidence and architecture – that late 3rd to early 1st millennium Greece does not provide a blueprint for an understanding of European sequences beyond. Both areas are not profitably studied in terms of Bronze Age 'centres' and 'peripheries'. Bronze Age communities throughout Europe were following their own trajectories, and there are differences in corresponding human dispositions and the

logics of social and cultural configurations encountered, sometimes subtle, sometimes marked, which do not lend themselves to study in terms of socio-political 'types' and the overarching logic of social evolution towards the 'better', the more complex, or hierarchically structured.

We have traced – admittedly superficially only – the repeated 'ups' and 'downs' from the Early Helladic corridor houses, via Mycenaean palaces, to post-palatial and Early Iron Age society, which set the Greek sequence apart from wider European developments. This sequence is historically specific, precisely because after the collapse of the Mycenaean palaces, exceptional themselves on a European scale, only in Greece were a surviving population and newly emergent elites confronted with the remains of a more 'glorious' past, and we see the deliberate reference back, at least by some segments of post-palatial society of Late Helladic IIIC, to former 'greatness', despite general social and cultural discontinuity. This situation, as well as the subsequent 'Dark Age' development exemplified here by Lefkandi, is very different from that of other European societies, even if some of these may seemingly feature a comparable social and 'political' structure of contested leadership, elites in command of limited resources from just their rather small communities, and trying to develop more stable forms of leadership on this basis, but without a 'Mycenaean' past of their own to draw upon, or a wider Mediterranean sphere of interaction into which Greece was repeatedly integrated to varying degrees and to different outcomes.

As has already been argued above, archaeology should try to establish an understanding of such historically specific constellations, not reduce them to supposedly timeless categories of social evolution allowing easy comparison of quite distinct societies, their social and cultural expressions. Comparison, instead, may help us realise what is truly specific or unique about the situation studied and – in our present context – to allow for the great variability in the way social space may be organised and drawn upon for future action under different social and cultural conditions. We should not, then, expect to find a one-to-one match, precisely because each prehistoric society we study would have followed a distinct trajectory of its own; knowledge of its history – what was recalled and what was made up, what was told and what remained in tangible material terms – would have had an influence on future perceptions, guiding actions and the 'direction' of history.

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[248] Crielaard/Driessen 1994: 261–262; cf. Popham/Calligas/Sackett 1990: 91–95; Calligas/Popham 1993: 1; Popham 1993b: 101; Popham/Lemos 1996: plates 1 and 2; Lemos 2008: 182–184.

III. Epilogue

III.1 Exploring Divergent Trajectories in Bronze Age Europe

Drawing mainly on settlement evidence and architecture, it has been argued in the present part 1 of this study that late 3rd to early 1st millennium Greece and the wider Mediterranean do not provide a blueprint for an understanding of European sequences beyond. Both areas are not profitably studied in terms of Bronze Age 'centres' and 'peripheries'. Bronze Age communities throughout Europe were following their own trajectories. There are differences in corresponding human experience and dispositions as well as in the logic of social and cultural configurations encountered, sometimes subtle, sometimes marked, which do not lend themselves to study in terms of dependency, socio-political 'types' and the overarching logic of social evolution towards the 'better', the more complex or hierarchically structured.

We have traced the ups and downs from the Early Helladic corridor houses, via the Mycenaean palaces to post-palatial and Early Iron Age society, which set the Greek sequence apart from wider European developments. This sequence is historically specific in the first instance because the Mycenaean palaces are part of a specifically eastern Mediterranean *koiné* of ultimately Near Eastern-derived palatial cultures. As such they expose structural complexity and political hierarchisation not otherwise evident in the traditional 'tribal' communities of Bronze Age Europe beyond. The Greek sequence is historically specific in the second instance, because after the collapse of the Late Bronze Age palaces only in the Aegean were a surviving population and newly emergent elites confronted with the remains of a more 'glorious' past. Consequently, we see the deliberate reference, at least by some segments of post-palatial society, back to former 'greatness' despite overall social and cultural discontinuity. This situation, as well as the subsequent 'Dark Age' development exemplified here by Lefkandi, is very different from that of other European societies, even if some of these may seemingly feature a comparable social and political structure of contested leadership and elites in command of limited resources only from their small communities and trying to develop more stable forms of leadership. They did so, however, without a 'Mycenaean' past of their own to resort to or a wider Mediterranean sphere of interaction into which Greece was repeatedly integrated to varying degrees and to different outcomes. The Iron Age 'heroes' described by Homer were living in a different world not only from their local Mycenaean predecessors but also from their Late Bronze Age or Hallstatt 'princely' colleagues further north. It is no good to collapse a more complex archaeological reality, the different notions of the world held by all these individuals and their incentives to act in a specific social and material world, into a reductionist archetype male warrior 'hero' irrespective of historical context.

It has been argued that archaeology should try to establish an understanding of such historically specific constellations, instead of reducing them to supposedly timeless categories of social evolution which seemingly allow easy comparison of quite different cultures and societies. We are at risk, here, of using such reductionist concepts to cover the *longue durée* and to bridge the gap between socially and culturally distinct societies widely set apart in space and/or in time in order to produce the unified Bronze Age narrative commonly accepted. Instead, an unbiased comparison may help us expose what is unique about the specific prehistoric situation under study and enhance awareness of the great variability in local trajectories. Just like the Hawaiian chiefdoms wrongly imposed upon Bronze Age archaeology as a universal stage of social evolution, when in fact they represent an extreme and historically specific example of 'political economy' only, Mycenae may then give us an impression of the efficiency of truly hierarchical systems to interfere with the lives of their populace, as well as of the expenditure required in material and symbolic terms to reproduce such systems. Mycenaean society may thus become a foil against which better to appreciate difference. It may urge us to take an interest in the different workings of Greek societies before and after the palaces, as well as those of traditional 'tribal' or peasant Bronze Age communities in Mycenae's wider European hinterland. What is interesting about all these groups is precisely the different 'solutions' found to organise social life and their widely different culture traits, not how far they had advanced towards a perceived ideal state, and why they did not advance any further. These are the wrong questions. We should not, for this reason, look for or expect too close a match between different parts of Bronze Age Europe and the Mediterranean. Each prehistoric society we study followed a distinct trajectory of its own. Local actors were drawing upon specific understandings of social 'reality' and the material possibilities at their disposal in pursuit of their interests. Local norms and knowledges of the past – what was recalled and what was made up, what was told and what remained in tangible material terms – would have had an influence on future perceptions, guiding actions and the future direction of history.

All too often, however, we are still analysing widely different prehistoric groups in terms of the same broad and supposedly universal categories. This is how the Early Helladic corridor houses come to be conceptualised in broadly the same terms as the later Mycenaean palaces in spite of their entirely different potential to frame social action. We are essentialising, thereby, from a rich and diverse evidence of past materiality, intentionality and action, to a reductionist version of the past in terms of

preconceived types of society presumably encountered. An attempt was made to illustrate the shortcomings of this approach focusing on the Early Helladic corridor houses and the Late Bronze Age Mycenaean palaces in particular. Attention was drawn instead to current approaches which may help us to overcome such 'monolithic' modelling that relies on normalised representations of the archaeological remains and past social and political 'structure'. A greater awareness of local agency and the inherent openness of social discourse was argued for and illustrated by the low level of determinacy seen in both the case studies on pre- and post-Mycenaean architecture and social space.

Even in the Mediterranean, then, which is paradigmatic for the development of ancient 'civilisation' and ultimately of 'classical' antiquity, it can be shown that development did not take the form of linear social or cultural evolution from simple to most complex and hierarchically structured societies. Rather, in the examples chosen from the Early and Late Helladic Greek mainland we see the development of quite different expressions of cultural complexity, quite different notions of the self and society and a different ethos of political leadership. Since none of these eventually prevailed – the decline of the corridor houses and the fall of Mycenaean Greece – the Aegean Bronze Age may be characterised by a cyclical pattern and repeated 'onsets' towards greater complexity. This development was dependent on local factors, such as landscape and climate, settlement patterns and population numbers, preferred crops or strategies of animal husbandry, as well as on human perceptions of how and where to live, and differential access in the course of time to wider Eastern Mediterranean spheres of interaction and exchange.

In the Carpathian Basin, on the other hand, from the 5th millennium BC onwards we see a different kind of 'cycling' with adjustments within the structural limits of broadly tribal societies (cf. Parkinson 2002; 2006), but with little 'progress' in terms of social differentiation and political hierarchisation far into the Bronze Age (cf. Duffy 2014): from the Late Neolithic tell sites, via a dispersed Copper Age pattern and the reappearance of settlement mounds during the Early and Middle Bronze Age, all discussed above, and on to the differentially organised fortified sites of the Late Bronze Age Gáva (Urnfield, Kyjatice, etc.) culture, situated on the hilltops of the Carpathian ranges, as well in the lowland marshes, some of them of truly impressive size but often occupied for a limited period of time only when compared to the previous tell sites of the area (see Kienlin/Marta 2014 for references). We see, here, culture and social or organisational change along different lines than in the Mediterranean. Change that is only insufficiently understood if one follows the traditional top-down approach of Bronze Age archaeology, with its predominant interest in the evolution of stratified society and the socio-political impact of metalworking, etc.

For this reason it has been argued above that the traditional modelling of Bronze Age tell sites falls short of a more complex ancient reality, and it is unfortunate if we introduce a rigid Neolithic versus Bronze Age divide. The evidence from both periods is multi-faceted, and in many aspects there was continuity. We should not deliberately restrict ourselves to the study of Bronze Age communities in terms of 'political economy', supra-regional elite exchange and political hierarchisation. The approach taken was broadly via the social use of space, since it is felt that is was rather their built environment that reflected and shaped commonly accepted values and perceptions in Bronze Age communities than the occasional foreign prestigious item of metal or amber circulating among unclearly defined 'elite' groups. It has been argued that rather than competition and the attempt to establish or reproduce political hierarchies in the Bronze Age, as in the previous Neolithic, we also see a concern with communal values. Traditional notions of the world, of the self and the community, were encouraged rather than setting a premium on the aggressive aggrandising behaviour of select 'alpha' males only, which so tend to fascinate us. What we see is the long-term stability of a traditional way of life rather than Bronze Age communities fundamentally different from everything that had come before. There was continuity in the norms and values structuring the life of these communities and their social space in contrast to 'foreign' (i. e. Mediterranean) models of hierarchical society and their spatial correlates (e. g. palaces, central storage or workshops), if such were in fact known during a later phase in the existence of our tells. And there was, on the internal side of things, resistance in the face of the ever-present individual ambition to become more equal than the others.

This line of argument will be further developed in the forthcoming second part of this study. Since our current perception of such sites as somehow dominating the landscape is reductionist and misleading, initial emphasis will once more be placed on the different trajectories taken by such 'tell-building' communities. The approach suggested will thus be illustrated by reference to Early to Middle Bronze Age 'tell-building' communities in two micro-regions of the northern and north-eastern part of the Carpathian Basin: the Hungarian Borsod plain, occupied by Hatvan and subsequent Füzesabony communities; and the Romanian Carei plain, occupied by Sanislău and the following Otomani communities during the period under consideration.[249] Drawing on data from ongoing projects in both micro-regions, it will be suggested that we better leave behind essentialising concepts of 'proto-urbanity' or 'political economies' in a Bronze Age world. Instead, we clearly have to move towards a more fine-grained contextual understanding of the specific materiality of life on the Bronze Age tells under consideration, of the spatial and architectural settings guiding perception and available to be drawn upon in social action; an approach which also seeks to integrate the specific potential of such sites to evoke corporeal and affective responses and thereby attract notions of belonging, tradition and identity.

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[249] For the time being see Marta et al. (2010), Fischl/Kienlin/Seres (2012), Fischl/Kienlin (2013), Fischl et al. (2014) and Kienlin/Fischl/Marta (in print).

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