Social Transformations in Archaeology

Global and Local Perspectives

Kristian Kristiansen and Michael Rowlands

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN ARCHAEOLOGY

Social Transformations in Archaeology explores the relevance of archaeology to the study of long-term change and to the understanding of our contemporary world. It re-evaluates the premises and epistemologies which underlie the study of archaeology and looks at the ways discoveries about the past have a direct bearing on contemporary beliefs and actions. This collection brings together both new and previously published papers by Kristian Kristiansen and Michael Rowlands, which clearly illustrate the contribution archaeological analysis can make to our understanding of long-term change at a global level.

The papers in this survey are divided into three sections. They deal in turn with: broader theoretical issues; centre-periphery relations in a wide range of contexts; and finally focus in on an archaeological examination of colonialism, with case studies from historical Africa and the Mediterranean in the first millennium BC.

Social Transformations in Archaeology is essential reading for archaeologists and anthropologists. It will also be of great interest for all those working in related disciplines who are concerned with long-term change and development.

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INTRODUCTION

Michael Rowlands and Kristian Kristiansen

In this volume we bring together a set of papers, some previously published, others written specifically for this collection, which we believe define a coherent argument for the relevance of archaeology to the study of social transformation and our understanding of the contemporary world. Originating under the influence of various debates within structural Marxism in the early 1970s, the consistent theme of this volume is the re-evaluation of the premises and epistemologies that should generate a distinctively archaeological approach to the past.

Over the last two decades social evolutionary approaches in archaeology have been criticised for maintaining in some guise or other a modernist ideology of progress from simple to complex society. While characterising societies as tribes or chiefdoms seemed a useful framework to study institutional differentiation and the processes accounting for transition from one stage to another, it was very much embedded in Western assumptions that human history, to use Gellner's phrase, is a 'world growth story' (Gellner 1964:12–13). Accepting all the caveats of not compressing specific into general evolution, the fundamental idea remained that change could be measured by some form of institutional differentiation over time. Processual attacks on evolutionary stage theories had been directed against the explanations of change they offered rather than assumptions about complexity which were considered to be empirical and not ideological questions. In turn a central critique of processual explanations for social evolution was the charge of functionalism. Criticisms were directed against vulgar materialists reducing all explanation to narrow economic determinism and against cultural ecologists relegating variation to a complex of ecological-demographic variables to which the social and the political were functionally adapted (Friedman 1974; Friedman and Rowlands 1977; Burnham and Ellen 1978; Rapoport 1977). In archaeology this was developed into a more general critique of determinism and integrated systems approaches which depended on models derived from the natural sciences (Rowlands 1982; Hodder 1982).

While advocates of extreme ecological-demographic determinism can still be found in current archaeology (e.g. Sanders and Nichols 1988), the general response over the last two decades has been to stress various forms of environmental or economic possibilism, to emphasise the increasing autonomy of social factors in shaping material and environmental conditions, to emphasise discontinuity over continuity in social change and to recognise that 'human beings make history but not necessarily under conditions of their own choosing'. The disappearance in archaeological discourse of terms such as 'social evolution' in favour of 'long-term social change' or 'the *longue durée*' reflects a profound ambivalence to generalised history while at the same time retaining the idea that it is time depth that makes archaeology a different and valuable contributor to the other social and historical sciences. Others have argued that this is not necessarily the case (e.g. Shanks and Tilley 1987). Some argue that archaeology's data is material

culture and that it contributes theoretically by emphasising the materiality of form and its interpretation in the absence of language (Ucko 1970; Hodder 1986). Others have argued that, however poor its data, archaeology provides unique access to the past as 'Other' as a means of holding in tension the universalism of the present (Shanks and Tilley 1987). Some of those most critical of social evolutionary perspectives (e.g. Hodder 1986; Shanks and Tilley 1987) have advocated historical indeterminacy in relating present to past. They have argued that different historical narratives are motivated by contemporary ethical and political dispositions rather than their relative correspondence to past social and economic realities. This has been accompanied by a retreat from abstraction and generalisation to contextualisation and particularism and to avoidance of the issue of whether social change is predictable and its consequences in the present avoidable.

Writing history from present to past has its own problems of inevitably writing about origins (Thacker 1997:34) but the issue is whether it is a more satisfactory way of understanding the contingencies by which we have come to be as we are. Social evolutionism was undoubtedly guilty here of turning the object of study—development, progress, or whatever—into the aim or goal of history. Social archaeology has also been condemned as a project that assumes categories of the material and the social form a systemic totality as a neutral background on which actors and actions, beliefs and practices can be mapped (Shennan 1993). The historiography that traditionally has most forcefully used the concept of social totality as a backdrop, Marxism, also replicates a similar drive to totalisation in order to characterise its object of study Jay 1984). Moving beyond normative discussions of what constitutes the social and society has stimulated a debate between postmodernist archaeologists who wish to treat the 'real' or the 'material' as a set of discourses or texts and archaeological critics of postmodern theories who desire a rigid distinction between discursive representations and the real material of archaeological pasts (although, for the phantasmic nature of the 'real' see Lacan in Zizek 1994). Fears about the erosion of disciplinary boundaries, for example between archaeology and cultural studies, may have led to oversimplification of positions but the proposition remains that the epistemological status of archaeology as either real or discursive tends to remain a key issue motivating debate.

The question of long-term change is therefore no longer an empirical matter of documenting what happened in the past. Either the past as trope is constantly rediscovered in the present as a means of experiencing it as if one was there (Tilley 1993:3); or archaeological explanation presupposes an account of what people were doing as choices or distributions of outcomes rather than mechanically determined by unknowable constraints (Lemonnier 1993; Shennan 1993:56–7); and/or the long term is habitual action recognised as persistence of form or style or ways of doing things that are part of consciousness but not manipulated by it (Bradley 1991; Hodder 1987; Gosden 1993). What is no longer being taken seriously, once the tyranny of epistemological difference took hold, is the importance or otherwise of the consistency of the social whole over its individual parts (i.e. actors) and the role of structure in shaping subjective experience. For both Lacan and Lévi-Strauss, structure was that part of the real that remained un-symbolised; the antagonism that holds society together through the attempts to conceal or 'patch up' the rifts and efface their traces. The non-symbolisable traumatic kernel finds expression in the very distortions of reality, in those dissimulations around which social reality is structured. For Marx, structure related to the pre-ideological or

repressed role of social antagonism which, unless bursting out in class struggle and thus realising itself as the totalising principle of society, prevented social closure into a transparent, rational whole. All three share the same belief that structure is more than constraints on action or rules that govern hidden dispositions (although it functions as these) because social reality is always an attempt to conceal the 'real' of antagonism, to create a symbolic fiction, to domesticate and contain repressed conflicts which, because it can never do this completely, constitutes the problematic of ideology.

It may well be that the sociological critics of evolutionism never wished to be so successful in creating a new paradigm for the social sciences. Some, like Giddens, for instance, clearly wanted to draw attention to power, structures of domination and control of resources as the fundamental phenomena that define social reproduction (Giddens 1984:281–2). The movement from agency to the contradictory consequences of action is linked in his argument to structural contradictions which in turn depend on the conditions of system reproduction which 'act to negate the very principles upon which they are based' (Giddens 1984:312–14). His argument is premised on a critique of evolutionism that was intended to liberate the field from being forced into an 'evolutionary shape', although perhaps ironically it is also his predilection for a rapprochement between structural history and sociology in 'making sense of texts' that leads him to draw analogies between archaeology and hermeneutics as mutually consigned to the task of interpreting artefactual/textual fragments washed up on the shore of modernity (Giddens 1984:357).

The aim of this volume is to remain committed to an archaeology which investigates the existence of social realities that to some degree lie beyond, or are repressed by, the scope of conscious experience. By this we mean that ethical and political values take the form of commitments to doctrines or images that are grounded in remembered or reconstructed (i.e. repressed) historical realities. But, in practice, these commitments are always partial and limited in their internalisation of the objective conditions of their existence. This brings us back to the centrality of social antagonism and the recognition that the structuring of social reality is always an attempt to cope with it, to domesticate it or control it. In the light of such systematic uncertainties, actors unleash psychological forces and forms of social motivation whose origin and destiny lie beyond their capacities to predict or control. It is this perspective that requires an archaeology of the long term as a distinctive contribution to our understanding of social realities. The kind of relevance we have in mind is that which makes our experience of realities of the past have a direct bearing on contemporary beliefs and actions. Understanding the conditions by which certain accepted or 'common sense' experiences of the world may have come into existence sufficiently validates the need for archaeology to discover their 'reality'. A recourse to archaeology in order to show us how 'that which-is has not always been so' can easily be justified by the particular kind of time depth and empirical inquiry that archaeology provides. After all, by believing that archaeological inquiry transgresses constraints on knowledge, we are saying little more than what motivates all other academic disciplines and nothing about what is special about archaeological knowledge in particular. This cannot be time depth alone, since we can and do have an archaeology of the present. It implies instead that archaeology has developed a set of methods and a mode of questioning that reveals the nature of the constraints on our experiencing and

understanding the antagonisms of our worlds and on how we might wish to experience and understand them in the future.

Perhaps archaeological writing does require a certain 'aestheticisation', not in order to erode the truth of 'our' past but to recognise its 'twisted' perspective rendered oblique by the perspective we wish to draw on it at any particular time. Archaeology now reappears in Foucauldian guise as a method of studying and recuperating subjugated knowledges that can be freed and brought into play in the present (Foucault 1980:85). However, the settings and circumstances within which different narratives are possible do not come out of thin air and have to be understood within given historical and political circumstances. The challenges made to a Western Eurocentric view of world history by dependency theory was governed precisely by the appearance of the Third World as a fact of Cold War politics just as its decline as a general history of global inequalities and movements in civilisational status corresponded with the end of an East-West hegemony of global politics. This could be taken as an example of a Braudelian 'structure and conjuncture' scheme in which large-scale historical forces shape and are shaped by personal experience. But as Anderson wrote in criticism of E.P.Thompson, how are apparently transparent terms like 'experience', 'agency' to be understood in this co-determination? (Anderson 1980). Experience as passive registration of events in the world is very different from active 'seeing through' to effect change in the world. Couplets such as structure and agency are themselves problematic renditions of an apparently common sense view of how the world works. The language of structuralism implies an undesired objectivism and that of agency, positions set in ideological terms. There is no reason why archaeology should be different from any other part of intellectual thought where the breaking down of old certainties has been described as leaving behind a sort of conceptual rubble open to personalised rag-picking as modes of thought. But this seems unduly pessimistic and negates the positive trends established by the dominance of structuralism and structural Marxism in the 1960s and 1970s and the developments that have emerged to create the current theoretical influences in the subject.

Structural Marxism and its consequences

We take as a point of departure an approach that owes its conceptual origins to the critiques and reworking of Marxist theory in anthropology, in particular the influence of Althusser in combining structuralism and Marxism, as well as the structural history of Braudel, the 'world systems' perspective of Immanuel Wallerstein and current globalisation theory. Structural Marxism originated as part of the development of a modern Marxist understanding of pre-capitalist societies that not only took into account the results of anthropological research but also situated an understanding of 'people without' history as part of the development of capitalism and the modern world system (Kahn and Llobera 1981; Wolf 1982). It represented one of the first serious attempts to criticise and reform classical Marxism, which was characterised by evolutionary stage theories and simplistic notions of economic determination such as the base/ superstructure model. This coincided with developments in anthropology that were producing a new rapprochement with historical process, in particular a study of the effects of ideological conditions on anthropological discourse and the role of ideology

generally in the determination of social structures (Bloch 1977; Asad 1979). This led not only to the rejection of neo-evolutionary theory in anthropology, as represented in the work of Leslie White, Julian Steward and others, but also to debates about what constituted an adequate explanation of society, and whether society existed as a self-contained unit of analysis (Friedman 1994). In archaeology structural-Marxist ideas were applied in a number of different contexts (Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978; Bender 1978; Kristiansen 1978; Gledhill and Larsen 1982; Rowlands, Larsen and Kristiansen 1987; Ekholm and Friedman 1979, 1980; Friedman 1982; Parker Pearson 1984). In comparative archaeology, Spriggs has used Godelier's discussion of the Asiatic state in his analysis of the development of Hawaii (Spriggs 1988); Tilley used Meillassoux's discussion of the role of ancestral knowledge for the legitimation of authority in the Early Neolithic in Scandinavia; and Thomas made an insightful comparison of the Early to Middle Neolithic in central Europe through a contrast between lineage and Germanic modes of production (Tilley 1984; Thomas 1987). A combination of Marxist and world systems theory has been particularly influential in American archaeology (e.g. Kohl 1987; Peregrine and Feinman 1996). Perhaps the least used concept is that of the Germanic mode of production, although in eastern Europe it has been more popular and Hartman, for example, has discussed the transition to feudal society in terms of the rise of the Mark association. Bonte also used it in his comparative studies of African pastoralist societies and Hedeager for understanding the transition from pre-Roman to Roman Iron Age in northern Europe (Hedeager 1987, 1992).

Althusser gave priority to the symbolic constitution of social relations. His rejection of the concept of ideology as false consciousness and his insistence on the materiality of ideological practice meant that 'ideas' could never be abstract but were always installed as concrete activity. Furthermore ideology is defined by those cultural processes whose effect is the constitution of subjects. Subjectification proceeds by concrete cultural processes of 'interpellation', that is, by naming, describing and identifying subjects within social processes (Coward and Ellis 1977). Individuals may be victims of exploitation but they can invent a subjectivity that denies it in order to believe themselves to be free and autonomous. Ideology represents therefore the 'imaginary' relations of individuals to their 'real' conditions of existence in which subjects are inscribed within and marked by social processes. Hence Althusser stressed a theory/practice connection and rejuvenated an exhausted Marxist theory by giving culture a relative autonomy, something that just couldn't be read off but needed to be seriously analysed. Althusser's merger of structuralism with Marxism was in part to demonstrate that symbolic practices (the 'myth-making' of Lévi-Strauss) operated politically to identify and name subjects and that the forms identities took were, in the last instance (that never came), produced by the unconscious rules of economic logics (Althusser 1979:199–273).

Yet this broke away from naive ideas about progression and cultural evolution and offered a far more powerful alternative to functionalist theory. In periods of radical contradiction, subjects were semi-detached from underlying economic relations and through the acquisition of critical knowledge (an epistemological break) could change their conditions of existence. The parallels with Foucault on the nexus of culture, power and subjectification are obvious enough but it was the political dimension of ideology that was stressed by Althusser. This was its appeal in the late 1960s to a generation that could subscribe neither to evolutionary Marxism nor to the synchronism of classic

structuralism and condemned the functionalism of American social theory for being powerless in criticising American foreign policy in South-east Asia. The idea that kinship, religion or law could be equally ideological and political depending on the way they dominated, for a while, the functioning of unconscious economic laws also meant that non-capitalist social relations could be theorised. Social relations of production were not simply determined by the labour process as in classic Marxism but were themselves ideologically constituted and acted to create particular kinds of subjectivity that constituted imaginary relations with given material conditions of existence. Ritual power, marriage systems and esoteric knowledge could all act to define forms of subjects so they could participate in particular material processes for the extraction of surplus labour (Kristiansen 1984). The potential functionalism of these explanations was clear (cf. Friedman 1975) but it was subsumed in a concept of a social totality linking the imaginary to the real that had wide comparative implications as a theory of social transformation. Godelier defined structural Marxism in anthropology as

> a vast new field of investigation, namely the search for the reasons and the conditions which, in history, have brought about shifts in the locus, and hence changes in the forms of relations of production.
>
> (Godelier 1977:765)

If traditional approaches in social analysis based on studying empirically observable institutions, roles and behaviours were inadequate, then what was to replace it? Althusser based his account of what determined the difference between one mode of production and another by recognising the relative autonomy of the different structures and by identifying which dominated the subjectivity of given social relations of production. The borrowing of the concept of structure from Lévi-Strauss is most explicit here. Structure was defined as a set of historically derived constraints or dispositions (similar to Bourdieu's habitus) that repress subjects in imaginary social relations so as to extract particular kinds of surplus labour and ensure their allocation within the larger social totality. Structures are not directly observable, only their functional effects. Hence the structural Marxist borrowing from Marx of the concept of social formation converted the observable form of society into a hierarchy of abstract distinctions. Which elements take on the functions of relations of production or function ideologically to legitimise social inequality depends not on predetermined evolutionary goals but on a set of structural constraints which defines their functioning in the social totality. Structures contain two sets of contradictions, what Godelier called intra- and inter-systemic, both of which were deemed essential for understanding the dynamics of a social formation. Friedman was much more explicit about inter-systemic contradictions being of greater importance since they did not have to take place within an ill-defined social totality but could operate at an intersocietal or regional level that did not predicate the prior existence of a 'society' (Friedman 1975). Also he was clearer about defining the concept of contradiction as the result of breakdown in the conditions of mutual constraint or the limits of functional compatibility between structures such as those that might arise between the forces and relations of production. In his debate with Rapoport over the functionalism of neo-evolutionary theory, Friedman was concerned with developing more flexible models of determination and domination of different structures within the same formation. Neither

Godelier nor Friedman used the term ‘mode of production’ (in contrast to Meillassoux, Terray and other writers in the French Marxist anthropology tradition), in order to emphasise the dominance in their analysis of social relations of production over forces of production. For the same reason Friedman shifted his model to examining the conditions of social reproduction in order to explore another kind of relation, for example that which links kinship to production and distribution as well as to techno-ecological conditions (Friedman 1975). If social relations are material relations, if they dominate the process of material production and reproduction and they owe their origin not to that which they dominate but to the social properties of the previous system of reproduction as a whole, then it is only possible to explain the social in terms of a history of the social.

If Friedman’s reformulation of Marx and Lévi-Strauss has a Durkheimian influence, then Althusser’s theory of ideology and subjectivity not surprisingly bears a close resemblance to the ideas of Foucault. However, while they agreed that the formation of discourses always has material effects, they disagreed over the prior existence of social groups as material facts, which led to the criticism by Althusser that all debate with Foucault on the subject of objective conditions ended with an exasperated ‘It’s the discourse, stupid’. Later Foucault was forced to acknowledge the role of non-discursive practices in the over-determinations of subjects, although he can still be read to imply that history has only a linguistic existence (Thacker 1997). If objects and events only emerge in discourse, does that entail their having only a discursive existence? Archaeology is now well acquainted with the paradox that either interpretation produces what we believe to be the events and objects ‘of the past’ or that, even if the past did exist, it can only be grasped through our own discursive interventions which necessarily contain within them our own perspectives and interests (e.g. Tilley 1993). But if discourses are not groups of signs but practices which form the objects of which they speak, then archaeology studies practices that obey rules of discourse, which are linguistic. Althusser, on the other hand, argued that practices were ultimately embedded in real sites of contestation and struggle, for example, the state, which in modern societies provides the means (schools, universities, media, law and morality) to encourage the masses to consent and participate in their own repression. In the sense that ‘people make history but not under conditions of their own choosing, rather under conditions inherited from the past’, there are considerable implications for materialist approaches in archaeology. What has swept away the whole debate, however, is not the nature of materialism but the wish to avoid the charge of objectivism which poststructuralism used in order to exclude from further discussion the work of Althusser, Lévi-Strauss and Barthes, to name but a few.

Perhaps the most consistent criticism of structural Marxism and materialist approaches in general has come from anthropologists who basically use a concept of history to be synonymous with a concept of culture. For Geertz, the past cannot be understood by means of elaborately constructed theoretical formulas or by reference to general laws. The creativity and consequences of human activity always take place within the context of sets of historically derived symbols to which human actors attach meanings (Geertz 1973, 1980). To say that a problem or practice is historical is the same as saying that it is culturally situated, and vice versa. Geertz’s reconstruction of the history of the nineteenth-century Balinese state was intended to be a case study of historical change as a continuous social and cultural process of patterned alteration in the meanings attached to

cultural symbols, change which, when viewed as a whole, becomes almost impossible to detect (Geertz 1980:5). Sahlins also makes numerous references to culture and history in his criticisms of various materialist approaches to the past (Sahlins 1976). Yet he differs from Geertz in being less concerned with meaning or action than with the opposition between concept and praxis in debating whether the conceptual scheme should be seen as both prior to and the mediator of activity. Culture as a conceptual scheme can be subjected to structural analysis and indeed the terms culture and structure are largely synonymous in Sahlins's work (Sahlins 1985). His definition of 'structural transformation' as change in 'positional relations among the cultural categories' characterises transformations as the relation or interaction of structure and event or structure and practice. However, as his own interdisciplinary research with Kirch in Polynesia demonstrates, the overwhelming emphasis is on how the 'event' is incorporated in structure—the cultural reading of new events within pre-existing codes and categories (Sahlins and Kirch 1992). The political and economic transformations that accompanied events such as the death of Captain Cook are treated as little more than a backdrop to the incorporation of the act into a pre-existing mythical praxis. Sahlins's famous 'structure of the conjuncture' about the interrelations of structure and practice implies a similar linguistic turn in reducing the history of contingent events to pre-existing conceptual schemes.

It is perhaps ironic, therefore, that it has been other Marxist historians such as E.P.Thompson and Raymond Williams and Marxist anthropologists such as Wolf and Roseberry who have seen the elision of a history of the event from the actors' point of view as the most essential criticism of all the structuralist approaches (Thompson 1978; Williams 1980; Wolf 1982). Wolf, in particular, criticised the Eurocentric view of global history found in world systems theory and resented, as anthropologically perverse, Wallerstein's tendency to see the history of the rest of the world since 1492 as a consequence of the expansionism of Europeans. His diatribes against structural Marxism and structural history equally raise interesting intellectual questions for the influence of Julian Steward's multilinear evolutionism in anthropological archaeology (Wolf 1982; Steward 1955). Steward's trenchant criticisms of the band-tribe-chiefdom-state evolutionary scenarios in American neo-evolutionary anthropology were motivated by his belief that contemporary marginals (hunter-gatherers and tribals) were not surviving primitive precursors of states and civilisations but had been pushed historically into peripheral areas on the fringes of more complex types of colonised society and through environmental adaptation, represented devolved and exploited peoples. Steward's multilinealism opened up the possibility of 'other histories' than those traced by modernisation theorists in which Western culture and its nation states (complex societies) were the end point of history (most recently developed archaeologically, for example, by Anna Roosevelt for lowland Amazonian Indians and by Wilmsen for South Roosevelt for lowland Amazonian Indians and by Wilmsen for South African hunter-gatherers—Roosevelt 1994; Wilmsen 1989–and by Steward's students Mintz (1986) and Wolf (1982), who developed a history of capitalist and precapitalist modes of production and their articulation that contrasts explicitly with world systems perspectives in which the histories of peripheries are simply 'read off' by events in the core).

Subtleties of intellectual history aside, the tendency in general in archaeology has been to reduce critiques of materialism to criticisms of social evolutionism (Hodder 1986).

This ‘idealist error’ is unfortunate, not only considering the actual intellectual development of materialist approaches to the past but also because it has encouraged simplistic academic posturing in place of rigorous debate. For example, some of the problems in applying structural Marxist ideas in archaeology stem from their origins in synchronic structuralism, which encouraged tendencies to functionalism in explaining long-term social change. This is certainly a fault in Friedman and Rowlands’s (1977) discussion of models of civilisation. But one of the advantages of the Althusserian formulation was the emphasis on theory and practice, that is, that a theory always returns to a practice which in turn defines its relevance and utility (Althusser 1969:168). To the extent that this remains an intellectual problem it is an idealist position and it may be that the implications are little more than an Aristotelian notion that ideas shape material and vice versa. However, the more radical implication is that theory is an outcome of embodied practice, physical activity in the world, which, more congruent with the Marxian notion of praxis, has obvious echoes in Giddens’s and Bourdieu’s versions of practice and agency. Althusserian structural Marxism also broke away from naive ideas about progression and cultural evolution and offered a far more powerful alternative to functionalist theory. The stress on history and contradiction was essential as the solution to the problems of classic structuralism (for example, the disappearance of the referent, the object to which the sign refers) and in particular in arguing that objective issues of power relations should be the core of analysis. The fact that these may not be fully within the conscious experience of individual actors means that even at the potentially functionalist level of unintended consequences of action, there has to exist a notion of structure that generates particular distributions of out-comes over time and certain ways of understanding and experiencing the past as the motive for action.

It is of considerable importance to acknowledge the dominance of structuralist thought in social science until the early 1980s and the extent to which it still shapes ‘taken for granted’ knowledge in both archaeology and anthropology. The ‘linguistic turn’ in archaeological theorising entailed a basic adherence to the idea that codes or categories generate practices. The emphasis on context in an earlier interpretative archaeology, for example, tends on examination to dissolve into a series of structuralist statements, such as defining context as ‘the totality of the relevant dimensions of variation around any one object’ (Hodder 1986:139) or that archaeological contexts are themselves a product of disciplinary codes set up for producing particular knowledges and these have effects on those who create, use and interpret them (Tilley 1993:9). The failure of structural Marxism, and why it fell out of favour in the social sciences from the mid-1980s, was as much to do with antipathy to the objectivism of structuralism in general. Althusser shared with Lévi-Strauss and Lacan a belief that concepts were always part of a field of force that encompassed the totality of causes and effects in everyday practice. Besides the compulsion for completion and the unwillingness to recognise the partiality of any theoretical perspective, the danger of this totalising effort to achieve complete explanation, which it shared with systems theory, was the drift to empty formalism, the development of a new rationality based on formal abstract games that lost all purchase on empirical content, in particular the concrete experience of lived experience. But equally the current predominance of practice theories in the social sciences, in particular those that encourage the study of embodied practice as concrete experience, involves the opposite danger of marginalising structure, defined functionally as passive constraint on

individual action. Giddens's structuration thesis is inherently vague and imprecise on this issue, allowing on the one hand for 'all structural properties of social systems to be the medium and outcome of the contingently accomplished activities of situated actors' (Giddens 1984:191) and on the other 'structural contradictions to be the constitutive features of human societies' (Giddens 1984:191, 193). His idea of co-presence as a means of reconciling the duration of activity and the *longue durée* of institutional time—the fundamental question of social theory as he puts it—is nothing of the sort, in the sense that it rests on little more than their supposed common existence in recursive time as the basis of practical consciousness (Giddens 1984:35). The reduction of structure to the outcome of practice (which is continually referred to as 'bracketing') as the condition and the outcome of human social association leads him to accept some quite absurdly out-of-date anthropological writings on 'traditional societies' or about the stagnation of the 'Asiatic mode of production' because they are assumed to represent the outcomes of 'reflexively monitored activities of situated actors' (Giddens 1984:199; 1990). In effect, the notion of reproduction he espouses to account for these differences in disposition requires little more than a broad-brush and outdated picture of societal types along the lines of the hot and cold societies of Lévi-Strauss or Weber's agrarian versus modern societies (cf. Gellner 1988). Anderson is also surely right when, in his criticism of Thompson, he argues that it is the discontinuity or lack of co-determination between agency and necessity that not only makes the outcomes of history unpredictable but also warns us to avoid attempts to reconcile levels of the practice/structure or micro/macro types. Privileging instead their separate contributions provides us with a distinct mode of access to the realities of these worlds (Anderson 1980:32). If structural properties have a potential temporality that is not the outcome of the practices and temporalities of situated actors, then the relation between them may be not systematic but contradictory, inconsistent and non-reductive, and there is every reason why archaeologists should continue to privilege the study of such processes as their speciality.

These issues bring us back to the starting-point of this Introduction. We seem unnecessarily caught between avoiding the reduction of social meaning to omnipotent social structure (semiotic codes, grids of social classification generated by social structure, modes of production, etc.) or regarding social practices as unconstrained, open and indeterminate. Shennan has a valid point when he argues that talk of structures, practices and temporalities is too abstract and what archaeology recognises realistically are interactions between loosely coupled sets of processes (such as day-to-day power relations and day-to-day agricultural practices and their ecological outcomes) which are historically contingent, irreducible and 'rhizomic' rather than hierarchical in nature (Shennan 1993; personal communication). An example of this might be Mann's discussion of the breakdown of kin-community resistance to political centralisation occurring when investment in fixed facilities makes the costs of moving away socially prohibitive, a process he describes as 'social caging' (Mann 1986:54–8). Warfare only enters his model once populations have been 'caged'. Its role is to intensify state formation and expansion as polities attempt to take over each other's infrastructures. The move from day-to-day repetition of power relations in relation to agricultural resources to intensification of exclusion and centralisation can not only be mapped but, as interacting processes, can show how the will and capacity of kin-based communities to resist political centralisation was broken as incipient elites came to unify across earlier political

boundaries. Mann's caging hypothesis suggests that people accept domination (consensually, rather than under direct threat of violence) when it is the lesser of two evils, but the unintended consequence is that kin-communities turned peasantry are forced to 'consent' to greater domination by the pressures created by the tendencies to expansion and violence between elites. Each successive episode will reflect the impacts on social behaviour of previous historical experience and transformations in social practices, resulting in more complex changes than those allowed by ecological pressures acting as 'the motor of social evolution'. In the past it has been found necessary to engage in rather sterile debates about the role of demographic pressure as opposed to the importance of cultural strategies of power and actions of social agents in negotiating relations of domination. The fact that such questions are no longer an issue is important in itself, allowing a much greater exchange of ideas between archaeology and the other social sciences.

Anti-anti-objectivism

The discussion so far scarcely envisages the anti-realist view of the past according to which (in its most relativist version) the past only exists in the accounts we give of it. Rather it is assumed that the meaning of archaeological practice is sustained as long as the subject retains its Enlightenment goal of recovering the past as a necessary part of knowing the present and as a guide to the future. Our discussion provides support for Habermas's claim that 'there is no cure for the wounds of Enlightenment other than the radicalised Enlightenment itself (Habermas 1992:155). It is hardly surprising that, faced with the current confusions and inadequacies of the use of the past in identity poli-tics, Edward Said should express his impatience, declaring that 'the question of identity—focusing on yourself, are we this, that or the other?—is really in the end one of the less interesting questions in the world', compared to the issue of 'enlightenment and emancipation' (cited in Callinicos 1995:199). In a postmodernist sense that 'the idea of difference becomes, in effect, the new universal that cannot be overcome but must, instead, be celebrated', historical struggles in identity politics terms are transformed into the effects of signification.

The picture is confusing. On the one hand it is an argument that in economic, political and ideological terms we now live in a world qualitatively different from that of modernity, involving shifts in experience, aesthetic practices and social theory itself. It implies that old certainties have broken down (left/right politics have been substituted by local social movements over green issues, heritage, gender) and the realities of a post-Cold War disorderly world do not encourage faith in totalising truths any longer. According to Foucault, both structuralism and Marxism were excessive culprits in the production of global totalitarian theories aiming to decipher the universal secret of culture and history. Hegel's belief that reality unfolded itself through the resolution of its own contradictions, achieving greater and greater conditions of self-consciousness, compelled us to see the movement of culture and history as a single process. Marxism was equally a grand narrative that abolished cultural difference, producing instead a single salvational view of historical progress to which all societies strive. In terms of ideas of universal or modern aspirations for human emancipation, the replacement of Hegel's idealism by

Marx's material laws of historical development and the universalisation of his telos of world history, particularly to the Third World, was little short of disastrous.

Postmodernism espouses a radical rejection of the sociological traditions of Marx, Weber and Durkheim and in particular the rationalist notion that there is a coincidence between the movement of thought and the movement of reality. Lyotard argues that modernity anchored a discourse of truth and justice by relying on the great historical and scientific narratives for legitimacy (Lyotard 1980). Postmodern is a new stage because grand narratives have now lost all credibility: the accumulation of wealth, the aspiration to freedom, or to a classless society, Marx's master narrative that the aim of history was 'the collective struggle to wrest a realm of freedom from a realm of necessity' are all invalidated. More than this, for both Foucault and Lyotard, such grand narratives are morally bad, particularly if constructed as philosophies of history and as the totalising goals of political programmes and parties. They do not deny the necessity of constructing narratives. In fact they would assume nothing else as the logic of presence. No reality exists outside the stories that construct its objects. Instead it is the imposition of truth implied in the grand narrative in contrast to the multiple truths made possible by the *petits récits* that form the basis of their attack on truth. Meta-narratives, according to Lyotard, seek to weave together a diversity of events into the story of humankind's approximation towards some goal—freedom, absolute knowledge, communism, and so on. Meta-narratives contain the sort of closure that could be claimed to be true of all narratives: a sense of wholeness and completeness achieved by selection and describing events as tending towards whatever goal that the grand narrative assigns to the historical process. Whether this is necessarily so and whether there can ever be anything but choice in the narrative and the means to critique them is part of a much wider debate. But it has, for some, led to an undermining of our capacity to discriminate between historical representations based on relative success in capturing what really happened and constructs of the historical imaginary (most notoriously in the 'revisionist' questioning of the Holocaust that Le Pen called 'a mere detail of history'). Jameson, for instance, in his interpretation of postmodernism, claims that it renders us incapable of dealing with time and that it is symptomatic that we no longer desire to locate ourselves as part of history but rather, in the form of heritage, as consumers of it (Jameson 1991). A more intense experience of the present and the recognition of temporal discontinuity has replaced any faith in history as a process of development from one socio-economic system to another. Postmodernism rejects not only any movement in history but also the idea that any particular groups or actors should represent the voice of history. All the attempts to replace an over-abstract view of social evolution with a theory of politics that interprets the role of human agency in historical change have been brusquely dismissed as guilty of retaining a belief in the order of coherence and meaning in social change. On the contrary, it is asserted, there is no discipline any longer, history is discontinuous, and the focus should be on the heterogeneous, the diverse, the subjective, the spontaneous, the relative and the fragmentary.

This trend follows the more or less general trend to retreat from generalising goals in anthropology and archaeology. What some would see as the undermining of the ethnographic enterprise has led to a general concern with what constitutes the goals of anthropology (Geertz 1984; Barth 1989; Rabinow 1985). Geertz has recently shown signs

of worry about the way things have gone but concedes that the self-assurance of a previous generation of ethnographers is no longer feasible:

> This loss of confidence, and the crisis in ethnographic writing that goes with it, is a contemporary phenomenon and is due to contemporary developments. It is how things stand with us these days. It is not how they stood for Sir Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard.
>
> (Geertz 1988:72)

One can find the influence of many of these elements of poststructuralist and postmodernist writings in contemporary archaeological theorising, although to varying degrees of coherence and commitment. In current archaeology there are:

1 accounts following the structuration theories of Giddens and the practice account of Bourdieu (Barrett 1994);
2 accounts taking inspiration from the poststructuralist writings of the later Barthes, Derrida, Foucault and Giddens (e.g. Bapty and Yates 1990);
3 accounts advocating a Lévi-Strauss type of structuralism, with the difference that it is local rather than universal structures that are being emphasised (e.g. Hodder 1990);
4 Hermeneutic and phenomenological approaches (Tilley 1993, 1996; Thomas 1996; Gosden 1993);
5 Critical theory/Frankfurt School approaches;
6 Textual/discourse theory approaches (Tilley 1993).

None of these is exclusive and each is characterised by so many kinds of crossovers and hybrid approaches that it becomes difficult to distinguish coherent intellectual traditions. What they probably all share, however, is an antipathy to giving priority to the objective context of human actions. In part this represents a move towards various forms of relativism in archaeological theorising over the last decade, linked to the revival of narrative, albeit not in the sense of a mode of historical writing organised as chronologically sequential form but as constitutive of history *tout court* (cf. Stone 1989).

Relativism is, however, a minor issue in this general debate on the limits of objectivism. Few would entertain the naive idea that sense perceptions can and do simply reorganise material worlds at will. What is an issue is whether the massive attention paid to the interpreter reduces the archaeologist's relation to his/her objects of study to a decoding operation which reduces all social relations to communicative relations (Bourdieu 1977:1). Hence it is not sufficient for archaeologists to break with the primary experience of interpreting their material records, self-reflexively or otherwise. The knowledge Bourdieu terms objectivist presupposes knowledge of both the objective structures of a social world and the objective truth of primary experience as experience when *explicit* knowledge (author's emphasis) of those structures is denied (Bourdieu 1977:3). This in turn was the rationalisation by Bourdieu of the divorce between structuralism and phenomenology. This harks back to the debate that all abstractions (that is, structures) must ultimately be grounded in (that is, derived from and returned to) 'basic experience of the world', advocated by Merleau-Ponty (1964:212) and rejected by Lévi-Strauss, who founded structuralism in opposition to this phenomenal view of lived experience in order to search 'beneath the rationalised interpretations of the native' for

those ‘unconscious categories’ which Mauss previously argued were the determinants of social life (Lévi-Strauss 1977:7).

It was the structuralist vision which inspired Braudel’s ‘structural’ or ‘analytic’ history to prioritise the objective context of human actions over history of the event and to move beyond the impasse of structuralism and phenomenology, the development of a theory of practice in the work of Bourdieu, Giddens and others. Although this debate was addressed in an early phase of post-processual archaeology, it must be said that little has come out of any application to the archaeological record (*pace* Barratt 1994). Instead a return to a phenomenological theory of primary experience has been widely advocated as ‘interpretative archaeology’, which avoids even Bourdieu’s strictures that the limits of objectivism would not be transcended by a logic of practice that was reconstructed without an explicit consideration of the objective conditions of social agency (Bourdieu 1977:38–58).

In our view, this turning away from structure and its conditions of practice is mistaken, particularly because it is in this area that archaeology has most to contribute. The structuralist vision of a ‘human reason which has its reasons and of which man knows nothing’, a categorising system unconnected with a thinking subject is a fundamental, although not a complete, justification of the archaeological enterprise. A move to recognising that a subject both shapes and is shaped by the structures it employs in no way invalidates a study of structures, institutions and the degree to which they place limits on individual freedom or, for that matter, shape such ideals in the first place.

> The old problem of the relation between subject and object is transformed, and relativism is surpassed as soon as one puts it in historical terms, since here the object is the vestige left by other subjects, and the subject—historical understanding—held in the fabric of history, is by this very fact capable of self criticism.
>
> (Merleau-Ponty 1973:30–1).

Followers of Bourdieu and Giddens should have no problem with the temporality of human practices fashioning and being fashioned by structural properties. The question is the degree of autonomy of the latter in the shaping of the former and, as mentioned earlier, whether they generate distinctive temporalities implying different empirical bases of inquiry. The same issue dominated Weber’s writing on the unintended consequences of actions and on the centrality of the theme of compulsion, fate and irony in human actions (Turner 1981:9). For Weber it is not ideas but material and ideal interests that govern human actions (Weber 1961:280). The effects of actions are therefore often the obverse of intentionality, as in his discussions of how charisma as a personal attribute can be routinised into authoritarian rule (Weber 1961:54). The idea that the outcomes of human actions often work against their intentions and limit rather than enhance possible future courses of action is part of the irony of human history. The question is still whether Weber, like Giddens and others, is using the term structure in any other way than describing or glossing the aggregated properties of individuals.

The alternative view of ‘analytic history’, which views structure to be historically situated rather than to be a property of human cognition, lies precisely in the argument that structures gain a certain autonomy over time (as institutions, roles, etc.) that have to

be understood, struggled against and if necessary changed as an act of will. The fact that this has generated a rather justifiable antipathy to objectivism is just as likely to be part of a personal practice that rejects the alienation of modern life and seeks more authentic conditions of intimacy. Ideas of objective structures bearing down on subjectivity are simply not how one wishes to view the world at the end of the twentieth century. A Marxist account would describe this as a romantic reaction to the alienation encouraged by the unhappy consciousness peculiar to capitalism which helps obscure the social conditions that determine people's existence. A less baleful view would give a more positive and optimistic rendering of historical agents' ability to appropriate and make the best of the historically derived conditions in which they find themselves. In either case there is a tendency to represent capitalist modernity as fragmentary and fissiparous, a welter of individual experiences, actions and items that lack depth or historicity in the face of an autonomous logic of capitalism (Berman 1984). As a means of coping with this fluidity, we romanticise heritage and 'traditional' societies governed by use-value, concrete labour and non-alienated praxis. Archaeologists can become leading figures in countering fragmentation by encouraging a romantic attachment to sense of place and belonging as a 'fantastic' misrecognition of the realities of modern political economies which deny such securities to all but the more affluent few.

The confusion of these beliefs tends to confirm Habermas's argument that personal choice is already prefigured by the uncoupling of system from the lifeworld in the history of rationalisation in the West. Weber and Simmel were both concerned that modernity is increasingly characterised by formal and objectifying systems of administration, control and impersonal calculation rather than subjective impulses. Objectivists, by pursuing their analytical and calculating view of reality, are accused of a lifeless recording of regularities or of reifying various analytic notions such as 'culture', 'structures' or 'modes of production' and imagining that they exist as such in the world, external to actors and constraining their responses towards regularity. Bourdieu's attack on this objectivism was powerful and warranted but it is important to note that he did not include in his critique the formal rules that defined differences in society nor situations in which actions appear to actors as reified external domination (Calhoun 1993:73). This was because he saw no point in pursuing the dualism of subjective culture and objective structure as choices because it was rooted in the supposed innate human need for non-alienated praxis made impossible by the separation of production from consumption in modern life, that was redolent of most critiques of modernity from Marx to Sartre, and was by no means justified by the ethnographic findings of people's real lives (cf. also Miller 1987:32). Romantic seeking after lost values buried in a formal, calculating administered world was as illusory as rediscovering them in a future postmodern world 'freed from necessity'.

One of the consequences of this turn from objectivism, in the most vulgar sense, was the reduction of structures to individuals and the consequences of their actions. This is not to deny the critics of sterile philosophies of historical determinism but it has meant that the wish to avoid any such taint on the grounds that it generates a kind of fascistic tendency in historical writing has had profound effects in theorising the world. Bourdieu, for example, as one who was too careful to take this easy way out but nevertheless challenged structuralism for eliminating agents and practices, created a bias in social theory towards a discourse on social reproduction (rather than social change) because he

wanted to show that reproduction was what people did, even when reproduction was not itself their intention. And this was because actions and intentions are the product of a *modus operandi* of which the actor is not the producer and has no conscious mastery; they contain an objective intention which always outruns the actor's conscious intentions (Bourdieu 1977:79). Thus,

> it is not by lavishing generosity, kindness or politeness on his charwoman (or any other 'socially inferior' agent) but by choosing the best investment for his money, or the best school for his son, that the possessor of economic or cultural capital perpetuates the relationship of domination which objectively links him with his charwoman or even her descendants.
>
> (Bourdieu 1977:189–90)

One might well suggest that it is worth knowing that what defines the best investment is an outcome of the tendency for the rate of profit to fall through the increased organic composition of capital. And this is because, as any Marxist primer will say, at root there is a contradiction between the forces and relations of production. Bourdieu provides considerable insight into the practices reproducing domination but what is missing is any historical analysis of what generates the objective conditions that make one kind of reproduction possible rather than another. He recognised the dilemma when he pointed precisely to the problem that Sartre created for himself by making each action 'a sort of unprecedented confrontation between the subject and the world' (Bourdieu 1977:73). Against the view that makes social reality inexplicably voluntary and ultimately therefore arbitrary, Bourdieu argued that agents act within socially prescribed constructed ranges of possibilities in which they are durably inscribed (subjectification in Foucault's sense) as well as within the social world in which they move (Calhoun 1993:74). This would appear to support a structure/agency dichotomy, but he explicitly rejects this dualism of an active subject confronting society ('the source resides neither in consciousness nor in things') and argues instead for studying the relationship between a history objectified in things, in the form of institutions, and a history incarnated in bodies, in the form of habitus (Bourdieu 1990:190). As is well known, Bourdieu's particular solution to the conflict between objectivism and subjectivism was to stress practical mastery, a theory of practice that would give good account of the limits of awareness. This drew him to the conditions of misrecognition and misinformation and, anticipating Giddens, to favour a theory of reproduction instead of a theory of the forms of struggle that can break patterns of stable reproduction and promote social change. This of course is not conducive to a theory of macro-historical social change and his account essentially renders social systems conservative and offers no reasons why a logic of reproduction would not work (Calhoun 1993:70). In response to his critics, Bourdieu developed his theory of fields in order to show how the same agents may be linked to each other through action in a number of different domains, for example kinship, religion and economic production, through which conflicts of interests emerge. If a field is a sphere of culturally transmitted information and rules for action, then the relations between them are specified once again by the interests of a strategic actor and not by anything more systematic and potentially contradictory. That is, the motive of social life is the pursuit of wealth, power, profit, and so on, and the resources available to pursue them, in other words rational choice theory.

But Bourdieu cannot explain why certain kinds of interests dominate in some periods and societies rather than others, given that rational choice itself is not exactly exempt from the pursuit of a capitalist logic. This was of course the point at issue for structural Marxists with their concern for predicting the conditions of structural transformation, a point that Bourdieu acknowledges when he recognises

> it is necessary to write structural history which finds in each state of the structure both the product of previous struggles to transform or conserve the structure, and, through the contradictions, tensions and power relations that constitute that structure, the source of its subsequent transformation.
>
> (Bourdieu 1990:42)

Bourdieu does not directly address how socially determined interests relate to a theory of practice, except to say that the habitus is able to achieve a practical mastery of the relationship between different fields. If so, it would lead to stable, self-reproducing systems—which is not and has not been the state of the world. Certainly this has something to do with the complexity of fields; the fact that an economist at the World Bank relies on a theoretically informed habitus of a different kind from the aid worker implementing a structural adjustment programme suggests not only a difference of level of complexity but also fundamental differences in the transmission of information on the basis of which decisions are made and alternative strategies considered from which contradictions arise. This is consistent with Bourdieu's earlier rejection of structure/agency dualism and the need for analogous histories in developing an approach to social transformation and cultural reproduction. As a contribution to achieving this, Bourdieu's theory is at its most insightful as a theory of reproduction and at its weakest as a theory of transformation, which, as others have said, is consistent with its structuralist, even functionalist, roots (Calhoun 1993:72).

If the structuralists thought that they had dealt with the Cartesian inheritance of the subject ('I…aim to show not how men think in myths, but how myths operate in men's minds without their being aware of the fact'—Lévi-Strauss 1969:12) and if poststructuralism faced the task of overcoming an excessively objectivist understanding of structures with the understanding that structures do not simply constrain agents but allow them to act in ways that lead to the transformation of the structures themselves, then—whatever one's views about totalisation—somewhere out there in the no man's land between Descartes and Durkheim there remains a need for a theory that responds to the objective experiences of social reality, to an understanding of how solutions to specific problems draw in the entire web of interrelated social levels into a totality which then demands the invention of a politics of social transformation. To see these as loosely articulated historical processes, as junctures at which particular choices and chances tipped the balance between significantly different outcomes, and to see them as a theory that rejects the necessity of inevitability, does not invalidate the view that generalities exist that can be known. Vast system-building or totalising theories of history are not necessarily the only way to conceptualise the complexity of such social realities.

The collapse of a concern for objective conditions in archaeology may have left us with a conceptual rubble out of which mosaics of relativised pasts can nevertheless be assembled. Studying difference on its own terms and for its own sake appears to have all

the merits of salvaging cultural uniqueness in the face of modernisation and homogenisation of global identities without providing for an understanding of the past as a means of liberating the present. In what might be termed post-development society, basic modernist assumptions about social and spatial distinctions, development and progress and unified identities appear to be dissolving as a more globalised and heterogenous world takes its place. We now have sufficient historical perspective to perceive developmentalism as an idea of an urban intellectual minority in the Western metropoles who sought to have the world remade in their image. Recent history has seen fit to move in other directions. However, societies and cultures do not just differ from each other. Some are more successful than others, richer, more powerful militarily and economically, and the nature of this special kind of difference must be fairly important for the less successful party to understand rather than to hold on to a faith in the uniqueness of its culture as a compensatory role in the global order.

Revising social transformation

In following the poststructuralist 'linguistic turn' of recent years, we argue that the tendency to acquiesce in a 'tyranny of epistemologies' envisages archaeological worlds as constituted by paradigms and paradigm change. This denies some basic questions about historical processes and dynamics that have been essential to a general understanding and acceptance of the significance of archaeological knowledge to our general understanding of the human condition. The move set the stage for an easy, dismissive anti-evolutionism/ anti-materialism, a refusal to countenance the historical and political-economic contexts of all cultural phenomena, and the related tendency to subordinate economics and politics to culture and declare 'it's the discourse, stupid' to be the answer to all problems. This has damaged the possibility of continuing to explore certain significant theoretical and methodological questions concerning the nature of social dynamics, which have simply been categorised as 'evolutionist' and therefore no longer of significance. However, following our own strictures, it is also clear that changes in the historical context of archaeological knowledge production, while at the same time producing antipathy to social evolutionism, have been accompanied by a resurgence elsewhere of evolutionary biology and evolutionary psychology, which specify the contribution made by culture to reproductive fitness. The line drawn between objectivism as science and subjectivism as humanity is now more firmly drawn than ever.

Undoubtedly archaeological practice is changing in the light of these considerations and is as likely to stress contingency and discontinuity as it is continuity and idealised structure constraining change. Contests of representation can now take many forms and there is no doubt that the passage from 'simple to complex' as a Western image of itself is one historically derived indigenous past that, for a time, was successfully universalised as a view of the future.

Not surprisingly, at present the production of archaeology also shares with other disciplines a decentred predicament. Radical fragmentation, playful juxtaposing of grotesque incongruities, plurality, indeterminacy and contingency of social boundaries, the end of master narratives, are already part of the agenda. The flat space of modernity had an east-west axis; it was a space of centres and peripheries. But in a globalised world

there are no distinct centres that are primary reference points. At present we may be witnessing less a shift of location of the core than at least a partial rupture between geographical and economic location in the world system. If classical archaeology (up to the death of Gordon Childe) could orientate itself around tracking progress from simple to complex societies, and if modernist archaeology questioned this universalising framework by seeking comparative generalisations through exploring diversity of local response to common adaptive problems, then current trends in archaeological theory genuinely reflect the complexities of post-development society. These trends are not so much about exoticising others as the depiction of the intimate ways in which 'we' and 'they' were and are imbricated in global contexts that determine all our identities. It is not sufficient to depict these environments as two-dimensional—history-making versus passive, developed versus backward, core versus periphery, modern versus traditional, because the dualist assumptions of modernist archaeology are dissolving and more complex understandings are demanded of the relations between identities in the contemporary archaeological world.

However, we maintain that in these circumstances it is more important than ever that archaeology should achieve particular success in demonstrating how social dynamics constituted as historical forces encompass and mobilise subjectivity and agency in culturally distinctive ways. Archaeology does not require that this should be its only goal nor does it deny that all approaches are theoretically partial. Like the usual suspects who are normally rounded up whenever it is necessary to talk about 'structuralism' (Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, Lacan, Foucault, etc.), we reject the *cogito* as a starting-point of social investigation and we regard a search for ultimate foundations or origins with considerable suspicion, in favour of an alternative vision of history as networks of divergences and differences. The privileging of structure over the subject, the unconscious over the conscious, constraint over action are other antipathies usually contrasted with phenomenology and practice approaches. By engaging in academic practices that sustain these antipathies, it remains uncertain whether any of these strategies have served to liberate social theory from its patriarchal origins. As Bourdieu and Passeron commented on the rise of structuralism in the 1960s:

> All the social sciences now live in the house of Durkheimism, unbeknownst to them, as it were, because they walked into it backwards.
>
> (Bourdieu and Passeron 1976:168)

If structuralism claimed to have tamed an excessively subjectivist theory with a knowledge of the opacity and density of the world of structures, then most contemporary theories can be seen as responding to the knowledge that structures do not simply constrain agents but allow them to act in ways that frequently lead to their transformation. The abstractions of such insights achieve little in terms of empirical gains without some attention to what particular disciplinary histories and practices bring to bear on them. Some of the key issues that we argue remain unanswered and repressed in current archaeological debate are as follows:

1 The connection between structure and practice, given the numerous definitions of structure that are currently in use.

2 Are such terms as structure/practice, continuity/change, process/ dynamics reification of, or do they encompass, more observable outcomes of practice and agency?
3 Questions of social and cultural transmission: for example, how knowledge is produced, assessed and transmitted in time and space.
4 In history, we find situated beings characterised by a certain way of relating to others and to nature. There is no plurality of subjects but an inter-subjectivity; all are affected by sharing in a 'single common situation', i.e. acting as if they were groups.
5 Archaeological and ethnographic practices share in common that neither can be done unless and until (a) there already exists a sociological link between observer and observed and (b) that link is explicitly theorised in the research process. We must not only theorise the quite specific positions of those for whom pasts are written and constructed, but also the position which we occupy, being conscious that we are, to put it crudely, largely middle class Western intellectuals.

These remain key issues in social theory that remain undeveloped largely because changes in archaeological discourses have not invalidated their potential but rather repressed their significance. Dismissing social evolution as a hangover of nineteenth-century dogmas of development and progress does not deal with the realities or otherwise of social processes and historical dynamics over the long term. It does not deal with the fact that the conceit of First World knowledge that relativises the past is the last thing wanted in Third and Fourth World contexts where 'development' is a key issue. Acquiescing in a tyranny of the epistemological break, rather than retaining a balanced and cohesive approach to a plurality of approaches, has done little to ensure certainty in archaeological practices and has promoted instead a retreat into dogma and empiricism in the defence of intellectual territories. Unfortunately the world changes and the contribution that archaeology makes to understanding such changes alters; clinging more rigidly to a position is not a sensible response to claims of relevance. We argue that this is not a time to give up on the humanistic belief in the meaning of history. To say this is to subscribe not to inevitable evolutionary goals but to a mode of reflection that can comprehend and anticipate its own past/future. To the extent that the archaeology and ethnography described here contributes to such understanding, it forms a praxis.

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Part I
CONCEPTUALISING SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

1
OBJECTIVITY AND SUBJECTIVITY IN ARCHAEOLOGY

Michael Rowlands

> Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views and conceptions, in a word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations, and in his social life?
>
> (Marx and Engels 1959:49)

It was a guiding idea of Marx that our knowledge of the world is limited by the historical epoch within which we live. Understanding is thus itself both produced and constrained by historical process. Such an apparently paradoxical and relativistic view is deeply pessimistic of the attainment of objective, timeless knowledge. However, like Hegel, Marx envisaged a utopian future when the distinctions between essence and appearance and subjectivity and objectivity would be obliterated in an historically achieved condition of social awareness. The attainment of 'knowledge' of the world for Marx was therefore progressive: a process of 'seeing through' surface appearance to underlying reality which, rather like personal development, was temporally ordered.

In this respect, Marx differed little from the other thinkers of his day. But, unlike Hegel, Dilthey or Weber, he did not believe that progressive understanding would be achieved by greater conceptual clarity. Only by practice could reality be made to expose to the observer its own immanent logic, and reveal the ideas of previous epochs as particularistic distortions. To observe that the dominant ideas of any period which claim to be universal truths were those of the 'ruling class' was to expose their ideological nature and to gain knowledge of the structure of domination which they conceal.

Thus, the past has always to be viewed retrospectively; in reverse of how it is written. Objective knowledge of the past is a viewpoint of the present and, in turn, current claims to universal truths are open to future accusations of particularistic distortion. Marx has thus been accused of presentism; of projecting on to the past categories that are relevant only for understanding the present. History, in the Marxian scheme, becomes a simple mirror image of the present. Baudrillard claims, for example, that all non-capitalist societies are regarded by historical materialists through 'the mirror of production' (Baudrillard 1975). Thus Marx's analysis of modern capitalism distorts the reality of the past by imposing upon the latter concepts of our political economy in a form of temporal ethnocentrism. In a less sanguine age, Marx's notion that our interpretation of the past is always guided by contemporary interest, that the 'human anatomy holds the key to the anatomy of the ape', not only does not strike a sympathetic chord but is actually forgotten (Leach 1977). The unintended consequence of a viewpoint such as Baudrillard's, which

Marx was concerned to avoid, is extreme relativism; historical epochs must be understood on their own terms, regardless of the impossibility of achieving such a state of affairs.

Objective structures without a subject

To recognise that the past is always studied from a presentist point of view is therefore not only to acknowledge 'revisionism' but also to differ as to its basis in subjectivity and objectivity. A 'history for' some purpose (discontinuous) is contrasted with a 'history of some entity existing in real historical time (continuous). In the former, historical consciousness implies the possibility of multiple histories (personal, group, class and so on) and multiple times (linear/ cyclical; reversible/non-reversible) consistent with the interiorisation of time experience. In the latter, a unified historical process is implied which lies outside human conscious activity (in the sense, no one could have woken up one morning and said the Hundred Years' War is starting today; the ability to do this lies not in individual experience but in the historian's or prehistorian's use of time and the validity of their claim to construct retrospective 'objective knowledge').

We can continue further with this contrast since it is quite prevalent in contemporary archaeology. Applying Nadel's distinction between ideological and scientific history (Nadel 1942:72), in the former the past is characterised as an infinity of events resulting from past human actions. The extent to which any of them have any meaning depends on contemporary conscious ordering of past events into process. This ordering process is guided by present interests and the ideological role played by images of the past in society. The distinction between reality and ideas is thus largely suppressed in favour of the latter. Hence there can be no kind of historical process outside of human conscious experience, that is, no process which is not anchored in collective memory (Halbwachs 1980). (It may be worth pointing out here that the subjectivist characterisation of the past as an unknown concatenation of events is no less real than the notion of conscious process. Reflection of personal experience should tell one that we interiorise the past in both these guises; as personal events and as periods of self-classification although temporally separated from each other. A surer guide to this particular version of the process/ event: culture/society dichotomy is thus Freud's logic of primary and secondary process: Sullaway 1979:340.)

For those archaeologists who have a more vested interest in supporting the idea that a prehistory *of* some entity is more than an image to serve contemporary ideological purposes, holding to the notion that through a certain mode of thought, some segment of a past reality can be established, is probably fairly essential. When dealing with long time periods, it might be assumed that processes operate which lie outside human consciousness. In this case, either human actors will not figure at all, except as 'props', or will act as 'encompassed' characters; this is implied by Marx's statement that 'Men make history but not under conditions of their own choosing, but under conditions directly inherited from the past' (Marx 1954:10). We can assume that Marx is claiming some more complex relation between social system and social action. Thus, social system implies the presence of objective structures, and social action the presence of conscious activity operating within these historically inherited constraints. The materialism/idealism

debate was resolved, so Marx believed, by denying both the status of the transcendental subject (Hegelian world spirit) and the primacy of objective material conditions (Feuerbach's materialism). Instead, historical process was defined as a struggle between human deeds and historically derived structures which alone enables human beings to move beyond their present objective conditions of existence.

Two crucial problems were 'left over' by Marx in resolving, to his own satisfaction, the idealism/materialism dispute. The first centres on the status of objective conditions. How can the consequences of human subjective actions have objective effects that 'take on a life of their own'? The second is, how can we gain knowledge of such objective conditions which is not relativistic and illusory, a product of living within them? Marx thus bequeathed, as unresolved, questions which continue to dominate twentieth-century social thought. Not perhaps because of intellectual incapacity on his part but simply, following his own epistemology, because the social conditions of his time did not permit their resolution and those existing today still may not do so.

One solution to the first problem is to deny the presence of objective conditions altogether. Here, the dichotomies between structure and action or reality and thought are suppressed by positing the primacy of objective structures of the mind (categorisation processes). Objective conditions have no reality except as the products of forms imposed on the world either consciously (idealism) or unconsciously (structuralism) as guides to human action. Objective conditions and social actions are unified as the result of cognitive structuring in which both 'reality' and 'truth' are socially relativistic and temporally shifting concepts (although Lévi-Strauss is hesitant on drawing this conclusion, cf. 1966:117).

A second solution is exemplified by Althusserian Marxism. Althusser simplifies matters by retaining a strict reality/thought dichotomy. Neither can be reduced to the other and he assigns each to a different branch of knowledge (historical materialism and dialectical materialism, respectively). Following Freud on the timeless logic of the unconscious, Althusser denies superstructure a history; only infrastructure possesses the capacity for social change. The thinking subject is unimportant in the latter and Althusser has to assume that 'history is blind: a process without a subject' (Althusser 1969:167–8). In his work on ideology, on the other hand, he takes the knowing subject as central and denies that ideas are simply reflections of reality but are integral to it (Althusser 1969:231–2). This apparent paradox he attributes to analytic perspective which defines for him different fields of enquiry within social reality.

The Althusserian solution is by no means novel. It codified what had already become a fundamental cleavage in the Marxist tradition. Since Engels simplified Marx by claiming that ideas are only a reflection of the reality of social relations, the development by Plekhanov to Lenin and Stalin of a crude, mechanical materialism became inevitable. The humanist reaction to this trend by Lukács and Gramsci created a countercurrent which came to regard ideas as the common assumptions through which a group or society conceptualises the values and beliefs that allow it to operate effectively. Thus, to Althusser, an ideology consists of a system of representations which form an organic and vital part of every social structure (Althusser 1969). While ideas, actions and interests are inseparably combined, yet the conditions within which they exist are derived historically.

A third solution would therefore be to place ideas, actions and interests back into history, as part of a developmental process. One example is found in Popper's theory of

World 3. Here, objective structures are the consequences, not necessarily intentional, of actions which, once produced, exist independently of them and take on ‘a life of their own’ (Popper 1972:118). Although they are the products of human actions, objectified structures exist independently of any knowing subject. This is due to the fact that social actions have unintended consequences that are not in the consciousness of the actors and which ‘generate institutional dynamics with a frequently high degree of autonomy’ (Berger and Kellner 1982:70). Such creations come to occupy a central place in human social and physical environments. They have to be adapted to and thus shape the actions of successive generations. Each generation has to evaluate, criticise, revise or revolutionise them as part of a transactional relation between it and the structures of unintended consequences of actions inherited from previous generations. Objective structures thus have histories; they are by nature open to change, both as the result of some internal logic, and as the result of the criticism generated by their inability any longer to satisfy human needs. The mediatory role of criticism is thus the process of knowledge formation, which may be subjective (sets of dispositions) or, preferably, objective (problems, theories and arguments) and exists independently ‘of anybody’s claim to know’ (Popper 1972:109). It is the role of criticism in the promotion of social change which Bourdieu and Habermas have also recently converged upon in their critiques of objectivist knowledge and the need for a third-order knowledge which grounds knowledge of objective conditions in practical thought (Bourdieu 1977:18–19; Habermas 1971).

This overlaps with solutions to the second problem left unresolved by Marx. Can we gain knowledge of objective conditions which is not a product (a rationalisation) of living within them? To answer this question in the affirmative is to be on the side of science. It would assume that objective knowledge is not something produced by a particular method but is the product of a critical mode of thought which evades ideology and gains some definite purchase on reality. (Hence, Marx’s well-known phrase: ‘scientific thought differs from ideology as real knowledge differs from empty talk’.) The result is to soften the distinction between modes of thought and to recognise their common cognitive basis, even though we may give priority to one mode over others as superior in its practical implications. The distinction between science and ideology (or objective versus subjective knowledge) is thus displaced by a stress on the unity of theory and practice, and critical evaluations of the former in terms of its practical effectivity in the operation of the latter (a potentially relativistic argument). The resulting reduction of theory to practice thus runs the danger of excluding the possibility of detached knowledge (universal truths) which is not immediately relevant in the serving of immediate interests. On the other hand, to assume the existence of a theoretical consciousness existing independently of living *praxis* (an explicandum) is to indulge in arid speculation. A reasonable alternative would be to postulate that theoretical understanding, while initiated in the particularity of concrete, historical situations, remains an act striving towards a universality which necessarily surpasses the action at hand.

What has been said so far supports the assumption that a ‘prehistory of some entity has some basis in reality. The study of the past is not limited to the results of past human actions which, as Collingwood put it, can only be apprehended from within the event (Collingwood 1946:213–14). On the contrary, we need not assume that objective structures were in the minds of contemporary actors at all and can claim instead that they

are only detectable retrospectively as the result of a particular mode of critical enquiry. The language of evolution, transformation, cyclical trends and other totalising models are useful, if insecurely based, metaphors in any provisional attempt at grasping their meaning. Handling social process in the very long term is still a problem that remains unresolved, and will remain so as long as insecurity exists as to whether such problems exist in reality and are relevant concerns in contemporary consciousness.

Sense of past—sense of place

Up till now, we have accepted the traditional view that the construction of a history entails the imposition of form on the past as a retrospective act of will by the present. Any epistemology which attempts to reconstruct the past 'as it really was' is therefore flawed in its initial assumptions concerning the irreducibility of historical facts. But the claim to have escaped from contemporary relativism by arguing for the existence of objective structures outside the knowing subject, is not a central issue in current theorising of 'history for some purpose'. Subjective interpretations of the past are equally 'presentist' but in a different way.

The primary motive is to establish a sense of past, upon which members of a community in the present can project a common sense of unity. All community, national, pan-national and world histories share this motive in common. Politics and archaeology are therefore inseparably bound to each other at the regional and national levels as competing interpretations of past experience are brought to bear on questions of ethnic and regional separatism, subnationalism and nationalistic integration enforced by the modern state. Historical consciousness is thus used as a means of cohering mass sentiment either in support of dominant authorities or, more often, to organise resistance against them, with the rationalisation that the uniqueness and particular identity is in danger of being lost. The histories of different units are irreducible; a number of local histories cannot combine to form a national history and the latter cannot be colligated into supranational historical accounts. Each of these forms may be pursued concurrently, roughly corresponding with an ascendancy from the popular to the increasingly academicised and specialist practitioner. Each projects its own beam of light on to the past in the search for unique, particularistic and endlessly regressive sequences of historical events which serve to define identity at ascending levels of cultural and political integration. In the words of Huizinga: 'the past is limited always in accordance with the kind of subject which seeks to understand it. Every civilisation has a past of its own…History is the intellectual form in which a civilisation renders account to itself of its past' (Huizinga 1963:7).

Societies are thus believed to be enriched or impoverished by the amount of history they interiorise. Cases range from the fragmented historical consciousness of ex-slave societies in the Caribbean where anything of any substance is of the moment (Wylie 1982), to China, India and Egypt which claim descent from ancient civilisations and base a contemporary sense of national unity on millennial heritage (Wallerstein 1978). This willingness to interiorise history lies behind the famous distinction made by Lévi-Strauss between hot and cold societies (Lévi-Strauss 1966). As Lévi-Strauss later made clear, he was nor referring to the objective fact that some societies have and others do not have a

past (Charbonnier 1969:38–9). All societies have a past. But some societies are surrounded by their past and remain impervious to it. Others, particularly those superficially termed complex, research it and actively interiorise it as a necessity for the maintenance of identity and a sense of unity.

The principle at stake, therefore, is not whether political and ideological context acts to expand, truncate, distort or suppress 'real' history. The fact that this is so is made no clearer by positing objective 'pure' history on the one hand, and the existence of conditions promoting its distortion on the other. In reality, objective and subjective views of the past are not so neatly separated in this way. The issue is rather that what exists to be manipulated is a principle of historical understanding which asserts that past and present are unified through a mental act of 'objectification'. In order for the present to discover itself (assuming it has the reflective need to do so), it must confront itself with a like object in the past with which unity can be established in order to discover a common sense of time and place. Historical understanding is grounded upon and built upon the continuous exchange of inner experience with objects outside of oneself. Hence the emphasis on intuition and imagination as the mode in which historical events are incorporated into present thoughts (Collingwood 1946:218–19). The act of reconstructing the past becomes a personal creative one limited to a commonly held definition of a unique entity (defined by sense of place and time) within which an infinite regression into detailed knowledge is the sure path to historical enrichment.

Certain general features of traditional archaeological practice are clarified once these points are recognised. As is well known, archaeology, more than most disciplines, has a popular base. This is due partly to the fact that access to its product by the non-*cognoscenti* is less restricted by the mysticism of its practice and by recognition of acknowledged difficulties in decoding its texts; and also, because archaeology's data base is embedded in individualised capitalist property relations which makes its possession a matter of personal ownership. To varying degrees, archaeology provides a particularly efficient access to a sense of past, as a fairly free resource, upon which personal, community, national and supranational forms of identity can be established and changed.

In Europe, archaeology only gradually came to be separated from other activities such as folklore and custom, all of which were associated with the quickening interest in 'national culture' in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Historical consciousness and nationalism are indissolubly bound up with each other in modern European thought. Moreover, nationalism is not something which the modern state invented in order to bind its members to it through mass cultural sentiment. The former usually preceded the latter and, depending on the form taken, has as often as not acted as a source of resistance to the expansion of state power and the rationalisation of modern life. The development of archaeology in Europe has in large part been on the side of nationalism, and its relation to the state (and the extent to which the latter has encouraged its development) has been both variable and ambiguous. In recent times, archaeology has been encouraged to produce a sense of past to bolster monolithic state identity (German national socialism and Soviet communism); has been discouraged due to the fear that it would promote regional separatist movements and undermine nation-state integration (modern France); or has been left as a largely free resource at the local level as long as 'official' national history remained the prerogative of the state (United Kingdom).

Since the Second World War, the relation between archaeology and nationalism in Europe has been strongly de-emphasised. The reasons for this lie both in the repugnance felt towards the role of archaeology in promoting German nationalism and in the appeal of a 'prehistory of Europe'. In reaction to the ugly reality that extreme nationalism can result in fascism, historical consciousness was shifted to continental proportions in Europe. The desire for European political unity has thus been preceded by a search for commonality in a unified sense of past as a response to the horrors of two world wars, blamed on political disunity, and resistance to the prospect of a political future of either indirect hegemony of market forces administered by the USA or direct rule by the Soviet Union.

If pan-national sentiment and search for identity exist as a strong motivation for archaeological research in Europe and elsewhere at the present time, this would account for the apparent lack of enthusiasm amongst many of its practitioners for comparative and generalising goals. It is for this reason that culture-history cannot be polemicised away and remains a principal organising force in archaeological research and will do so for as long as it operates as a form of repressed motivation rather than an acknowledged and investigable regularity in social life.

Objectivity versus subjectivity

Objectivist versus subjectivist accounts of the past thus lead to two distinct modes of enquiry for which the terms social evolution and culture-history are metaphorical expressions. The relative merits of each were central to positivist versus relativist debates in the philosophy of history (compare Hempel 1974 and Collingwood 1946) and in the early polemics of the 'new archaeology' (Binford 1962).

Some of the logical implications of these two categories are summarised in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Objectivist and subjectivist accounts of the past

	Objective	*Subjective*
Synchrony	Present as frozen time	Present as mental construct of sedimented memories of the past
Diachrony	Linear, continuous chronology	Multiple time scales, constructed according to interests. Change fortuitous
Context	Generalisation and comparison of an object of study	Particularisation and detailed knowledge of a unique past
Aims	Explanation	Understanding

The social origins of this conventional dichotomy can, no doubt, be traced back, in the case of objectivism, at least to the French and Scottish schools of eighteenth-century Enlightenment philosophy, and subjectivism to German Romantic idealism. The codification of these different principles for interpreting the past is thus not unrelated to the presence of strong nation-states in the case of the former, and the absence of

statehood and the search for cultural unity in the case of the latter. Divorced from their particular contexts, however, these two principles have striven for universality by defining each other as either empirical, physical and scientistic, or as mental, intuitive and particularistic.

Archaeological practice appears to deny such overt categorisation. In studying European prehistory, Gordon Childe, for example, consistently asserted that his purpose was to understand the origins of a unique set of social conditions which led to the development of modern capitalism in Europe and nowhere else in the world. Yet he is probably best known for arguing equally forcefully that archaeology should study regularities and correlations in the past (Childe, e.g. 1958). As an example of a more overtly humanist tradition in British archaeology, in *Ancient Europe*, Piggott declares that 'every civilisation should be evaluated on its own terms', yet he denies that facts speak for themselves and argues that the latter are selected by general concepts and models (Piggott 1965:5).

The conclusion seems inescapable that archaeology is firmly in the grip of clearly demarcated intellectual positions—positions that have to be characterised as either/or, in some cases regardless of actual personal practice. Either archaeology must be explanatory, empirical and capable of obtaining objective truth or it is intuitive and particularistic and a matter of personal interpretation. The result is an archaeological practice polarised between the pursuit of generalisations at the level of objective structures or the reconstruction of subjectively defined entities, the meaning of which for the present is by no means devoid of political importance and social generalisation. The resulting tragic gap between 'a history which explains more and teaches us less and a history which teaches us more and explains less' (Lévi-Strauss 1966) has been an object of concern, and some mirth, in recent surveys of the subject (Flannery 1982; Renfrew 1982).

Many of these difficulties can be traced back to the misguided attempt to isolate history from the study of regularities and correlations in social life, as a necessary step in harnessing its subject matter to the creation of nationalist histories in the nineteenth century. Aspirations in archaeology to escape from such constraints and to achieve stability in some more generalising mould were achieved only by avoiding any critical assessment of the distortions of its intellectual past and adopting an antagonistic and negative attitude towards it. The resulting dualism between a 'traditional' (subjective) archaeology and a'new' (objective) archaeology left the former intact in its implicit and tacit practices and the latter deprived of insight into the nature of some of the basic motivating forces in the construction of their subject.

Archaeological epistemology has been renegotiated in recent years in terms of two distorted categories, inherited from the nineteenth century, which are no longer viable in contemporary contexts. On the one hand, the past is an object without a subject and, on the other, it is a subject without an object. Neither carries great conviction and often produces meaningless results and a disconnection between stated aims and achieved practice. While neither the reality of objective structures nor the opacity of social goals to actors is in doubt, in archaeology this too easily takes on the appearance of the 'iron cage' of evolutionary determinism, closed off to any critical awareness. Absorbed by the present, this kind of 'sense of past' encourages political fatalism and acquiescent acceptance of blind historical forces beyond the knowledge and control of the individual.

Subjectivity without an object, on the other hand, reduces the past to the present as varying forms of ideologies held by different groups to legitimise their interests. This promotes a frankly cynical view of the role of archaeology in contemporary political contexts. Both are the products of the uncritical acceptance of historically inherited, outmoded and distorted categories of thought. The deconstruction of these categories and the construction of new ones to take their place is an act of intellectual labour still to be achieved in contemporary archaeology.

Conclusion

Objectivity and subjectivity are thus opposed to each other as exclusive choices when, in the final analysis, it is their internal relationship to each other in a single field of enquiry which needs to be achieved. But as Marx taught us, the history of culture develops by the assertion and pursuit of what appear to be irreconcilable conflicts and oppositions. As we work through these movements, we learn how what is true in each of them can be integrated into a more comprehensive understanding that enables us to reject what is false, partial and one-sided. Put differently, recognition that knowledge is socially constructed exposes the social particularity of claims to universal and timeless understanding in archaeology. It permits us to interrogate the intellectual conditions in Western thought which made such divisions both necessary and reasonable; to ask how these have affected claims to knowledge in archaeology and to turn such enquiries into a source of generalisation concerning the role of history in society as well as the history of societies.

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2
MATERIALISM AND MULTILINEAR EVOLUTION

Michael Rowlands and John Gledhill

Over the past few years a growing number of archaeologists have begun to move away from explanations derived from functional ecology, systems theory and the more naive forms of cultural materialism towards a focus on specific social and political processes and their economic functioning within defined historical circumstances. In questioning the kind of materialism that has formed the theory of the various neo-evolutionary schools, prehistorians can derive considerable encouragement from recent successes in social and economic history, in particular from the work of the French *Annales* school,[1] whose analyses of historical processes of 'long duration' have enjoyed a widening and potentially integrative influence in history and other social sciences. The dawn of a true 'social archaeology' may now be possible.[2] But in its way stands what some already see as a polarised wrangling over what should be considered 'determinant' in economic versus socio-political processes. This has already led to the creation of the new 'ism' of social determinism to characterise positions critical of the older forms of matrialism.[3]

The purpose in this chapter is to demonstrate that such a position is theoretically misconceived and that any future archaeological theorising needs to take into account issues raised in recent debates in anthropology as to the nature of pre-capitalist social formations.[4] Self-styled 'Marxist theories' have had considerable impact in anthropology. But they have raised many more problems than they are capable of resolving in their attempts to universalise a body of Marxist concepts outside of the historical materialist hypothesis for nineteenth-century capitalism. Anthropological debates have now raged for a decade on whether concepts such as class, exploitation and mode of production can be extended (as universal categories) from the study of capitalist to that of pre-capitalist societies. At the heart of these debates lies a very basic question: what could it mean to say that the economy determines social form and historical process universally? On this fundamental issue, French Marxist anthropology is simply one stream, or, more accurately, one group of tendencies, in postwar Marxism in Europe.

The real question entailed by the historical materialist hypothesis is how one defines and conceptualises the 'social totality'. The most influential version in Europe, deriving from Althusser (for example, Althusser and Balibar 1970), sees it as a layer cake of 'relatively autonomous' structural levels, distributed between infrastructure (forces and relations of production) and superstructure (politico-juridical and ideological structures). In contrast to the cruder versions of cultural materialism, it is not argued that the superstructures are a product of the infrastructure, and, in the case of precapitalist formations, it is recognised that the 'economic' is, in fact, organised by what Althusserians see as 'superstructures', 'non-economic' social relations such as kinship,

religion or bonds of personal dependence. This raises the issue of how this 'dominance of super-structural instances' can be squared with what is assumed to be the historical materialist hypothesis: 'determination by the economy in the last instance' of the structure of the social totality. It also poses the question of what determines the particular form of 'superstructure' which will be 'inserted into the economic base' in a particular case. The Althusserian response to these questions is a form of teleological functionalist argument which fails to provide any coherent account of the mechanisms of historical transformation which lead to changes in dominant structures, and suffers the general logical ills of explanations of this type (Friedman 1975; Hindess and Hirst 1977).

Godelier's brand of 'structural Marxism' differs somewhat from this, in denying any rigid distinction between base and superstructure, although Godelier himself offers little advance on Althusser on the question of what determines the form and nature of the dominant structure.[5] For Godelier, religion, for example, can be infrastructural if it functions as 'relations of production'. He would therefore deny the separation of religion from the economic to explain theocratic relations in early states. It cannot act as some kind of 'after the fact' ideological legitimation, because 'religion' constitutes the cultural form within which hierarchic economic relations were experienced and lived. Unfortunately, the initial assumption is still made that somehow the economic and the religious are distinguishable entities, differing simply in their relations of functioning with each other in given historical circumstances (cf. Kahn 1978).

In contrast to the Althusserian and structural Marxist positions, an alternative conceptualisation of the macro-structure of social totalities exists which is not identified with any hypothesis of determination by the economy at all, but by its holistic and dialectical view of social totalities and reality as a social process. In place of a 'layer-cake' model of base and superstructure, Lukács (1968) proposed an organic model of social totalities in which the elements of economic, ideological, political and juridical relations cannot be separated from each other at the level of social practice. 'Vertical determination' is therefore denied in favour of the dialectical interplay of, say, economic and political processes within a diachronic frame of reference.

Since we are not concerned here with defending the eternal truth of Marxist discourse, there is no need to preserve any particular conceptualisation of the social totality because of its genealogical purity. However, these debates have considerable implications for our conceptualisation of the nature of the precapitalist societies that we study in prehistory. The primary error to be exposed is the assumption that 'economics' (and indeed materialism) can be universally reduced to the categories of material production, technology, work processes and the form in which labour is exploited. The 'economy' in this sense clearly cannot even define the dynamics of 'modes of production' in Marx's general historical sense (cf. Banaji 1977). If we look at Marx's treatment of the 'ancient' mode in *Grundrisse*, for example, we find that slavery as a mode of exploitation does not define the driving contradiction of Roman society, while his account of European feudalism anticipates Weber in stressing the particular *political* characteristics of this system. The point here is not that 'Marx was right'—his analyses of these phenomena are far too schematic to deserve this accolade—but that from the outset Marx was forced to reject the kind of economic conceptualisation which has dominated much of subsequent historical materialist analysis. The lesson to be learnt from this would appear to be that we cannot understand the dynamics of social formations as historical totalities either by

examining technology or work organisation or by inspecting the way in which surplus is extracted from direct producers. Economic and socio-political conditions cannot therefore be separated, and both are equally 'material': we cannot understand economic processes in the narrowest sense in isolation, but neither can we argue that real development trajectories are determined by purely 'cultural' or 'political' processes. What this perspective does imply is that theorising about long-term socio-economic change in prehistory involves us in the construction of models of total social systems in which ideological, political and economic processes are linked to each other in a dialectical interplay rather than as determinate levels in a social formation. In turn, it serves to emphasise that where social anthropology and a 'Marxist anthropology' have failed fundamentally is in their implicit acceptance that a static analysis is required prior to diachronic analysis; in both we have the absence of a genuine theory of history centred on social dynamics and transformation processes.

How then should we approach the materialist explanation of long-term socioeconomic change? Let us consider the development of more complex stratified societies. Much of the discussion of this issue has been totally obfuscated by neo-evolutionist emphasis on the 'origin of the state', defined as an abstract configuration of institutions with universalisable properties. Let us suppose that the question is really about the evolution of new forms of dominance mechanisms underlying the elaboration in scale and integration of territorial political units. Elsewhere, we have offered elaborated models of these processes which seek to establish the following principles.[6] The dynamic of the underlying transformation processes derives from contradictions at two levels. First, we have long-term contradictions which arise in the arena of socio-political action as political hierarchies are reproduced over time. Second, because the reproduc-tion of political hierarchisation as a social process is dependent on material flows in a quantitative sense, we have contradictions arising from the dependence of social reproduction on material flows which must be captured, acquired and ultimately produced under conditions which include both social and physical limits and possible disruptions to such material flows. For example, and oversimplifying for the sake of brevity, it can be argued, in the cases of Mesopotamia, Mesoamerica and north China, that a collapse of extended territorial polities into competitive city states of a more nucleated kind represents a loss of control by earlier centres over resources flowing through a larger intersocietal exchange network (cf. Ekholm and Friedman 1979). Whether these resources are used in the subsistence sphere or for producing palaces, manufactured goods used in status prestations, or whatever, does not affect the basic principle that their significance is that their acquisition has become a condition for the maintenance of forms of political hierarchisation. The competition for resources manifested in such contexts is therefore really a product of inter- and intra-societal political competention. The development of the inter-regional network of trade and productive specialisation is itself, in fact, a product of socio-political development, not a 'purely economic' phenomenon.

These observations are still, however, rather imprecise. To go further, we need to examine the nature of internal stratification and its contradictions, and how this relates to contradictions in the differential advantage that competing factions enjoy in the control of material resources. Very schematically, it can be argued that the pre-city-state systems experience a progressive separation of functions within the ruling group, linked to

internal competition for status and succession to offices, and problems in maintaining political control over extended territories and in deepening the dependence of subordinate strata on their ruling groups. The contradictions generate the elaboration of new strategies for maintaining dominance relations which in turn change the configuration of the system. One outcome of this is a possibility that segments of the dominant stratum and aspirant groups may achieve a degree of autonomy from state-sector mechanisms of wealth appropriation and accumulation, via mercantile activities. Attempts by the centre to control the political periphery may also involve the allocation of 'benefices' of various kinds to secure loyalty, which may in the longer run enhance the possibilities for the emergence of competitive centres on the periphery.

Hence, early forms of territorial states feature relatively weak mechanisms for centralised political-economic control, and create the conditions for their own demise by attempting to resolve problems by elaborating elements which further outstrip the capacity of these mechanisms. For recentralisation and larger territorial polities to emerge, new and more effective measures for polit-ical-economic centralisation must be created, and 'the state' which exercises control in such systems will appear to represent a more autonomous kind of political institutional complex, comprised of a set of differentiated fractions (priestly, administrative, military, and so on), and increasingly disembedded from subordinate ascriptive status groups. Since each fraction appropriates surplus via different mechanisms, conflicting interests over material resources are generated, some of which may, under certain conditions, be antagonistic to political centralisation as such. In mediating and manipulating these antagonisms, as well as those between exploited and exploiting strata, the rulers maintain their own position by engaging in a generalised form of power politics. Obviously we have an historical variable in the extent to which both political centralisation and state control over the economy (in particular the mercantile economy) is maintained in time and space. Explaining this pattern of variation leads us back to the analysis of the social and material conditions underlying the power balances within and between social strata that obtain in particular historical cases (cf. Gledhill 1984), which themselves are not given but are products of preceding historical processes.

The final issue which we wish to discuss has already been anticipated in earlier remarks. What is the appropriate unit of analysis in the study of social evolutionary processes? The bulk of conventional social theory is premised on the notion that we base analysis on 'the society' as a socio-political unit. But this position becomes untenable if the society in question cannot reproduce itself in isolation from other societies, to the extent that it would have developed differently if it were independent of its articulation into a larger system. Wallerstein has, of course, argued that leaving aside isolated self-sufficient communities, the only true 'social systems' are 'world systems', multi-society units defined by the existence of an integrated division of labour (Wallerstein 1974; 1979), though as we will see, it is important to stress that this integration is brought about by the interaction of a series of interdependent but often heterogeneous dynamics characterising the system's different components. It is clear that local material production processes frequently cannot be reproduced without inter-societal exchange and that interdependency in this sense has increased in scale and intensity through history. But this is really an insignificant point in itself, not least because increasing economic interdependency of this kind is evidently linked, as we have already argued, to the

socially determined ‘needs’ of various forms of expansionary politico-economic systems. Even the study of relatively early periods of prehistory raises the unit of analysis issue in the light of the scope of some of the interactions uncovered by archaeology in recent years, once we recognise the significance of transactions in non-subsistence goods for the reproduction and transformation of social structures (Bender 1978; 1990). But in the case of more complex and hierarchic social systems it is even more evident that ‘development’ cannot take place in a closed space but involves the interdependent development of core and peripheral areas.

Here, however, we should be careful to avoid some potentially disastrous misconceptions which can arise from a focus on the larger ‘global’ or ‘world systems’ unit of analysis. First, we must recognise that the relationships within such systems cannot be reduced simply to material laws. To begin with, the social structure of society X may be systematically linked to that of society Y primarily via the articulation of socio-political structure. Let us consider, for example, a phenomenon which is of considerable significance in the prehistory of many areas: nomad sedentary relations. Now nomadic pastoralist societies in fact reproduce themselves economically independently of regularised transactions with sedentary communities (Baxter 1975). In addition to symbiotic food transfers, it is also possible to see that demographic exchanges between sedentary, pastoralist and hunter-gatherer societies constitute important long-term conditions for the reproduction of the different kinds of social aggregates concerned (see, for example, Spencer 1973). But even the further addition of non-food exchanges and tax and tribute transfers does not exhaust the possible scope and nature of the interdependency which characterises some cases of nomad sedentary interaction. In the case of the central Asian pastoral formations, for example, it seems clear that the existence of a ‘conical clan’ form of ‘internal’ socio-political organisation, with its potential for escalating stratification and political centralisation, cannot be regarded as something independent of the long-term dynamic interaction between the frontier nomads and the civilised core of China (Lattimore 1951). Lattimore has argued that the balance of material advantage in the tributary relationship notionally ‘imposed’ by the Chinese fell overwhelmingly to the nomads. This observation reinforces the hypothesis that Mongol socio-political structure took the form it did partly because it resulted from the negotiation of socio-political strategies which permitted a permanent articulation of the dominant strata in Mongol society with the Chinese stratification system, enabling the nomad elite to share in the fruits of the exploitation of the Chinese peasantry. While the existence of resource transfers from the Chinese core region underpinned the structures created, acting as a condition for the reproduction of internal social differentiation in the nomadic communities, the form of socio-political organisation generated should be seen as determined by the specific social characteristics of the two systems thereby integrated: on the one hand, internal social conditions in the pastoral communities (which ruled out simple replication of the Chinese pattern)[7] and, on the other, the form of articulation demanded by regularised relations at the political level with a different kind of society.

In general terms, the material economic dimension of global system linkages is determined by the social structures which mediate the forms of incorporation of a society into another’s sphere of influence and determine the effect this has on the incorporated society’s development. In the case, for example, of economic relationships of a ‘colonial’ type which do not involve actual conquest, the economic subordination of the periphery

occurs because local elites have both the desire and the capacity to impose a particular kind of economy on the rest of their society under specific and variable local social conditions. As Islamoğlu and Keyder have argued apropos the 'peripheralisation' of the Ottoman empire to western European centres, the significance of the changing structure of international trade in this period lay in the fact that it mobilised certain latent contradictions in the Ottoman system, which we must understand fully in order both to explain why peripheralisation occurred and to understand the specific social and political forms which evolved subsequently in this area (Islamoğlu and Keyder 1977). Most important of all is the implication of the principle that quantitative material economic development is a function of the qualitative characteristics of socio-economic and political structures, given that we clearly could not predict, for example, the kind of structures which characterised the formations of classical antiquity from observing the material contribution to their evolution made by commercial relations with Near Eastern societies. And it is also clear that the timing of incorporation relative to the former notionally 'autonomous' development of the incorporated society also has significant effects in terms of the degree to which its existing structures are in a state of crisis.

We must conclude that if a world systems perspective leads simply to a focus on inter-regional trading networks and abstract processes of wealth accumulation as determinants of local social forms, then the problems already encountered with the conceptualisation of social totalities will be extended to a wider plane but scarcely resolved. This brings us to a further major issue.

It is seldom satisfactory in principle to try to explain the past in terms of the properties of the future. Capitalist accumulation in world systems that has arisen since the sixteenth century has achieved a different form to that of earlier systems where it operated under different conditions. While it cannot be denied that local 'societies' were involved in production for a larger system in earlier precapitalist contexts, the developments which took place cannot be predicted from later situations, nor can the links between the social elements involved be assumed to be of the same kind. Indeed, even within the context of the discussion of the evolution of the modern world system,[8] it is clear that one of the major problems with 'world systems' theorising has been a lack of a truly analytical periodisation of the successive phases of that process. Mercantile capital and the forms of accumulation associated with it were dominant in the early periods (Kay 1975), and mercantile capital is a phenomenon of considerable antiquity. But the structural place of merchant capital in early modern western European society differed from that which it occupied in earlier or coeval civilisations, while it could also be argued that the appearance of centres based on the new forms of accumulation associated with modern industrial capital represented a crucial historical transformation which generated qualitatively new types of core-periphery relations relative to those of earlier imperial systems, including the Spanish-American empire.

What we are trying to grasp, then, are dynamic processes which generate spatial and diachronic variation in individual socio-political units. Within global systems, individual societies move along a series of interdependent development paths: neither their social structures nor even geographical extension, demographic size and composition can ultimately be taken as 'givens', but must usually be regarded as effects continually produced by wider processes of inter-action and incorporation.[9] The distinction between 'internal' and 'external' relationships is therefore only a viable one in a limited sense. At

given moments of time, existing societies can be linked together in new ways, and the results of this linking are not predictable without understanding how this change in external conditions of reproduction bears on internal structures. On the other hand, since such phenomena as 'trade' actually do modify conditions of reproduction for local societies, the distinction between internal and external factors is itself undesirable as a dichotomy, since it disguises the true nature of social evolutionary processes. One of archaeology's advantages over other social sciences is that it offers us ready access to a macro-spatial picture over long periods of time. That this advantage has not been fully exploited theoretically is another demonstration of the fact that theory cannot be built successfully by reifying categories of archaeological data.

Notes

1 Out of the work of the more recent generation of *Annales* writers, two works which would particularly repay a reading by archaeologists for their general methodological interest would be Braudel 1972 and Ladurie 1974. For surveys and assessment of *Annales* as a whole, see the special issue of *Review,* vol. 3/4, 1978, and the introduction to Burke (ed.) 1972, which also contains an important essay by Braudel: 'History and the social sciences'.

2 It is perhaps worth emphasising that 'social archaeology' has thus far frequently failed to break effectively with existing explanatory paradigms such as ecological functionalism, despite real advances in conceptualisation, and in the issues posed for research and methodology. A number of the contributions to, for example, Redman *et al.* 1978 would fall into this category.

3 'Social determinants' *stricto sensu* would presumably ignore physical-geographical, ecological and climatological factors. But such a stance in no way follows from the principle that the historical effects of these variables (and their unquestionable significance in evolutionary processes) are produced by the mediation of social processes in a way which is complex and which escapes analysis based on non-specific historical models and the crude forms of reductionism recently criticised by Sahlins (1976).

4 Fuller discussion of the general issues raised here is provided by Kahn and Llobera 1981, Gledhill 1981 and Gledhill 1984.

5 For some analytical contrasts between the work of Godelier and Friedman (1975) and Friedman and Rowlands (1977), see Gledhill 1981.

6 See Friedman and Rowlands 1977, Rowlands 1979, and Gledhill 1984. On the peripheries of more complex core areas and 'world systems' analysis, see also Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978, Gledhill 1978 and Rowlands 1980.

7 For a discussion of the limits of techno-ecological explanations for the characteristics of pastoral social organisation, see Burnham 1979.

8 For this debate see, for example, Frank 1978, Banaji 1977 and Brenner 1977.

9 Conventional materialist theories have generally attempted to correlate local variation in social structure with local techno-economic variation or resource endowments. Here we are arguing that the link to material economic aspects of social reproduction is generally much less direct. Simple correlations between local resource base and degree of political complexity or regional dominance frequently fail to materialise because the capacity to accumulate goods and people within a political unit may depend on more complex sources of advantage in a wider system, such as the ability to adopt local labour processes/divisions of labour which secure higher rates of accumulation overall in circumstances which depend crucially on the place a society can occupy within the bigger network (see Rowlands 1979).

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3
CONCEPTUALISING THE EUROPEAN BRONZE AND EARLY IRON AGES

Michael Rowlands

> It seems to me axiomatic that where neighbouring communities have demonstrable economic, political and military relations with each other then the field of any useful sociological analysis must override cultural boundaries.
>
> (Leach 1954:292)

A'Western' sense of history has been defined as a mode of consciousness that assumes social change to be inevitable, continuous and linear (Lévi-Strauss 1966). The idea that societies 'evolve' is therefore deeply rooted in European thought as a rationalisation of a period of recent social change which, perhaps inevitably, has been considered the most disruptive in world history. While European philosophy may therefore be accused of exaggerating its own sense of loss, it is a unique feature of Western intellectual life that it has come to terms with its own experience by conducting one of the longest and most detailed historical investigations into its own genesis ever attempted. In order to avoid endless historical regression and to put some kind of order into what could be seen as an endless series of disasters, Western historians have chosen to select three major periods of social change for special attention: the beginning of classical antiquity, the fall of the western Roman Empire and the transition from feudalism to capitalism. All three 'events' are unified at a higher level since they all claim to answer a single question: what was so distinctive about Europe that encouraged the development of modern capitalism there and nowhere else and what were the origins of this distinctive developmental sequence?

A concern with understanding the uniqueness of the European experience has been the leitmotif of social and philosophical thought since the eighteenth century. The search for 'the other' as alien comparison motivated an earlier anthropology to see the world in simple binary terms of the primitive/civilised variety. Perhaps more than the social sciences, history and prehistory have been concerned with studying uniqueness, rather than the comparison of cultural difference, as their particular contribution to constructing a European identity. The historical method differs quite fundamentally from the anthropological in this respect. Comparison to elucidate difference is replaced by the construction of a particular developmental sequence in order to detect those points in time when certain events had the unintended consequence of diverting the European sequence of social change from the rest of world history. Hence, the anthropological mode of treating ethnographies as cases for elucidating some general principle is inverted in the case of history where general concepts are useful only to the extent they facilitate

our reconstruction of a particular past. History as the conscious search for cultural identity is therefore humanity while anthropology as the interpreter of cultural difference becomes social science. Some practitioners in both disciplines have disagreed vehemently with such a characterisation of their respective disciplines and give the uncomfortable impression of trains passing each other in a rather dark tunnel (contrast Evans Pritchard 1961 and Binford 1962). But otherwise few in European archaeology have inquired into the reasons why their work is so deeply enmeshed in the complexities of reconstructing a particular cultural sequence. According to Whallon they should be off subsuming their particular case as illustrative of some more general comparative principle (Whallon 1982). This chapter is an essay in why this has not been the case and yet why the results of such work are still of general significance.

Over the last century the answer to the question 'When did a distinctively European form of society diverge from the rest of the world' has been moved further back in time. To avoid endless historical regression and recognising the probable arbitrariness of the decision anyway, Marx and Weber favoured the medieval notion that a benchmark could be set at the decay of later antiquity and the emergence of Europe as a moral and cultural synthesis of Romano-Germanic elements, ethnically unified in its opposition to Byzantine and Arab imperial aspirations (Anderson 1974). The classical tradition, consistent with a wider view of what constituted Western civilisation, emphasised the appearance of the Greek city state system as the 'event' which initiated the divergence of the West from that of the ancient Near East. Recent debates betray a related assumption that the character of modern Europe can be projected back into classical antiquity and its origins established as a kind of negative mirror reflection of the present (for example, the Polanyi characterisation of market and non-market economies in ancient Athens: Polanyi 1977), the role of commerce and the use of class versus status group to define stratification in the ancient world (Finley 1975). Finally, European prehistory provided an alternative rationalisation that required regression into a more remote past, stressing the autonomous development of Europe from a much earlier period than hitherto conceived. The Bronze Age became prehistory's answer to the question when and how a distinctive European society emerged in world history.

Defining the European Bronze Age

By exposing our motivations for studying the past, we lay bare the guiding principles that lead us to assume certain periods in prehistory to be of greater interest than others. As is well known, the Bronze Age was defined in the nineteenth century as part of a general scheme that combined a glorification of technological progress with millennial expectations of the kinds of human freedom this would produce in the future. The Bronze Age was therefore a period of 'primitive science', the achievements of which would be measured unproblematically with those of the modern age. Like many other historical schemes which segment time into blocks that are opposed to each other by qualitative differences in the characteristics common to them all (in the case of the Three Age system these were qualitative differences in the forces of production characteristic of each of these periods), emphasis is placed on the transitions between the segments rather than the segments themselves. Gordon Childe, for instance, was able to sustain the Three

Age system for a while by proposing certain socio-economic correlates to the technological criteria that defined the segments (Childe 1957). But as a more rigorous sociological approach has begun to show that changes at the economic, political and ideological levels are not 'all of apiece' we have come to realise that time may be segmented in as many ways as convenient to the researcher concerned.

Gordon Childe retained the traditional Three Age system primarily because his arguments for the relationship between the political, the ideological and the economic were of a highly determinist nature. As is well known his case invoked the utilitarian thesis that bronze metallurgy introduced a more efficient technology. This required an international trade for the acquisition of copper and tin and the complex nature of metalworking skills fostered the creation of a stratum of full-time metalworkers, existing on the boundaries of tribal societies as itinerant craftsmen (Childe 1957, 1958). Now if Childe was simply arguing for the primacy of technology thesis and drew the wrong social 'facts', then his model for the Bronze Age has probably been rightly dismissed as a set of conjectures refuted by subsequent 'facts'. But it seems to me that Childe was attempting to say something else which, even if the precise arguments about bronze metallurgy do not apply, still lurks in the background as a set of unrefuted prepositions.

For instance, Childe was as equally concerned with the development of copper and bronze metallurgy in the Near East and Egypt (Childs 1944). Moreover, he was fully aware that metallurgy did not serve the same purpose in all three areas nor did similar technologies necessarily result in the same social facts. In the ancient Near East, metalworkers like other craftsmen were tied to palace and temple; in Europe they had a semi-autonomous political and economic status. In Mesopotamia, craftsmen produced under duress for the luxury and warlike needs of aristocracies. In Europe, they produced on demand and were 'free' of political constraint. Hence, in the Near East, metallurgy was harnessed to non-utilitarian needs and in Europe to the utilitarian. In the Near East, metals had to be acquired by tribute and administered trade, in Europe they were acquired through commerce.

In other words we have two sociological models lurking in the background here which tend to characterise Europe and the Near East as polar opposites of each other. One of these conceptualises ancient Near Eastern societies as totalitarian and despotic, lacking in personal liberty and leading to endless cycles of empire formation and stagnation; and the other defines Europe as ranked but never stratified (that is, empires have never developed indigenously in Europe), with greater personal freedom and a more dynamic tendency for economic growth and development.

But what were the origins of these two social models that Childe used to contextualise the different functions of bronze metallurgy in Europe and the Near East? The characterisation of the Near East as a despotic society under the control of temple and palace derives its inspiration from Hegel's description of Oriental society and Marx's conceptualisation of the Asiatic mode of production ('AMP', cf. Anderson 1974, appendix B). Influences upon both of these thinkers can be traced back to the philosophical debates concerning the nature of social inequality in the French and Scottish schools of the Enlightenment. In *De l'esprit des lois* (1748), Montesquieu made despotic society one of his three basic types of government, the others being monarchic and republican. He maintained that Asia, for most of its history, had been characterised by the rule of despots, by slavery and by the state control of land and other natural

resources. Europe by contrast was characterised by the rule of law, and a spirit of liberty and the relative dominance of society over the state. As an explanation for this contrast, Montesquieu stressed geographical differences between the two areas and initiated the hydraulic irrigation debate by arguing that despotic government was most suited to societies in large, hot, desert areas where the maintenance of order was difficult and the state had to undertake special managerial tasks. Adam Smith took the next step by contrasting Europe and Asia as two different kinds of political economy. In Asia, agrarian production dominated over manufacture, the countryside inhibited the growth of a manufacturing urban base, and tribute and tax prevented the growth of free trade. Hence, Europe and Asia were conceptualised as mirror images of each other. To these, Marx added his concept of the AMP, including for Asia the absence of private ownership of land, the self-sufficiency of village communities in combining agriculture with craft production so that there was no need to participate in external exchange, and the dominating role of the state over society. But in answer to a question from Engels, Marx emphasised that it was the absence of private property in land and the predominance of the 'self-sustaining village community' that was the key to understanding Oriental society—'The absence of private property in land… is the real keystone of the Oriental vault' (Marx and Engels 1975:82).

As for the reasons for this contrast between a stagnant East and a dynamic West, Hegel, Marx and Weber went little further than agreeing with Montesquieu's original emphasis on environmental and geographical circumstances and, in particular, the importance of irrigation (Weber 1976:37–8). Hence it is of no surprise that as far as the Near East was concerned, Childe adopted the AMP model with little modification, although in later years the discoveries at Jericho and elsewhere led him to begin to modify the irrigation hypothesis.

But in the case of Europe, Childe consistently believed archaeology would provide the answer to why European society diverged from that of the Near East and the origins of the social conditions that encouraged the development of those virtues of individualism, entrepreneurial skill and inventiveness which he believed were the progressive features of modern European society. These virtues he believed to be not of recent origin. Instead they could be traced back into prehistory and in particular to the inception of the Bronze Age with the first appearance of free craftsmen who could develop their skills and accumulate wealth untrammelled by religion or by servitude to a despotic ruling class. In the preface to *The Dawn of European Civilisation,* Childe summed up the major theme of the book as the 'foundation of European civilisation as a peculiar and individual manifestation of the human spirit' (1947:xiii). Elsewhere he maintained 'Among the Early Bronze Age peoples of the Aegean, the Danube Valley, Scandinavia and Britain, we can recognise already these very qualities of energy, independence and inventiveness which distinguish the western world from Egypt, India and China' (Childe 1925:xiii, xiv). In other words, Europe had been capitalist since the Middle Bronze Age and the growth of the economic and moral forces unleashed at this early time were finally, in his own day, about to transform the face of the earth—a Braudellian *longue durée* of quite gigantic proportions, which incidentally allowed him to embed the past in the present and intellectually justify the existence of archaeology as an academic discipline to his own satisfaction.

To substantiate this interpretation of the European Bronze Age, as a form of primitive capitalism, Childe concentrated his work on the Neolithic and Early Middle Bronze Age since he believed this to be the major period of transition which established the unique course of later European prehistory and history to have been perpetuated from then on. For him, the Neolithic in Europe was simply an extension of Near Eastern Orientalism. He described 'Megalithic builders' absorbed in the cult of the dead, with superstitious observances paralysing all their activities. In later works, the emphasis is placed on the self-sustaining nature of the Neolithic community, the insignificance of trade and the absence of technological development (which in Childe's eyes was the equivalent of science) (1958:75–7). This stagnant variant of Asiatic society was changed irreversibly by the introduction of bronze metallurgy from outside which served to burst open the self-sufficiency of the European Neolithic community. More than this, it was the external derivation of bronze metallurgy that determined the peripheral manner of its incorporation. 'European metalworkers were free. They were not tied to any one patron or even to a single tribal society. They were producing for an inter-tribal if not an international market' (Childe 1958:169). And it was this freedom which encouraged the development of 'native genius' and the growth of scientific knowledge that classical, medieval and modern European societies were to capitalise upon and extend. Technology had served the needs of production and exchange rather than status requirements at least since the Bronze Age and in this respect the Industrial Revolution was only different in degree from previous stages of European technological achievement.

The fact that Childe subsequently came to be characterised as the diffusionist who could not detect any originality in European development is ironic considering the philosophical origins which determined his empirical interests. One can only describe Childe's view of the relation of Europe to the Near East as a form of Hegelian dialectic (Childe 1957:15). Apparent dependency of Europe on Near Eastern innovation is negated by the mode in which the latter was incorporated, which in turn led to irreversible changes and differences in the conditions of existence of Europe from those of the Ancient Near East. At this point Childe again uses bronze metallurgy as an indicator of how unconstrained relations of production led to a dramatic growth of technology in Europe in contrast to stagnant forms of bronze technology and functional variation in the Near East (Childe 1942). By stressing the role of innovation, Childe provided an alternative explanation of the divergence of Europe and the Near East from the ecological determinism of Montesquieu which had been accepted by all subsequent writers up to and including, in his own day, Julian Steward (Steward 1955). By denying the significance of geographical conditions, Childe inadvertently shifted from an ecological determinist position as far as the Near East was concerned to an economic determinist view of European prehistory.

Redefining the Neolithic/Bronze Age transition

We have seen that in his characterisation of the European Bronze Age, Childe relied on a number of commonly accepted eighteenth- and nineteenth-century generalisations about the difference between Oriental and Western society. He projected this contrast back into European prehistory. The European Neolithic was a variant of a more generalised form of

Oriental society that elsewhere evolved into the more highly bureaucratised forms of empires which Europeans were to encounter in modern times (India, Persia, China). Childe was one of those of Enlightenment sympathies whose macro-view of world history was firmly rooted in the primacy of the West and in understanding the origin of those dynamic forces that were, in his own time, transforming the world around him.

We are left with several legacies due to the manner in which the contrast between the Neolithic and the Bronze Age had to be conceptualised in order to fit this wider world view, many of which we still operate with, although we may no longer understand their genesis. The image of a Neolithic economically self-sustaining community immured from trade and stagnating under the dead hand of religion probably has undergone most change (Sherratt 1976). The role of bronze metallurgy and its mode of incorporation into European society has retained its significance, although the prestige functions of the earliest metalwork would now be stressed rather than Childe's utilitarian model. Childe's portrayal of the emergence of wealth-based aristocracies from the dissolution of Neolithic quasi-theocratic communities has not been radically altered, although it has been conceptualised in more sophisticated forms (e.g. Renfrew 1973:242; Shennan: 1982a).

The root of the problem lies, of course, in the extent to which the periodisation of European prehistory rests on such received wisdom and thus obscures contradictory patterns emerging from more concrete empirical analyses. For instance, discussing the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age transition in western Europe, Renfrew has distinguished a pattern of group-oriented chiefdoms from a succeeding pattern of individualising chiefdoms (Renfrew 1973, 1974). Gilman proposed a similar dichotomy for the Late Copper Age/Early Bronze Age of south-east Iberia and more recently attributed this to contemporary processes of agricultural intensification (Gilman 1976, 1981). Shennan has generalised the distinction to central and western Europe, allowing for a time lag between the two, in which 'Neolithic' hoe cultivators, egalitarian in social relations and ritually defined in communal relations and ideology move into contrast with more hierarchical, prestige good oriented systems in the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age (Shennan 1982a, b). Although conceptually far more sophisticated and precise, this would in broad terms fit the general picture described by Childe and retains an implicit faith in the significance of bronze metallurgy as a disruptive innovation.

However, both Shennan (1982b) and Sherratt (1984) have recently elaborated a more gradual and regionally diverse description which permits the transformation of a description that was in danger of drifting into epochal stages, to a millennial-long process of subcontinental proportions. In the case of western Europe, only in southern Britain and particularly Wessex have more fine grained analyses begun to show a more complex pattern than the simple replacement of one social form by another. Barrett and Bradley, for instance, have described the change from mid-third to mid-second millennium BC in Wessex as the slow separation of ritual and secular power in which both structures coexist as part of a single dual system in the Late Neolithic. New forms of wealth accumulation provided by the latter structure are embedded in and serve to elaborate existing ceremonial practices into hyperritualised forms which continue well into the Early Bronze Age (Barrett and Bradley 1980, chapters 3 and 4). No such long-term elaboration and gradual decomposition of traditional principles seems to have occurred in northern and central Europe. In the former area, the sudden flourish in megalithic tomb building in the Early/Middle Neolithic transition decomposes rapidly into the Funnel

Beaker/Battle Axe series of the Middle/Late Neolithic with an emphasis on local regional styles in material culture and exchange networks (Randsborg 1975; Kristiansen 1982). The decline of earlier ritualised forms of social integration is therefore extremely rapid. New forms of status principles become established based on direct control of local resources which are developed further by the late Early Bronze Age in a phase of increasing trade with Central Europe.

Sherratt (1984) has summarised his own interpretation of the contrast between central and eastern Europe, emphasising that similarities between the sequences tend to be obscured by the obvious chronological disparity. Two points need to be emphasised. First, as Sherratt argues, no necessary dependence upon the introduction of bronze metallurgy is implied. On the contrary, it is the east-west clinal process covering more than a millennium that is the determinant of the relative value attached over time to metalwork and other categories of valuables in circulation. Second, apart from the western peripheral areas where, as Sherratt emphasises, traditional ritualisation could be maintained and elaborated rather than being disrupted by expanding exchange networks, the maintenance of monopoly control over circulation appears to have been extremely difficult. This would presumably explain the relative absence of status differentiation prior to the end of the Early Bronze Age, when bronze production and circulation attained sufficient velocity to achieve some degree of dominance over other spheres of production and exchange. Even in these cases, we should remember that areas where this may have occurred (signified by the presence of 'rich' burials) were marginal (for example, on the northern periphery of the Unetice area) and its duration short-lived.

By adopting a macro-spatial and temporal approach to Europe from the late fourth to early second millennium, a pattern has been detected which could never have been built up through the painstaking comparison of local sequences (where essentially complexity is being reduced by emphasising time-scale within the confines of an arbitrarily defined territorial unit). The fact is that starting in south-east Europe in the later fourth millennium and extending to the most western fringes by the mid-second millennium, a series of profound and structurally similar changes occurred in subsistence, settlement, burial rite and attribution of personal status, technology and craft production (Shennan 1982a:10). The simplest explanation would be to view them as the consequence of a long cycle of expansion in exchange networks and trade density that began in south-east Europe and followed a northwest direction, weakening and dissipating in intensity along its westernmost extension. All of this suggests that a long-term tendency existed for an increase in the density of exchange and alliance networks in eastern Europe, which had expanded into parts of Central and western Europe by the end of the third millennium. Elsewhere, Rathje has suggested that there is a more general tendency for large scale exchange systems to establish themselves initially over extensive areas (applying Sahlins's reciprocal exchange principle, 1972:294–312), and then subsequently to decompose into more economically specialised and regionally differentiated networks (Rathje 1978). Friedman has applied a similar principle to Oceania and would associate the first mode of exchange with a political principle of limiting access to strategic items and the second with situations where competition for status depends on the circulation of such items and hence serves to intensify their production and exchange. In the case of Oceania, the first mode would correspond generally with societies of broadly Polynesian type and the second with those of Melanesian type, with the latter as essentially

decomposed or elaborated versions of the former (Friedman 1981, 1982). Gledhill has described a similar pattern of expanding and contracting exchange networks centred on the Mesoamerican heartland, and has related these to events in the American south-west and mid-west (Gledhill 1978).

In the European context, the additional factor of intensification in subsistence economy requires a special mention. Gilman, Shennan and Sherratt have laid great emphasis on changes in subsistence economy and settlement associated with what Sherratt has termed the secondary products revolution (Sherratt 1981). In all the comparative cases cited, intensification of the subsistence economy is involved because foodstuffs enter directly into circulation (cf. Friedman's discussion of western Polynesia, 1982). This is particularly so in more marginal areas where access to strategic items may be limited and political competition may itself involve the accumulation and circulation of foodstuffs. It would be most unfortunate if we continued to assume that there is something called a subsistence sector (food/agriculture) and something else called production for exchange (craft production). Such differentiation is most uncharacteristic of such social situations and ignores completely the often high symbolic value that is attached to the consumption of particular kinds of food-stuffs in these ceremonial exchange systems. Sherratt makes much the same point in emphasising that the technical and expressive role of livestock cannot be separated in European prehistoric contexts (Sherratt 1982). This is even more so, when large-scale regional networks decompose into more intense and specialised systems since circulation takes on a more 'economic' character and all surpluses will be undifferentiated in exchange rather than being differentiated through withdrawal from circulation for ceremonial purposes. Moreover, the logic of the argument presented here would argue against the separation of technical items like ploughs and animal traction or consumption items like wool and milk from the more general system of circulation simply because they have 'subsistence connotations'. In fact it seems most unlikely that they could have 'diffused' as a separate technological category but are intimately connected with the whole gamut of change that characterises the later fourth to late third millennium in Europe.

In what way does this new synthesis, recently provided for us, alter our conception of the beginning of the 'Bronze Age'? In the first instance, it serves to emphasise once again that the role of bronze metallurgy has been seriously overestimated and that bronze production as a separate sphere in the political economy scarcely needs to be isolated until the later phases of the Early Bronze Age at least in each particular area. It suggests instead that a different periodisation is needed in which roughly an Early/Middle Neolithic may be contrasted to a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age and the latter in turn contrasted with a Later Bronze Age/Early Iron Age unity, in Central and western Europe. By reorganising our time segments in this way, we also have to keep the process at work firmly in mind rather than the discontinuities it generated in different regional sequences at different time periods. Figure 3.1 thus attempts to show the changing sequences of political and economic forms in different sectors of Central and western Europe. Finally, there is no reason to assume this intensification process operates within a 'closed system'. Without requiring any model of imperialism or direct economic intervention, the dates of these major changes in the European subcontinent correspond too closely with the major period of urban origins and commercialisation of the Near Eastern regional system of the later fourth and particularly third millennium BC, for this correspondence between the

two areas to be coincidental. Comparative cases of sudden inter-regional bursts of economic activity usually associated with breakdowns in distant pre-existing core systems of political control and stratification are too well known to require much elaboration here (cf. Rathje 1975 on Classic/Post-Classic Maya; or Allen 1977 on the Lapita horizon in Melanesia; or Gledhill and Larsen 1982 on the Old Babylonian period in Assyria). That the consequences of such bursts of activity may spread far outside the original cognised domain of the actors involved illustrates once

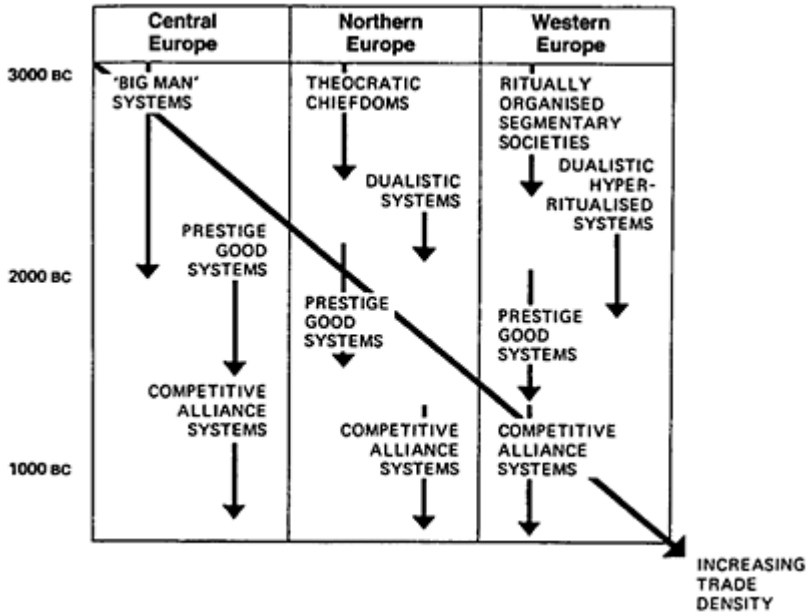

Figure 3.1 Succession of social types (generalised).

again how archaeology can record the unintended consequences of essentially blind historical processes.

Conceptualising the Later Bronze Age and Early Iron Age

The first half of the first millennium BC was once described by Jaspers, correctly, as an axial age. By this he meant the emergence of major religious and intellectual 'breakthroughs' within the orbit of the major civilisations. The rise of classical Judaism, Zoroastrianism in Persia, Confucianism in China, the transition from the Vedas to Buddhism, Jainism and other sects in India, accompanied the change from pre-Homeric mythical thought to philosophy in classical Greece. The beginning of classical antiquity has thus been a focus for research for over a hundred years precisely because it was viewed as the period in which a distinctively 'European' form of society diverged from

that of the ancient Near East. What constitutes the distinctive features of this uniqueness depends on one's conceptual orientation but at least, in the hands of Marx, Weber and Polanyi, there was a consistent emphasis on the freeing of economic forces from political constraint. Polanyi's purpose in studying the genesis of archaic Greece was to contrast the age of Homer to the age of Hesoid as the consequence of a period of major political and economic disruption (Polanyi 1977:147). The freeing of economic forces for the pursuit of gain was contingent therefore on the destruction of the Late Bronze Age palace systems and their regulation of administered trade. In the case of northern Syria, Liverani has explained the collapse of the Late Bronze Age palace systems as the result of internal processes of social and economic differentiation of palace personnel and the increasing ability of such segments (merchants/landowning aristocracy), to disengage from the palace and continue their activities in a different framework (Liverani 1978 and 1987). The re-structuring of the regional economy after the 'collapse' required technical innovations in transport (both land transport, pack animals and larger ships) to facilitate more directional long-distance trade; a change in settlement to smaller and more diffuse urban centres requiring technical innovations such as water storage, and terracing, irrigation; new fallowing techniques and use of iron ploughs, to facilitate intensification of agricultural productivity in a more limited territory. A similar pattern of urban growth, short-distance migration, technical innovation to sustain settled population in more limited territories and the expansion of nomadic populations in interstitial zones have been described for the Palestine coast in the eleventh and tenth centuries by Frankenstein (1977). It may seem rather arbitrary to limit the period of crisis to the traditional twelfth century date and the re-structuring of the regional economy to the eleventh and tenth centuries and certainly in some areas (for example, north Syria, central and south Anatolia) palace centres continued alongside these urban developments (more properly commercial city states). Moreover, to limit the crisis to the twelfth century would ignore what was probably a longer process of gradual destabilisation of the palace economies during the thirteenth century which culminated in the decentralisation of the palace systems and a break-up of pre-existing monopolies in production and interpalatial control of material flows via gift exchange and royal agreements. This, of course, requires further investigation as a particular case exemplifying a more general principle concerning the relationship between status hierarchies and their ability to maintain monopoly control over the circulation of goods and services (Douglas 1967; Rowlands 1982:168). While analogous cases may be cited from the Old Assyrian period in the Near East (Gledhill and Larsen 1982) or post-classic Maya in Mesoamerica (Rathje 1975), the distinctive feature of our particular case lies in the inability of Near Eastern empires to extend political control over these developments in the outer periphery of their sphere of influence. The long-term result is thus the birth of the 'Mediterranean world' as a semi-autonomous political and economic system which diverges in basic structure from the Near East of the first millennium BC.

The situation on mainland Greece is obscure, in large part due to the fact that the ancient prejudice against speaking of banausic matters has led to a superficial view that stratification could be based on either landed or commercial wealth. Although the debate on the scale of commerce and manufacturing in the eighth century threatens to continue (Snodgrass 1980), even moderate expansion in a wealth-accumulating secondary sector is likely to have increased rather than undermined opportunities for investment of wealth,

from whatever source, in status building activities such as land investment, temple building and religious festivals. The fact that this may have led to the semi-commercialisation of land holding and the reification of land from a kinship right into a status principle, makes it even less easy to claim a separation between landed and commercial wealth. A wider regional perspective allows the speculation that the growth of commercial city states on the SyroPalestine coast and possibly Ionia in the tenth to ninth century generated in turn a secondary and subordinated commercial sector in the agrarian dominated territorial states of the Greek mainland by the eighth century. The resulting ideological (but not real) cleavage between landed and commercial wealth could thus be manipulated as a stratification principle in order to control the disruptive influence of free flows of wealth.

The response to the restructuring of the regional economy appears to have taken a different course in north Syria and Palestine. There is a shift from conventional gift exchange to transactions of a more formally commercial pattern. In the cases of Phoenicia and north Syria, the merchant is removed from indigenous status hierarchies and plays a more interstitial role in which the supply of raw materials is pursued for its own sake and profits accrued are not cycled back into local status competition. The description of the Phoenicians by Homer as pirate-sailors who were not averse to kidnapping strangers to sell as slaves and the similar opprobium attributed to the Phocaeans is an apt representation of the activities of these mercantile groups. Liverani has described how the entire terminology of trade in Syro-Palestine underwent semantic change in the first millennium to a more overtly commercial usage and how the ideological representation of profit came to be highly prized in contrast to Late Bronze Age ideals of generosity and disinterest (Liverani 1987). The situation in Greece was almost certainly more variable than in north Syria or Phoenicia and a contrast between the Ionian Greeks and the Greek mainland should be borne firmly in mind, particularly as the relatively exceptional case of Athens, where a land-based aristocracy retained control, is our primary source.

But it is the extent of new contacts and the stimulus to trading that are most important. The Phoenicians, for example, were clearly as much concerned with encouraging the production of manufactured items for sale as in the carrying of raw materials. Their activities were typically mercantile in the sense of buying cheap and selling dear and avoiding the cost of production themselves. Moreover, they were no longer limited to the regions they could contact, by the necessity for formal political relations due to the control of local rulers over their activities. They could operate in a more far-flung and extensive manner, establish contacts to their own advantage and where necessary operate from autonomous trading stations. The collapse of Egyptian control over the Red Sea, Mycenaean control of the Aegean and further west and the freeing of overland routes to Assyria and Babylonia also expanded enormously the opportunities for profitable long-distance trading. We can also assume that these opportunities were taken up relatively soon after the collapse of the Late Bronze Age regional system. Even in the case of Phoenician involvement in the western Mediterranean, while the traditional date for Cadiz (Gades) to the eleventh century is too early, there is no reason why the initial exploration of trading opportunities should not have occurred by then. Moreover there is every reason to suppose that initial Greek colonisation of the Black Sea coast and the

West had been preceded for some time by renewed trading activities of both Greeks and Phoenicians in former Mycenaean areas of influence.

For some reason these destabilising tendencies on the western Asiatic periphery were a considerable threat to the stability of the Assyrian/Babylonian core areas. We witness a brief attempt by Tiglathpilesar I at the end of the twelfth century to restore control over the north Syrian area and then a gap of two centuries before the more successful campaigns of Assur-nasir-pal II and Shalmanesar III who successfully imposed control over the trading cities of the Levantine coast. The effects of Assyrian expansion are threefold. First, it resulted in the destruction of the Aramaean states in north Syria as a conscious and directed piece of Assyrian policy and excluded the Greeks from the entrepôts that they had established there. Second, the Ionian Greeks were excluded from the Anatolian overland trade, particularly after the destruction of the Urartrian-North Syrian axis by Assyria in the late eighth century. Third, the incorporation of the Phoenician states by Assyria resulted in their being allowed to maintain a commercial role under favourable treaty terms and at the same time be relieved of competition from north Syrians and Greek access to the overland trade to Mesopotamia. On the other hand, it implied that they would be locked into a particular clientship-cum-commercial role within a larger regional empire with consequent effects upon their political evolution. It is insufficient at this point simply to emphasise the effects of Assyrian military pressure and tributary demands on Phoenicia since an extensive commercial base to the neo-Assyrian empire can scarcely be in doubt (Winter 1973). The exact nature of the role of the Levantine city states after the eighth century is, therefore, unclear but the largely mercantile role they played in the central and western Mediterranean in the following two hundred years without evidence for territorial annexation or the extension of tribute relations at the expense of trading monopolies, implies the continuation and expansion of a specialised commercial role.

The same can scarcely be said for Greek colonisation in the West. The fact that it was the Thessalian—Euboean-Cycladic network which previously dominated the Near Eastern trade that was also precocious in the trade with the West, implies a rapid redeployment of trading activity as a consequence of their exclusion from the Syro-Palestine coast, at the latest by the first half of the eighth century. In certain specific instances, it could be argued that the motivation was clearly the replacement of raw materials now denied to them from the Near East (such as iron from Elba and central Italy or Sardinian copper). It is sufficient for our purposes here, however, to point out the significant effect that non-incorporation into the regional empires of the first millennium had for the development of the Greek city states in contrast to those of north Syria and Phoenicia. The elaboration of a commercial sector that was a characteristic feature of much of the eastern Mediterranean at the start of the first millennium BC could only develop on the Greek mainland within an evolving agrarian based city state structure. And here, in a different relation to land-holding defined oligarchic elites to that characteristic in Ionia and the Syro-Palestine coast. This should be sufficient to remind us that the evolution of the classical Greek city state is not to be understood simply by the presence or absence of commercial relations with the Near East.

What bearing do these ‘events’ in western Asia and the eastern Mediterranean have on our characterisation of the Later Bronze Age and Early Iron Age of temperate Europe? An initial premise would be that the unity of Reinecke’s Hallstatt chronology is a more

certain guide to our understanding of this period than the traditional Bronze/Iron Age dichotomy. A second would be to agree conveniently with the emerging orthodoxy that large parts of Europe underwent fundamental change towards the end of the second millennium BC (Renfrew and Shennan 1982:57). At least one view of what this significant change constituted emphasises decomposition of established status hierarchies and the perdurance of less stable principles of status acquisition and maintenance (Rowlands 1980; Bradley 1982). The most striking indicator of such a state of affairs is the extension of the Urnfield cremation rite from a centre on the Middle Danube to most areas of Central and western Europe by the ninth century. Obviously no universal meaning can be attached to cremation as such (there is no reason to assume it even evoked its earlier Bronze Age meaning in the first millennium), but the fact that in the few instances where stable hierarchies were able to emerge for a time, there was a constant struggle to return to a traditional form of legitimation based ideally on inhumation, tumulus burial, personal weaponry and access to prestige items, suggests that these represent two principles of status ordering (fluid and competitive ranking versus fixed hereditary succession to status) that were in constant tension during the Later Bronze Age. Significantly this apparent dissolution of stable mechanisms of status acquisition and succession appears to correspond broadly with increasing competition for control over land, agricultural intensification and a more rigorous definition of land-holding (e.g. Bradley 1978 and 1981). In contrast to what might be predicted by some, this unstable state of affairs was apparently a major stimulus to deep-mining of copper, metalwork production, salt extraction and the production and supply of other raw materials. Bronze becomes more widely available, particularly in parts of eastern and Central Europe where basic agricultural implements are consistently made of bronze (see Harding 1984 for summary). In other words, apparent devolution towards more competitive and antagonistic political relations (which incidentally does not imply lack of complexity but quite the reverse) implies reorganisation and intensification of production in all sectors as well as a massive increase in the velocity of circulation.

Even in Urnfield contexts there is some evidence that under certain conditions more stable, ordered hierarchies could develop, for example in the early and late phases of the Urnfield sequence. The reappearance of rich burials, usually in marginal areas with either cremation or inhumation practice and categories of high status grave goods, suggests that more coherent and extensive hierarchies could develop under special conditions in the Later Bronze Age. It is, however, the late Hallstatt C-D period in Central Europe which provides us with the clearest indicator of the conditions for the emergence of this kind of stable ranking structure. It might well be significant that dominant Hallstatt B centres in south-west Germany or east France were located in areas where occupation from Hallstatt B-early Hallstatt C is less apparent. In the eastern Alpine region, on the other hand, Hallstatt B occupation was radically altered due to the development of trade with the south. But other areas that were strong Urnfield centres in Hallstatt B, for example south Bavaria, were peripheralised in the ensuing Hallstatt C-D periods. In other words, the strong regional shifts detected in political dominance which characterise Hallstatt C-D development may not only be to do with re-orientation to the Mediterranean world but also with resistance or avoidance of these new contacts either by late Urnfield strongholds or by Mediterranean trading partners wishing to avoid relatively well-

organised polities and wanting instead to stimulate or transform weaker local societies to serve their needs (cf. Harke 1979 on Hallstatt C-D settlement relocation).

The arguments concerning the internal structuring of the Hallstatt D chiefdoms have already been rehearsed elsewhere (Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978). Control of monopoly advantage in external sources of wealth inputs into the local systems were crucial for understanding the set of conditions which permitted, for a brief period, a phase of stabilised ranking in certain areas of Central-western Europe. This requires that such external conditions have to be related to existing internal circumstances; the different responses of the eastern versus the western Hallstatt regions is a case in point. In the latter case, these internal circumstances appear to be a pre-existing but weakly developed alliance and exchange network. This was of a highly fragmented and competitive nature that, under an external stimulus, could be cohered by certain powerful households into a more stable ranking structure. The archaeological evidence of centralised craft manufacture in a range of status items (necessary to define access to rank position) and prestige objects (needed at all social levels for transactions such as payment of bridewealth) is indicative of the form of control exercised, over gift-giving, marriage alliance and 'tributary relations'. I would also argue that this 'superstructure' of a status hierarchy emerges out of and leaves relatively intact an extended household domestic economy, although conditions would exist for an intensification of agricultural production for exchange.

Moreover, I emphasised the relative instability and fragility of these kinds of structure. When the monopoly is broken, the political arena quickly fragments and returns to previously existing competitive cycles of status rivalry, competition and display. Hence, the emphasis on warfare, raiding for plunder, the emergence of warrior age grades or retinues under some kind of chiefly or aristocratic patronage in Early/Middle La Tène, with warfare directed toward the acquisition of cattle, gold ornaments, weapons and probably slaves (locally socially constituted wealth items) may differ only in degree rather than kind from a more long term and still prevailing Later Bronze Age pattern.

The relative stability of the Hallstatt D phase may also, to a certain extent, be illusory, since raiding and trading are really two strategies for acquiring the same thing—wealth to use for internal circulation and exchange in competitive status rivalry (Nash, personal communication). If certain areas were, for a short period, able to gain access to sources of wealth of a consistent and enduring character, then quite exceptional conditions for the maintenance of stable hierarchies may be expected to develop. As Daphne Nash has explained, one of the really significant differences between Late Hallstatt and La Tène is the manner in which wealth could be acquired from the Mediterranean world, in the earlier period by regular trade and in the later period as a return on demand for Celtic warriors as mercenaries (Nash, personal communication).

The question is, can we relate any of these developments in the Later Bronze Age/Early Iron Age north of the Alps to contemporary change in the Mediterranean, or are we only to consider such situations when evidence of direct contact can be established? It must of course be stated quite firmly that here we are only concerned with the conditions controlling the reproduction of these 'societies' and not the particular local forms adopted. The cultural idioms manipulated in status competition and the actors' representation of their own particular political arena do not concern us here. In fact it is quite likely there would be a number of different local systems in operation that could not

be viewed as transforms of each other and would have their own distinctive properties and evolutionary potential. The point instead is to stress that their capacity to function in a locally appropriate manner depends on conditions that are not included within these local ethnically defined circumstances. It has been argued that we have evidence of relatively stable status hierarchies in the European Early and Middle Bronze Age contemporaneous with palace regulated economies and elaborate title systems in the western Asiatic (including the Aegean) Later Bronze Age. There is also evidence for the growth of unstable competitive status systems in the European Later Bronze Age occurring in the same period as the semi-commercialisation of the eastern Mediterranean in the early first millennium. The principle that underlines both situations is the presence or absence of the conditions for maintaining monopoly advantage over internal distribution and external exchange. Here we could follow both Friedman's arguments about relative trade density or scarcity, which really involves velocity of circulation, and Douglas's more general principle of differentiation of hierarchies and the difficulties these conditions create for established status-holders to maintain control over material flows (Friedman 1981; Douglas 1967; Rowlands 1982). Hence we need not be limited to the presence of prospectors, traders or other such human agencies to be the conscious instigators of these conditions. Such correlations indicate only that we are dealing with open regional systems, in other words, that Europe was always part of a larger whole. The conditions necessary for direct intervention and even control of parts of temperate Europe in the later first millennium can only be properly conceptualised as due to the presence of longer-term processes which apparent discontinuity would encourage us to deny.

Conclusion

Over the last hundred years, the 'prehistory of Europe' has been conceptualised in terms of two sets of opposed principles: discontinuity/continuity and dependency/autonomy. The first of these principles stems from a nineteenth-century positivistic faith that methodological rigour would reveal the objective truth of historical development. In this paradigm, the key to understanding the origins of modern Europe lay in tracing the genesis of its contemporary character to a period of short-term disruption and discontinuity, the unintended consequences of which were only to be revealed in a longer-term process of continuous change. The second is derived from the role historical consciousness has played in European nationalism. Each European nation state has made claim to a unique history and has sought evidence in the past for its cultural autonomy and continuity. A sense of past is thus used to promote social closure while dependency and change are de-emphasised and externalised as factors existing outside of a social system defined in basically ethnic terms.

Discontinuity, change, innovation and dependency as outside thus become opposed to continuity, tradition, autonomy and inside as the often implicit organising principles of much narrative prehistory. Up until the Second World War, the former principle was emphasised in British archaeology, probably as a reaction to the obvious dominance of the latter in central European work. Shorn of its particular nationalistic overtones, the continuity/autonomy principle has been revived in recent years utilising arbitrarily

defined spatial units in place of the culture area concept. An implicit sense of European pan-nationalism seems to lie behind this revival. An autonomous 'prehistory of Europe' emerges as a cultural vision which acts as a motivating force to achieve a degree of political and economic unity in Europe in the face of competing claims to domination by outside forces (an interesting modern parallel to the conditions in the eighth century AD which first promoted the use of the term 'Europe' to describe the emergence of a sense of ethnic consciousness in the face of external aggression; Hay 1968).

All of this teaches us that such principles are not abstract theoretical devices for constructing objective historical 'truths' but relate to contemporary interest: writing which appears to stress a 'dependency view' is scarcely likely to be well received in the current ethos. Moreover, it is quite unsatisfactory since it remains locked within a distinctively Eurocentric view of the nature of social change, the validity of which the author has been at some pains to question. While the solution may not be entirely satisfactory, it may still retain some merit if one is clear as to what one is trying to avoid. This is quite simply to deny that one has any *a priori* knowledge of the united whose 'history' is to be constructed or within which change is said to occur. If one accepts that social bounded-ness is a relative and shifting concept of emic proportions, then the conditions promoting such closure cannot be viewed *a priori.* Put simply, a prehistory of Europe cannot be assumed (except ideologically) and it is the conclusion of this chapter that it does not exist except as the presentist projection into prehistory of current interests in establishing a unified sense of a 'European' past.

No doubt this will be viewed as an unsatisfactory answer to the 'uniqueness of Europe' question. But if one does not start with the assumption that one is dealing with the prehistory of some ethnically bounded unit, then the processes once describes cannot be expressed in terms of the autonomy/dependency opposition. (A linguistic packing model may be more appropriate.) Europe as an ethnically defined unit did not exist prior to the eighth century AD, when chroniclers first used the term to refer to the Romano-Germanic populations (Hay 1968:25). Understanding how this state of affairs emerged is scarcely helped by projecting it or its sub-units back into prehistory as a unifying frame of reference. In this manner we learn once again that understanding our own particular historical development—as a necessary component of creating a sense of identity—is founded on a more open-minded attitude to comparison. In this regard the societies that have occupied the European landmass have played a structurally similar role in world history as other 'blocked areas' such as sub-Saharan Africa and other 'blocked areas' such as sub-Saharan Africa and Oceania. Perhaps a 'Europe in prehistory', marginalised yet linked through unequal exchange to the major centres of wealth, accumulation and power, was underdeveloped (rather than being in a state underdevelopment) in a manner analogous but not similar to what happened later in Africa and Latin America. The situation changed in Europe in the sixteenth century AD when the wealth crises experienced by European feudal aristocracies encouraged them to gain access to independent sources of revenue from the New World and the Far East. By thus breaking their dependence on long-distance trade with the Mediterranean and the Near East, the societies of the European subcontinent unwittingly achieved an autonomy of action, the results of which are only too visible at the present day. Since a few hundred years out of several millennia is like a drop in the ocean, we may be unwise in assuming this recent shift to autonomous 'core status' to be a permanent state of affairs.

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4
THE FORMATION OF TRIBAL SYSTEMS IN NORTHERN EUROPE, 4000–500 BC

Kristian Kristiansen

The aim of this chapter[1] is twofold: a) to model and explain long-term changes in Neolithic and Bronze Age tribal systems of northern Europe (approximately 4000–500 BC) based on regional sample (a vertical cut); and b) to unfold and explain the dynamics of the larger tribal system based on the evidence of the Nordic Bronze Age (a horizontal cut).

Due to the scope of this venture and the limited space available, it is inevitable that I have to postulate certain premises. First, I propose that developments in the region chosen to exemplify long-term changes can be regarded as representative of main trends in the larger northern European area. Second, I propose that the Neolithic and the Bronze Age represent a long-term sequence of tribal systems that go through definite cycles and irreversible changes. Third, I propose that it is necessary therefore to establish a common frame of reference, theoretically and methodologically, in order to describe and explain their structural properties, their range of variation, and the structural changes they undergo.

As a starting-point let us briefly recapitulate some trends in recent research.

Throughout the 1970s, studies of Neolithic and Bronze Age social systems have significantly increased our knowledge of the relationship between settlement systems, economy, and social structure (e.g., Bradley 1972, 1977, Fleming 1971, Kristiansen 1978, 1980, Randsborg 1974, 1975, Renfrew 1973, Sherratt 1972, 1977, Welinder 1975, 1977). Such studies are, however, still rather few.[2] Widely separated in time and space, they represent a selection of static sequences between which one has to interpolate in order to reconstruct a coherent picture—and in terms of explanation this is often hampered by non-comparable methodological approaches and problems of representivity.

With respect to *theory,* the concept of tribal social organisation in a prehistoric context needs elaboration badly. The traditional evolutionary framework of tribes and chiefdoms (e.g., Fried 1960, Sahlins 1968, Service 1962) seems too static and too general to account for the spatial diversity and the long-term changes of such systems in prehistory.

Another limiting factor is that much ethnographic evidence can hardly be regarded in isolation, but should rather be considered in the context of the expanding world economy during the last few hundred years that both directly and indirectly may have influenced the present historical context of primitive social organisation when viewed in an evolutionary perspective (Ekholm and Friedman 1980).

These limitations in the ethnographic evidence should not lead us to dismiss the significance of using general principles of social organisation at various levels of complexity as an interpretative and explanatory framework from which more specific

hypotheses may be deduced and tested. It should rather make us aware of the potential of the archaeological record for contributing to explaining processes of social evolution that demand both time depth and geographical scale—elements that can only be supplied by archaeology and history. Thus with respect to European prehistory, Andrew Sherratt's recent analysis of the technological, economic and social changes that characterised the secondary products revolution is a major contribution towards understanding tribal transformations in Neolithic Europe (Sherratt 1981, also Fleming 1972). It may seem strange, then, that the rich European evidence has not invited more work along such general evolutionary lines. But the reason is probably that one is not only faced with an enormous amount of published evidence, but also with a theoretically very difficult and rather discouraging situation, when trying to explain what superficially may look like several thousand years of stagnation in traditional terms of social evolution. In comparison, the development of more complex societies in non-temperate habitats offers much more clear-cut examples of evolutionary trajectories, and most recent discussions have dealt with the explanation of such cases (e.g., Carneiro 1970, Flannery, 1972, Friedman and Rowlands 1977, Sanders and Price 1968, Sanders and Webster 1978), not to mention the rich literature on the origins of the state.

In northern Europe, however, 3,500 years of tribal life, from about 4000 to 500 BC, promise an opportunity to explore the structural diversity and possible long-term evolutionary trajectories of a tribal mode of production within a temperate habitat. The release of this potential, however, is not only a matter of empirical anlysis. It demands the elaboration of theoretical concepts enabling us to frame and explain the evidence, a task to which we shall now turn (see Figure 4.1).

Theoretical models

General theory

Our general model will be based on the structural Marxist notion of social reproduction, as presented by Friedman (1979) and Friedman and Rowlands (1977) (see also recent discussions in *Critique of Anthropology* and in Ingold 1981).

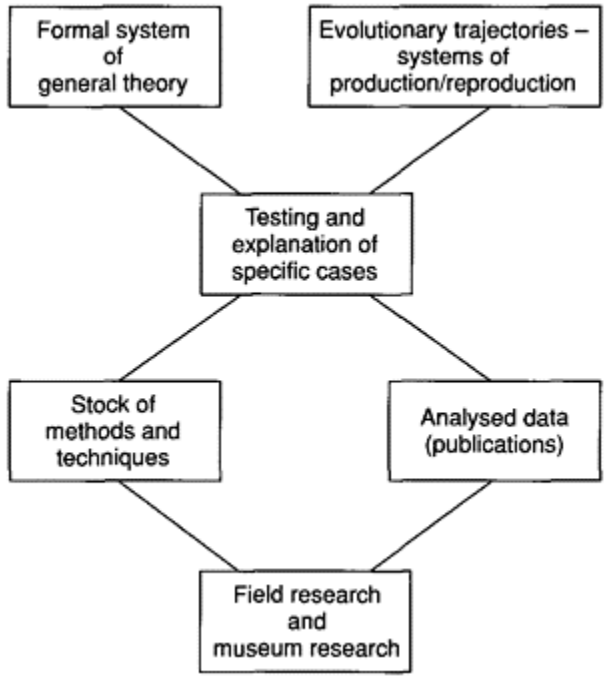


Figure 4.1 Graphic representation of basic elements in the research process.

The model is defined by a set of functional categories and a set of rules regarding their interrelations, which constitute a theoretical system that serves to frame and explain concrete forms of social reproduction. The structural categories are characterised by their relative autonomy, and they are linked by a variety of intra- and inter-systemic functions. The limits of functional compatibility within and between such structures defines the onset of contradictions.

These structural concepts are the basic theoretical tools. The object of analysis, however, is a social system, which comprises a set of productive relations that organise and dominate social reproduction. Dominant relations of production are those relations that take on these functions, whether kinship relations, religion or any other set of institutional relations.

Working in the opposite direction, we find that the exploitation of the environment by a given social formation creates a hierarchy of constraints that determines the evolutionary potential of the system as a whole. This, however, should not lead us to postulate economic determinism, since it is the relations of production that dominate and hence determine the formation of such constraints and their impact on the course of development.

A transformation may occur when a given social system alters the economic conditions of production and thus imposes a new set of constraints on the system that are

incompatible with the dominant social relations. Also, a positive altering of economic conditions and intensified production may lead to the evolution of new social formations.

The preceding implies that transformations can only be explained with reference to their previous forms. Social reproduction, however, is also a regional reference to their previous forms. Social reproduction, however, is also a regional phenomenon distributed in space, thereby linking social units together in a larger system. Thus

> the structures of the larger regional systems are determined by the dominant relations of production that make them up, e.g., the internal potential demands of local systems and the spatial distribution of constraints that determine the relative potential for development of the individual units with respect to one another
>
> (Friedman and Rowlands 1977:271)

The crucial problem is: On what scale does evolution take place? This can only be answered by considering production and reproduction within the larger spatial framework on which it depends.

In the next section these general theoretical concepts will be applied to construct a more specific model of tribal production and reproduction.

Specific theory

The concept of a tribal mode of production, as applied in this chapter, is derived mainly from Sahlins (1972:101–48) and Friedman (1975 and 1979). The basic premise is that the elementary properties of tribal production and reproduction generate a wider range of tribal variants, depending on a complex interplay between the spatial and temporal distribution of economic and ecological production. This implies that there exists a predictable and systemic relationship between spatial and temporal tribal variations as products of one or of several types of time-space cycles.

In the Friedman model, the basic production and exchange unit is the local lineage. Based on analysis of the articulation of marriage—exchange cycles and local production, it demonstrates how surplus is converted into higher status and ultimately into absolute rank through feasting and ritual (Friedman 1975: figure 2). This analysis is then embedded in a larger time-space model of evolutionary and devolutionary cycles. The evolution-devolution cycle starts with the expansion of an ‘egalitarian’ tribal system, which through intensified production creates extensive alliance networks. Wealth is channelled into a gradually evolving ranked system of conical clans (chiefdoms) and is sustained by ritual and chiefly mediations with the supernatural, displayed in the production and consumption of valuables. When territorial expansion can no longer take place, population increases and production is intensified, thus transforming the landscape and leading to degradation of the conditions of production. Population concentrates into larger units. Competition for rank is strongly intensified and individualised, but in the long run supralocal exchange and vertical relations gradually break down or are reduced in scale. The social system returns to a more egalitarian level. Thus the cycle can also be described in terms of vertical and horizontal relations. The motor of the cycle is the articulation of exchange and production within an expansionist tribal economy that

gradually changes the conditions of production. This imposes a new set of constraints on the social system that is gradually transformed as part of this process. A continuous contradiction between the dominant productive relations and the constraints they impose upon the productive forces determines the course of the cycle. A long-term cycle of several short-term cycles may then finally reach a point where conditions are sufficient for a transformation of the system as a whole to occur (Friedman 1975:186, figure 13).

The properties of the local production—exchange cycle referred to previously can never be demonstrated in the archaeological record. What can eventually be demonstrated are some of the material implications of the model on a larger time—space scale—that is, patterns of expansion—regression, settlement densities and systems of land use, degree of and means of economic exploitation and, to some extent, systems of rank and ritual. The spatial and temporal variability of such variables may then serve as a preliminary test case for the more general aspects of the model.

Let us first turn to the temporal aspects of our model, exemplified by a long-term settlement sequence in the region of north-western Zealand (Map 4.1) from 4000 to 500 BC.[3]

Long-term changes: north-western Zealand

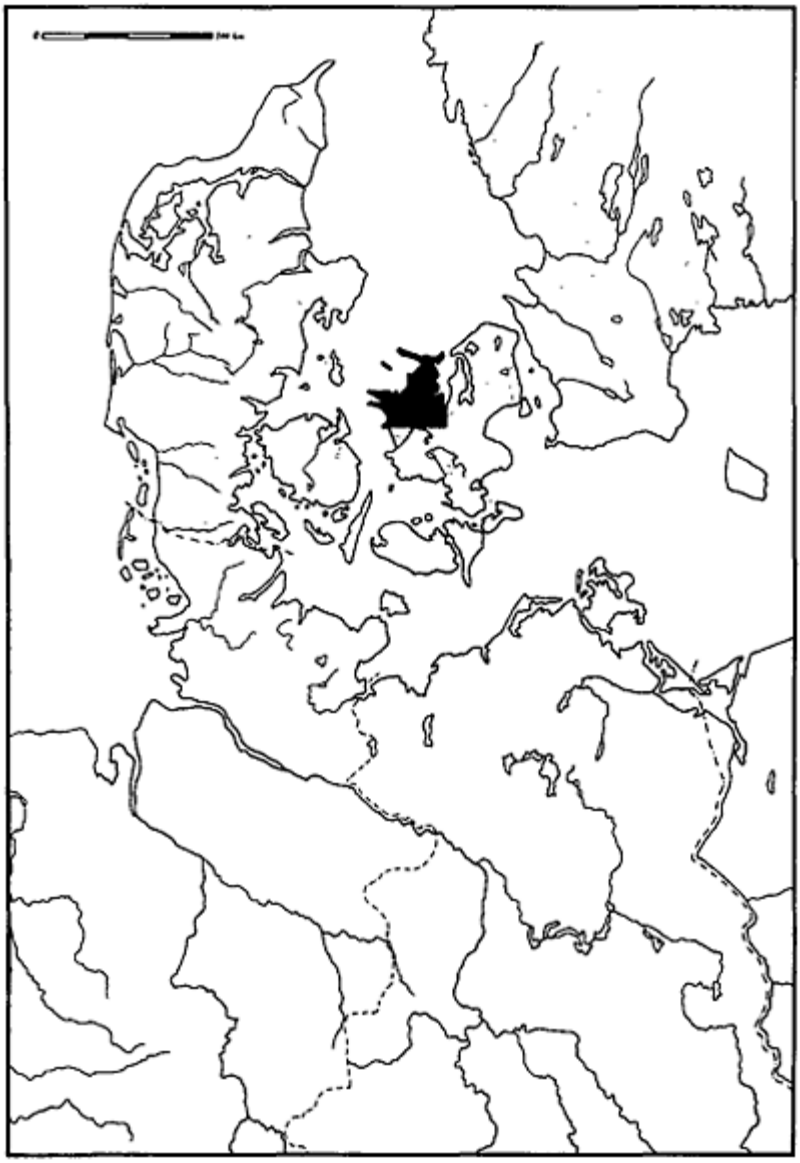
North-western Zealand comprises most of the ecological and geographical variation found within the northern European lowland area, with the exception of the sandier areas of north-western Europe, to which I shall return later. It can thus be regarded as a representative sample, both geographically and archaeologically.

The settlement history of the area is divided into five main chronological stages: Early Neolithic (EN), the period of thin-butted axes,[4] Middle Neolithic (MN), the period of thick-butted axes, Late Neolithic (LN), the dagger period, Early Bronze Age, and Late Bronze Age (EB and LB).

The Early Neolithic spans from 4100/4000 to 3500/3400 BC (in Mathiassens's terminology, from 3800 to 3200 BC), the Middle Neolithic from 3400 to 2400 BC (in Mathiassen's terminology from 3200 to 2400 BC), the Late Neolithic 2400 to 2300–1900 BC, the Early Bronze Age 1900–1000 BC and the Late Bronze Age 1000–500 BC (for calibrated chronology, see in general Tauber 1972, Nielsen 1977a and Malmros and Tauber 1975).

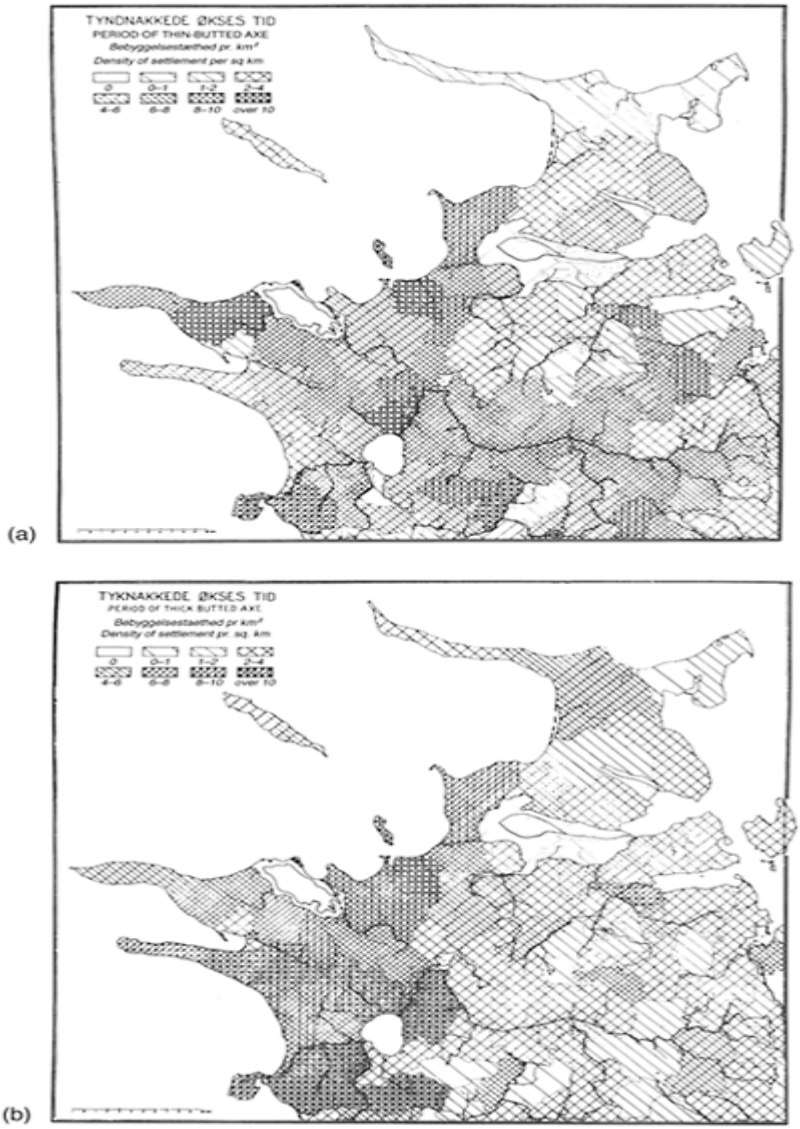
Settlement structure and subsistence strategy

Overall changes in settlement patterns are shown in Map 4.2. The EN shows a rather dispersed pattern that can be regarded as an extension of the Late Mesolithic settlement base expanding from both the lakes in the interior and

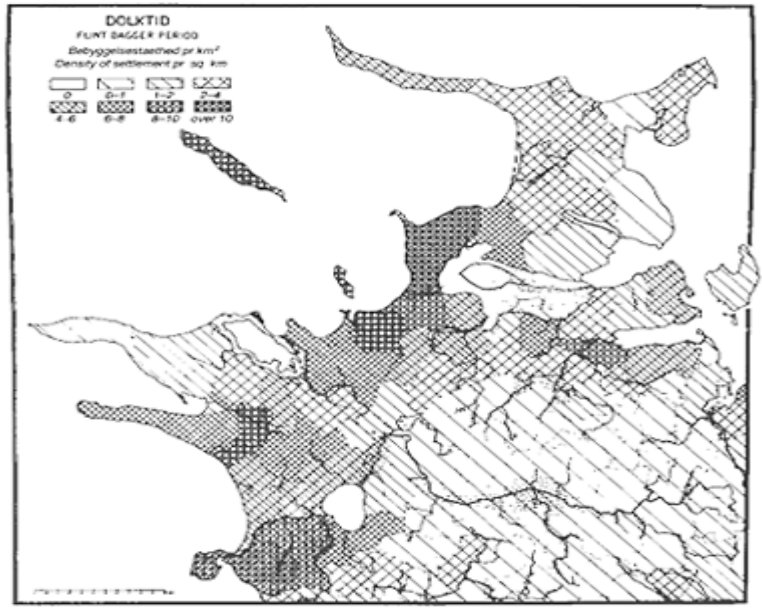


Map 4.1 Part of northern Europe, with north-western Zealand indicated in black.

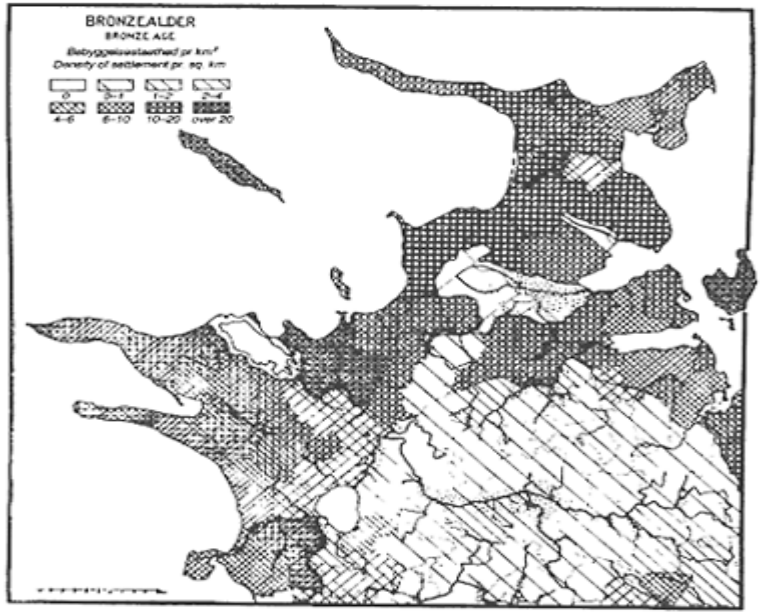
from the coastal areas (Paludan-Müller 1978). During the MN the interior was thinned out and some settlement concentrations occurred. Then in the LN the shift from inland to coast was completed, and settlement concentrations became a regular phenomenon—a



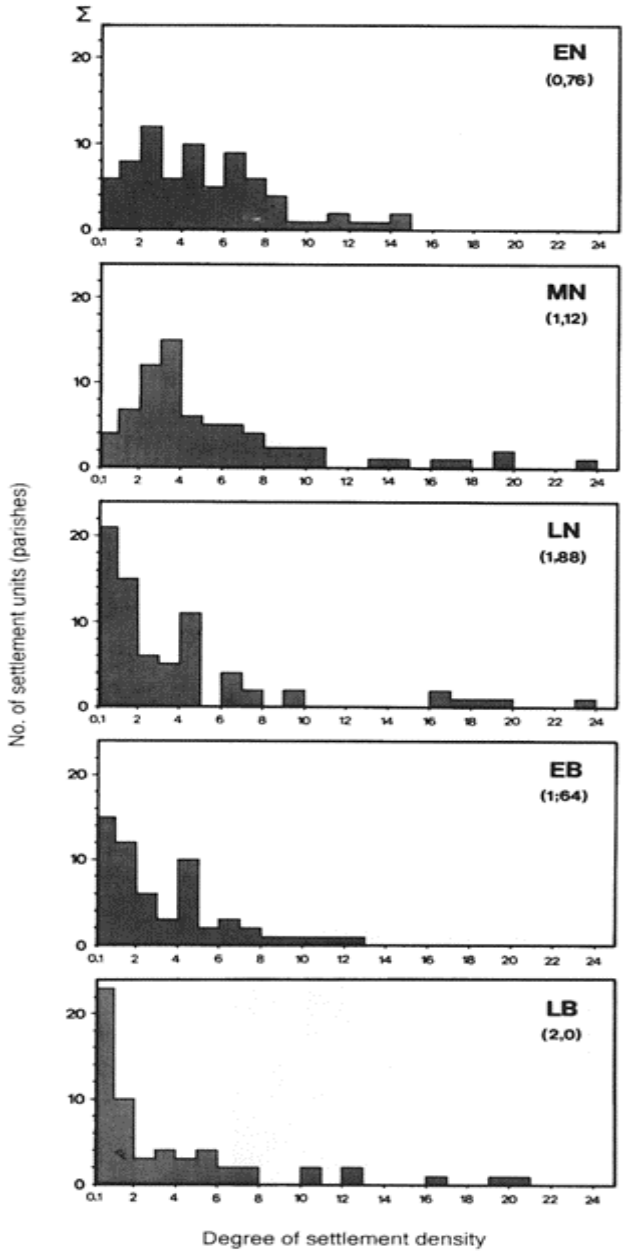
Map 4.2 The prehistoric settlements of north-western Zealand: a) Early Neolithic—period of thin-butted axe; b) Middle Neolithic—period of thick-butted axe; c) Late Neolithic—flint dagger period; d) Bronze Age—Early and Late.


DOLKTID
FLINT DAGGER PERIOD
Bebyggelsestaethed pr km²
Density of settlement pr sq. km
0
0–1
1–2
2–4
4–6
6–8
8–10
over 10

(c)


BRONZEALDER
BRONZE AGE
Bebyggelsestaethed pr km²
Density of settlement pr sq. km
0
0–1
1–2
2–4
4–6
6–10
10–20
over 20

(d)



Degree of settlement density

Figure 4.2 Graphic representation of the settlement structure in north-western Zealand. Degree of settlement

stratification is indicated by a numeric value dividing the number of settlement units below density 4 from the number with density above 4 The number of settlement units (parishes) is on the vertical axis, and the degree of settlement density increasing from left to right on the horizontal axis

Source: Mathiassen 1959: table VI

tendency that continued during the Bronze Age (BA). During this period the interior was nearly empty, and settlement concentrations on the coast increased.

These trends in settlement patterns can be further illuminated by grouping the evidence as has been done in Figure 4.2, which shows degrees of settlement density (increasing from left to right) and numbers of geographical units (parishes) on the vertical axis. It demonstrates a gradual tendency toward settlement differentiation. The EN is characterised by gradual variations in degree of settlement density, which conforms well with a more dispersed settlement pattern, although it is rather dense. During the MN, several areas became less densely settled in the process of settlement displacement from the interior toward the coast, and settlement differentiation increased. This process finally achieved stability during the LN and the EB, and it was further differentiated in the LB.

If we accept these gross tendencies as a starting-point, several things can be predicted, among them increased exploitation of the environment within the more densely settled areas (and forest recovery in the less densely settled areas), changes in the organisation of the economy in order to feed more people in smaller areas, and probably also changes in social organisation.

Changes in subsistence strategy are demonstrated in Figures 4.3 and 4.4, using barrels of hard corn (htk.) as indicators of the productive potential of a given area (parishes are used as areal units). The more hectares (ha) per barrel of hard corn, the less productive is a given area, and vice versa (for a general explanation of these concepts, see Kristiansen 1978: note 9). Naturally this parameter can only

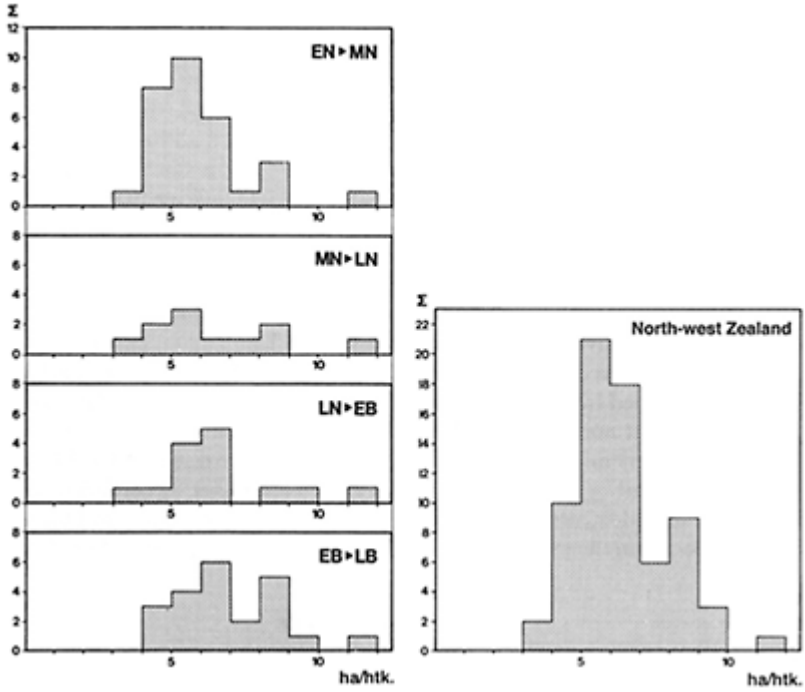


Figure 4.3 Subsistence strategy during expansion, defined by an increase of settlement density of more than 0.5, and from EN A to EN BC by lack of point-butted axes. Parishes are used as regional units; hectares/barrel of hard corn (ha/htk.) as an indicator of productive potential. The representation of the whole region (north-western Zealand) is shown at the right

Period transitition	Mean value	Standard deviation
EN A→EN BC	6.67	1.94
EN → MN	6.43	1.65
MN → LN	7.00	2.32
LN → EB	7.07	2.05
EB → LB	7.45	1.56
North-west Zealand	6.87	1.58

Figure 4.4 Subsistence strategy during expansion, represented by the numerical values of Figure 4.3.

indicate very general tendencies, and it is therefore most suitable for analyses and comparisons of larger areas (e.g., Randsborg 1974, Kristiansen 1978). In our small region, however, some general trends can be observed, which should then later be specified and tested by site catchment analysis.

Compared to the overall productive potential (PP) of northern Zealand, the Early Neolithic subsistence strategy seems to have been selective, the inhabitants preferring the most productive soil. Thus from EN A (4000 BC) to EN BC (3800–3200 BC), that is, after the first expansion period, the average PP in areas of continuous expansion (not settled in EN A, indicated by lack of point-butted axes) was slightly better than the region as a whole, a tendency that was accentuated from EN BC to MN. This seems to indicate that increased intensification took place in areas of high PP, while less productive soils already witnessed a gradual depopulation. From the LN and the EB, however, the PP was generally lower than the average of the region, whereas the range of soil quality increased. The tendency toward intensified settlement expansion within less productive areas continued during the LB.

Thus, the observed changes in settlement pattern and settlement structure were accompanied by a gradual change from heavier soils toward lighter ones. As we know that north-western Zealand did not lack soils of high productive potential, the general change in subsistence strategy toward soils of less PP can only be explained by the operation of economic constraints. According to our model, we should expect these to be localised in changed conditions of production as reflected in the exploitation of the landscape and in patterns of land use.

Ecology and land use

Vegetational changes in the exploitation of the landscape during the Neolithic are recorded in Figure 4.5. These general trends correspond with most pollen diagrams in southern Scandinavia (Berglund 1969, Andersen 1976). The initial phase of the Neolithic, the A phase (in the diagram, phase II), was characterised by ‘slash-and-burn’ cultivation

of small plots for cereal-growing and pollarding of trees for leaf-foddering of stalled cattle. The manipulation of the forest was

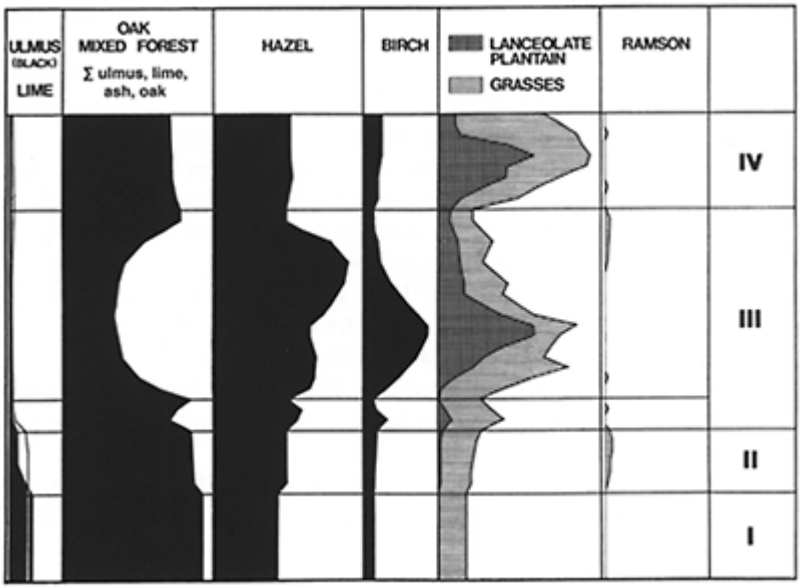


Figure 4.5 Pollen diagram, pieced together from diagrams from Aamosen and Sørbylille (Zealand) and Dyrholmen (East Jutland)

Source: after Troels-Smith 1953: figure 2

modest. Not until the later Early Neolithic (EN BC) did a significant reduction of the forest (the 'landnam') take place, with the aim of creating large areas of open land for open pastures and free-grazing cattle. An indication of this was the disappearance of ramson, which was much preferred by cattle, and the enormous increase of grasses and lanceolate plantain, while the high forest was correspondingly reduced (phase III). With degradation of the soil, a gradual displacement of settlement took place, which is reflected in the recovery of secondary oak mixed forest in the interior (this part of the diagram is from the Aamosen Bog). A significant reduction of the forest and a corresponding expansion of open land with permanent pastures took place at the transition to the Late Neolithic in southern Scandinavia, while this had already occurred in Jutland with the appearance and expansion of the Single Grave culture or Battle Axe culture (phase IV in the diagram). During the Bronze Age the exploitation of the landscape steadily increased, especially during the Late Bronze Age. (This is not included in Figure 4.5.)

This picture of the vegetational development corresponds well with the observed changes in settlement structure and subsistence strategy (see Figures 4.2 and 4.3). It

reflects the impact of different types of subsistence strategies on vegetation. The response of environmental constraints caused a gradual change from extensive to intensive 'slash-and-burn', which was succeeded by an extensive 'pastoral' economy and from small-scale land use toward large-scale land use. From a broad-spectrum economy, based on an interaction between the production of the forest (leaf-foddering, pigs, hunting) and the soil (cereal production and some grazing), a trend developed toward a narrow-spectrum economy based mainly on the production of the soil (stock-rearing and cereal production) and specialised exploitation of ecological niches, such as fishing.

The expansion of open land from the Early Neolithic to the Bronze Age can also be inferred archaeologically through the relative increase in settlement density (see Map 4.2 and Figure 4.2), and absolutely by calculating different open-land values for the recorded number of megaliths and tumuli, most of which have been registered in this area.[5] If we assume that each barrow (which in the Bronze Age utilised between 1 and 3 ha of grass turfs) would require a further 10–20 ha of permanent open land (fields, pastures) to preserve productivity, we arrive at the open-land figures in Figure 4.6. They demonstrate the economic and ecological differences between the EN and the BA and the corresponding changes in patterns of land use.

Thus the preference for light soils during the LN and the BA was not initially a result of blocked expansion on good soils and the budding-off of settlements on marginal lands. It reflects an economically determined preference for light soils whose more open forest was easy to transform into productive grassland (Kristiansen 1980). Gradually, however, the opposition between the open land of a dominant pastoral economy and the dense surrounding forest on the heavier soils would make its exploitation more and more difficult within the known range of the economy, thus creating a new set of constraints. This might explain the Late Bronze Age intensification on light soils, despite the availability of forested areas of higher PP.

When summarising the evidence of this section it seems fairly safe to conclude that we are dealing with a long-term cycle of economic intensification within a tribal framework that led to a gradual transformation of both the economy and the ecology. I further suggest that these changes should be regarded as irreversible and that by the end of the Bronze Age they reached a point that did not allow the cycle to continue or to be repeated, resulting in a structural transformation of the tribal systems of northern Europe (Kristiansen 1978, 1980). Finally I suggest that this long-term cycle was made up of two rather distinct shorter cycles: the EN-MN cycle and the LN-BA cycle. In the following section a more detailed description of the cycles, based on recent research, will be presented in order to explain their dominant features and their internal dynamics.

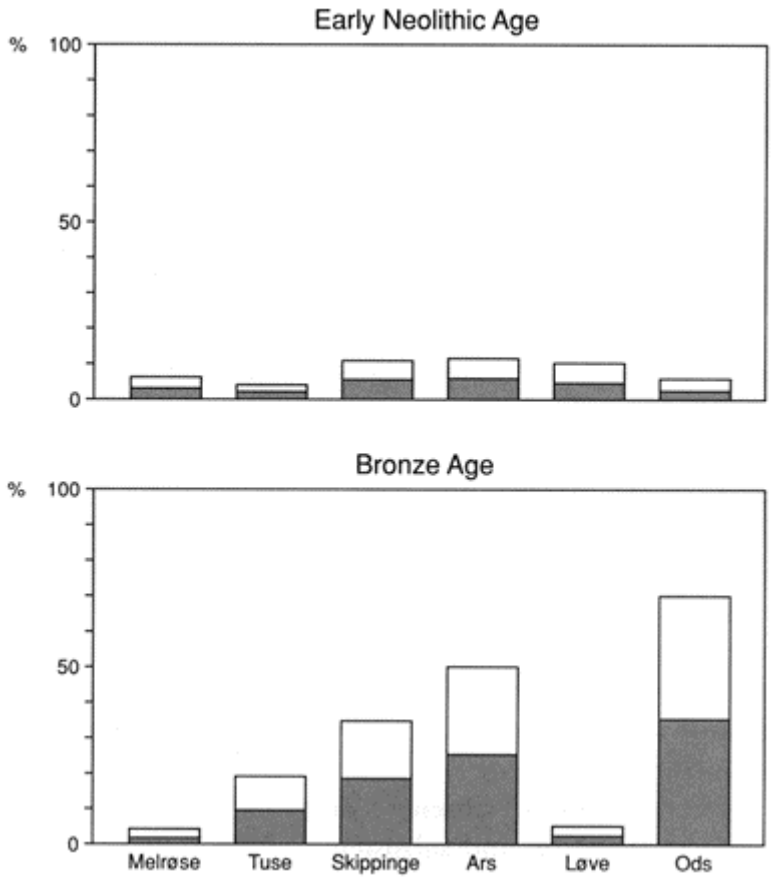


Figure 4.6 The supposed extent of permanent open land during the Early Neolithic and the Bronze Age in north-western Zealand, calculated on the basis of open-land values per megalith-barrow of respectively 10 and 20 hectares. The regional units are the present districts

Tribal transformations: northern Europe

The relationship between production and reproduction determines to a large degree the potential for increased wealth accumulation and its transformation through alliances and feasting into status and increased hierarchisation. The basic archaeological variables in

the analysis of this process are the different stages in the exploitation of the landscape and their reflections in settlement patterns and in the display of wealth in ritual and burials. These variables link economic conditions of production with the organisation of production and its investment in alliances, ritual and rank. In what follows, these variables will therefore be considered in greater detail. The chronological and cultural succession described next is based on calibrated radiocarbon dates.

4100–3800 BC, Early Neolithic A

Agricultural colonisation from a Mesolithic base was developed by small family groups practising 'slash-and-burn' cultivation on small plots for cereal-growing and pollarding trees for leaf-foddering of small numbers of fenced stall-fed cattle (Troels-Smith 1960). Local inland sites like St Valby (Becker 1954) were based on cereal-growing (wheat) in small cleared fields, probably by hoe cultivation. The dominant domestic animal was the pig, which foraged in the forest. Along coasts and lakes, seasonal hunting and fishing camps, like Muldbjerg in the Aamosen Bog (Troels-Smith 1953), formed part of a mixed economy, based on exploiting a wide variety of resources, but mainly on the production of the natural environment (Mahler 1981).

The material culture was a continuation from the Mesolithic base, with simple pottery and thin-butted axes for clearing. Wooden bowls imply a tradition of elaborate woodcarving.

Exchange was regionally restricted, and burial and ritual reveal simple earth graves (Brinch Petersen 1974) with little ritual evidence, but some display of the use of status items like amber and the earliest battle axes. Small votive offerings of pottery containing food are found in bogs and lakes (Becker 1947).

3800–3400 BC. Early Neolithic BC

The rapid expansion and increase of population gradually led to an intensified exploitation of the environment. Large-scale forest clearings now took place (Iversen's so-called 'landnam') (Iversen 1941, 1973). In opposition to the preceding slash-and-burn technique, which maintained a balance with the forest, the aim now was to create large and more permanent openings of the land, which were maintained by free-grazing cattle. Whether we should regard this landnam as the outcome of faster and more extensive slash-and-burn cultivation with cattle preventing the forest from regenerating, or, as definitely stated by Iversen and Troels-Smith, the result of a distinct new clearance strategy, is in my opinion still debatable.[6] According to Troels-Smith, it represents an agricultural economy distinctly different from the earlier long-house farmers of the Linear Pottery culture who practised horticulture on small permanent fields and kept stall-fed or fenced cattle (Troels-Smith 1981). But it quite evidently reflects a changed subsistence strategy that demanded the co-operation of several family groups (for example, extended families). The opening of the forest was accompanied by technological, economic and social changes. A more efficient agricultural practice, involving ard ploughing, was introduced, the number of cattle increased and a general increase in productivity took place.

The settlement system stabilised and a complex territorial organisation developed that was sustained by elaborate ritual and exchange. Impressive expressions of communal ritual are demonstrated in timber-constructed earthen long barrows from an early date, especially in Jutland, which were later succeeded by the earliest megaliths. Other ritual manifestations are found in the hoard-ing of large ceremonial axes and the sacrifice of cattle in bogs, which were accompanied by feasting. Also, the sphere of craft production witnessed a remarkable development. Flint-mining gave rise to the increased production of long, polished flint axes that entered local, regional and inter-regional exchange cycles. The latter also included amber and small numbers of imported copper axes from Central Europe. A wide variety of fine decorated pottery was produced and consumed in rituals at megaliths. Also, elaborate battle axes and mace heads were employed in ritual and as status items for a small elite group. They were buried in earthen long barrows and in the earliest megaliths. These gradually developed from single chiefly burials of big-chiefs to local territorial cult places for ancestor worship and burial places of chiefly lineages that were descended from the ritual ancestors (the first 'big-chiefs').

3400–3200 BC. Transition between Early and Middle Neolithic

The transition from the Early Neolithic to the Middle Neolithic marks the continuation and culmination of processes begun in the preceding period. Over a few generations the construction of thousands of megaliths (in the latest phase they were virtual stone houses) took place at the same time as impressive territorial causewayed camps (central places) for inter-clan activities were constructed. We are dealing here with a specific territorial pattern of chiefdom organisation, which was paralleled in other areas of western Europe and which has been elegantly interpreted by Colin Renfrew (1973). In Denmark and southern Scandinavia the evidence displays basically the same features (Andersen 1981, Löfvig 1980, Madsen 1982, Persson 1979). At the local level megaliths served common functions as ritual central places for ancestor worship and burial places of chiefly lineages.[7] Wider inter-clan activities at a regional level, however, were carried out at central places—including feasting and ritual and probably marriage alliances between chiefly lineages, the planning of common agricultural activities, exchange and redistribution of food surpluses, and settlement of inter-clan hostilities.

The 'seasonal' function of communal and territorial central places conforms well with a dispersed settlement pattern of extended families in a forest environment who based their existence on intensive slash-and-burn agriculture. Small family groups lived in U-shaped huts, although the so-called long houses, now interpreted as barrows, have not been finally disposed of. Lakes, inland waters and the sea served as communication lines and are reflected in the clustering of settlements close to main watercourses.

The economic basis of these territorial chiefdoms lay in the high productive potential of the former forest soils, which were exploited through intensive shifting cultivation on both forest and open land. Cereal samples reveal a very pure crop of wheat with few weeds (Jørgensen 1977), indicating efficient cultivation and crop rotation with long periods of fallow, suitable for grazing cattle (Higham 1969). Annual weeds indicate repeated cultivation on the same fields over several years.

The regional diversity of basic and scarce resources—amber and flint—stimulated inter-regional and international exchange, channelling copper axes from Central-eastern Europe and new religious ideas—megaliths—from western Europe back to Scandinavia.

The monopolisation of valuable prestige items and the mobilisation of surplus production for ritual and feasting was the basis of local alliance networks. At the top, amber, copper and battle axes circulated, while the polished thin-butted flint axe was the common medium of exchange. Thus, in northern Zealand, the numerical relationship between battle axes, megaliths and polished flint axes is 31:561:2,439, indicating the exclusive nature of prestige items. The articulation of these factors at local and regional levels gave rise to the formation of the first chiefdoms in the prehistory of northern Europe in the late fourth millennium.

3200–2800 BC. Middle Neolithic A; 2800–2300 BC. Middle Neolithic B

The 3200–2800 BC period witnessed the gradual disintegration of territorial chiefdoms, which is reflected in ritual, material culture, settlement patterns and exchange systems. This chain of events was due to a complex interaction of ecological and economic factors that reached a threshold first of all within the settled areas of the TRB culture.

Within the economy, cattle held an increasingly dominant position, pigs were reduced in number, while barley, less demanding with respect to soil, gradually replaced wheat (Madsen 1982, figure 17), apparently as an adaptation to a open, degraded environment with increasing population and settlement clustering. This could be explained by a decline in cereal production, leading to a heavier stress on meat production and a gradually changed preference for light soils and open forest which could be transformed easily to grassland. Areas that had been degraded from long cultivation were gradually left, and an increased exploitation of maritime resources and hunting to balance diminishing agricultural yields is reflected in the appearance of a specialised toolkit of maritime hunters—the Pitted Ware culture which originated in Norway and Sweden. Here the decline of agricultural production was much more significant, as is reflected in the pollen diagrams (Berglund 1969). Hunting replaced agriculture as the dominant subsistence strategy in marginal areas (e.g., Welinder 1975). This hunting-agricultural economy with a highly specialised and differentiated toolkit for both hunting and woodworking co-existed with the traditional agricultural communities for several centuries and was gradually acculturated during the 2800–2400 period (Welinder 1977–1978).

Thus it seems that overall agricultural production in Scandinavia declined during this period. At the local level this made the chiefly mobilisation of surplus production for feasting and alliances more critical, as it demanded an increasing share of a decreasing production. These contradictions between the social and the economic systems probably triggered intensified production, for example shorter fallow periods, which resulted in the degradation of soil and imposed new constraints on the social system.

In the long run, competition for land and increased warfare would be a probable result of this development (Vayda 1961), leading to a reduction of inter-tribal alliances and exchange. Chiefly communal activities ceased. The final disintegration of the systems occurred when the contradictions between the economy and the social system led to a

break-up of the settlement pattern and of the territorial framework of chiefdom organisation. This occurred in Jutland with the sudden, rapid expansion of small pastoral family groups of segmentary tribes—the Battle Axe culture—on to the light soils of central Jutland around 2800 BC. In southern Scandinavia the settlement pattern largely remained intact, but the new ritual system and part of its social and economic basis was adopted.

In the archaeological record, the gradual disintegration of chiefdom organisation is reflected by a decline in the building of megaliths, a gradual decrease of communal ritual and use of votive offerings and a decline in the production of fine pottery for ritual and funerals that was replaced by simple domestic pottery. Small offerings of flint axes at megaliths replaced former ritual practices. Also cause-wayed camps disappeared, while at the same time settlements became larger. Inter-regional exchange ceased. This is reflected in regional ceramic groups and the fact that long-distance exchange of copper and amber came to an end at an early date. The crucial point was reached with the disintegration of the territorial organisation of the settlement system in Jutland and the rapid expansion into a new environment around 2800 BC that released the potential of pastoral elements that had gradually developed during the 3200–2800 period. But it cannot be excluded that European migrations played a role, spreading the innovations of the secondary products revolution (Sherratt 1981: figure 10.16, Stage II).

The Battle Axe culture, characterised by single burials of both men and women in small local lineage or family mounds made of grass and heath turf, reflects the reversion of a chiefly territorial clan organisation into a segmentary organisation suited to predatory expansion (Sahlins 1961).

The uncontrolled production of battle axes (each local lineage controlled by its own chief or big-man) reflects local competition and the lack of higher levels of social integration. Thus after the expansion stage, closed local exchange cycles developed, and these are reflected in the archaeological ceramics.

A massive, permanent opening of the landscape took place on the light soils of central Jutland and north-western Europe, creating extensive permanent pastures dominated by heathland. Wheels and wagons were introduced for the first time, reflecting the communication potential of this new environment (Rostholm 1977, Sherratt 1981: figure 10.9). The economy was probably based on cattle (meat and milk), sheep (wool production), ploughing, and some cereal growing (barley). The widely dispersed settlement pattern of small family groups clustered along ecological boundaries—for example, heavy, hilly moraine and flat sandy soils—made possible the exploitation of both environments. But extensive sandy areas were also colonised. During the following 200–300 years, local cycles of expansion and regression, warfare and alliances, in a delicate environment with a local ecological threshold, kept the system in a state of evolutionary flux or equilibrium.

2300–1900 BC. Late Neolithic; 1900–500 BC. Bronze Age

The 2300–1800 BC period saw an enormous expansion of open land with the formation of permanent pastures throughout southern Scandinavia, which reflected a renewed spread of a pastoral economy that extended into marginal areas of former hunters and fishers in central Scandinavia. The change in settlement pattern and expansion onto light

soils allowed increased surplus production for increased inter-regional exchange, and this was reflected in the spread of a new elaborate flint technology and the general use of flint daggers as prestige items. Inter-regional exchange of flint developed and by the end of the period bronze objects from Central Europe were entering the Scandinavian exchange systems.

With respect to ritual and social structure, individual burials in stone cists or small mounds predominated. The enormous production and ritual consumption or hoarding of daggers probably reflects a competitive big-man system of segmentary tribal groups without higher chiefly levels of integration since monopolisation of production and prestige items could not take place. With the development of long-distance exchange in bronze, a new situation was established, in which articulation of exchange and local production could lead to monopolisation of prestige items and increased hierarchisation. During the Early Bronze Age this led to the formation of a theocratic chiefdom structure based on the principles of a prestige goods system, and characterised by elaborate communal ritual and feasting, the construction of thousands of impressive tumuli of local chiefly lineages, increased craft production for ritual purposes and controls over prestige items for the display of rank and wealth. In the Early Bronze Age this evolved into a complicated system of status distinctions. Local chiefdoms were distributed along regional alliance networks, as for example in north-western Zealand, and these are reflected in the spatially hierarchical distribution of wealth and symbols of rank (Randsborg 1974, Levy 1979, Kristiansen 1981). Settlement hierarchies developed with central chiefly settlements controlling craft production, local exchange and ritual. Chiefs sat on wooden stools (preserved in oak coffins) and lived in large houses, some between 30 40 m long and 6–8 m wide. The culmination of this type of chiefdom organisation was reached at 1500–1200 BC and 800–650 BC.

With the advent of the Late Bronze Age at about 1000 BC changes in burial rites and in status display indicate a temporary crisis, in part due to decreasing supplies of metal (Kristiansen 1978). Agricultural production was intensified, and competition for alliance and exchange increased, resulting in more elaborate communal ritual and votive offerings of prestige items to reinforce chiefly organisation and to maintain alliances and supplies of metal. The display of personal wealth in burials, however, was heavily reduced, and tumuli-building came to an end. Increasing warfare and continuous ecological degradation led to settlement clustering, and this imposed new constraints on the economy.

Increasing contradictions between economic conditions of production and the reproduction of social organisation caused a break-up of the settlement system in the transition to the Iron Age. Settlements expanded into former unsettled areas of heavy soils (Kristiansen 1978, 1980), followed by the collapse of chiefly organisation and of long-distance exchange. A more egalitarian social system developed, organised in autonomous local settlement units of fenced villages. Social and economic relations were based on the ownership of land divided into permanent fields. The elementary tribal structures of social reproduction no longer dominated the organisation of production.

Regional and local systems

Production-reproduction cycles

The long-term production-reproduction cycles described above are summarised in Figure 4.7. Naturally this figure represents an abstraction, summarising the main trends. These are made up of numerous small local cycles whose dominant trends constitute a regional cycle. Several regional cycles may constitute dominant inter-regional or 'global' cycles, as shown in Figure 4.7. This can be illustrated on a small scale (Figure 4.8), showing the articulation of local cycles in north-western Zealand from the Early Neolithic to the Late Bronze Age, indicating changes of settlement density but not their magnitude. The left and right sides are inversions of each other, and three main types of regression and expansion cycles have been classified.

It can be seen that the dominant trend of local cycles creates a regional cycle corresponding quite well to Figure 4.7. The Early Neolithic represents a climax

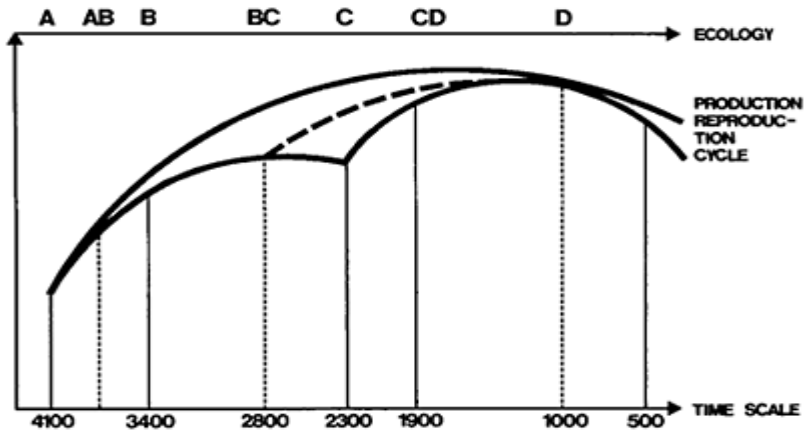


Figure 4.7 Production-reproduction cycle of northern Europe, 4100–500 BC. A: Slash-and-burn agriculture of small plots for cereal-growing, hoe agriculture, and leaf-foddering of stall-fed cattle. B: 'Landnam'—opening of the forest. Free-grazing cattle and pastures, ard agriculture. C: Second landnam, in Jutland 2800 BC, in southern Scandinavia 2400–1900 BC; significant reduction of forest and the

formation of extensive permanent pastures and heath areas; secondary-oak mixed forest and expansion of birch. D: Intensified decimation of secondary forest, expansion of pasture; third landnam in central and southern Scandinavia

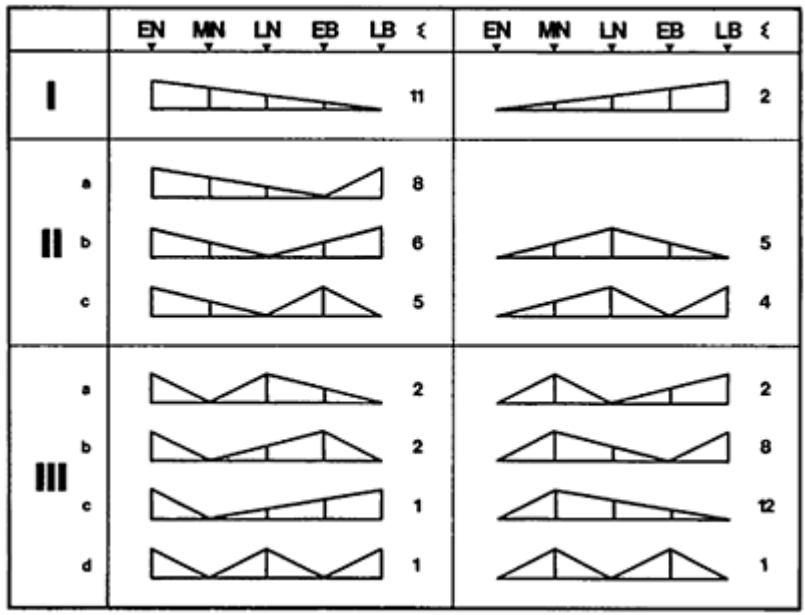


Figure 4.8 Local cycles of settlement increase/decrease in north-western Zealand 4000–500 BC. The areal units are parishes

Source: based on Mathiassen 1959: table VII

period in the area (34 cases), just as settlement expansion from the EN to the MN is strong (34 cases). The MN displays a maximum in 23 cases. Intensification during the MN and expansion from the MN to the LN, however, is rare (11 and 6 cases), and the LN-EB represent periods of stabilisation with rather few maxima and few cases of increased settlement density from LN to EB. The LB, however, was a period of increased settlement density and internal expansion. Settlement density increases from EB to LB in 21 cases, and the LB displays a settlement maximum in 32 cases.

Thus, the cycle of north-western Zealand corresponds to the main cycles in Figure 4.7 with the exception of an intensification in LB. It exemplifies the complicated spatial and

temporal relations between production-reproduction cycles that led to the formation of dominant long-term cycles.

Returning once again to Figure 4.7, a few general points of explanation and clarification should be made. The gradual change in economy and ecology during the 4000–500 BC period displays a general evolutionary trend of economic intensification that created basic differences in the economic conditions of social organisation. This implies that the territorial chiefdoms of the Early Neolithic period were basically different from the theocratic-prestige goods chiefdoms of the Bronze Age. The first type originated from a dispersed settlement pattern of extended families, who practised slash-and-burn agriculture on good heavy soils in a forest environment. They were linked together in a territorial organisation of local and regional central places, the ritual framework for the periodic execution of common economic tasks (such as cutting of forests, building of megaliths) and for the maintenance of inter-regional exchange. Members of a chiefly lineage were seen to be the descendants of founding ancestors who intervened on their behalf with the whole community. This chiefly control was simply an aspect of the ritualised extension of the communal lineage structure.

The theocratic chiefdoms of the Bronze Age, on the other hand, originated from a competitive segmentary tribal system of economically autonomous settlement units and lineages based on a pastoral economy in an open environment. Hierarchisation was therefore triggered primarily by the monopolisation of long-distance exchange networks that is reflected locally by clusterings of rich burials and settlements along important communications lines. However, population density and the distribution of wealth generally reflect the productive potential of larger areas (Randsborg 1974, Kristiansen 1978). Warfare was a prominent feature of this competitive and male-dominated system. An elaborate religious system, separated from the communal lineage structure, had evolved. Chiefly control was maintained partly by an increased monopoly of ritual functions, as is reflected in rock carvings and bronze figurines. Priestly functions were therefore an extension and mystification of chiefly powers that were based, in reality, on the political monopolisation of production, alliances and long-distance exchange.

On an evolutionary scale of tribal variation, the two systems probably represent contrasting types of tribal hierarchies with many parallels in the ethnographic literature. With respect to the territorial clans of the EN, striking parallels are found in New Guinea, technologically, in terms of different stages of shifting cultivation and with respect to relations between ritual, local production and the employment of axes and prestige items in alliance and local exchange (Clarke 1966, Højlund 1979, Bulmer 1960, Liep n.d.). On an evolutionary scale, New Guinea should probably be placed in the ‘decline’ period of territorial chiefdoms, which is characterised by intensified shifting cultivation, inflation of local exchange in axes, for example, and little or no chiefly monopolisation of exchange.

The theocratic chiefdoms of the Bronze Age, based mainly on long-distance exchange, should be compared rather with Polynesian and Melanesian chiefdoms, where the monopolisation of scarce valuables seems to have been of prime importance in opposition to ecological diversification, as was originally suggested (Brunton, 1975, Earle 1977).

It may be suggested that these variants of a tribal hierarchy represent potentially different evolutionary trajectories. In a temperate habitat, however, the successive transformation of the environment leads to a degradation in the economic conditions of

production, which cannot be transcended by a tribal mode of production. Thus the development cycles summarised in Figure 4.7 seem to characterise a wider pattern to be found in temperate Europe (Sherratt 1981). In some areas the regional cycles were shorter, for example, in England (Bradley 1978); in other regions they were longer, for example, in southern Scandinavia, with the exception of Jutland, and were dependent on the overall productivity of the region and its articulation with other regional systems.

The very long period of decline and subsequent stagnation or flux between approximately 3200 and 1900 BC is another phenomenon that calls for explanation. It seems to reflect a period of change from approximately 2400 BC toward a pastoral economy on light soils in an open environment, which raised the overall productivity of the region. It corresponds with a similar trend in European prehistory (Sherratt 1981) that is characterised by closed regional systems that are linked together with the secondary spread and development of metallurgy toward the end of the period. This stresses the importance of interregional exchange and the monopolisation of scarce and valuable resources as an important precondition of stratification. These three stages of tribal development, as reflected in settlement patterns, are summarised in Figure 4.9.

Although economic constraints imposed by the transformation of the environment quite evidently created barriers to the functioning of the social system, and thus seem to have determined both the decline of EN territorial chiefdoms and BA theocratic chiefdoms, it is worth reflecting on the fact that culmination periods in both cases correspond to periods of international exchange, making

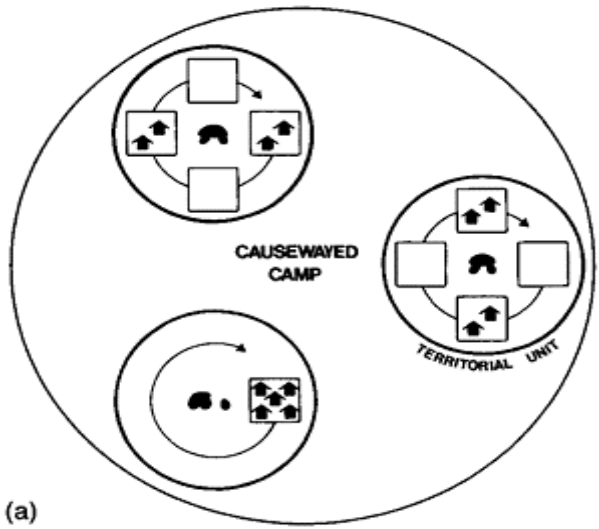


Figure 4.9 Settlement types. a) The Megalithic phase of slash-and-burn cultivation, megaliths and causewayed camps functioning as seasonal central places at local and regional levels,

dispersed settlement in forest environment. b) The Late Neolithic phase of segmentary pastoral groups with a pastoral economy in an open environment. Barrows of local families and lineages close to settlement, dense settlement pattern with no central places. c) The Bronze Age, showing a redistributive settlement system with a pastoral economy in an open environment, settlement hierarchisation based on permanent settlements

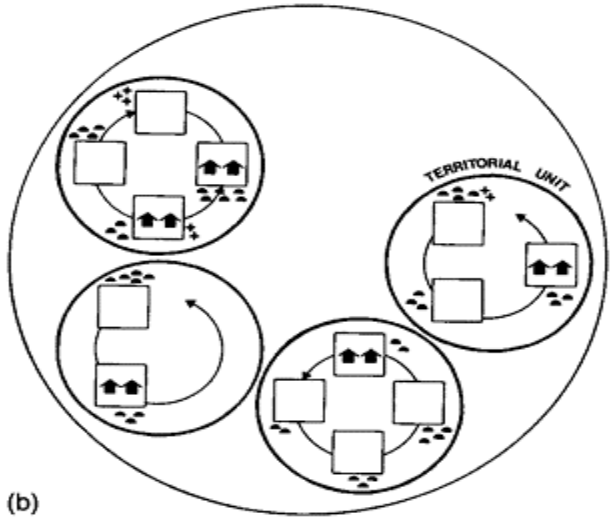
Note: a) to c) presuppose a gradual cyclic movement of settlement sites within local territories

Source: b) and c) after Thrane 1980

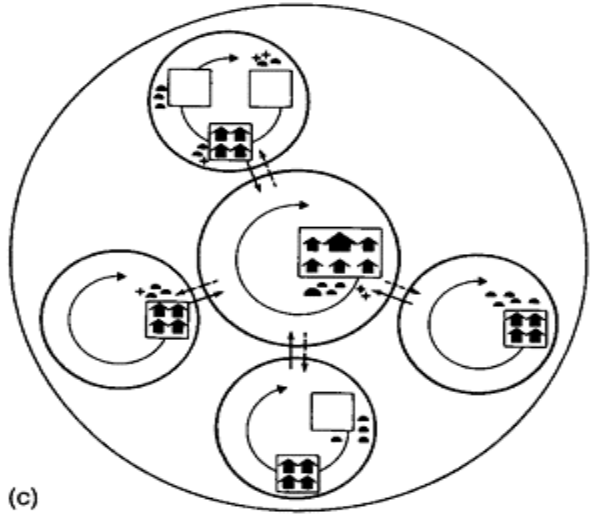
possible an increased monopolisation of valuables. Also, in both cases the decline of chiefdom organisation corresponds with a decline in long-distance exchange networks.[8] This places the problem of determining the causes of evolution and devolution in a wider spatial context of interacting systems, which I shall try to exemplify very briefly in the final section (for a more extensive analysis, see Kristiansen 1978, 1981).

Regional dynamics: the Nordic Bronze Age

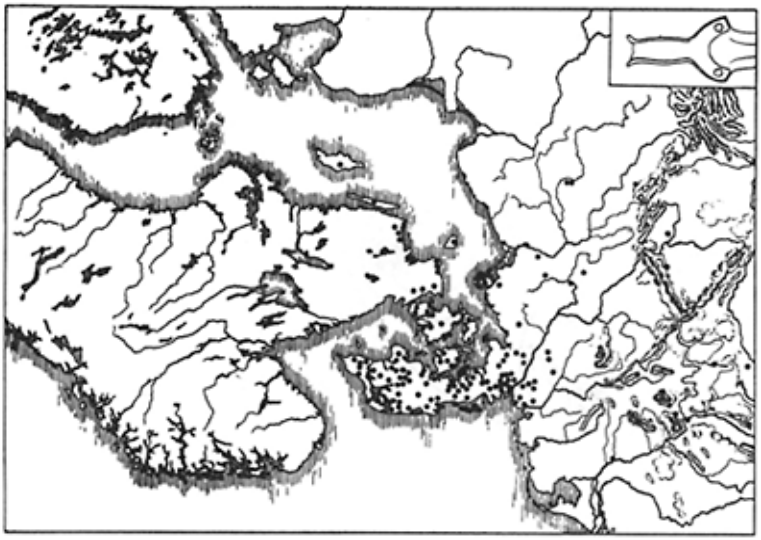
Maps 4.3a–d show the geographical expansion of the Nordic Bronze Age over a thousand years, as reflected in the distribution of Nordic bronzes.



(b)



(c)

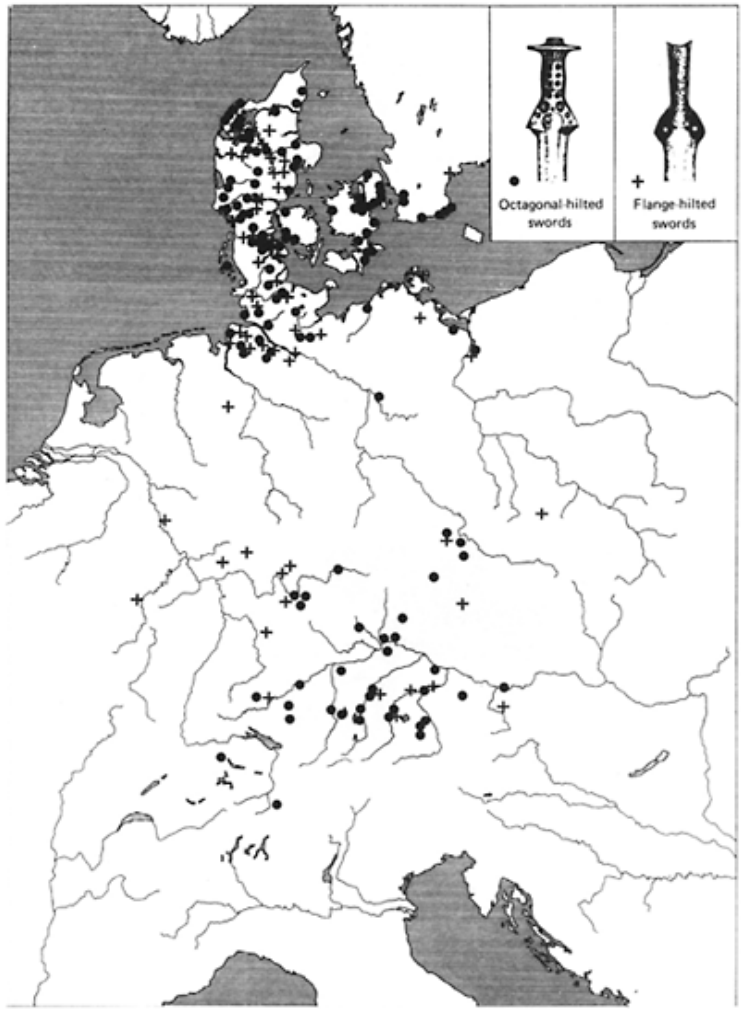


Map 4.3 The expansion of the Nordic Bronze Age culture from periods 2 to 5 based on flange-hilted swords (Early Bronze Age) and Nordic hoards (Late Bronze Age)

Source: after Sprockhoff 1931, 1937

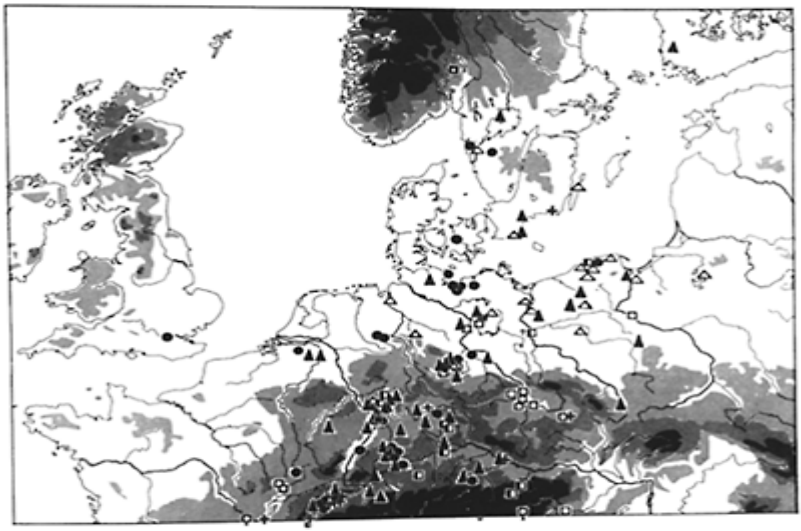
Traditionally this expansion has been interpreted as a cultural and ethnic expansion. In the following paragraphs I shall try to explain these phenomena as reflections of variations in the consumption of prestige goods based on variations in exchange and local economic conditions of reproduction. Let us first consider exchange and consumption.

The eastward expansion of the Nordic BA, succeeded by retraction in western Scandinavia, can be closely linked to changes in the European—Scandinavian exchange networks in the Early Bronze Age and the Late Bronze Age (Map 4.4 and Map 4.5).



Map 4.4 The distribution of imported swords or imitations of imports during period 2 of the Early Bronze Age

Source: after Struve 1971: table 26



Map 4.5 The distribution of imported swords or imitations of imports during period 5 of the Late Bronze Age

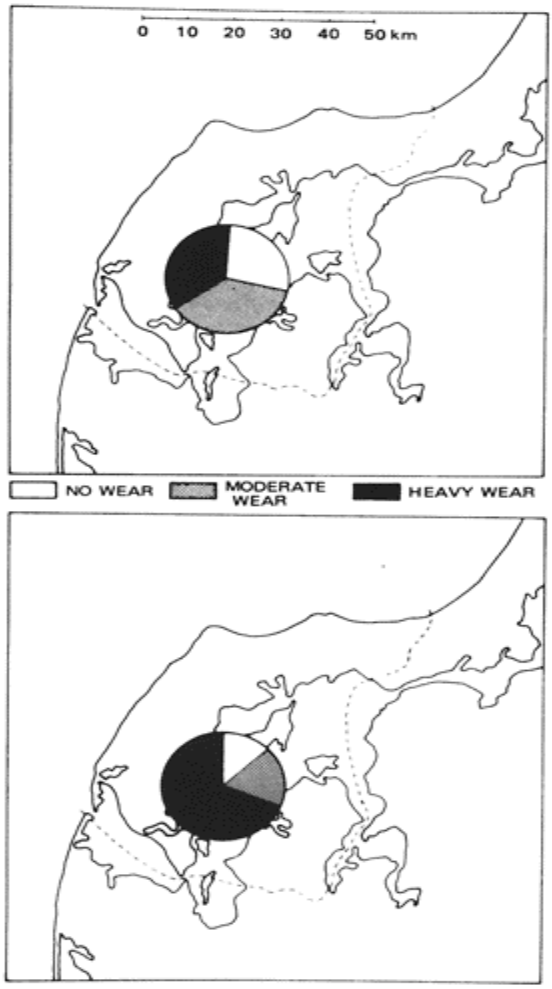
Source: after Thrane 1975: figure 120

The general eastward expansion of both consumption and exchange networks presented here can be exemplified in a local area in north-western Jutland through an analysis of the circulation time of prestige goods.

Swords were classified according to degree of wear—that is, circulation time. If we apply this analysis in one of the central regions in north-western Jutland we get the following picture (see Map 4.6)—from period 2 to 3 a significant increase in heavily worn bronzes occurs, followed by a significant decrease in consumption in period 4. Prestige goods are now too few and rare to deposit in burials or hoards due to a lack of bronze. This development is accompanied by settlement concentrations, as seen in Map 4.7.

The development in this local area, however, exemplifies the development of western Scandinavia from the Early to the Late Bronze Age, which reflects an economic—ecological crisis of the Bronze Age settlements on the light soils of north-western Europe. Production for exchange to acquire bronze triggered ecological over-exploitation, which resulted in a general economic crisis. The flow of bronze was reduced proportionally, and a retreat from the most marginal land was followed by settlement concentrations. This is reflected in pollen diagrams that show the gradual expansion of heath areas.

In eastern Scandinavia, however, an opposite development took place. Settlements expanded into marginal lands, and for a period of some hundred

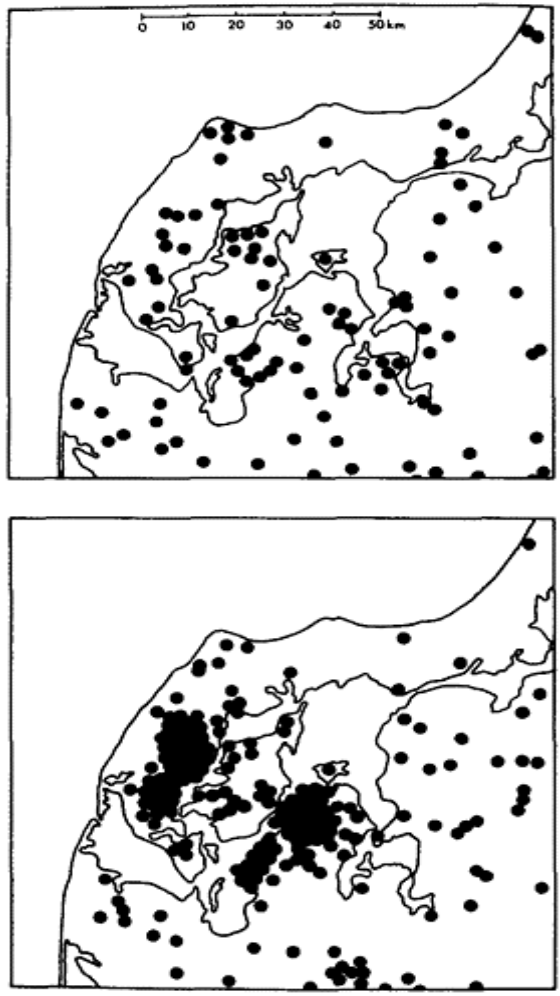


Map 4.6 Variations in the degree of wear on full-hilted swords in period 2 (25 observations) and period 3 (26 observations) in the Early Bronze Age in the 'Thy' region in north-western Jutland

Source: after Kristiansen 1978

years this led to new lines of exchange becoming established, channelling flows of goods and people, with the goods being displayed in extensive consumption. Only the central part of southern Scandinavia remained stable, in respect to economy, exchange and consumption, due to the high productive potential of this area.

Thus the decline in western Scandinavia was counterbalanced by an economic expansion in the eastern region. Only the core area of southern Scandinavia-northern Germany was able to maintain its position throughout the period, partly because of its central position, but especially because of its high productive potential. The economic development of the Nordic Bronze



Map 4.7 The distribution of burials in periods 2 and 3 of the Early Bronze Age in the 'Thy' region in north-eastern Jutland
Source: after Randsborg 1973–4: figures 1 and 2

Age was thus centred around a western axis in the Early Bronze Age and around an eastern axis in the Late Bronze Age. When viewed in this perspective we may regard these local economic cycles as part of the reproduction of the larger Scandinavian system.

In terms of the productivity of the whole region, this probably remained stable throughout the whole period in question, but the reproductive process, responsible for regional expansions and regressions, exploited and exhausted different areas at different periods.

A balance between evolutionary—devolutionary processes could consequently be maintained throughout the Bronze Age. Gradually, however, contradictions built up on both local and regional levels, and these are reflected in increasing settlement concentrations, which were then dispersed at the transition to the Iron Age (Kristiansen 1978, 1980).

Conclusion

It has been demonstrated that a specific theoretical model of cyclical tribal transformation can be applied to temperate Europe from 4000 to 500 BC. Further, it has been shown that such long-term transformations can be explained as a function of the spatial and temporal distribution of production—reproduction cycles whose articulation may define local, regional or even 'global' systems. A regional system may eventually be composed of several local cycles of expansion and regression, as is exemplified by the Nordic Bronze Age. The balance between these opposing processes of evolution and devolution determines the course of development within the larger system.

It was further suggested that developments in tribal hierarchisation from 4000–500 BC were closely linked to such regional cycles—generating an Early Neolithic-Middle Neolithic cycle of territorial chiefdoms that was dependent upon slash-and-burn agriculture and a Late Neolithic-Bronze Age cycle of prestige good systems that was based on a pastoral economy. These two cycles of tribal transformations constitute a general evolutionary sequence of economic intensification and population increase, which at the transition to the Iron Age reached a point that would not allow the tribal cycle to continue or to be repeated.

Notes

1 In recent years intensive research has drastically changed and added to our understanding of the Neolithic period in southern Scandinavia, and my explanation of the Neolithic production—reproduction cycle owes much to this research, part of which is not yet published. I want to thank the following persons for referring me to recent evidence, and for allowing me to cite papers not yet published: Poul Otto Nielsen, National Museum, First Department; Torsten Madsen, Institute of Prehistoric Archaeology, University of Aarhus; Niels Andersen, Prehistoric Museum, Moesgård, Aarhus; Henrik Tauber, National Museum, Eighth Department; Jørgen Troels-Smith, National Museum, Eighth Department, Bent Aaby, Geological Survey of Denmark, and Andrew Sherratt, Oxford University. For discussions and help on this chapter, I am grateful to my wife Lotte Hedeager. Figures 4.1, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11 were drawn by Catherina Oxen.

It has not been possible to reference the vast literature on the Neolithic and the Bronze Age on which this chapter is based. I will therefore refer to a selection of recent Danish publications that cover the main topics. A re-analysis of stylistic groups in Neolithic TRB pottery has been carried out by Ebbesen (1975, 1978), Andersen and Madsen (1977), and Gebauer (1978). Flint axes have been classified by Nielsen (1977a, 1977b) and Højlund (1973–1974), settlements by Skaarup (1973) and Davidsen (1978), and causewayed camps

in Andersen (1973–1974, 1981). Megalithic ritual has been summarised in Daniel and Kjaerum (1973) and presented in detail by Strömberg (1971), with the most recent synthesis of pre-megalithic burial types in Madsen (1979). A classification of megaliths is found in Aner (1963). We are still lacking any up-to-date analysis of the Single Grave culture in Denmark in contrast to Sweden (Malmer 1962). Recent discussions have appeared in Lomborg (1975), Davidsen (1975), and Malmros (1979). Also the Pitted Ware culture was recently summarised in Nielsen (1979). The standard work on the Late Neolithic is still Lomborg (1973), with Jensen (1972) on settlements. With respect to the Bronze Age, see the bibliography in Kristiansen (1981), with the addition of recent research papers in Thrane (1980). Concerning vegetational development in southern Scandinavia, the standard summary is still Berglund (1969), with important additions in Andersen (1976), Göransson (1977), Welinder (1974), and Mikkelsen and Høeg (1979). Much work has been carried out in pollen analysis in recent years in all Scandinavian countries, but unfortunately most of the Danish research is still unpublished. In general the reader will find his or her own way to recent literature in *Nordic Archaeological Abstracts.*

2 It should be added that much recent research is about to change this situation. This is reflected in Britain in several British Archaeological Reports publications (e.g., in Barrett and Bradley 1980), in Scandinavia in Kristiansen 1984.

3 North-western Zealand was intensively surveyed by field walking in the years 1948–1956 as part of a major research project carried out by the National Museum and published in 1959 (Mathiassen 1959). The aim was to achieve a representative record of all types of archaeological data in a typical East Danish environment. A similar project had earlier been carried out in a typical West Danish environment, and it was published in 1948 (Mathiassen 1948). In north-western Zealand, approximately 2,700 settlements, 3,400 megalith barrows and burials, 240 hoards, and 10,000 single finds were recorded. The number of objects totalled 50,000.

The research area covers 1,690km^2 of late glacial moraine, mainly clay with scattered areas of more sandy clay. Clay dominated soils amount to 980km^2, sandy soils with some clay 435km^2, and moores (former lakes) more than 200km^2. The area is rather hilly and with its long coastline and inland lakes, it has attracted a dense settlement in all prehistoric periods.

A recent analysis of the impact of later surveys and excavations has confirmed that the main trends in the published data can be regarded as representative, with the exception of settlements in some areas (Thrane 1973). Neither this material nor that from Jutland has been utilised in any extensive settlement analysis, with the recent exception of Paludan-Müller (1978). With the aim of extracting some of the scientific potential of this vast amount of material, I began to computerise and analyse the raw data in 1979, primarily with the aim of testing the applicability of the land evaluations from 1688 and 1848 as a tool for settlement analysis within smaller regions compared to site catchment analysis of soil types.

In this chapter a few tentative, simple quantifications are presented, as the processing of data is not yet finished. It is presumed that the nature of the evidence is generally comparable from the EN to the LB, whereas the Iron Age marks a complete change in evidence. From EN to LB burials above the ground are common (megaliths-tumuli) in all periods, just as production of durable tools, weapons and ornaments of flint and bronze, makes burials, hoards and settlements easily recognisable and datable. I want to thank Bjarne Mortensen of the Niels Bohr Institute for carrying out the computer analyses.

4 In Mathiassen's terminology, the EN (period of thin-butted axes) composes what is today classified as EN BC to MN I, which dates from 3700 to 3200 BC.

5 Naturally the present number of monuments is far below the original total. As both megaliths and tumuli normally cluster in smaller groups, these extra monuments would probably fall

within the range of open land inferred in Figure 4.8. These figures, however, should be regarded as minimal ones.

6 The 'landnam' is very well documented since Iversen's pioneer work (1941), and it has been supported by experiment (Iversen 1973). It is not a synchronous phenomenon, but a clearance strategy that occurs repeatedly during several hundred years all over northern Europe - in some areas early, in others late. Evidence comparable to the Danish EN A—stall-fed cattle and small permanent fields—has been very well documented in Switzerland (TroelsSmith 1981, Guyan 1981).

7 The big dolmen and the passage graves should be regarded rather as the final deposition place of the bones of the deceased that had been through several ritual processes in wooden cult houses.

8 In the EN it should be noted that a corresponding decline seems to take place in the copper-producing areas of eastern Europe (e.g., Vulpe 1976: appendix 1).

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5
FROM STONE TO BRONZE

The evolution of social complexity in northern Europe, 2300–1200 BC

Kristian Kristiansen

The introduction of bronze in northern Europe in the late third millennium and the subsequent development of bronze technology in the beginning of the second millennium raises a basic question: Was bronze channelled into already existing social and economic networks, primarily replacing existing tools and status symbols made of flint, stone and other materials—or did it lead to the formation of more elaborate social and economic hierarchies? We are thus dealing with the implications of technological change. Earlier scholars, like Gordon Childe, regarded the introduction of bronze as one of the most decisive steps in the evolution of European society, allowing an upper class of metallurgists and chiefs to separate themselves from daily subsistence production, while trade in bronze transmitted new cultural information from the Near East to northern Europe (Childe 1957; also Coles 1982a).

Others, like Colin Renfrew and Andrew Sherratt, have stressed that neither bronze nor copper imply such a significant change. Metal tools were only slightly more effective and technically more demanding than Neolithic skills of flint, pottery and stone working, whose distribution already linked wide areas of Europe by primitive exchange networks (Renfrew 1973; Sherratt 1976).

But perhaps even more intriguing than this is the problem of explaining why bronze was adopted, especially in areas without copper and tin. Was it primarily for social or economic reasons? And if some developments really occurred with respect to social stratification and international exchange, was this actually caused by bronze alone, or should it rather be explained by internal demographic or economic factors? Such an internal framework has recently been given first priority as a precondition for the adoption and development of metallurgy (Renfrew 1973), in opposition to earlier scholars stressing external factors as the driving force (Childe 1957). We are thus dealing with the preconditions of technological change and the old question of internal versus external influence/the primacy of the social versus the economic. But before we confront these basic issues let us first present the cultural and chronological framework of our research area.

Chronological and cultural framework

The temporal sequence we shall be dealing with spans the period 2300–1200 BC. Culturally and chronologically it is made up of three main periods—the Late Neolithic or

dagger period (2300–1900 BC), the first period of the Bronze Age, EBA 1 (1900–1500 BC) and the second period of the Bronze Age, EBA 2 (1500–1200 BC) (Figure 5.1).[1]

The dagger period represents both continuation and innovation compared to the preceding period of the Single Grave or Battle Axe culture, which after the initial pan-European expansion had developed still more local cultural groups. However, a new expansion in Central and western Europe of bell-shaped beakers accompanied by the first metallurgy, simple copper daggers and highly specialised bow-and-arrow techniques, initiated a new and lasting period of international information exchange. Gradually, this new metallurgic tradition developed into highly stratified chiefdoms in certain nodal areas, based on the control of production and exchange in metalwork. The driving force in

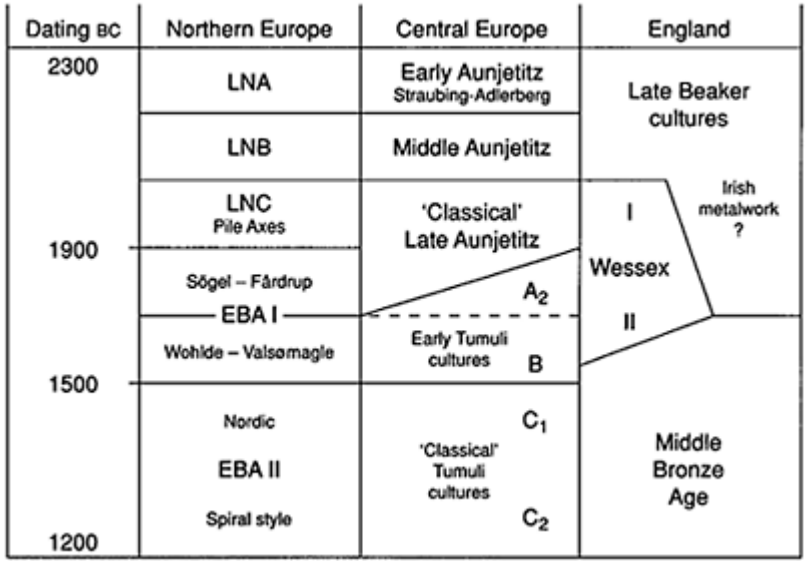


Figure 5.1 The major cultural and chronological sequences discussed

Note: the transition LNC to EBA I is now dated 1700 BC, the beginning of LNC/Classical Late Aunjetitz 1900 BC, and the end of EBA II 1300 BC

Source: based on Lomborg 1973: figure 87

this development was the Unetice culture in Central Europe (East Germany, Austria and western Czechoslovakia) with the Adlerberg and Straubing cultures in southern Germany as small local centres. In England the beaker tradition lived on, and in the Wessex culture it developed similar stratified chiefdoms at a later date. It was not until approximately 1700–1600 BC that these early metallurgic centres were replaced by a pan-European

tradition of metalwork based on abundant and widespread supplies of bronze (see Figure 5.1).

In northern Europe the concomitant adoption of the dagger as the dominant prestige object (instead of the battle axe) and the development of a new elaborate flint technology characterises the beginning of the *Late Neolithic period* around 2400–2300 BC. However, while the dagger was employed as prestige object, the old flint smiths took over its production by adopting a new technique. Through mass production flint daggers were spread all over northern Europe from a few source areas. The primary area of distribution was southern Scandinavia/northern Germany, but daggers were also distributed to the remote areas of northern Scandinavia, just as a few of them also occur in the Unetice culture of Central Europe. Five main types characterise the Late Neolithic period (Figure 5.2), while a late type continued into the Early Bronze Age. The major types are imitations of metal daggers. Thus flint technology

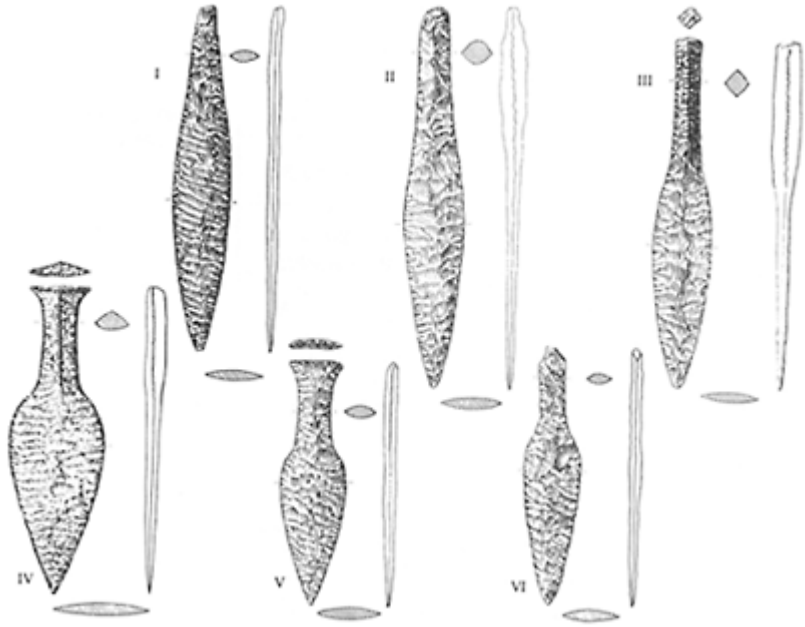


Figure 5.2 The six major types of flint daggers of the Late Neolithic in southern Scandinavia

Source: after Lomborg 1973

succeeded in competing with metallurgy throughout most of the Late Neolithic in northern Europe. When bronze prestige objects gradually took over this resulted in some last outstanding efforts from the flint smiths.

During the latest phase of the LN, bronze imports, especially of axes, became numerous and the first crude local imitations were produced, but with a very low alloying

of tin (approximately 2 per cent). These imports originated from the two dominant centres of metal production: the Late Unetice culture and the Anglo-Irish Bronze Age culture. The Unetice products which dominate are mainly found in the central parts of southern Scandinavia, while the Anglo-Irish products are mainly found in the western parts. All finds are from hoards, some of them impressive trading hoards (as Plate 5.1).

With respect to burial rites, however, there is no uniformity. In western Scandinavia, especially Jutland, the barrow tradition of the Single Grave culture continued, while in Zealand and southern Sweden big stone cists for collective burials

Plate 5.1 Hoard from Gallemose with ring ingots and local pile axes. The

function of the three other objects is unknown (photograph National Museum, Copenhagen)

dominated, under influence from western Europe. But also graves below ground-level without barrows or stone cists were common, just as were secondary burials in the old megaliths. Thus a variety of burial traditions was employed through-out the LN and EBA 1. The standard burial equipment was naturally the dagger, but also arrowheads and small bone pins imitating Unetice pins are common. In addition individual hoarding of flint daggers was widespread.

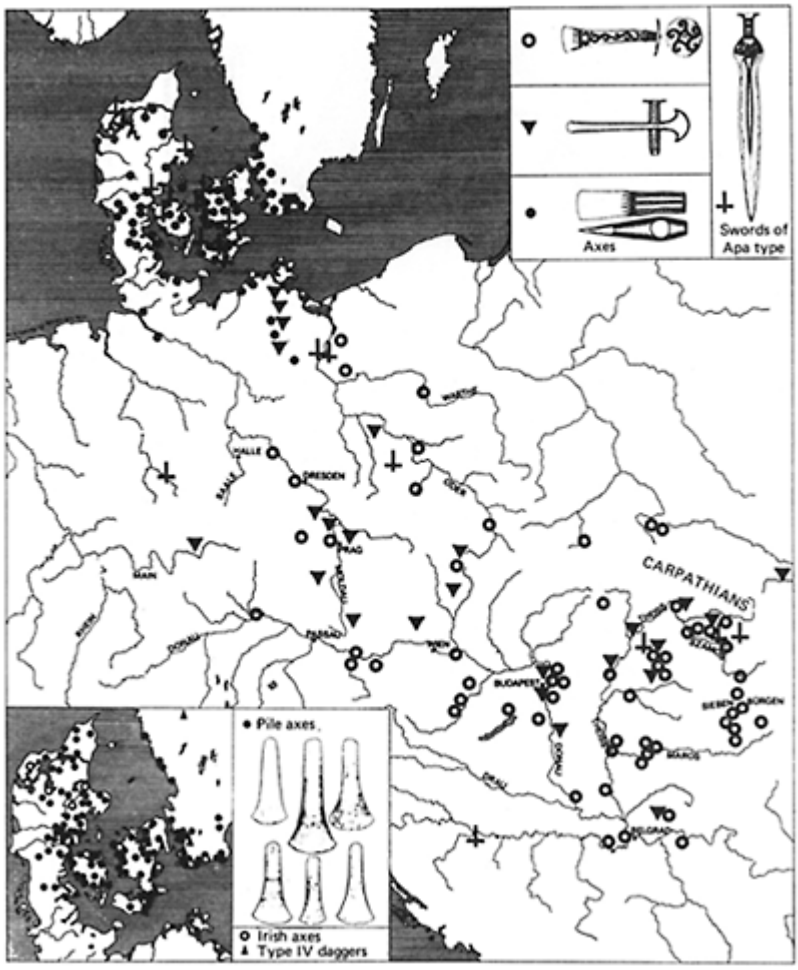
During the *first period of the Bronze Age* from 1700 to 1500 BC, the importation of bronzes increased, just as local production became more widespread. A stable alloying of tin around 8–10 per cent was achieved. During the early phase (the Søgel-Fårdrup phase) both importation and local production was confined to a small number of types, mainly daggers and axes. The bronze spearhead represented a new dominant weapon together with the short sword. Local production was dominated by massive shafthole axes, imitating the local working axes of stone and a few primitive daggers. Such axes, weighing up to 5 kg, represented a big investment of bronze. Quite clearly a stock of bronze was built up, which is reflected in the hoarding of such objects throughout EBA 1. Burial consumption was still too costly, just as the irregular supplies did not allow the development and maintenance of more skilled metallurgical craftsmanship.

In the later 'Wohlde-Valømagle' phase, the variety of bronze types increased somewhat. Long swords were imported for the first time just as local production was steadily developing. However, most objects were still hoarded and burial equipment confined to flint daggers or small objects of bronze. In the 'Søgel-Wohlde' group, however, bronzes were employed as burial equipment for the first time.

Throughout EBA 1 new centres of metal production developed and northern Europe was culturally divided between two international influence zones—that of the Carpathian Siebenburger cultures of south-east Europe (Map 5.1) and that of the Søgel-Wohlde culture of north-western Europe (Map 5.2). However, imports from south-western Europe still reached Scandinavia, especially axes.

By the end of EBA 1, these various cultural influences were moulded in the development of the original Nordic Bronze Age that signalled the beginning of EBA 2.

From *period 2* (1500–1200 BC) southern Scandinavia was culturally integrated in a common Nordic tradition of metallurgy based on rich supplies of bronze in combination with the development of an elaborate Nordic tradition in metalwork of unsurpassed mastery and beauty. A stock of bronze that allowed the maintenance of highly specialised metallurgic skills and regular depositions of metals in burials had been built up and big trade hoards were rare. A wide variety of metal objects was now produced, some of them formerly made of organic materials, and others completely new. The sword becomes the standard male weapon, just as elaborate female bronze ornaments appear for the first time. Monumental barrows are now employed all over Scandinavia as a

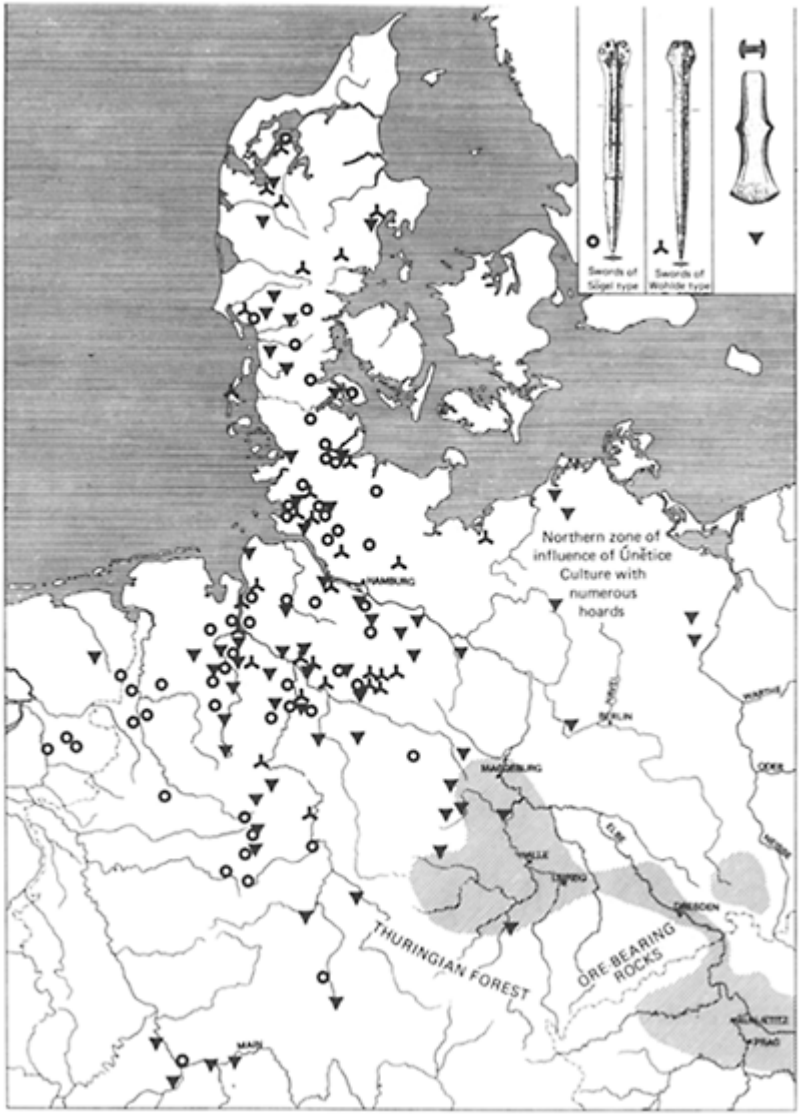


Map 5.1 The distribution of south-east European bronzes and local Nordic bronzes in period 1

Source: after Struve 1971: table 2

common burial type, as in the pan-European Tumuli culture, and prestige objects of bronze become standard burial equipment.

This represents a period of cultural integration and acculturation of wide areas in Europe, normally labelled the Tumuli culture. It was based on a highly increased production and distribution of copper, tin and bronze from many dispersed source areas which supported an extensive supply area. International alliances of exchange ranged thousands of kilometres transmitting ideological and cultural influences between the Mycenaean area, Central Europe and Scandinavia.



Map 5.2 The distribution of north-west European bronzes in period 1
Source: after Struve 1971: table 5

Processual framework

In the following I shall analyse the various social, economic and ideological components of the cultural and temporal sequence outlined above as a basis for interpretations and explanations.

Let us first consider the implications of bronze. If bronze led to the formation of new social and economic hierarchies we should expect that:

- specialisation becomes more differentiated and eventually linked to new status positions;
- exchange systems become more differentiated and far-reaching;
- warfare becomes more efficient and organised;
- new social positions are reflected in burials;
- ritual and religious organisation become more complex;
- settlement structure is differentiated.

Specialisation

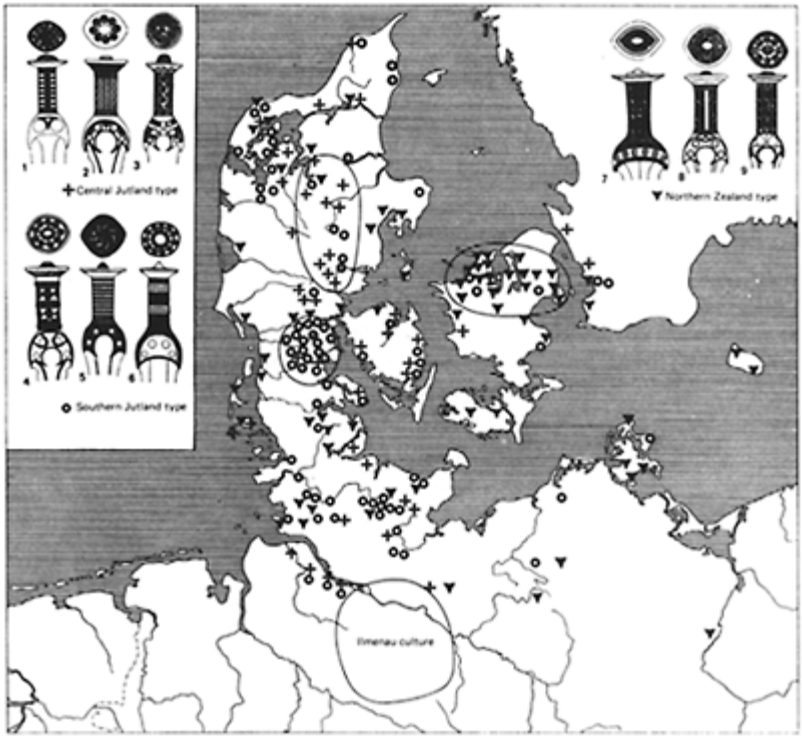
Since specialisation is relative to the organisation of society, I shall define it as any exclusive activity which a person or small group perform for long periods demanding economic support for their living from one or several settlements. Such activities might comprise anything from textile manufacturing, boat- and house-building to metallurgy. The decisive factor is not always the actual degree of specialisation but the range and impact of such activities on economic and social organisation. Thus specialisation is defined by social rather than technical means.

Since the Early Neolithic, flint technology had involved a number of specialist skills—flints were extracted by mining and worked and polished in a time-consuming process. The same is true of the Late Neolithic, which saw a new flourishing in flint-mining and superior technology combining polishing and flattening. On the other hand, this was no exclusive skill, and raw materials were available everywhere, although the flint-rich chalk layers in south-eastern and north-western Denmark clearly were the primary extracting areas. Settlement finds indicate that flint technology was generally mastered, although probably not everywhere at the level of the most exclusive pieces. Thus, although mining areas probably manufactured the masterpieces and held a favourable position in the exchange network, no monopoly of skills could really be achieved except by ritual or other means unknown to us.

Compared to flint, bronze technology was both more demanding and exclusive. First of all, access to bronze was limited and prevented most people from gaining knowledge of bronze-working. In order to develop and maintain professional skills, it would actually be necessary to put the work in the hands of as few people as possible as long as supplies were scarce. And after all bronze never really became abundant. Thus from late period 1 and early period 2, the explosive development of local metallurgy in southern Scandinavia can only be explained by highly developed specialist skills in combination with increased supplies. The repertoire and the technological mastery of Nordic metalwork indicate this, showing the employment and fitting of different techniques, for example, modelling, casting, hammering, chiselling of ornamentation, fitting of gold and amber. This is supported by the fact that we do not find evidence of bronze-casting on most settlement sites. But it has also to be admitted that very few settlement sites are excavated. However, analysis of prestige weapons and ornaments has made it possible to single out regional production centres and sometimes even the same hand in widely distributed pieces (Map 5.3). In comparison, the products of less specialised centres, for example, local Swedish and Norwegian imitations, are easily recognisable. This is

supported by a rare hoard from Smørumovre of a fresh production of 200 axes and spears evidently intended for distribution to a larger area. Thus the Bronze Age of northern Europe gives no support to the ethnographic models of metalwork (Rowlands 1971). They would apply better to iron technology (Nicolaisen 1962) or to local areas where simple bronze tools were commonly produced, at least in the Late Bronze Age.

Other areas of specialist skills were in wood-working. Here the wooden cups, the elegantly shaped folding stools (and war chariots?) and carvings on dagger sheets reveal a mastery not seen in the evidence of the Late Neolithic, although the material from this period is very scarce compared to the Bronze



Map 5.3 Workshops of full-hilted swords from period 2, as defined by Ottenjahn (1969)

Age. At the same time, pottery degenerates into astonishing primitivity, losing its former ritual and social functions.

Also textile manufacture developed a very high professional level and a variety of dressings in EBA 2, but here we lack comparative evidence from the earlier periods. An area of possible specialist skills unknown to us would be shipbuilding, so vitally important for trading expeditions, as reflected in rock carvings.

We may conclude, then, that a certain development in specialist skills from LN to EBA 2 can be observed, especially with respect to metallurgy and wood-working.[2]

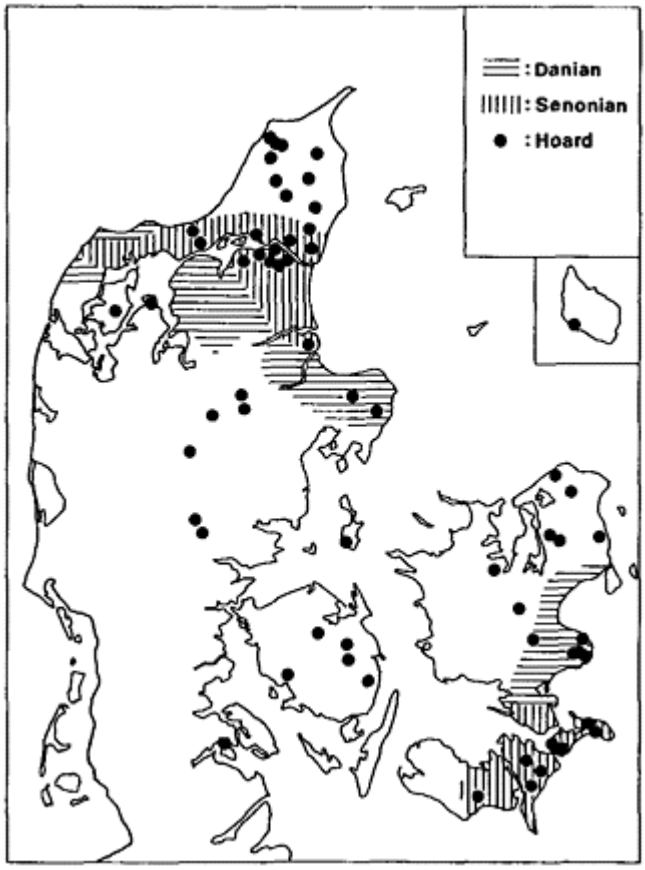
Exchange

'Exchange is the code through which status information is communicated', as stated by Goldman (1970). With this as our premise, we shall concentrate on the intensity and extent of exchange rather than its organisation, as the archaeological evidence is dominated by status items.

In terms of exchange, the Late Neolithic marks a significant change compared to the previous period, which was dominated by closed regional cycles of exchange. Inter-regional exchange in daggers and other flint tools now integrated most of Scandinavia into a common cultural tradition of identical weapons (daggers, spears) and tools (sickles, axes). Daggers were circulating along the Norwegian coast to the most remote areas, and in the Baltic we even find trader hoards in northern Sweden, several hundred kilometres north of the nearest agricultural settlement.

By overlaying a map of the flint-rich chalk layers in Denmark with the distribution of hoards and of daggers in general (Map 5.4) it becomes clear that they were produced and distributed from two major areas. The rapidly falling frequency with distance from resource areas indicates the reciprocal nature of exchange. Daggers probably circulated within the local alliance areas of common ritual and religious beliefs as reflected in local regional groups of burials. Early types were mainly distributed from north-western Jutland and they have their greatest density in western Scandinavia, whereas later types were mainly distributed from the south-east Danish area with greatest density in southern Scandinavia. However, trading expeditions took place over sea—to Norway, northern Germany and also up along the east Swedish coast. The intensive consumption in burials and hoards and the widespread distribution of daggers suggest both a high production and strong status competition with little chance of obtaining a monopoly. They also suggest the spread of common status systems.

There is no reason to believe that the earliest imported bronzes could not have been channelled through the same local networks as flint daggers. The same may even be true of the Anglo-Irish axes. The fact that the northern border of Aunjetitz hoards coincides with the southern border of Nordic flint daggers would seem to indicate different and partly incompatible exchange



Map 5.4 The flint-rich chalk layers of Danian and Senonian types and the distribution of hoards with flint daggers

Source: after Jensen 1982 and Lomborg 1973

systems. As long as importation remained at the level of finished products for restricted prestige circulation, this situation had no need to change.

Exchange, however, had to be organised in different ways if larger quantities were to be more constantly supplied—a precondition for local metallurgy. Stable alliances had to be established that linked northern Europe to the circulation of bronze, and this might imply the gradual adoption of new social and ideological ideas and beliefs. Second, part of the return was amber and fur, which had to be exchanged from source areas along the west coast of Jutland and central and northern Scandinavia,[3] and this demanded efficient interregional exchange (in the previous periods amber was mainly found in burials in Jutland with no further distribution).

The development stated above seems to have characterised LNC/EBA 1, and by EBA 2 southern Scandinavia had been linked to the common European bronze network, just as a common Nordic tradition of bronze production had developed. I doubt, however, if this new exchange system was substantially different from earlier ones. Probably, it was both more competitive and vulnerable as participation in the dominant alliance networks determined the potential for controlling the distribution of bronze, in opposition to flint that could be more widely obtained. We should consequently expect more conflict. Also a certain diversification of alliance networks can be observed, the dominant alliances taking place over longer distances. Marriage alliances were established between Zealand and northern Germany (Lüneburg, an important centre of metal production), cross-cutting several settlement areas and chiefdoms, in distance more than 200 kilometres. This is, for example, reflected in a complete female Lüneburg burial in south-eastern Zealand (Aner and Kersten 1970: no. 1269A), and later in a heavy Lüneburg impact on the development of female ornaments in Zealand. Such exchange networks imply a degree of organisation above the level of local settlement units (Map 5.5).

Thus, with respect to exchange systems, we see an increase in scale. However, the implications of this new situation were rather to be found in social organisation and in warfare.

Warfare

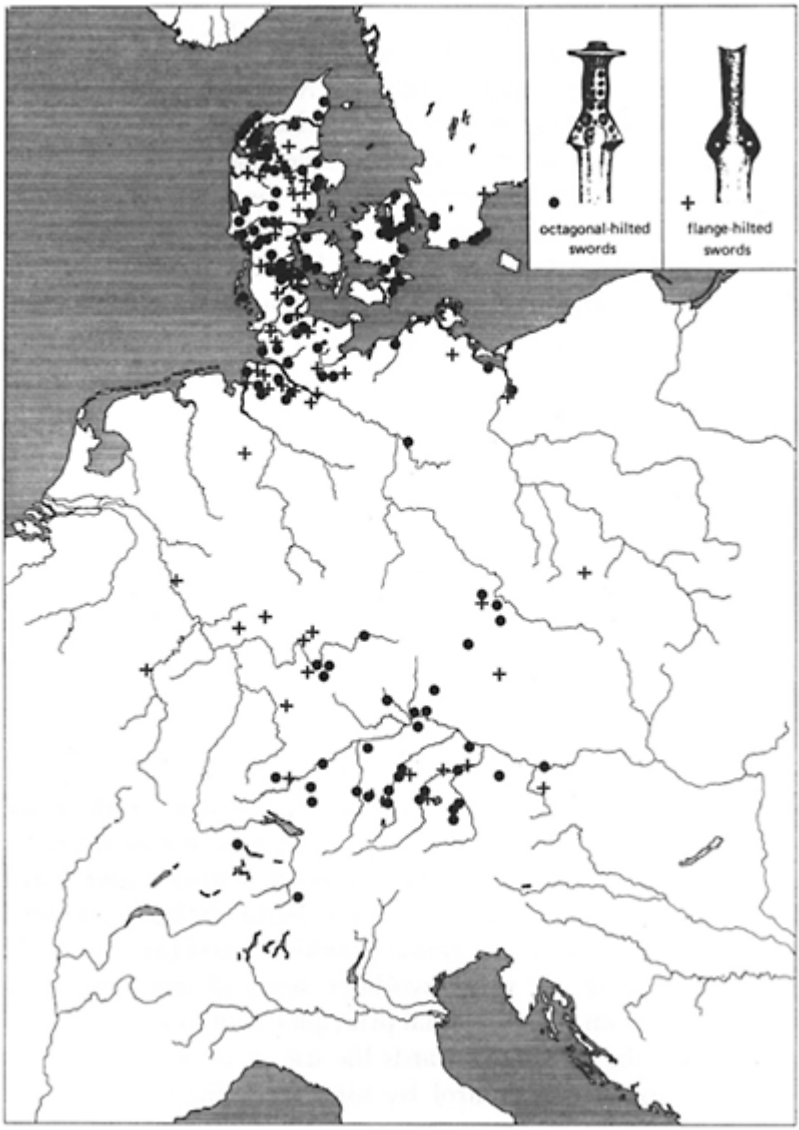
As long as no separate or permanent military organisation has developed, warfare and its organisation are intrinsically linked to social organisation in such a way that no distinction can be drawn between social, political or military behaviour. This is also reflected in the dominant position of certain weapons as status symbols in burials and hoards throughout the whole period. Consequently, I shall consider both warfare and social organisation.[4]

The effectiveness of weapons and the military organisation of their use determine the potential for exercising control, with organisation as the most decisive factor. Although one should distinguish between symbolic and actual control, we take as our point of departure that the actual military potential of control is decisive for the impact of indirect control—whether sustained by religious means, war games or other symbolic ways of directing social behaviour to conform to certain organisational principles. Our attention should therefore in the first place be directed towards the use of weapons and their technical development, spheres of control by force and, finally, the social organisation of warfare.

The LN is characterised by three weapons—bow and arrow, the spear and the dagger. Bow and arrow seem to have reached a high level of perfection, employing wrist protection and new efficient types of arrowheads. Probably the most efficient weapon in close combat was the spear, as today the bayonet. However, spearheads of flint were most probably for throwing, giving weight to the spear, whereas it would break in hand-to-hand fighting. The flint dagger could only have had little practical importance.

Axes were apparently not employed in fighting, but served primarily practical purposes for cutting trees and wood-working, although they still retained some of their symbolic functions in ritual.

EBA 1 sees two important innovations: the bronze lance and the bronze sword. The bronze lance increased the danger and the efficiency of close



Map 5.5 The distribution of full-hilted octagonal swords and flange-hilted swords of Central European/Aegean influence

Source: after Struve 1971, table 26

combat considerably, just as the sword introduced a new type of efficient hand-to-hand fighting. Thus lance and long sword soon became the dominant weapons.

Functionally, bow and arrow serve other purposes than lance and sword. They represent action at a distance together with the throwing spear. This could then be followed up by lance and sword in close combat if necessary. War axes were also employed, but their prime function was ritual. Thus we witness a technical development in the performance of military close combat, also reflected in the development of personal defence weapons such as shield and war helmet (although not evidenced until the late Bronze Age). Although war chariots are pictured on rock carvings, they would probably not have had any significance, just as riding is not testified either. But they reflect a new aristocratic warrior ideology linked to the spread of the long sword.

The actual use of weapons and the organisation of warfare is naturally a difficult question. A regular occurrence of one or two arrowheads in burials throughout the period would seem to indicate killing in warfare in opposition to 5–10 arrowheads reflecting a quiver. However, from period 1 we have the possibility of observing actual traces of sharpening of spears and swords of bronze due to their use in warfare. This shows that most swords in period EBA 2 bear clear evidence of actual use—points are sharpened and the upper part of the sword blade below the hilt is normally heavily sharpened to repair injuries caused by warding off (Figure 5.3). Thus warfare and war games were consistent features of the mature Bronze Age.

If we examine the dominant weapons used in burial equipment, we get a further idea of the symbolic importance attached to the various aspects of warfare. Thus during the LN bow and arrow often accompanied the dead. In period 1, however, the spear becomes the most important weapon in burials in some areas, together with short daggers and war axes. But from period 2 spears disappear and the long sword is dominant, often in combination with mostly ritual war axes. Naturally, regional variations can be found, but in general this development seems to reflect a temporal sequence of military innovations, and the social and ritual importance attached to them. In actual close combat, spear and lance were probably the most important, but prestige was clearly attached to sword-fighting. Thus it seems that warfare was determined not only by military considerations but also by social and ritual rules of combat—a sword fight representing the most important element in period 2 and onwards.

Military efficiency is primarily determined by organisation and tactics (and attack of course), but the archaeological evidence only gives slight hints of this. Was combat performed by small or big war parties or by selected sword fighters? Probably a combination depending on the context. Some weapon hoards give an indication that a group of sword fighters of 6–7 was maximum, and the same is true of spear fighters. However, the number of men without prestige weapons, equipped with bow and arrow and a lance with a bone spearhead cannot be estimated. As defence works do not occur, we must think in terms of rather small warbands raiding trading expeditions or settlements beyond their own alliance network, capturing slaves, cattle, and so on. Territorial control of larger areas extending beyond alliance networks is unlikely. The prime function of raids is to increase one's own wealth and productive basis (more cattle and manpower). However, internal control and influence was rather determined by

alliances and supported by prestige gained in warfare with neighbouring chiefdoms and on trading expeditions. This secured access

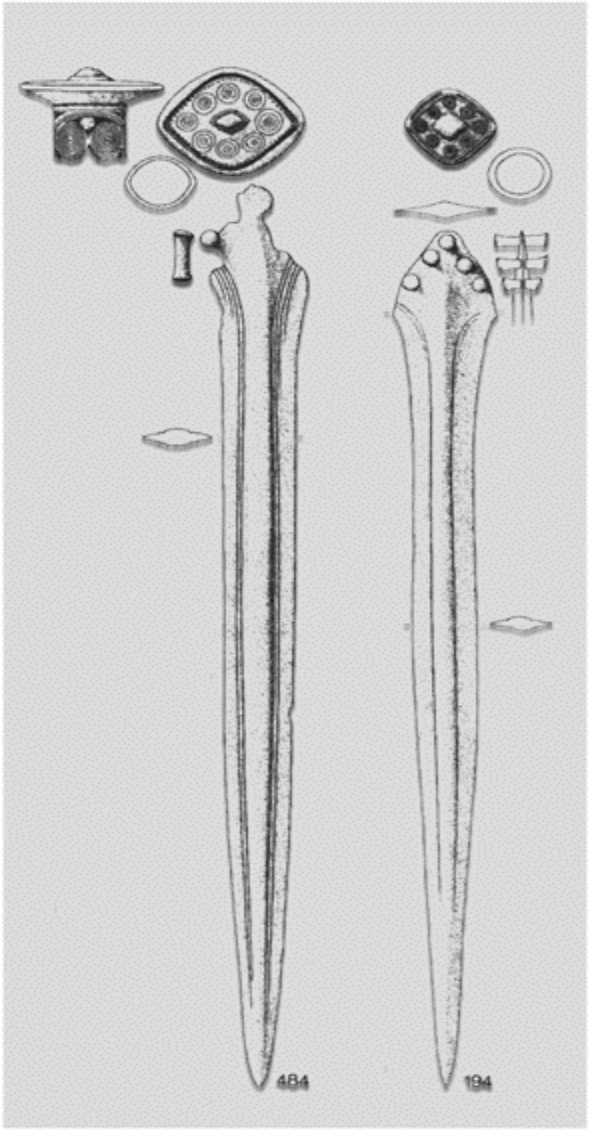


Figure 5.3 Examples of sharpening of sword blades from period 2. Sharpening is most distinctive at the point (attack) and under the hilt

(defence), where the proliferation may disappear and the blade become asymmetrical

Source: after Aner and Kersten 1970 ff.

to bronze and the support of other settlements which could be furthered by military threat and oppression. Thus alliance and warfare, aid and trade were intermingled in the attempt to extend the sphere of influence of dominant chiefly settlements, thereby increasing their share of prestige and bronze.

What we see, then, is a trend towards increased military efficiency, especially in close combat, based on the employment of the bronze sword and the lance. This is reflected in a heavy symbolic display of such weapons in burial equipment or hoards and the absence of female ornaments of bronze until EBA 2. Bronze was a scarce material and access to bronze weapons was restricted compared to traditional weapons of flint, bone and wood. The dominant role played by warfare in Bronze Age society is also testified on hundreds of sword blades showing heavy traces of actual fighting. It can further be proposed that this was the outcome of a process towards increasing political control and the concomitant rise of new ruling elites—a warrior aristocracy—in period 2 and onwards. If that is so, we should also expect it to be reflected in grave goods diversification.

Burials

Grave goods represent a selective categorisation of the dead by the living and are one among many ritual dimensions of burials. Thus grave goods are not a passive, or one-to-one reflection of social structure, but a dynamic way of enforcing, by ritual means, dominant trends in social organisation. This can be done either by masking, repressing or displaying certain elements or items (see articles in Hodder 1982; Hedeager and Kristiansen 1981; Kristiansen 1984a). Thus, in some regions and periods, the display of individual grave goods was regarded as less important than the collective ritual framework of burials (Shennan 1982). However, throughout the period in question individual grave goods depositions seem to have been constantly performed despite various regional burial and hoarding customs in the LN and EBA 1 that will be considered later.

In the LN, burial equipment was rather standardised with few distinctions. We see a trend towards increased diversification in burial equipment from EBA 1, reaching a climax in EBA 2. Thus in the LN, the dagger was standard male equipment, but it was also extensively hoarded until LNC, when bronze tools took over this function. From EBA 1, grave goods became extremely rare and the most valuable bronzes, swords, spears and axes are generally hoarded. However, in north-western Europe we see the first male burials with a more complex equipment of weapons, and from EBA 2 both males and females were buried with grave goods of bronze and gold. As in the LN, those who received a burial represent but an upper segment of society, but from period 2 we are presented with significant grave goods stratification even within this group (Randsborg 1974). Among the weapon burials a division between chiefs and warriors can be demonstrated (Kristiansen 1984b).

Chiefly swords are highly artistic (full-hilted), while warrior swords are plain and functional (flange-hilted swords). Chiefly swords only rarely reveal traces of fighting and heavy sharpening—many of them are not even sharp—whereas all warrior swords bear heavy witness of fighting (Figure 5.4).

To these distinctions we can also add that chiefly burials often symbolise ritual and other occupational specialisations. Ritual equipment such as a special shaman bag with amulets, in a few graves a golden sun disc, and more often

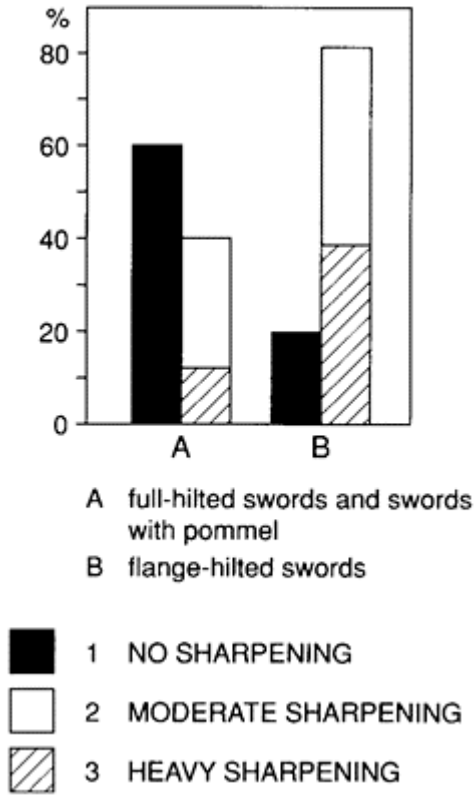


Figure 5.4 A quantitative analysis of degrees of sharpening of period 2 sword blades according to type. A: full-hilted chiefly swords. B: flange-hilted warrior swords

Source: modified after Kristiansen 1984b

also big drinking cups of wood with tin sprags or, in rare cases, an imported metal vessel belong to this group. Such equipment is never, or very rarely, associated with warrior sword burials. What they may have in common as high-ranking males are the symbols of

special body care: tweezers and razors of bronze, and naturally, the chiefly burial in a monumental barrow (Figure 5.5a–b).

Thus by period 2 a differentiated warrior aristocracy is fully established. On top are chiefly and ritual leaders who only rarely performed actual warfare, and below them a group of high-ranking warriors without ritual and specialist functions. We are a long way from the standardised equipment of petty chieftains in the Late Neolithic, each hamlet having its own chief or big-man.

A similar development characterises female equipment. By EBA 2, we meet a clearly defined group of high-ranking females with ritual functions, with the big sun disc, shaped belt plate, and a bronze collar as diagnostic ornaments. Also golden earrings seem to have indicated a special function going back to the LN. Ritual functions and the sun disc ornament also seem to be associated a ritual axe, is found. Also tools for specialised wood-working or metal-working occur (saw, chisel and hammer). To this should be added the universal chiefly symbols: the golden arm-ring and the stool (a folding stool of wood preserved in a few burials). But with the special corded skirt, just as elaborate hair arrangements were part of the outfit of high-ranking women (Figure 5.6).

This diversification among high-ranking chiefly families is also demonstrated by the construction of barrows. An analysis of the size of more than 3,000 preserved barrows in Schleswig-Holstein revealed a very significant diversification with only a rather small group of truly monumental size (Figure 5.7). Although this variation is also determined by the frequency and period of use, new burials adding to the barrow, it is well known that the most outstanding chiefly burials, such as Skallerup on Zealand, also were covered by some of the biggest barrows in the entire region (Jensen 1984). is is also demonstrable that some barrows reveal rather poor burials throughout their period of use, while others mainly contain rich burials, thereby demonstrating differences of wealth among high-ranking families over long periods of time.

Figure 5.5a Chiefly sword and daggers from a period 2 burial ‘Store Kongehøj’ in Jutland

Source: after Boye 1896

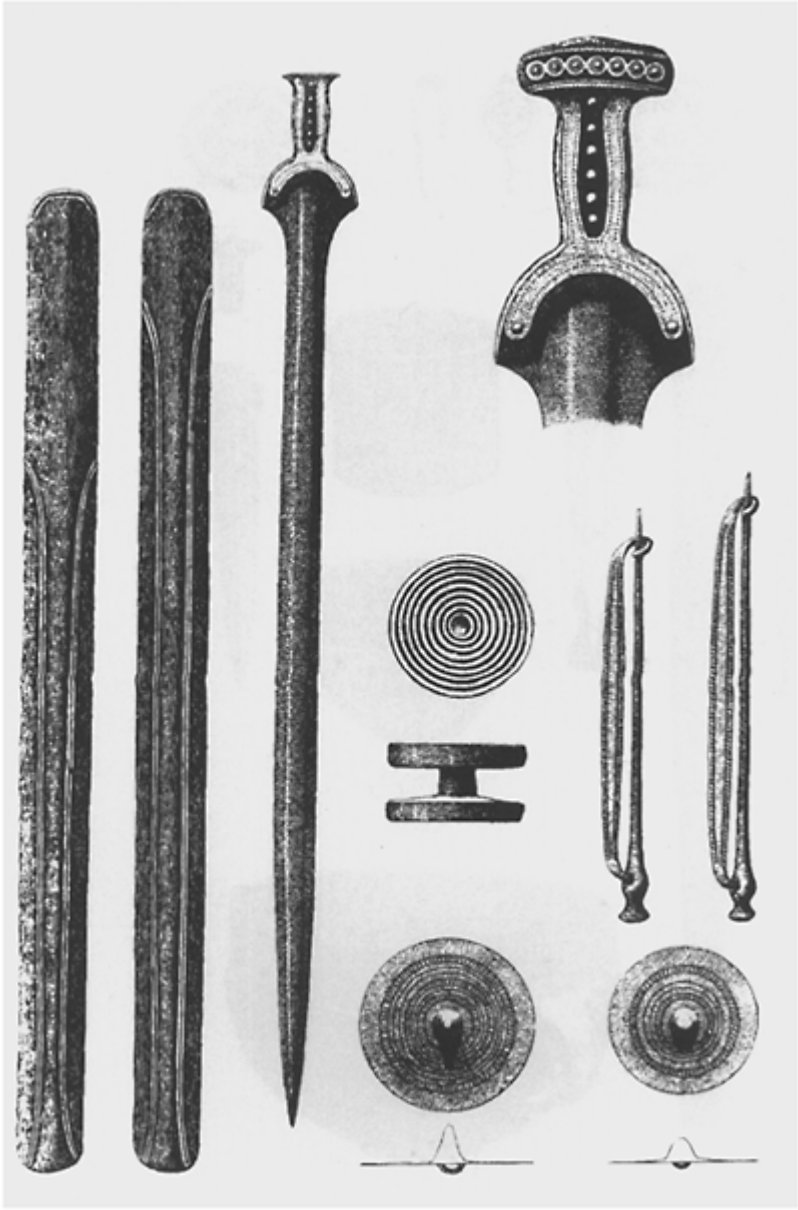


Figure 5.5b Warrior sword from a period 2 burial ‘Muldbjerg’ in Jutland

Source: after Boye 1896

Figure 5.6 Example of the arrangement of complex hair-style on a high-ranking Early Bronze Age woman from Skrydstrup

Source: after Lomborg 1964

Thus the pattern of social hierarchy and wealth differentiation that manifests itself from EBA 2 onwards seems to be one of permanency. Although EBA 2 is based on traditions rooted in the LN, this differentation is interpreted as reflecting a real development in social stratification and complexity linked to the introduction and employment of bronze in prestige-building. The heavy display of weapons among high-ranking males is taken as an indication of the importance of warfare in the process of establishing new social hierarchies. Not until EBA 2 did bronze become so common that it was employed in the production of female ornaments.

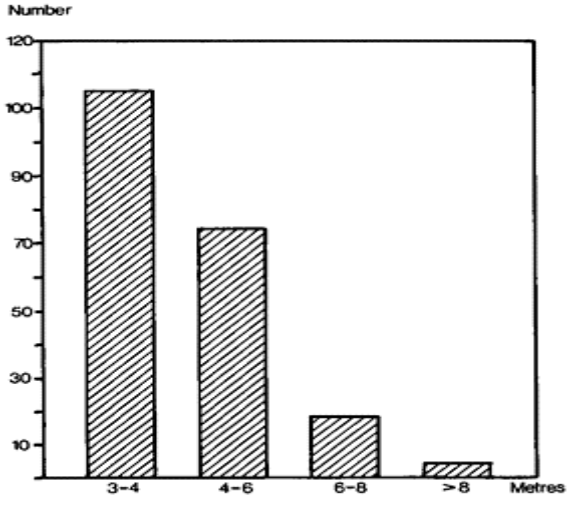


Figure 5.7 Large Early Bronze Age barrows from Schleswig-Holstein classified according to height

Source: based on Struve 1971

Ritual and religion

Ritual and religion are closely linked to ideological legitimation of dominant trends in social organisation. By institutionalising certain practices and beliefs (song, dances, myths), their cyclical repetition makes the world seem without beginning and end. What has once become ritualised cannot be questioned, 'belief does not exist in primitive social organisation. But, perhaps more important, ritual tends to be exclusive—it can only be performed by those who are, in some way or another, qualified. The nature of these qualifications is the crucial point. In tribal social organisation they are often linked to certain social prerogatives, such as direct descent from mythical forefathers or 'kinship' relations with powerful chiefs and gods from outside. Control of and access to ritual is therefore an important precondition of power. However, the relationship is a complex one, as demonstrated in several recent papers (Shennan 1982; Kristiansen 1984a). Ideology may both mask and de-mask, hide and emphasise. An analysis of ideological change is therefore basic to any social analysis in order to understand the relationship between social organisation and ideological representation.

With respect to burials, the tradition of single graves under barrows, which had prevailed in north-western Europe, came to dominate all over Scandinavia in late EBA 1/EBA 2 and onwards, in a monumental version selecting the highest and most impressive locations in the landscape. Thus in southern Scandinavia, the LN/EBA 1 tradition of collective burials in stone cists, heavily inspired from western Europe but rooted in Megalithic tradition, was given up. This burial tradition, however, was also linked to old traditions of ritual hoarding and communal ritual that continued throughout the Bronze Age. These two traditions—a north-west European one of single burials in monumental barrows and a south Scandinavian one of ritual hoarding and communal ritual—were moulded into a single Nordic tradition in EBA 2 and onwards.

To this synthesis of Scandinavian traditions was added new religious mythology in late period 1 and onwards, especially Aegean mythology. The spiral style and the new warrior swords are examples of diffusion from Central Europe/the Aegean, but in mythology this was accompanied by the idea of double aces with representation of warrior gods, the horse-drawn sun on a chariot, war chariots, bull and horse games, and so on.[5]

All in all, the whole mythology of a warrior aristocracy is seen to have accompanied the employment of the bronze sword in northern Europe. To this should be added the idea of demonstrating and conserving ritual sceneries (Figure 5.8), soon leading to a widespread tradition of rock carvings—an invaluable source of ritual and religious knowledge.

Some of this religious mythology, so completely separated from traditional communal and tribal ritual, quite evidently was rooted in local traditions. The ritual importance of the war axe and the whole symbolism of pairing is also found in the Single Grave culture (for example, double male burials, which

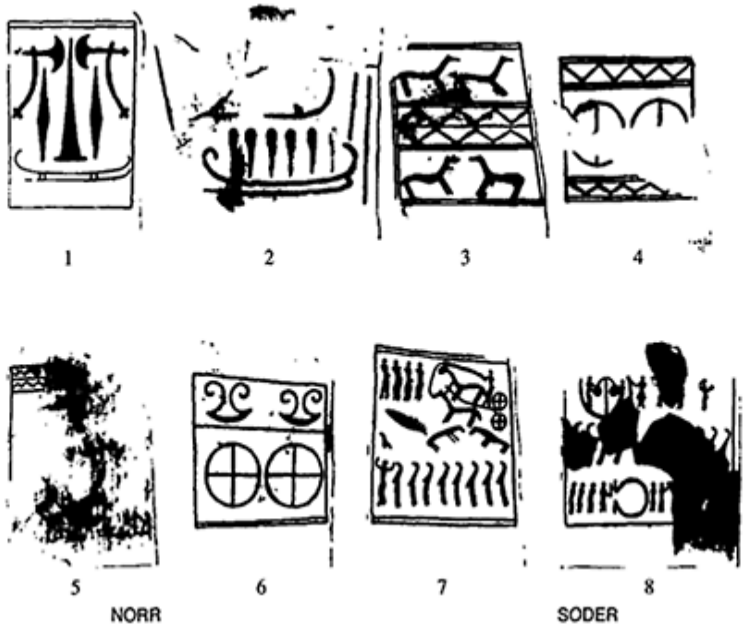


Figure 5.8 The eight decorated stone slabs from the Kivik grave

Source: wash drawing by H. Faith-Ell after Malmer 1981: figure 6

now became widespread throughout the whole of northern Europe). Also sun fertility is universal. However, the ritual framework was new—the idea of drawing the sun on a chariot and the mythology of chiefly warriors (war chariots, stools). In fact the pictures of war chariots have their closest parallels among Egyptian war chariots, just as the few preserved folding stools are of similar dimensions to Egyptian stools. It remains as astonishing phenomenon that Egyptian/Mycenaean mythology and prestige equipment could be transmitted over such distances. The pictorial stone slabs in Kivik are impossible without Mycenaean/Mediterranean prototypes, for example, pictorial rugs and the grave stelae at Mycenae, just as are folding stools and war chariots without their Mediterranean/Egyptian prototypes.[6] From the Scandinavian centres of foreign influence this new ritual/religious complex spread, and in more remote areas as in southern Norway the elegant war chariots with four-spoked wheels from southern Sweden turned into rather clumsy local imitations with solid wheels and drawn by oxen (Figure 5.9).

From late EBA 1 there developed a whole ritual equipment of big paired double axes and spears, probably early lures and drinking vessels, making possible a complete correlation between the impressive ritual sceneries on rock carvings and the actual archaeological evidence of ritual hoards and grave finds (see Kristiansen 1984a: figures 10–11). To this is added the widespread employment of animal and bird masks in ritual and on the bows of ships, as evidenced

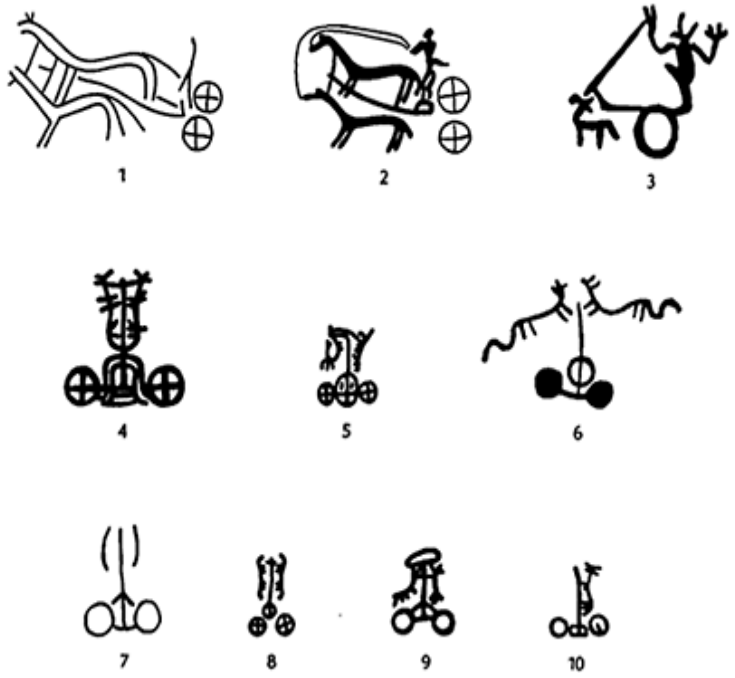


Figure 5.9 A selection of rock carvings of chariots from the Early Bronze Age

Source: after Schousbo 1983

in rock carvings and bronze figurines. We can thus distinguish between a sphere of personal status items, as seen in burials, and one of communal ritual equipment, only rarely found in burials but sometimes in hoards. The evidence allows us to link the performance of the extensive communal rituals with the ritual warrior chiefs. In this way they legitimised and demonstrated their social and political privileges by ritual means. Thus chiefs combined religious and political monopolies. Access to ritual and new religious ideas was channelled through the same lines of chiefly alliances as bronze.

This specific combination of extensive communal ritual and the demonstration of personal wealth and prestige (social inequality) in burials and barrows is the ideological basis for the development of warrior aristocracies in northern Europe from approximately 1500 BC onwards, and it further explains the richness of the archaeological evidence. Thus, old traditions of communal ritual were linked to a new external ideology of warrior aristocracies in combination with a prestige-goods economy based on long-distance exchange of bronze and gold that lasted throughout the next millennium.

The strength of this new political/ideological system is demonstrated by the fact that at least part of its was adopted in central and northern Scandinavia in areas with little access to bronze and a mixed economy of hunting and agriculture. Thus, along the northern coasts of Finland, Sweden and Norway –800 km from southern Scandinavia—we find thousands of monumental barrows situated at dominant locations, dating from around

1500 BC (Broadbent 1983: figure 2; Kristiansen 1987). Once again, this exemplifies that exchange is the code through which status information is communicated. And it further exemplifies that it was not the employment of bronze in itself, but rather its social and ritual framework that was significant. The full-scale development, as seen in southern Scandinavia, however, would not have been possible, and could not survive, without the prestige goods of bronze and gold. That is clearly exemplified by the decline of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age around 600–500 BC. But this is quite a different story (Kristiansen 1980:24ff.).

Settlement structure

With respect to house types,[7] the LN and EBA 1 represent a continuum, characterised by the rectangular two-aisled type. In western Denmark (Jutland), hamlets apparently consisted of a group of rather small houses of individual households, while in eastern Denmark/southern Sweden we find a few rather large houses of extended families/communal houses (some up to 40 metres long).

The evidence of settlements thus conforms with other evidence (ritual), suggesting different principles of social organisation in eastern and western Scandinavia, originating respectively in the Single Grave culture and the Megalithic culture. By period 2 the rectangular three-aisled type apparently replaced the two-aisled type in a rather big version all over Scandinavia. This corresponds to other observed changes, and the evidence of the LBA suggests that the communal type of household organisation (extended families) of the Megalithic culture came to dominate throughout the Bronze Age.

With respect to settlement differentiation, the evidence does not allow any safe conclusions. However, the only extensively excavated settlement of period 2 seems to be both larger and more diversified than those from the previous periods. Generally, the preliminary nature of the above suggestions should be stressed, since at present there are rather few totally excavated settlement sites from the periods in question.

Analyses of metalwork, grave goods and pottery are thus both quantitatively and qualitatively much more informative and reliable with respect to spatial dimensions of differentiation.

Explanatory framework

Our expectations set out in the beginning of the previous section have to a large degree been fulfilled. Diversification could be observed in most cases, however, accompanied by increased cultural homogeneity. It seems that we are dealing with a rather complicated process of interaction between technological, social and ideological change—a kind of ‘cluster interaction’ (Price 1977; Shennan 1982). This was interpreted as a development towards more complex social hierarchies amplified by a new ideology of warrior aristocracies and sustained by more efficient military organisation of political and economic control. It gives strength to our hypothesis that these processes could be observed independently with respect to specialisation, military techniques, grave goods diversification and religious organisation. Thus the importance attached to developments

in specialisation, for example, metallurgy and wood-working, was reflected in grave goods. From EBA 2 status was attached to crafts specialisation, indicating the interlocked development of status systems and craft specialisation (for comparative evidence see Goldman 1970:491ff.).

What we witness, then, is a development both in social organisation (hierarchisation) and in scale (political control of larger areas/long-distance alliances). It has to be admitted, however, that this development is most clearly evidenced when contrasting the LN and the EBA 2. The intermediate stage EBA 1 is more diffuse.

The evolutionary potential of this development was apparently rooted in the individualising segmentary tribes of the Single Grave culture with its strong emphasis on personal status display, demonstrating social inequality rather than hiding it (Shennan 1982: Kristiansen 1984a). When linked to the ceremonial traditions of the old Megalithic regions in southern Scandinavia, a strong theocratic synthesis emerged ideal for legitimising a new social order of a tribal warrior aristocracy. Its actual power basis was the monopoly offered by the control of bronze and the elite exchange of prestige goods. This gave access to both religious power (new rituals) and military power (weapons).

However, we have not yet faced the difficult question of what triggered this development. What are the determining factors? It has been suggested that the status ideology linked to the spread of bronze weapons was a decisive factor. Also the potential of establishing a monopoly of certain prestige goods—that is a potential of creating and protecting new social and political privileges reflected in new status positions—has been emphasised. And to this was added the evolutionary readiness or potential of the pre-existing social and religious order. However, was bronze the cause or the effect? Did its application lead to an economic development in subsistence creating a basis for converting increased surplus into exchange of more bronze, or was bronze primarily a social phenomenon with only little direct importance for subsistence?

And, second, was this technological-ideological complex a driving force in itself or were developments rather determined by factors rooted more deeply in economic, ecological and demographic conditions, following their own internal trajectories?

To answer these questions we must briefly discuss demographic and economic factors as reflected in the exploitation of landscape, settlement and subsistence systems.

First, it should be stressed that the effect of bronze technology on subsistence might be caused both by social dynamics (stronger competition and need for surplus leading to economic intensification) and by more efficient bronze tools. It can be observed that bronze axes gradually take over the role of stone and to some extent flint axes from LNC/EBA 1, whereas flint dominates all other tool production. As bronze axes are not significantly more efficient than flint and stone axes, and as the major settlement and economic expansion occurred before the introduction of bronze (see below), its main importance is not within the sphere of subsistence production. Right from the onset bronze belonged primarily to the sphere of prestige goods.

Having stated this, we may now turn to our second question—the impact of internal economic and demographic conditions.[8]

In general, the overall settlement structure throughout the period in question is a continuation from the Battle Axe culture, and the same is true of subsistence (Kristiansen 1982). However, in several areas the LN marks an expansion of settlement, especially in Sweden and Norway where agriculture now for the first time becomes dominant in

marginal areas or supplements hunting and fishing. Pollen diagrams reveal a heavy expansion of open land, and archaeology, the spread of daggers, sickles and stone axes—the last an efficient multi-purpose tool for both cutting of forest and preparing the ground. Thus, when analysing archaeological settlement densities the LN represents either expansion or clustering in most areas of Scandinavia, which is supported by pollen diagrams. There can hardly be any doubt that this was due to a combination of new subsistence strategies and population increase. Also pollen diagrams indicate an extensive land use based on cattle and sheep-grazing. This is reflected in low frequencies for cereals and the first increase of *Fagus*, the only tree not eaten by grazing animals. Thus most of northern Europe is characterised by open grassland, shrubby woods with hazel and secondary oak-mixed forest. As coastal settlement densities increased in many areas, it may also be suggested that fishing played an important role supplementing the diet.

In conclusion, the LN represents a boom period in terms of settlement expansion and expansion of open land in many areas, a development which had already begun in the preceding period. The intensive exploitation of the landscape continued during the EBA 1 and 2 with some regional displacements. Thus in most areas of northern Europe, the period LN/EBA 1 represents the formation of the open cultural landscape—although with regional expansion and regression phases dependent on local trajectories.[9]

We may thus conclude that bronze was introduced after a rather long period of settlement expansion and increased exploitation of the landscape. It may be suggested that this inherent trend of settlement expansion and population increase held a potential for developing more hierarchical structures if contradictions arose between economic potential and population densities. This, however, was apparently not the case until the Middle and Late Bronze Age (Kristiansen 1980, 1984a). I am, therefore, inclined to believe that the introduction of bronze triggered a development towards a more stratified social order, at least in southern Scandinavia, due to its potential for monopolising wealth, prestige and power. It should be stressed, however, that the pre-existing social and economic order of the LN, with its competitive individualising ideology of social inequality, represented a necessary background—unable to release its inherent evolutionary potential until triggered by prestige goods exchange. Social dynamics were consequently the driving force.

Thus the social organisation of EBA 2 was founded upon the structural principles of the preceding periods and does not represent another stage on the evolutionary ladder, but rather the ultimate development of a segmentary tribal system. With this as our explanatory structural basis, let us finally consider Scandinavian developments in a wider European perspective.

Basing itself on imported prestige goods, the new social order of the mature Bronze Age was vulnerable to fluctuations in the supplies of bronze or in the rate of exchange. Unfavourable exchange rates might lead to increasing exploitation and eventually overexploitation to secure a larger surplus. It seems, however, that during the EBA 1 the rate of exchange developed in favour of the recipient areas, bronze becoming more abundant and cheaper, which was a precondition for development in EBA 2 and onwards.

However, there is more to it than rates of exchange. It seems that the resistance to developing a full bronze technology at an earlier stage was also due to a structural incompatibility between Scandinavia and the highly stratified bronze producing areas in

Central Europe. We may speak of a kind of centre/periphery relationship between these areas, the rather few centres trying to monopolise production and know-how. During this phase the periphery was primarily supplied with rather simple tools (such as axes).

From approximately 1600 BC, a new widespread chiefdom structure emerged without paramount centres of production and know-how but instead dominated by numerous smaller chiefdoms linked by extensive alliance systems. The international spread of the Tumuli culture and the incorporation of northern Europe into this new framework were based on a structural compatibility ranging from the Baltic to the Danube.[10] In opposition to the preceding period, it was characterised by widespread production and exchange of personal prestige goods and the employment of a new ideology of warrior aristocracies, linking northern Europe, Central Europe and the Mediterranean to a common ideological framework. Within this perspective we may regard the spread of bronze technology as a decisive step in the evolution of European society which for a rather short period until 1200 BC unified large areas of Europe within a common structural framework that was never to reappear and which represents the climax of European tribal evolution.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank Søren Dietz, of the National Museum in Copenhagen, for information about the most recent Mycenaean chronology. He is of course responsible for neither my interpretations nor my lack of familiarity with Mycenaean archaeology. I also wish to thank Helle Vandkilde for references to literature on Mycenaean archaeology.

Notes

1 The absolute chronology applied in Figure 5.1 is mainly based on calibrated C-14 dates. I have, with some modifications, followed Klaus Goldmann's reinterpretation of the sword typology and of Mycenaean influence in Europe, whose implications for cultural interrelations and chronology I find convincing in most aspects (Goldman 1980/81). Unpublished C-14 dates of oak coffins from Montelius period 2 burials in Jutland span the period 1500–1200 BC (calibrated after Clark). These datings tend to support the above chronology and the traditional historical cross-datings. The datings are significant since they are from outer rings, and thus very precise. They are furthermore mostly supported by preliminary dendrochronological datings, although they tend to narrow the time span a bit. Of 21 datings the majority fall in the first half of the fourteenth century. I want to thank the First Department of the National Museum in Copenhagen for permission to refer to these preliminary datings that are part of a joint project with the Munich laboratory and Professor H.Schwabedissen.

The above datings imply that several of the calibrated datings from the European Middle Bronze Age, extending back to 1700–1800 BC, are to be questioned. Such internal contradictions, however, were already pointed out in 1975 by Snodgrass. We should, naturally, be open to the possibility that the Danish dates do not cover the initial phase of period 2, although some of the burials on archaeological grounds belong to the earlier part of the period. Its termination, on the other hand, cannot be later than 1200, and we should probably expect an overlap with the beginning of the period 3 during the second half of the thirteenth century, according to a few recent datings.

For the Unetice and Wessex cultures I have followed the calibrated C-14 dates (Coles and Harding 1979:67ff.). The late dates of the final Wessex culture imply that it runs parallel with the latest Unetice and early Tumuli phase (A2/B1) (Hawkes 1977; Burgess 1980:106ff.). This makes sense archaeologically and in terms of cultural interrelations (for Europe see Kubach 1977).

While it seems that local series of controlled C-14 dates of the later phases of the Early Bronze Age (late Wessex/Tumuli culture/Nordic) in connection with more precise calibration curves are beginning to correspond to the archaeological/historical cross-datings, there are still unsolved problems with respect to the Earlier Bronze Age. This implies that the calibration curve needs further adjustment for that period, that too many C-14 samples are too unspecific (no control of the sample's own age, for example, by outer rings, the archaeological context of the sample is not safe) or that historical dates are wrong. As the latter at present is regarded improbable (Hankey and Warren 1974; also Hänsel 1982) we are left with the two first alternatives. Thus there can be no doubt the shaft graves, which are now thought to cover the period 1650 (1700)-1450, and bush barrow graves with uncalibrated C-14 dates from 1700–1450 BC belong to the same sequence. As bush barrows are considered to be late within Wessex (Burgess 1980:108ff.) they may overlap with the shaft graves with some good will. But the situation is not at all satisfying. What we need at present then is a critical re-examination of the existing C-14 datings and their context. However, C-14 samples are to be regarded as typological elements and we should therefore apply the same methodological criteria with respect to probability as for typological dating. In that respect relative typological dating is still in most areas more precise and reliable in archaeological terms ((I am not referring to archaeological/historical cross-datings).

With respect to the *cultural sequences* the reader is generally referred to Gimbutas (1965), Coles and Harding (1979) and Müller-Karpe (1980). A recent summary of research of the Bronze Age in Western Europe is given by Coles (1982b) and in eastern and Central Europe by Harding (1983). With respect to *regional publications* Lomborg is still the standard work for the Late Neolithic in Denmark (1973). For England Burgess (1980) gives an outline of the whole period in question, while the pan-European Bell Beaker culture is synthesised by Harrison (1980). The period 1900–1500 BC is still best covered by Hachmann (1957), with Buttler (1963) on the western connections. The period 1600–1200 BC is rich in publications, none, however, dealing with the whole period and region, except the old work on the Tumuli culture by Holste (1953). Mention should be made, however, of the monographical series 'Prähistorische Bronzefunde,' covering a large number of selected objects, such as pins, swords and axes. Fully illustrated catalogues of all copper and bronze finds in selected regions are found for Denmark in Aner and Kersten, vols. 1–7 (1970ff.) and for Sweden in Oldeberg (1974). For Schleswig-Holstein a useful outline of the Early Bronze Age is given by Struve (1971).

The sequence treated in this chapter is traditionally divided between the Late Neolithic or Copper Age and the Early Bronze Age. The implications and limitations of this old technological division for understanding and explaining the social evolution during the transition and during the subsequent Bronze Age, has recently been illuminated by Rowlands (1984).

2 With respect to metallurgy a major publication is still that of Oldeberg (1942–43). Textiles in Broholm and Hald (1940); Munksgård (1974) and recent articles by Jørgensen, Bender, *et al.* (1982). Rock cravings are classified and quantified in Malmer (1981).

3 The question of inter-Scandinavian exchange and of fur-hunting is treated in an article (Kristiansen 1987) but see also Malmer (1981:105ff.) and Johansen (1983). The impact of Lüneburg on Eastern Denmark was originally analysed by Sprockhoff (1940). Evidence of regional and interregional alliances, however, is testified in many specialist works, some of

them referred in Kristiansen (1981:248ff.). The objective in most of these works is classification and chronology. Thus we need a re-analysis of such patterns in terms of alliances and exchange for which the evidence holds a great potential.

4 An outline of prehistoric warfare in Denmark is given in Hedeager and Kristiansen (1985), and is analysed for the Bronze Age in Kristiansen (1984b). Basic principles of primitive warfare are described in Turney-High (1949, second edn 1971).

5 In this section the so-called *Mycenaean influences* in Central and northern Europe are put into an ideological framework of tribal social organisation and evolution. However, the whole notion of Mycenaean influences has been much disputed on archaeological grounds. It is therefore necessary to comment briefly on this debate. Some of the implications for the Nordic area are treated in note 6.

The situation is characterised by a group of proponents, mainly Central European scholars, and a smaller group of opponents, mainly English scholars. However, the discussion has been hampered by methodological problems: proponents have tended to rely on rather loose typological criteria without due respect to rely on rather loose typological criteria without due respect to the prescribed procedures of typology (Malmer 1963:27ff.). Opponents, on the other hand, have chosen the easy way of relying primarily on C-14 dates and demonstrate little familiarity with—or simply disregard—the methodological principles of typology that are basic to any archaeological solution of the problem. Thus, as each side applies different criteria, a balanced view based on a systematic analysis is not possible at present.

Recently Goldmann (proponent) has tried to reinterpret some of the archaeological evidence in a way that corresponds to the C-14 dates. This is in some aspects convincing, especially with the most recent datings of Montelius period 2 and the shaft graves. This implies that they may cover both Later Wessex/East Europe A2–3 and B/early C (Goldmann 1980/81).

In a new book Harding (opponent) has summarised the evidence (Harding 1984). It is an extremely valuable syndhesis from a critical or rather sceptical point of view, although also problematic. A detailed and balanced assessment of the evidence is given with respect of amber and faience beads and with respect to genuine Mycenaean objects and pottery. Thus, Harding concludes that direct contact was responsible for the occurrence of similar amber spacer plates in Wessex and the shaft graves. It is therefore indeed strange that he tries any argument to explain other, expectable, similarities in Wessex as accidental or insignificant. This reflects a weakness of the book: the discussion of each group of evidence is carried out in isolation. The significance of the cultural context is therefore overlooked or perhaps more precisely only a local (archaeological) type of context is accepted. We are thus sometimes presented with rather surprising arguments to explain away cultural connections of undisreputable significance, such as the zig-zag mounts in Wessex, Bush Barrow, and the shaft grave Iota (Harding 1984: figure 31), where not only form, but also construction and number of mounts are identical. Not to mention the exclusive symbolic significance of such an object. It is also quite clear that when stylistic and symbolic similarities *a priori* are considered subjective and insignificant, then there is little justification in discussing such evidence at all.

A counterweight to Harding's scepticism is found in Bouzek (1966), Vladar (1973), and in a number of articles in *Jahresberichte des Instituts für Vorgeschichte der Universität Frankfurt a.M.* 1977 and *Prähistorische Archäologie in Südosteuropa* 1982. They make it clear that the so-called Mycenaean influences were part of a much larger cultural and ideological complex, some of it Eureasian (Hüttel 1977 and 1982), some of it Mediterranean or Near Eastern, including Asia Minor (Pingel 1982, Schauer 1984). Some of these traditions, especially that of metal toreutic, were well established centuries before the shaft graves (Müller-Karpe 1977) and exercised influence also on the early European Bronze Age. Also the shaft graves themselves bear witness to diverse traditions, demonstrating trading

expeditions and far-reaching alliances of adventurous chiefs or kings (especially the later LH 1—the A-circle). The *'nouveau riche'* display is a typical example of the founding phase of a dynasty (for discussion Dickinson 1977).

Thus when discussing this kind of evidence, reflecting trade and alliance systems not only between centres, but also between centres and 'peripheries' in several links, we are often dealing with a combination of a few genuine imported finds and local imitations or inspiration. And as genuine finds often occur isolated in a foreign context or in exceptional contexts such as Wessex and shaft graves, it is extremely difficult to assess the significance of the data both in archaeological and cultural-historical terms. It demands rigorous methodological analyses of both local, regional and international cultural and chronological contexts. But without a theoretical idea about the nature of the structural framework within which these historical processes were operating, the significance of the material evidence can never be properly interpreted and explained, as stressed by Müller-Karpe (1977), also Bouzek (1982). To this author there can be no doubt that the rise of the shaft graves rested on the capacity to explore and exploit a position on the fringe of the 'civilised' world of the eastern Mediterranean and the 'barbarian' hinterlands of the west Mediterranean and Central and eastern Europe. These hinterlands, however, were probably much less barbarian and more organised than we have tended to believe. And the capacity to establish far-reaching trading links with remote areas, cross-cutting areas of different political systems is testified in the Near East and Asia Minor. But also in the hinterlands, such as Scandinavia, trading expeditions crossed the open sea of the Baltic and sometimes extended 500–600 km northwards along the coast.

While trading contracts with Wessex were given up, those with the western Mediterranean and Europe were strengthened and developed until climax and decline around 1200 BC. The fourteenth century especially was a period of expansion in trade (LM IIIA). After the completion of this chapter, Bouzek's recent book (Bouzek 1985) (proponent) on the interrelations between the Aegean and Europe in the second millennium, appeared. It contains a detailed listing and discussion of all relevant finds. Together with Harding, it will be a standard work for years to come.

6 For the last hundred years it has puzzled archaeologists that the development of the original Nordic Bronze Age culture shows a 'Mycenaean' impact. And especially the fact that the Central European area does not display similar features, as one would expect of a transient zone. A number of Mycenaean cultural influences were apparently transformed into a genuine Nordic style. However, many elements bear witness to the original prototypes. This has most recently been pointed out by Goldmann, but deserves a systematic study since it can be supported by much more evidence. What is considered important here, however, is not only the actual influence, but rather the ideological and ritual context within which it was transmitted. One such context is the ideology of warrior aristocracies as reflected in the concomitant occurrence of images of war chariots, long swords and a number of other symbols of elites. This group of evidence will therefore be discussed in more detail.

With respect to *swords* there is a general agreement that developments were highly international, e.g., the shift from dagger to sword, or the development of the flange-hilted sword. Thus the flange-hilted sword of Sprockhoff's type 1b is related to Sandars's type D1 swords, and a sword from Ørskovhede in Jutland bridges this connection (Randsborg 1967). Although Harding (1984: appendix 4) in a detailed critique has pointed out, rightly, that in its major features it belongs to the European group, it stands out from the majority of 1b swords by a number of details, whose inspiration is the Aegean type. I agree with Harding that the rounded point at the shoulder is most significant. The angle of the sword at 130°, however, is, to my knowledge, only found on a few other swords, which distinguishes them from the majority of 1b swords that have more hanging shoulders (140–150°). Thus, it must

still be concluded that Ørskovhede, more than other 1b swords, reflects a rather specific Aegean influence, despite Harding's critique. It belongs to an early phase of the Montelius period 2 (see a related, but heavily sharpened sword from southern Jutland with an early period 2 pommel, Aner and Kersten no. 3559D). In accordance with Randsborg (1967) and Schauer (1972), and in opposition to Hänsel (1982:12), we ought to be in the fifteenth century BC, perhaps its later part.

Other traits that link developments in sword types between the Nordic and Aegean area are the pommel and the big rivets preserved on another sword from southern Jutland (Aner and Kersten no. 2538B). Given the nearly unlimited variety in sword pommels, such features are significant. Another small feature which may support an early date for the beginning of period 2, is the 'Mycenaean' dagger from Ahhotep's grave from Thebes (Helck 1977: figure 2.3., pp. 12ff.), dating from the mid-sixteenth century BC. The long hanging shoulders and the oval-shaped termination of hilt/shoulder with pointed ends is a combination of traits that is commonly found in the early phase of Montelius period 2 (and not in earlier or later periods). Given the variation known throughout the Bronze Age of the termination of the hilt against the blade, and considering the many other Egyptian/Aegean influences in the early period 2, this parallelism is hardly accidental.

The introduction of the full-hilted long sword in late period 1 and the flange-hilted warrior sword in period 2 was followed by a number of other international features linked to warrior aristocracies that spread in the sixteenth century. The significance of the *war chariot* in the Near East and Asia Minor in this respect has been documented from written sources by Zaccagnini (1977) and its spread in Eurasia is documented by Hüttel (1977 and 1982) on archaeological grounds. The employment of war chariots demanded not only a complex technology, but also specialised dressage and fighting techniques, which could only be mobilised in the empires around the eastern Mediterranean and the Near East.

What could be transmitted was the ideology and part of the technology. Thus Egyptian chariots demanded the importation of different sorts of wood from temperate regions (Littauer and Crouwell 1979:81). It is therefore a relevant question to ask if such chariots actually existed in equal numbers in the Nordic area? To answer that, we have to look at the evidence of carpentry, wagon models, rock carvings and the Kivik grave.

The preserved evidence of specialised carpentry is mainly restricted to folding stools that are simple but quite advanced constructions. The numerous rock carvings of ships, however, teach us that the technology for more complex constructions (including the bending of wood) must have been available. This is not to say that it was employed for war chariots. The four-spoked wheel especially is a complicated construction that is not testified in wood until the Iron Age in the northern region. However, it was known already from Montelius period 2, as the bronze model of the sun chariot from Trundholm in northern Zealand shows, together with a few other early examples of cast four-spoked wheels of bronze (Thrane 1962). Also rock carvings regularly show four-spoked wheels. Prototypes could be imported models of chariots in bronze, real chariots or pictorial blankets or rugs. None of the possible foreign prototypes has been found. We therefore have to deduce which is most likely. To do so we must turn to the evidence of rock carvings. Here the Kivik burial is important, together with other carvings of war chariots from the neighbouring areas.

The decorated slabs from the Kivik grave (Figure 5.8) are just as exceptional and unique in the Nordic Bronze age as the Trundholm sun chariot. We can therefore also expect them to be the result of extraordinary achievements and events. They are designed with frames and decorated divisions, e.g., like the shaft grave steles, or as one would expect from pictorial rugs. Their background is evidently not Nordic, but most probably Mediterranean/ Aegean. This is supported by a few of the motives. Although some of the ritual scenes may be said to

conform to known Nordic traditions (the lur blowers), others are unique, just as the occurrence of altar and war chariot (together with some objects or constructions with no parallels, e.g., the two open circles that could be the grave circle). What we see is most probably the ritual sceneries of the burial, and the employment of a war chariot indicates its relationship both with tribal elites and with ritual.

On the slabs without sceneries are depicted a number of objects, perhaps the grave goods and/or the most important belongings of the buried chief. The four horses (2×2) correspond to the wheels of two chariots, also depicted. To this are added his ships, lances and ritual axes. Finally there are two axe-like objects with open curved endings. They are paralleled in gold in the shaft grave Omincrom that is rather late within the B-circle, probably after 1550 (Mylonas 1972: plate 181).

According to the above there ought to have been two genuine war chariots in the possession of this extraordinary chief. This has been challenged by suggesting that the ritual scenes were idealised and replaced the real thing (Malmer 1981). Rituals, however, are performed by specialists and demand performance and participation in order to survive and retain their function. They cannot be replaced by carvings or figurines. It is therefore not probable that rituals could be illustrated without an intimate knowledge of their mythology and performance. The only thing that can be replaced, is the ritual depositions of the objects themselves, e.g., by drawing them or by using miniatures. The war chariot is both participating in the rituals and depicted in isolation (wheels and horses) together with other archaeologically known objects. From this follows that a real chariot, not a model, took part in the ritual, and that its deposition was substituted by drawing it together with other ritual objects (axes and lanceheads) that are normally not found in burials, but only (rarely) as votive or hoard depositions, and normally in pairs. This is supported by other evidence.

North of Kivik we find the most detailed carvings of war chariots, those from Fränarp (Figure 5.14, no. 4). Depicted from above, they show a completely realistic war chariot of the simple type, as preserved from Egyptian burials (Littauer and Crouwell 1979). The perspective and the realism of the carvings could not possibly have been derived from pictures, only from the model or a real chariot. The location of Kivik on the south-east coast of Scania is also perfect as an entry point for trade with the south coast of the Baltic, from the mouth of both Oder and Weichsel and down to south-east Europe (Thrane 1977, and Map 5.1).

Taking the evidence of Kivik and Fränarp together, I am inclined to conclude that in this area real chariots existed in the Early Bronze Age, probably imports from the Mediterranean/Aegean (in the Late Bronze Age imported prestigious wagons from Central Europe are documented archaeologically, e.g., Skjerne and Egemose [Jacob-Friesen 1970]). This naturally does not exclude the possibility that miniatures in bronze also were produced from the original prototypes. This was apparently the case in Denmark. A closer comparison of the Trundholm wheel from Northern Zealand and the wheel from Storehøj in Southern Jutland with Aegean/Egyptian prototypes and drawings on pottery reveals that the differences between the two Danish wheels (Thrane 1962: figures 11–18) correspond closely to similar differences among the prototypes. The Trundholm type has thin spokes and hub (Crouwell 1981: plates 85, 76–77, 60, 136–137 and figure 5). The Storehøj type has more solid spokes, hub and felloe (Crouwell 1981: plates 32A, 135). Part of its ornamentation reflects constructive details on the original wheels. The Storehøj type corresponds to the more solid four-spoked type, which occurs both early and late. It differs, however, from the later even more solid type, as seen in Skallerup and Ystad (Thrane 1962: figure 19). The Trundholm type with its lighter construction corresponds rather to the later six-spoked type from the later fifteenth century onwards (Crouwell 1981:81ff.).

Thus the Danish bronze wheels were not simple imitations of a general four-spoked type as depicted on the primitive models of clay or bronze in the Aegean and Central Europe (examples also in Crouwell 1981). They are precise imitations of a specific type of wheel, most probably a real wheel, and they reflect technological developments in the Mediterranean, just as later Urnfield and Hallstatt bronze wheels (Piggott 1983, Littauer and Crouwell 1979). As Storehøj is dated to the earlier part of period 2 by an imported pin of Zargenkopf type (and also contained a British jet bead!), an early dating for the introduction of two-wheeled chariots—or at least their type of wheel—is suggested.

That we are dealing with something very exclusive, but also very real, is indicated by the more primitive imitations in areas further away, such as Bohuslän in Sweden and Østfold in south-eastern Norway. Also the exceptional pictorial stone slabs were imitated on the inner kerb of sandstone slabs round a barrow in Sagaholm (Malmer 1981: figures 14 and 15). The exclusive nature of war chariots is also demonstrated by their restricted distribution in south Scandinavia, their restricted number on rock carvings (19 in all) and short duration (Early Bronze Age) (Malmer 1981:43ff.).

This import of two-wheeled war chariots took place during period 2, from its early part, as already mentioned. Kivik, however, has traditionally been dated to Montelius period 3 (eventually, late 2) based on the form of the axes and a few pieces of hammered bronze in the plundered burial. Hammered vessels, however, already occur in period 2, and the axes are then the only indication of a dating in period 3 (the wide and curved blade). The two axe symbols, on the other hand, might indicate an earlier dating. In that case Kivik could be the original source of inspiration of the employment of ritual sceneries on rock carvings in Scandinavia. This would also be in better accordance with the ship motive that belongs to the early type (Rørby), which begins in the late period 1 (Malmer 1981:31ff.).

Accompanying the new ideology of warrior aristocracies was also the universal symbol of dignity: *the stool.* In the Bronze Age a folding stool has been fully preserved in a few burials from Jutland, dating to Montelius period 2 (the calibrated C-14 dating of outer ring of one of them, Guldhøj, is 1480). The form and construction of this folding stool, however, is not local. Based on comparative studies of the Egyptian and Danish pieces, the architect Wanscher has convincingly demonstrated, also in precise drawings, that the Danish pieces conform to the constructive principles of the Egyptian type, just as dimensions are very much the same. There seems to be little doubt that they are the result of direct imitation of original Egyptian or Mediterranean pieces (Wanscher 1980).

Other symbols of exclusive social positions transmitted from the Mediterranean/Aegean area to Central and northern Europe at the same time were razors and tweezers. However, European symbols of high rank from this time are also found in the shaft graves: not only amber necklaces, but also an old symbol ‘of specific rank, such as the small rectangular pendant, normally of slate or the like, but in the Early Bronze Age sometimes also of amber. Such small things that had no value without knowledge of their specific social context tend to support the hypothesis that the shaft grave kings maintained alliances with, and were familiar with, the European hinterland (see also Davies 1985).

Taken together the group of evidence presented above leaves no doubt about the origin of warrior swords, war chariots and folding stools. This technological and ideological complex most probably reached the Nordic area during the final period 1/early period 2 in the late sixteenth and fifteenth centuries BC. Mycenaean/Mediterranean influences continued to be transmitted to the Nordic area also in the subsequent centuries, and a later date for other ‘Mycenaean’ influences is therefore highly probable. How the objects came to the Nordic area is a difficult question to answer at present, except in very general terms. Two possibilities seem at hand: 1) one or a few expeditions organised from the Mycenaean area,

or from one of their trading posts, reached the Nordic area in search of amber. It could either be from western Europe (the sea route) or from the major river systems of Central Europe. 2) Areas in Europe with Aegean/Mediterranean contacts traded such objects to several areas in northern Europe as part of prestige chain exchange.

The second hypothesis is the more probable, since the ideological context could not have been transmitted to the whole Nordic area by one or a few trading expeditions. This is perhaps the significant difference between developments in Wessex and south Scandinavia. Due to specific historical events the ornamental style of the Aegean/east European area was adopted in metalwork, and due to the ritualised theocratic nature of the Nordic Bronze Age, and exceptional conditions of preservation, much more of the original evidence was deposited and preserved archaeologically than in Central Europe.

7 Most of the evidence on settlements is very recent. For the LN/EBA 1 articles by Simonsen (1983), Nielsen and Nielsen (1985) and Boas (1983). For EBA 2 and the Later BA articles by Boysen and Andersen (1983) and Becker (1982).

8 The standard summary on the development of the cultural landscape is still Berglund (1969) and for Denmark Andersen (1983). The relationship between settlement/regression and climatic trends is summarised by Gräslund (1980).

9 To this should be added the important evidence of physical anthropology. In the LN population is markedly taller on average than the old Megalithic population. In Denmark males increase on average from 165.4cm to 171.1 cm, and females from 151 cm to 159.5cm (Brøste and Balslev 1956). A single stone cist in central Sweden with at least thirty individuals also revealed a very tall population. If we consider life expectancy, it is also higher during the LN (50% maturus/senilis compared to 35% in the MN), although all burials also show quite a few children and juveniles. As we have no skeleton data from the intermediate period of the Single Grave culture, we do not know if these changes were rooted in this period or if migrations may have played a role. However, it may be assumed that the expansion of settlement and the subsequent intensification in subsistence, at least to some extent, may be responsible for this development due to an improved diet. The rather homogeneous evidence of tall, healthy people strongly suggests that we are dealing with a rather small upper selection of the population during the LN (from the EBA the evidence is unfortunately too scarce to infer anything).

10 This structural and technological change in eastern and Central Europe is summarised in articles by Hänsel, Kubach, Primas and Vulpe in *Jahresbericht*, Frankfurt 1977.

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6
KINSHIP, ALLIANCE AND EXCHANGE IN THE EUROPEAN BRONZE AGE

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The aim of this chapter is to contribute to our general understanding of the nature of European Bronze Age society. However, this is no simple affair and I have no pretensions of being able to provide any general synthesising statement on the matter. Clearly, it would be rather foolish to assume some general kind of pan-European social form at this time. Instead, it is hoped that by examining a number of particular cases in the various Later Bronze Ages of European prehistory, we may be able to detect the presence of certain underlying principles of more general comparative significance. The relevance of this endeavour rests on the assumption that it is an advantage to seek for general similarities and underlying principles of organisation prior to the examination of particular local differences.

However, the purpose is not to contribute to historicising 'reconstruction' nor to reduce a particular socio-historical situation to an illustration of some anthro-pologically derived general principle. The concern is with making a contribution to the study of historical process and to the creation of a conceptual framework by which predictions of long-term trends in the development of European society can be made. In other words, using the dichotomy often relied upon by anthropologists to justify their ignoring of history, it is intended as a contribution to diachronic rather than synchronic analysis. In this respect the approach here is explicitly theoretical and more attention has been paid to the adequacy of the concepts used and their articulation into adequate theory than the elaboration of rigorous hypothesis formation and testing procedures.

To say that theory precedes observation is almost a 'truism' these days but its implications for existing methodologies and research designs in archaeology are still largely unrecognised. If we are to assume that epistemological and theoretical rigour is required in order to be certain that the right questions are being asked and that this must precede and be modified by interpretation, then something seems to have gone wrong in much current archaeological practice, where an empiricist reliance on 'testing' and methodological expertise substitutes for intellectual rigour. Theory is simply relegated to 'hypothesis formation' as a catch-all affair, the adequacy of which will somehow come out in the 'testing'. On the contrary, in this chapter we are concerned with contributing to the study of historical processes in human societies. These processes generate qualitatively new kinds of human conditions and lead to irreversible effects in creating new kinds of structures, which then determine future trajectories in social time. It is the construction of general models about the nature of human social systems (only variants of which exist in reality) that allow us to retain a comparative perspective and hence arrive at certain general propositions that can, with some degree of justification, be said to be

evolutionary in character and to escape from the reified objects that passed previously for evolutionary taxonomies and typologies. In this chapter there is little that can be claimed as far as 'methodological rigour' is concerned, since we assume this to be something to be invented at a later stage. It does not exist 'ready made' but is generated by an inappropriate theoretical frame-work. We would hope instead to be making a contribution to framing correct questions and helping to clarify the concepts required to answer them, as well as making some advances in re-organising existing data into new categories, and in the process gaining new insights into their meaning.

The articulation of kinship and exchange

In the anthropological literature, kinship has played a primary role in explaining the structuring of the social order in non-politically and juridically ordered societies. Even with the passing of the traditional functionalist notion of kinship as forming a moral system for the ordering of social relationships, the dominance of kinship relations in the structuring of political and economic relations in many small-scale societies has served to retain its status as one of the irreducible principles of social structure. While recognising this fact, anthropology has been less successful so far in recognising specific forms of kinship and their relationship to politico-economic correlates or determinants. The extent to which one is willing to consider this possibility depends on the recognition that consistent relationships exist between kinship form, patterns of marriage alliance (and the kinds of dependency and ranking these promote) and the size of the minimum political units on which the accumulation of socially significant wealth must depend. If we can show that kinship orders (but not necessarily determines) the structure of these local units (households, extended families, lineages and so on), which in turn predicts their success in a wider political context, then knowing the form that kinship takes has a potentially high predictive value.

For the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages, a case has been made, on the basis of local settlement organisation, for patrilineal recruitment and patrilocal residence of local groups (Clarke 1973; Crumley 1974). Using textual evidence, Clarke hypothesised that late Celtic society was patrilineal and patrilocal, with strong fraternal sibling bonds indicative of solidary lineages as the basic political and economic unit. He explained this as a product of techno-economic variables selecting for the recruitment of male labour in an ecological setting of diverse resource specialisation. The archaeological evidence remains problematic, relying as it does on the identification of male task activity areas in a group of closely associated structures set around a common focus, to represent groups of agnatically related males co-resident in a single habitation unit. As Clarke points out, such a habitation pattern has a long history in Late Bronze Age and Iron Age contexts (Clarke 1973:828). The development of a dual or tripartite class structure in late Celtic society, as usually understood, would have had to have occurred at the expense of kinship and to have resulted from the elaboration of various cross-cutting mechanisms of status differentiation and clientage based on non-kinship principles.

This is not the place to discuss the adequacy of an economically defined class model for late Celtic society, except to point out that the configuration is still 'tribal', and a division of social functions (chiefs, priests, equites, commoners, slaves) does not imply a

particular mode of social recruitment. However, we can use another source of evidence to support the notion of local patrilineal descent in the Later Bronze Age. From an analysis of ten stocks of Indo-European languages, Friedrich has proposed that earlier scholars, such as Delbruck, were essentially correct in deducing that 'ProtoIndo-European kinship was patriarchal, patrilineal and patrilocal and with a system of terms and statuses that would now be termed of the Omaha class' (Friedrich 1966:5). Barlau has arrived at the same conclusion for pre-Germanic kinship, arguing that the later emphasis on kindreds and bilateral kinship (the generalised Indo-European form) emerged from an earlier patrilineal system with an Omaha kinship terminology (Barlau 1976). Humphreys, on the other hand, believes that Greek kinship (and probably Indo-European kinship in general) always combined patrilineal descent groups with bilateral kindreds. This was because the descent groups were non-exogamous and one finds the formation of kindreds both within, and cutting across, unilineal descent groups (Humphreys 1978 and personal communication). If this is so, then one gets a very different picture of tight, potentially endogamous descent groups, with the household as the maximum exogamous and landholding unit. This picture is confirmed by the apparent lack of association between tribe and phratry (patrilineal clan and sub-clans in modern anthropological parlance) and land-holding qualifications. This apparently applies even in the Mycenaean texts and is not just a post eight-century feature. Membership of these larger descent groupings is associated only ideologically and ritually with political rights and status. Humphreys also argues that these patrilineal clans and sub-clans contained both nobles and commoners (that is, ranking is a product of internal differentiation within descent groups rather than constituting some economically defined notion of stratification). The emergence of the aristocratic *genos*, separate from the phratry, would be a late phenomenon (post-Homeric) and would be connected with rights to succession of office within the Greek city state. As these general features may be typical of Indo-European societies, we must surely be right in asking whether similar patterns can be observed in the archaeological record of the European Bronze Age. Also this argues for any comparisons between pre-Republican and Republican Rome and early Greece being embedded in diachronic sequences rather than based on arbitrary stages defined primarily by the adequacy of comparative historical documentation. The predominance of kinship in the early regal period and the period of the Etruscan kings in pre-Republican Rome has been common knowledge since the work of Maine and De Coulanges over a hundred years ago. The enduring social units of gens (clan) and families (extended household) retain a basic strength and significance well into the Republican period, even though new principles of political affiliation take away or replace their older and more socially pervasive functions. The strong emphasis on agnatic ties, on pater-familias as religious head, holder of property and as sole arbiter in dispute settlement, is consistent with the interpretation that the familiae formed the minimal political units and were linked to each other by agnatic ties and the worship of common family ancestors within the gentes, a number of which were vaguely linked together, probably through the defence of a common territory and possibly common rituals. But the familiae did not form the 'tribes' and 'curiae' which appear to be more consistent with some kind of later rationalisation after the foundation of Rome.

Without wishing to imply any simple sequence from patrilineal to bilateral kinship, and recognising the need to maintain a specific view of local developments, we are

nevertheless encouraged to explore the more general theoretical implications of the presence of patriliny with a kinship terminology of the Omaha type. Lévi-Strauss has stressed that the significance of Crow-Omaha kinship systems derives from their forming an intermediary class between his categories of elementary and complex kinship structures (Lévi-Strauss 1969: introduction). For alliance theory, the distinctive feature of Crow-Omaha systems is the absence of positive marriage rules for the creation of alliances between exogamous groups (as, for instance, the wife-giver/wife-taker relationship would imply) and the presence only of a prohibition of marriage with a woman from a descent group that has previously provided a wife to the same group within a specified number of generations. Members of groups that have provided marriage partners are therefore turned into a fictitious kin category, and in each generation, new alliances have to be formed with groups that have not previously given or been given a wife. Hence the marriage system created is expansionist and highly probabilistic. The rule operates to maintain ties with previous marriage partners through common rituals and gift-giving but without having to maintain the alliance through the exchange of women. The latter can instead be used to generate new alliances with strangers as part of a larger strategy of developing extensive and extremely dense marriage alliance networks, particularly if polygyny is practised. As a result any one group will be linked to numerous others at any particular time. In the absence of a long-term cultural rule, a probabilistic marriage rule operates which household head can use opportunistically to create dense networks of reciprocal obligations on which the size, wealth and power of a household may depend. This would also be consistent with the fact that relations between groups in Crow-Omaha systems are highly competitive, since in the absence of a preferential marriage rule, intergroup ranking cannot be ordered directly by descent and affinity. In this respect Lévi-Strauss may be making an evolutionary prediction (although he denies it) that transitional kinship structures result from the breakdown of ranked societies organised on the principles of elementary kinship structures (such as one of the ‘conical’ clan chiefdom forms to be found in pre-contact Polynesia).

For descent theorists, Omaha kinship terminologies are distinguished from Crow systems by being frequently associated with strong patriliny (Murdock 1949). Agnatic ties, particularly between male siblings, are emphasised and the household, made up of agnatically related males, their wives and offspring, is usually highly solidary and the most important political and economic unit. While there are obviously exceptions to such generalisations, it is nevertheless true that Omaha kinship terminologies are often found in societies that lack any segmentary lineage structure (of the classic Nuer, Tiv, Tallensi type) and where nuclear and extended households form the minimal political-economic units. These may be highly competitive, but can belong to larger descent groups of clan and/or sub-clan status and thus be linked to each other through ritual, the worship of common ancestors and possibly intermarriage, since such clans may or may not be exogamous. Terms such as household and family do not necessarily convey the correct meaning, given their ethnocentric connotations, of the nature of such minimal political and economic units.[1] Households may be large and ramified descent groups, on the size and power of which depends the prestige of each individual member. Strong controls are exercised over the actions of group members, usually under the autocratic rule of a household head, and particularly over wives and their offspring, since demographic size

is a major determinant of politico-economic strength. Cultural rules such as the levirate are emphasised (to maintain control of widows); residence at marriage is strictly virilocal, bridewealth payments are usually high and there may be severe sanctions against divorce and adultery. Hence, in very general terms, one may envisage societies with this type of kinship terminology being composed of a number of clans (20–40 is an ethnographic range) whose degree of corporateness may vary and whose principles for common action may be weak (that is, mainly in the fields of common rituals, ancestor-worship and ties to territory and burial places). Clans and sub-clans would be made up of households which vary in size, status and power, and would compete for rank both with each other and at the inter-clan level. They would form the basic social units to which individuals owed loyalty and their social status.

The highly solidary nature of household units and the absence of explicit descent rules for the ordering of ranking between households is clearly consistent with the findings of alliance theorists concerning the significance of opportunistic marriage rules for the generation of complex marriage and exchange relations. Competition for rank between households is played out in a wider arena of differential success in the establishment of alliances through gift-giving and marrying women out, and also by the benefits that accrue to the household from the obligations owed to it by their affines. Households with most extensive alliance networks are able to benefit not only from increased amounts of bridewealth being paid to them but also from the extra labour power contributed by outsiders to the group who stand in relations of obligation to it (sons-in-law, co-wife takers, uterine relatives). Members of a receiving group are in turn obligated in the same way to groups from which they have taken women. Hence, since group size determines productivity, larger households will dominate smaller ones through their ability to accumulate more wealth and surplus labour product than they would have to expend to meet their exchange obligations. Also, assuming that the arrangement of alliances is in the hands of a household head, surplus wealth is likely to be diverted to his advantage over that of junior agnates. Hence inter-group competition and ranking through competition serve to reinforce internal ranking within the household and, in particular, to sustain control over the household economy, the disposal of sisters and daughters and the marriage of junior males, by the household head and other senior males. Inequalities between households and within households are reinforced by the same processes of unequal productive capacity, and by the monopolisation and manipulation of marriage alliances and attendant political processes. A more absolute form of ranking between ‘nobles’ and ‘commoners’ can develop as a result of the intensification of these processes. The degree of competition in status rivalry largely depends on the extent to which certain households are able to accumulate more wealth and can use this to increasingly monopolise access to, and control of, common rituals, worship of ancestors, genealogies and other status-defining principle. A stratification between elite and subordinate households within the same clan emerges as a consequence of an increasing polarisation between wealthy and poor households. Since status and rank is maintained and increased by a household’s ability to maintain its participation in clan rituals, genealogies, and so on, as households become impoverished they lose their rights to participate in these status-building activities and lose rank in an absolute sense. Poorer households lose their social identity and are re-invested with the only one available to them, as dependants or clients of richer and more powerful households within the clan.

This process of 'sloughing off' poorer households and their reduction to client status leads to the emergence of elite and commoner strata within the same clan or phratry which will cross-cut all clans within a given territorial unit. An aristocratic elite tends to emerge, defined essentially by its relations to land, wealth, dynastic alliances, genealogical ordering and ritual knowledge, and differentiated from a commoner substratum that retains a reduced and politically insignificant kinship ordering.

These tendencies towards increasing stratification are not self-contained and endogenous processes. One feature of a number of ethnographic cases of 'Crow-Omaha' systems deserves particular mention in this respect. This is that they are often highly unstable structures that have been historically incorporated into extensive trading networks that allow forms of wealth to be accumulated and that generate different kinds of demand from those which had existed previously. It is as if a society that had formerly been relatively closed (where rank had been ordered and directed by kinship and alliance) was 'burst open' and new relations of dominance came to develop, based directly on the ability to accumulate wealth and to use it to succeed in the wider arena of competitive status rivalry. One might speculate therefore that the difference between elementary and transitional structures may have something more to do with their position within some larger system and the extent to which the demands of that system come to penetrate and disrupt the ordering of political and economic relations within an elementary structure. However, this need not be seen to be a passive affair by the local societies concerned. There would be many advantages for lower-ranking groups to gain access to alternative sources of wealth and hence be able to elevate their status within an existing hierarchy. The transformation from elementary to transitional structure implies, therefore, the dissolution of one form of hierarchy for another to take its place, but where the same cultural elements may be in existence and their possession is now a matter essentially of overt wealth distinctions, rather than genealogical distance or ideological claims to founding ancestors.

The primary aim in this chapter is to examine the relevance of these general principles for our understanding of later European prehistory. We obviously do not intend trying to elaborate any further on the nature of Omaha kinship systems as things in themselves. This is far better done at the level of ethnography. However, we do have a situation available to us in which we can understand the larger regional and inter-regional condition to which this particular social structural response can be related. We can also locate the existence of these types of structures in a given historical sequence and assess their implications for later social change in a specific set of historical conditions. In this respect, such a study may eventually contribute to our understanding of how and to what extent such systems may be considered 'transitional' in real historical terms.

The Homeric texts and their implications

In a discussion of the local societies of eighth-century Greece, we are drawn inexorably to the use of the Homeric texts. To do this requires making clear the manner in which one intends to use them and how this relates to the general debate as to their meaning (cf. Finley 1972; Snodgrass 1974). First, there seems to be no reason to participate in the argument concerning whether the texts refer to a particular or multiple social and

historical realities. Instead we feel it wise to consider them as bodies of improvised epic traditions that are making a series of statements concerning the nature of the ideal society that should exist for members of the Ionian Greek aristocracy of the eighth century, for whom the texts were intended. To say that the texts constitute an ideal 'world view' for a particular stratum in eighth-century Greek society does not in any way assume that this was the socio-economic reality of that century. Quite the contrary; the texts are best treated as the elaborated ideology of a particular class, whose bases of authority were fragile and potentially threatened by new sets of politico-economic forces not necessarily within their control. Second, while we may formally demonstrate that the texts are heterogenous in origin, this only goes to show that they share this quality with many other forms of mythical and epic thought and suggests that they follow the general mode of mythical construction that Lévi-Strauss described as 'bricolage' (Lévi-Strauss 1966). While to establish that discrepancies or inconsistencies exist in the construction of the texts may be useful on formal grounds, it by no means implies that they were discrepant to the audience for whom they were intended. If we follow Lévi-Strauss's definition of myth as a series of events in search of a structure, it is quite clear that such a rationalising concern is an inappropriate means of penetrating the modes of thought of the Greek aristocracy, for whom the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were essentially the codification of their 'world view'.

The Homeric texts are, therefore, best treated as the product of the societies of the eight-century for whom they were the conscious representation of an ideal set of values, the uncritical acceptance of which was essential for the continuing dominance of a particular stratum, and for whom the very act of recording an oral epic in the written word indicated a growing awareness of the threatening emergence of a contrary state of affairs. To speak of an 'Homeric society' does not, of course, imply that an eighth-century ideological framework was made up of real social events that had existed in the past and which were put together and articulated as an ideal 'charter' for eighth-century aristocratic social action. The error here would be to assume that by extending back to an appropriate historical period one can slip from eighth-century ideology to tenth- or ninth-century reality, whereas, in fact, we have to assume that the Homeric texts are the product of a long tradition of oral poetry that always functioned in the realm of the aristocratic ideal, at whatever period and in whatever form it took, and can never at any time have been wholly consistent with a reality that only the archaeological record can tell us about.

So what were the salient features of this ideal society that served to motivate aristocratic behaviour and project a stable, natural order to human affairs? We may best begin with the bases of stratification and the separation of nobility from commoner. One current explanation of early Greek kinship implies the presence of tribe and phratry in Homeric times as the equivalent of non-exogamous clans and sub-clans respectively (Humphreys 1978:196). This would see the phratry as a division of the whole society, with the *genos* as an aristocratic sub-clan, embedded within the phratry and emerging from it as increasing status differentiation led to a hardening of the distinction between aristocrat and commoner in post-Homeric times. Homeric accounts indicate the use of kinship, genealogical and ritual idioms for the separation of noble from commoner statuses, even though some mobility between the two strata may have been possible. Whether these clans and sub-clans had a more coherent basis in Late Mycenaean times is difficult to judge, although if the conical clan structure of the aristocratic *genos* lies

behind the complex series of grades and statuses recognised in the Linear B texts then it may be that it was the *genos* that emerged from the phratry, as junior lines were sloughed off the latter to form an undifferentiated commoner stratum within the larger kinship unit (cf. Goldman's analogous description for Polynesia 1970: chapter 21). The recognition of a stronger continuity in basic structural principles from Late Mycenaean to Dark Age will, in this case, need to be accepted. The non-noble commoner stratum was clearly not an undifferentiated whole in relation to those of noble rank. The texts refer fleetingly to a category of dependent clients *(thetes)*, in addition to slaves, who were property-less and homeless and were dependent members of noble households working for a salary and/or their maintenance (Austin and Vidal-Naquet 1977:201). However, the bulk of the commoner stratum were freemen and through membership of the phratry owned land, property and political rights and statuses. The treatment that Odysseus is forced to mete out to Thersites at a public meeting to discuss the progress of the war implies that these rights extended to participation in the major decisions made by the nobility. The phratry had its own rituals, meeting place and territory and, if at a certain period the *genos* was a status distinction and still embedded within the phratry, this might also explain the need for joint meetings and the presence of a central focus within the phratry territory, where a core of pre-eminent men were resident. The noble stratum itself was also not an undifferentiated whole but contained within it a series of grades and statuses that were the object of intense rivalry between noble households. The distinction of nobility gave rights to participate in special rituals, in ancestral worship at special territorial shrines, and to the divine sanction of genealogies, with the most important nobles tracing descent from the gods on either the male or the female side. It also gave the right to gain honour from personal combat in which assailants were matched to each other in terms of status as long as they were unrelated to each other through kinship or affinal ties (see, for example, Diomedes' refusal to fight Glaucus after the latter traces his genealogy and a guest friendship is detected; they exchange armour instead). The evaluation of relative status through the comparison of illustrious genealogies is a dominant theme in the *Iliad* but a number of mechanisms existed to manipulate relative rank, with religious manipulation by household heads, claims on the intervention and aid of divine and ancestral agents and the arrangement of propitious marriages and guest-friendships all playing a central role.

The Homeric marriage strategy has, in particular, been exposed to much debate, due to the fact that it has been treated as an institution, to be defined by a set of normative rules, rather than as a flexible strategy within a wider context of status rivalry between noble households (cf. Finley 1954; Snodgrass 1974). The existence of bridewealth and dowry, monogamy and polygyny in the texts has been used to demonstrate inconsistencies, when in fact their co-existence as part of the general strategy of marrying up is well attested in comparative sources (cf. Tambiah 1973) and is perfectly consistent with the ideals of Homeric society. The principal marriage strategy was for a lower-ranking noble to compete with others to increase the status of his household through gaining a wife from a higher-ranking household. To achieve this the prospective bridegroom had to offer richer gifts than his competitors, and it was this demonstration of the amount of wealth that could be mobilised by the bridegroom's family and alliance network that influenced the father's decision (Finley 1954:18–19). Hence higher rank was achieved through establishing alliances with those of superior status and this in turn depended on ability to mobilise sufficient wealth by calling upon the aid of one's existing network. No positive

marriage rules existed to prevent household heads and elder siblings from disposing of daughters and sisters in any way that would contribute to the wealth, power and support of the household. The power and rank of a household could also be reduced by exhausting its wealth, a strategy adopted by Penelope's suitors. By staying in Odysseus' house as guest friends, they had to be given food and gifts, and this served both as a constant drain on the household's wealth and as a pressure on Penelope to decide on one of them before news of Odysseus' fate could determine the right of Telemachus to succeed to his title (Finley 1972). While the case of Penelope may be exceptional, the general rule of single monogamous marriage and the importance attached in this case to marrying the 'widow' in order to gain legitimate access to Odysseus' title as king of Ithaca, imply that rivalry over claims to title was strongly bound up with success in contracting a marriage with a household of higher rank. It was Odysseus, after all, who was considered clever not to have competed with Menelaus for Helen, since he knew that the latter was wealthier and more illustrious than himself, and, in losing, he would have been shamed and have lost respect. It is Achilles who makes the remark, when refusing Agamemnon's offer of his daughter in marriage, that he should find a son-in-law 'more kingly than himself. On the other hand, the gift of daughters without competition, together with dowry, could be used to create a desirable alliance, particularly with an external ally, and the giving of a daughter and gifts seems to have possessed implications of dependency in accepting the offer. When Achilles refuses Agamemnon's offer, together with numerous gifts to recompense for the insult made to him by the abduction of Briseis, he does so by twice damning Agamemnon for treating him 'like a wanderer without honour' in offering his daughter in this way. This resembles the way that Patroclus and Phoenix had been taken in by Achilles' father, Peleus (Redfield 1975:16). Little more needs to be said: while, ideally, wife-givers ranked higher in Homeric society and the ideal marriage was an hypogamous one, the strategy was in fact highly flexible and contingent upon immediate circumstances of political advantage and personal honour. Sons of higher-ranking households were expected to take wives from outside the kingdom, or else one assumes a high rate of endogamous marriage among elite households, rather than marriage to the daughters of lower-ranking families within their own kingdom. The latter did occur as a means of gaining wealth from lower-ranking nobles, but one can only assume that to do this would have been considered undesirable and would result in the undermining of claims to high rank. Hence a number of factors combine to ensure that it would be the highest-ranking households that would gain most access to local sources of wealth and would use them to create the widest and densest network of external alliances. Expansion of their own household depended on these alliances, and through them lower-ranking nobles would become dependent on their superordinates to gain the advantages, if not the resources, necessary for the own local reproduction.

Kinship was not, therefore, the means by which unequal relations between households were ordered. On the contrary, it would appear that kinship ties were established through ranking and that the form which kinship took was determined by an unstable ranking structure and a fluid and competitive alliance structure. Power struggles between aristocratic factions were therefore the reality of marriage and guest friendship strategies, and determined the importance attached to inter-dynastic marriage for claims to authority and also the dangers of usurpation through the unfaithful wife, or the wife taken by guile

and stratagem. Guest friendship formed the non-marriage counterpart of the same alliance strategy. A guest friendship alliance between noble households was as binding as marriage and retained its strengths as a bond over several generations (for example, Diomedes' and Glaucus' case is a demonstration of the significance attached to the three-generational bond found elsewhere in the Homeric texts: cf. Pearson 1973). Guest friendship was mediated by the exchange of gifts and, like marriage, was not necessarily between equals. Agamemnon's guest friend in Ithaca, for example, was not Odysseus but a lower-ranking noble, Amphimedon, and it was to the latter that Agamemnon came to seek help in persuading Odysseus to join him in the expedition against Troy (Finley 1972:119). Hence gaining an illustrious guest friend abroad was fundamental to raising status at home, both in terms of respect gained, and the gifts and other resources acquired, while inability to maintain and renew guest friendship was a sign of declining power and an opportunity for rivals to move in (Finley 1972:120). It is significant in this respect that guest friendship was more commonly associated with the establishment of bonds between noble elites of different kingdoms than between high-ranking and low-ranking nobles of the same kingdom, given the obligations of the internal ranking structure and the external alliance structure that separated the two as alternative strategies. While it is true that inter-dynastic marriages were crucial for royal status, the pressure on high-ranking nobles to marry daughters down rather than with outsiders (the more desirable strategy) must have been part of the flux of constraints on aristocratic power and a function of the degree of centralisation of authority. Finally, as Pearson, Friedrich and others have argued, claims to higher status were part of a *cursus honorum* that could not be achieved within the lifetime of any one individual (that is, they could not be represented as the personal achievement of an individual) but depended on demonstrating that the rights and obligations of a particular rank position had been maintained over a number of generations before its achievement was formally verified by citing the relevant exploits and achievements of ancestors in the ritualised recitation of genealogies (cf. Pearson 1973). Social mobility was therefore inter-generational rather than intra-generational, and a family line which failed to maintain its obligations or had not ruled within three generations could be demoted from royal to noble rank or from noble to commoner (Pearson also cites Ralph Linton's comments on the Irish texts as a general proto-Indo-European phenomenon; Pearson 1973:160). Friedrich's proposition that Homeric kinship terminology was of the Omaha class would therefore be consistent, in very general terms, with the Homeric ideals of strong agnatic succession, the strength of the sibling bond, and a three-generation-defined field in which all individuals belonging to this line are forbidden as marriage partners as a function of their terminological merging into a single kin block. It would also account for the significance these rules have for succession to title, inheritance and support for claims to higher status in a wider social structural field, that would be, in Lévi-Strauss's characterisation, in 'a state of permanent upheaval'.

If competition for rank was intense and subject to frequent alterations in status, it would appear that representations of status took on the inverse appearance which, quite understandably, stressed permanence and the unalterability of the bases to power and authority. Status insignia were named and they possessed their own genealogies, confirming the right of the holder to occupy the position signified by them. Agamemnon's royal staff, for instance, could be traced to a divine origin through Pelops to his sons and finally to Agamemnon as grandson (*Iliad,* 2. 100ff.). As Finley has noted,

there were strict lines of giving and gifts were carefully graded and ranked as to their equivalence in status terms (Finley 1972:113). Glaucus was considered to have gone mad because after establishing rank equality with Diomedes he then proceeded to exchange gold armour for bronze. Personal combat between aristocrats was a highly ritualised and unequal affair, in which lower-ranking nobles were effectively incapable of killing higher-ranking nobles, and nobles and commoners effectively appear barred from combat with each other. Hence royal, noble and commoner statuses as such appear as a fixed set of categories defined by reference to ritual prerogatives (for example, at burial), the rights to participate in different categories of ritual and ritualised combat, and the divine sanction of genealogies.

Possibly even the right to trace a genealogy was a noble prerogative (rather than commoner descent from a vague eponymous ancestor) and these categories were also defined by rights to the possession of certain objects, modes of dress and behaviour. In this respect we cannot do full justice to Redfield's treatment of the metaphorical associations in Homeric thought and their implications for our understanding of the more material representations of the ideal categories of status. These are of relevance for our understanding of European Bronze Age societies in general. A central concept that he discusses is that of *kleos* (loosely, the reputation gained through being talked about by others) which, as a special type of social identity, was associated with places, events and objects that recorded the personal history of a famous man (Redfield 1975:32–5). Only a noble possessed *kleos* and it could be lost or increased, depending on his actions. It was a quality that he inherited from his father and which he was responsible for handing on undiminished, if not increased, to his descendants. Homeric honour lay at the basis of claims to status, and had therefore to be fixed in the memories of men through the use of epic and oral tradition, for which material representations were an important mnemonic device. Armour, for example, had a history; men were known by it and its *kleos* could be inherited from father to son, or a warrior acquired the *kleos* of that armour when he won it from a rival on the battlefield. Stripping the body of its armour was a form of personal defilment and a means of dishonouring the dead; it preceded mutilation and disposal of the body by throwing it to the dogs and carrion (Friedrich 1973). Honourable burial was associated with purification and the continued existence of the person's *kleos.* The technique of noble burial, for example, required its purification through destruction by burning being opposed to its survival; hence the fire would only be hot enough to burn the flesh and would leave the bones intact.[2] The bones were collected, folded in layers of fat and buried deep in a vessel with heavy stones, and a gravestone was set above them so that no change to the place or the state of the body would occur. These strong associations of personal honour, integrity and social identity which the individual held in trust for his descent line also warn against an autonomous militaristic interpretation of weapon finds in the Bronze Age. Renfrew has traced the relationship between weapons and personal status to the very inception of bronze metallurgy in the Aegean and has argued that the development of metallurgy in the Aegean is largely a consequence of it (Renfrew 1973:325). The same argument could as easily be applied to the development of metallurgy for Bronze Age Europe as a whole. Equally, we should not be surprised to find that the producer of these weapons was treated as a highly ambiguous, if not deviant, character. Hephaestus produced weapons and armour for the gods; his skill was envied by all, and yet, as Finley points out, his physical deformities set him apart. The 'limping

monster' was both admired for his skills and yet made an object of ridicule due to his incapacity to be like other men (Finley 1972:83).

If a number of strategies were available for manipulating access to higher status within the ranks of the nobility, clearly their realisation was not rooted in a free-floating social structure. Ultimately, success depended on the capacity to accumulate, display and distribute wealth; in other words these strategies have to be related to the political economy of Homeric society. As discussed above, wealth and prestige were measured by the ability to give better gifts than rivals. Moreover, wealth was evaluated in bronze, gold and occasionally iron (the former having a traditional value for Homer's audience) and was realised in manufactured status items such as goblets, tripods, cauldrons, ornaments, armour and personal weapons that were locked away in a treasury until the appropriate moment for a gift presented itself. However, in terms of the calculations involved, gift-giving, particularly between guest friends, has a seriousness that implies a more consistent transactionalism than symbolic exchanges between friends. A major distinction between two categories of wealth, or spheres of circulation, can be made in the Homeric texts, in terms of the possibilities of their local production. Often a man's wealth is measured in terms of the number of sheep and cattle that he possesses. Livestock was clearly the basis of Odysseus' wealth (*Odyssey*, book 14); a man's status is often appraised in terms of the number of cattle and flocks he possesses, and cattle were used as a unit of value (Finley 1972:76). While the economic base of the *oikos* was in land, it was the land of the plain rather than the hills that was important, both for agriculture and, more important economically, as pasturage for cattle. The rearing of cattle and sheep was therefore the substantive basis for the wealth of the Homeric household (Finley 1972:69).[3] However, treasure used as gifts, while valued in cattle, was made from metals or other materials, such as ivory and imported woods. As Finley has noted, the term treasure had very specific connotations and was not the exchange equivalent of local wealth, such as cattle, sheep and their products (Finley 1972:70–71). The highest sphere of circulation, and the wealth exchanged between the highest-ranking noble households which had to be accumulated to participate in the strategies of status elevation, were essentially made up of imported materials and craft products from outside a kingdom or the Greek world as a whole.

This obviously argues against the reality of the often stated ideal in the Homeric texts of the natural autarky of the *oikos*. The Homeric *oikos*, and the larger political structure of which it was a part, were dependent on external exchange in a very significant manner, for metals, slaves and other luxury items that were basic to competitive gift-giving and the reproduction and elevation of political status. The archaeological evidence would appear to support our case (the following is based on a summary available in Frankenstein 1976). Not only does the Aegean regain a cultural unity from the tenth-century onwards, but by the middle of the ninth century Greek quarters had been re-established in local towns on the Cilician-Syro-Palestinian coast. Rils, Boardman, Coldstream and others have referred to the propitious political conditions for the expansion of Greek trade in the Near East at this time (Riis 1970; Boardman 1973; Coldstream 1968). Thus we have the Greeks in direct contact with the major western Asiatic trading sphere of Urartu, Phrygia and north Syria from the middle of the ninth century. The object of Greek 'trade' cannot be satisfactorily resolved. The need for iron and copper is the motive usually attributed to Greeks establishing trading posts in Cilicia

and Syria (e.g. Boardman 1973:42–5). To these, Riis adds requirements for timber and oil, and probably linen too (Riis 1970:160ff.). Both believe that the Greeks would have supplied their Near Eastern trading partners with slaves, to which Riis adds 'hides, cattle, furs and dried fish'. All of this fits closely with the motives behind the twin principles of the Homeric political economy: wealth gained through warfare and raiding (including, in particular, slaves) and cattle, sheep and their products as the major units of wealth production within the *oikos* and probably the phratry/inter-phratry economy. Logically, therefore, we are forced to argue against the autonomy of the *oikos* as a self-contained unit of production and consumption, and to suggest instead that it formed the hub of a complex external alliance network, through which both symbolic exchanges and utilitarian exchanges were mediated. If we assume that aristocratic *oikoi* were ranked and that these in turn mediated emerging class-defined relations with their phratry commoner members, then we might assume that the larger entity formed the major politico-economic unit. A number of these in a region recognised the head of one of the units as pre-eminent and worthy of the title *basileus* and as being responsible for negotiations with those of similar title elsewhere. All this is speculative and based on logical criteria, but it must be assumed that increasingly the archaeological evidence will depict a more complex reality than the aristocratic ideal of the Homeric texts. Partly these ideals may be a function or our misunderstanding of certain meanings within the texts. For example, the often cited antipathy that the Greeks had against 'traders', such as the Phoenicians, need not necessarily refer to autarky versus external exchange relations existing as a reality, but may be an aversion to the practice of an open 'trading for gain' strategy which would threaten the very basis of aristocratic control over local surplus production for exchange. This could undermine the system of exchange embedded in a political alliance system based on guest friendship and intermarriage. Our attention should also not be distracted from the fact that in the contexts of the eighth century, Greek economic expansion had in all probability reached a scale in which new politico-economic forces, engendered by the inability of a local aristocracy to maintain a 'closed system', were a real and overt threat to their internal political control. Significantly, Finley concludes his chapter on 'Household, kin and community' in *The World of Odysseus* by pointing out that the first signs of a breaking down of the perceived inferiority of the *demos* is witnessed in the recognition by Homer of changes in the society of his day. Homer longs for an older, ideal order, based on the moral principles of kingship and a responsible aristocracy (Finley 1972).

Central Europe

A few general observations for the later Urnfield/HaC/D periods in Central Europe will be sufficient, we hope, to show that a number of concepts used in our earlier discussion are also relevant to the analysis of roughly contemporary Central European societies. Obviously, the differences between the 'Homeric societies' and the rest of Europe at this time should not be ignored, but the most superficial survey suggests strong similarities in underlying principles, even though they may not have been realised to the same degree.[4]

Other authors have already suggested that the Later Urnfield societies were highly stratified (Müller-Karpe 1959). While most Urnfield settlements are dense affairs and

heavily defended, their internal arrangement suggests the concentration of a number of extended households of varying size and structure. In many cases, the variation in house type could be a response to domestic size and function within a given stratum. The existence of the larger U-shaped or 'megaron' style buildings, on the other hand, implies a more clear-cut status differentiation, possibly of a royal/noble or a noble/non-noble kind, with the former being the more likely. Supporting evidence comes from the burial rites which include tumuli with inhumation or cremation in contrast to the predominant use of a variety of inurned cremations. The grave goods also suggest social distinctions, particularly in the phases of 'rich' burials of BzD/HaA1 and HaB2–3. Weapons and armour are again significant (for example in the Caka group) and may be an important aspect of social status, suggesting the existence of more subtle gradings within each of these strata. The larger defended settlements are also not a uniform feature of the Urnfield cultures but develop in certain areas in specific, if yet unknown, circumstances. But as Coles and Harding (1979) have pointed out, they are rarely isolated phenomena, but instead form foci for a lower-order, dispersed hierarchy of more open settlements within a defined territory. Hence their internal organisation is unlikely to be self-contained, but results from their role as centres of more dispersed political units, perhaps similar to the system in late HaC/D in southwest Germany (Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978).

In that paper we attempted to show that the Heuneburg domain in HaD1 was made up of a number of smaller semi-autonomous political units which had become dependent upon one of their number for their economic and political reproduction and, due to this, recognised its pre-eminent status. The reasons for this lay largely in the advantage that the 'Heuneburg' paramount held in monopolising access to foreign luxury and status items from elsewhere in Central Europe and from the Mediterranean world. This centralisation of political and economic power was made possible, for a period, by the fact that this paramount had already extended control over a widespread, if localised, internal and external alliance network. It was with the paramount that other foreign trading partners came to mediate in order to gain access to local domestic surpluses. Hence this type of political structure could not have been generated through external contacts, but these conditions allowed the further development of tendencies towards increased hierarchisation that already existed in their HaB/C antecedents. There is also no reason to assume that the HaD situation was exceptional, rather than being one phase, if an intense one, in a more general cycle of Central European/southern connections, extending over several centuries. The BzD and HaB2–3 expansionist phases in the Urnfield cultures coincided with two major phases of known political and economic expansion in the eastern Mediterranean, the Late Mycenaean phase and the period just prior to and around the formation of the Greek city states and expansion in the west. Also when we look northwards, we find that the HaB2 3 phase coincides with the major expansion of the Atlantic Bronze Age in the eighth-century and with the eastward shift in settlement and penetration south to the Lausitz area which characterise the major changes that occur in southern Scandinavia in M V–VI. These continent-wide pulsations and contractions in economic expansion occur over long periods of time and deserve more attention than they can be given here.

In an evolutionary sense, therefore, the appearance of an HaD type structure in Central Europe cannot be explained synchronically but only be showing how a set of political and

economic conditions already existed in the pre-HaD 1 monopoly phases which allowed these systems to be so easily penetrated by external trading systems and by demonstrating how they adjusted to the demands of the latter. We must therefore assume that the Heuneburg political economy and social structure is essentially that of a 'Bronze Age' society, with HaD1 representing the logical limits of that type of social formation.

We also argued (Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978) that centralisation of power in the Western Halstatt province was not a function of 'dominance through might' or of direct economic control. Rather, it depended on the manipulation and drawing together of the strands of a complex marriage, alliance, and exchange network which involved both vertical exchanges between subordinate and superordinate and external alliances and gift exchanges between apparent equals. There are numerous later classical references to similar practices, but perhaps one of the nearest in time to our period is Xenophon's account of his meeting with the Thracians in the early fourth century (*Anabasis* 7.3–1 owe this reference to Mrs S.C. Humphreys). A particularly striking feature of this description is the emphasis that Xenophon gives to his observations on food-sharing and the distribution of wealth from political leaders to their subordinates, symbolically witnessed by the Thracian chief giving bread and meat to his dependants and guests and leaving little for himself. An exchange of gifts had to be made to his guests to signify equality in relationship and as a pact of friendship and co-operation, a practice which by then was only a vague folk memory to the Greeks who had come ill-prepared for such an exchange.

Marriage alliance must have formed a significant aspect of these exchange networks. Assuming that wife-givers ranked higher than wife-takers and that the taking of wives from a household of higher status than the husband's conferred prestige and a claim to higher rank on the latter, then one can predict that this should be archaeologically demonstrated in the burial circumstances. There is every reason to suppose that cases will be found of female burials with rich but well worn personal accoutrements that are not of a local style, but were the personal items that she brought with her from her father's house as visible displays of her high rank. She would be allowed to keep these to signify her close ties with her natal group and the extension of her father's interest in her well-being. These well worn heirlooms, signifying her distinct status, would finally have been allowed to accompany her at burial, since her children, particularly daughters, would be under her husband's authority and belong to his natal group.[5]

Finally, we should emphasise that the extent to which exchange relations are the dominant means of ordering political relations depends largely on the stability of the situation. In the case of the Western Hallstatt chiefs, their role as 'middlemen' would have assured prosperity and stable economic and political conditions, as well as the dominant role of alliance and exchange in the ordering of political relations. Elsewhere this need not have been the case. It is more than probable that these chiefdoms met increases in demand from their southern trading partners by expanding exchange relations with more remote populations to the north. These in turn would have gained their surpluses and, in particular, specialist products for trade, by establishing even more distant links. Hence a dendritic growth of alliance networks would serve to integrate ever larger regions and to re-orientate local economic flows increasingly to these new centres in the south.

However, as we have already seen, exchange and warfare are simply two instances of the same structure in these societies, and peripheral expansion at the beginning is far more likely to take the form of raiding and generalised warfare before more stable alliance relations can be established. This would be particularly so where the capture of slaves would have been an important requirement. Hence the relatively peaceful Western Hallstatt chiefdoms would have encouraged the growth, on their northern periphery, of a corona of more unstable politics that were more likely to depend on raiding and generalised warfare as a means of gaining the surpluses needed to satisfy the demands of their southern trading partners. This outer periphery would have expanded outwards as, internally, former relations of warfare were consolidated and transformed into more peaceful and stable forms of interaction. To the south of the Western Hallstatt chiefdoms and nearer to the true centres of consumption and demand for Central European products in the western Mediterranean, a different type of polity would have emerged. Here it would not have been possible to maintain political control over access to foreign luxury and status items, since even relatively low-ranking individuals would have been able to enter (or at least could not have been prevented from entering) into exchange with external traders for these items. Hence a far more commercialised and competitive system would be generated in which political dominance could not be maintained by controlling monopoly access, but rather would depend in straightforward estimations of wealth as each household, lineage, or clan competed and struggled to become richer than its rivals. These would be the conditions in which 'flattened' ranking systems would develop, lacking any kind of pyramidal structure, since political leaders would not be able to bind subordinates to them in this way. If anything, there would be a multiplication of chiefly claims as political authority fragmented and almost every adult male had the opportunity in theory to accumulate the necessary wealth to make claims to high status. One can only speculate here that it would be these kinds of systems that would develop around the Greek/Etruscan cities at the head of the Adriatic and the Po valley and around the major Greek trading entrepôts in southern France. Equally, it would also be this type of political structure that would expand inland accompanying commercial expansion into Central Europe in the period prior to the Roman conquest of the western provinces. The West Halstatt type of structure would, in turn, be pushed further and further north as the necessary peripheral expansion that accompanied the commercial expansion of the core. The relative contraction and expansion of these different politico-economic structures in space, therefore, may be the ultimate result of a widening incorporation of western Europe into the commercially integrated economies of the western Mediterranean during the last two to three centuries of the first millennium BC.

The Later Bronze Age of southern Britain and the Atlantic Bronze Age as a regional economy

The late Middle Bronze Age (MBA) has been selected firstly because of my own familiarity with the material and also because in a number of recent papers Ann Ellison has made available extremely valuable interpretations of the different categories of evidence for this period. It should be made clear that the discussion was stimulated by her

explanation of what these material culture patterns represent and was only made possible through her analysis of the material (Ellison 1982).

From our discussion so far, we would predict that local residential units would be composed of patrilineal, patrilocal extended families, perhaps lineages, with a strong male focus (father and sons or male siblings under the authority of the eldest brother). Ellison has distinguished a modular unit as the basic residential group for the downland settlements of the late MBA (Ellison 1978; 1982). She distinguishes between a 'male' structure (her major residential unit) and a 'female' structure (one of her ancillary structures). The larger 'male' residential unit is identified by function, domestic activity and by size. A number of sites appear to have contained multiple units of this kind (such as Plumpton Plain A, Cock Hill, Itford Hill). The partial excavations at Rams Hill revealed only one such structure but there may well have been others in such a clearly defined site (Bradley and Ellison 1975). However, the size of the major residential units also varies between sites, implying that any increase in unit size was accommodated by enlarging this single structure rather than building a duplicate. Their size and the activities carried on within these units would strongly suggest they were multi-male residential units, while the ancillary structure formed a multi-female domestic production unit. This is more or less in line with Ellison's findings. This pattern would also be confirmed by the burial evidence. While Ellison has postulated the existence of kin clusters in a number of cremation cemeteries, evidence for the separation of males from females within the cluster would also be indicative of a strong male agnatic focus. Our argument would also imply that local settlements would vary in size in relation to their dominance within a larger network of competitive exchange and status rivalry. Hence a site like Rams Hill would not be the centre of a dispersed tribal society in which links between their segments were genealogically ordered, but would have formed the residence of a pre-eminent group that owed its position to greater control over local processes of alliance and exchange. In this case, local settlements would display a high degree of autonomy; they would be exogamous and form the minimal and most corporate production and consumption unit. Consequently the distribution of pottery, stone, bone, wood and antler artefacts indicative of domestic production should reveal tight stylistic clusterings characteristic of co-residential group autonomy and solidarity. This would appear to be the case at least for Ellison's heavy duty wares, although the nature of the material presents the problem that very slight stylistic variation may have had a considerable local symbolic significance.

So far we have stressed the existence of strong local autonomous co-residential groups, which varied in size depending upon relative demographic and economic strength. However, a glance at Ellison's study shows that a larger pattern of interaction must have existed (cf. Ellison 1982, figure 3). MBA settlements of her type A tend to cluster, particularly when associated with one of her type B settlements. However, except for an increase in enclosure size, there seems to be little differentiate her types A and B settlements in terms of function or ascriptive status. The size range between the two types would indicate a gradient of increasing enclosure size which, at Rams Hill at least, appears to be as much a function of increased storage facilities as of increase in house size (or multiplication of major residential units). The presence of more bronze implements on the larger sites may well indicate access to greater wealth, but not necessarily a difference in ascriptive status from Ellison's type A sites. If such an

ascriptive status distinction existed, we would expect it to be represented internally on all sites as part of a horizontally defined elite/non elite distinction (cf. tumulus burial and secondary cremation at the Itford Hill cemetery). Fine wares are found in some frequency in the major residential units of all sites, regardless of size. If the uniformity of these fine wares and their clear association with food consumption are taken into account, then their distribution may well represent the extent of food-giving and other exchange relationships existing between settlements which were linked in a hierarchy of alliance and exchange. The fact that the fine ware pottery tends to be such a ubiquitous category implies that it was involved in a variety of different forms of exchange relationship and so its distribution will be too coarse grained to pick out particular variants. It is of course likely that more refined clusters may still be recognised, which can resolve this problem (cf. Ellison 1982). However, while we cannot assume that its distribution coincides with any particular political unit, it may well correspond with the alliance and exchange field of one of the dominant groups resident in a site of Ellison's type B. Also, as Ellison notes, the fine ware distributions tend to correlate with those of a number of the palstave and ornament categories, indicating not only that their production was embedded within these fields of alliance and exchange but that their distribution also shared this characteristic. This by no means implies centralised control over production and distribution. It is most unlikely that at this level of development monopoly control over the circulation of bronze could have been maintained. However, varying degrees of dominance and success in manipulating local and long distance exchange relations would obviously lead to certain groups accumulating more bronze and other metals/resources and supporting craftsmen with more sophisticated skills in the working of bronze. There is no evidence to suggest that we are dealing with some kind of redistribution economy, with Ellison's type B sites acting as political agents in the acquisition and internal redistribution of scarce resources. A more competitive picture emerges in which communities of varying size and power vied with each other in gaining political and economic advantage from local and inter-regional exchange relations, which by the late MBA had resulted in a number of settlements gaining a dominant position in some form of localised hierarchy. Ellison makes two other points of relevance to us here. First, she points to the location of her type B settlements on the junctions between the distributions of a number of her fine ware categories: a predictable pattern in competitive exchange (although not of a 'market' nature). This type of location might allow greater access by dominant groups to other exchange and alliance networks (for example, for the conversion of mundane items from one network into prestige objects in another). Second, she shows that there is a significant density of finds of weapons and some categories of ornaments around the major enclosures, suggesting that more specialised items may have been distributed from these sites. This may well be so, but it might also indicate that the enclosures were embedded in much smaller territories than one might think and that these densities are more accurate reflections of the size of the local exchange and alliance networks in operation.

For a number of reasons already documented, it is unlikely that, if such local hierarchies existed in the manner described, they could have been sustained in some form of local 'autarky', particularly in the case of the metals and possibility some of the finer pottery. They must have been located in some larger inter-regional exchange network and have been producing some kind of local surplus for exchange—hence the importance we

have attached here to the relative size of settlement representing in some gross fashion differences in labour power. But this raises the question of what these surpluses could be: four-post and six-post structures are known in some Late Bronze Age settlements. These buildings may be associated with food storage and their presence on these sites could suggest surplus production of agricultural foodstuffs, as well as animals and animal products. The number of pits and above-ground structures may increase with size of enclosure and, as Ellison shows, the larger enclosures have access to better quality soils than the smaller ones. The various production tasks such as skin-dressing, leather-working and textile production are found in the 'male' residential units, and all of these patterns suggest an emphasis on the rearing of livestock and the processing of animal products at this time. This may not have been uniform between the different sites. Who were these surpluses intended for?

All the settlements would appear, in varying degrees, to have been involved in production, with little evidence of marked specialisation between them. Consequently, it is unlikely that such surpluses were for internal consumption. Nor does it seem likely that they could have been consumed by other settlements in similar niches in downland environments. In fact, it seems more fruitful to view these upland settlements as forming one sector within a larger regional division of labour. Perhaps their location would best be understood as the result of a demand for upland products by communities situated in lowland river valleys or on the coast? Our evidence from pottery, metalwork and burial distributions indicates that dense populations were situated in riverine settlements along the middle and lower Thames estuary and on coastal and river estuary sites along the south coast (in the Brighton area?), Hampshire and Dorset (Christchurch?) and the East Anglian fens.

It is unlikely that these riverine and coastal settlements would have been similar to those known from the downlands for several reasons. First, if our thesis is correct, the downland settlements would have competed with each other for access to land for subsistence, the raising of livestock and food production. This would result in a dispersed settlement pattern with segregated political and economic units linked to each other through competition, status rivalry and, presumably, affinal ties. However, since access to external trade is vital for local political development, such settlements are also located for trade in much the same way as the coastal and riverine settlements, although the form of the settlement pattern was determined by the different role of these sites in the larger regional economy. Coastal and riverine settlements would be located to benefit directly from long-distance trade, in particular for the articulation of internal exchange networks and the pooling of resources for cross-channel trade. The movement of populations to these relatively specialised niches, in order to benefit from new sources of wealth through intensified long-distance trade, probably started well back in the Early Bronze Age and Late Neolithic with the transformation of long-distance trade in elite status items, not only metalwork, into the circulation of artefacts and other resources basic to the reproduction of local social groups. Eventually this may have led to gradual but quite distinctive changes in the demographic topology of southern Britain and have undermined the older centres of power established in the Neolithic. In this respect, the Wessex EBA could probably be understood as a temporary and possibly 'last ditch' fusion of Neolithic and EBA political practice before a complete transformation took place by the end of the period.

Second, while our knowledge of the nature of these riverine settlements is slight (one envisages extensive settlement areas such as at Fengate), the metalwork in particular gives some indication that centralisation of wealth and power was greater than in the upland settlements. Weapons as embodiments of personal status and prestige are found in all areas. But whereas in the uplands the weapons are usually of the small spearhead variety with only an occasional larger basal-looped spearhead or rapier (probably imported), these larger and technically more sophisticated status items are most frequently found in the Thames valley and East Anglia. Ornaments also appear to be relatively less important in these areas than elsewhere in southern Britain. The clear ceremonial-cum-prestige functions of these weapons, their numbers, and their technical sophistication would all suggest a much greater emphasis on aggressive rivalry and status competition in the structuring of these lowland communities. The process was probably very much of the same order as that seen on the downland, but the greater sources of wealth available would imply greater displays of consumption, more inflationary cycles of gift exchange for the establishment of political dominance and ranking, and very much larger support groups for local political leaders.

We might predict, therefore, that minimal political groupings in the lowlands were likely to extend beyond local kin groups and engage wider units of clan or sub-clan status with more complex patterns of internal ranking, combined with corporate action at higher levels of political competition. The uniformity of the weapon types would support the notion that control over their production was exercised by elites located at the head of fairly extensive socio-political groupings and alliance networks. In addition, their distribution along the Atlantic seaboard suggests that it was the elites of these lowland riverine settlements that were actively engaged in long-distance alliance formation and trading and that it was on their activities in these spheres that members of upland communities depended for their supplies of metals and other resources. These communities supplied livestock and animal products in return. if this thesis is broadly correct (admittedly there is little evidence besides the metal-work), then we can suggest that the economic base of the riverine/coastal communities lay in specialist craft production (particularly metalwork), in the processing of raw material for exchange and in the supply of manpower, skills and technology for riverine, coastal and marine transport. This would have been an even greater incentive for the incorporation of male dependants into local groups. Since dispersed occupation of land would be a less critical factor, we might envisage a greater tendency for co-operating groups to be co-residential.

So far, we have described the local political economy of the downland settlements, suggesting that local relations of production were dominated by patrilinear forms of recruitment (strongly agnatic?) and ranking, with competition between groups ordered through affinal relations and competitive exchange. Dominance in wealth accumulation through exchange formed the basis for local competition and status rivalry between groups. There is reason to suggest that the same principles dominated the structuring of lowland riverine settlements but, due to increased access to wealth through long-distance trade, these processes could be realised to a much greater degree. In addition, the two regions did not develop in isolation but were interlinked in a system of exchange that was not necessarily utilitarian in function. The emphasis on raising livestock, particularly cattle, on the chalk downlands (admittedly based on the Rams Hill excavations and Bradley's subsequent demonstration of what appear to be field/pasture divisions on the

downlands) must immediately raise the possibility that cattle circulated in the lowland river valley communities (if not everywhere) as a unit of value, and as a wealth item in ceremonial exchange. We already know from the Homeric texts how pervasive a social function livestock could play (although this does not specify its particular role) and we know that cattle played a dominant role in internal circulation at later periods. Besides the well known references in the Ulster Cycle, Tacitus in *Germania* observes that cattle were given to chiefs as gifts by their subordinates and that chiefs held more cattle than they needed for their own consumption (*Germania* 5). Also, cattle and sheep were paid in compensation for blood feuds and wife abduction (*Germania* 21), and they were used in brideprice (but apparently not dowry) together with horses and weapons (*Germania* 18). As we found in the Homeric texts, cattle are being used here as part of an internal network of prestations between subordinate and superordinate and in competition for status, and they appear to have been distinguished from gift exchanges between elites, which are more frequently associated with gifts of war-gear, bracelets, torcs and slaves (*Germania* 15). (This is discussed more fully in Middleton 1979.) If something like the same situation applies to the downland and riverine/coastal populations of the later Bronze Age, then we may be quite wrong in examining them as physically and socially separate entities. It also once again emphasises our more general conclusion that the same principle of exchange combines symbolic, political and utilitarian functions as part of a single political and economic dynamic, underlying a particular social structural response. In essence, we seem to be dealing with a situation in which weapons, combining both prestige and utilitarian functions (since warfare is a status preoccupation), ornaments, livestock and other items are being circulated and exchanged in complex, if as yet unknown, systems of social prestations and rivalry in the acquisition of personal status. In addition, there seems to be no reason to assume that inter-regional and long-distance trade was ever couched in purely 'economic' terms. As we shall see, the 'weapon complex' is widely associated with the formation of political alliances between elites, and the exchange of war-gear in general played a paramount symbolic role in mediating relations between widely separated political agents. External alliances would appear therefore to have depended on a different set of exchange relations than those operating internally within particular communities and to have depended far more significantly on the exchange of symbols of 'chiefly' status. The relative absence of these 'high prestige' weapons, for example, on the downlands or for that matter along the south coast, where there are extensive concentrations of utilitarian bronze metalwork, would suggest either their subordinate status to the Thames valley and East Anglian type of political structures or else the existence of a very different principle of political and economic organisation, in which political status and warfare were not so inextricably bound up with each other.

The Atlantic Bronze Age as a 'regional economy'

It has become commonplace in recent years to emphasise cross-channel connections between southern Britain and northern France and to urge that their inter-connectedness should override contemporary ethnocentric notions of inviolable boundaries (Burgess 1968). Collis has argued that the tendency to see the Channel as a block to communication is a recent view, and that in prehistoric times it was more likely to have been a means of access and of easier communication than overland routes (Collis 1971),

and Bradley has also urged that settlement on both sides of the Channel could well be viewed as part of a single system of interaction and exchange (Bradley and Ellison 1975:115). However, we lack the conceptual tools for understanding what kind of interaction was taking place. Simple trade seems inadequate; the emphasis on the 'weapon complex' among the imports suggests non-economic relations, and the overlapping patterns of similarity and dissimilarity imply interaction but also discreteness and specialisation in relations, as if some more specific rules were in operation than gratuitous gifts and opportunistic trading.

We suggest, therefore, that it might be fruitful to envisage a core area of the coastal provinces on both sides of the Channel forming a single regional economic system by at least the late MBA, participation in which drew their respective communities in closer association with each other and served to segregate them from their territorially attached hinterlands. Certainly, for southern Britain, this best fits the evidence for the increasing development and separation of the South East and its closer identity with northern France and Brittany than with most other parts of southern and northern Britain from this time onwards (a long-standing fact of British prehistoric and historic regional development, after all). By a regional economic system, we follow Wallerstein (1974) by defining it as a system containing a geographical division of labour such that the various sectors of production within it depend upon economic exchange with each other for their own self-maintenance. The whole need not be governed by a single political system, nor have a common culture; rather multiple political units and overlapping cultural systems will be linked to each other through their occupation of distinct roles in production and exchange, on which their growth and development will depend. Since a regional economy is characterised by inequalities in exchange and by differential access to its economic benefits, variation in the growth and development of its constituent political units takes on a regular appearance, to the extent that one can usually identify a core area of maximum growth, and peripheries characterised by varying degrees of underdevelopment. We have already suggested that in southern Britain upland settlements were more marginal and were dependent upon lowland communities for their access to the products of this larger economy. We would suggest that a similar pattern will be found for the hinterlands of these dominant coastal/riverine communities on both sides of the Channel. We have also suggested that long-distance exchange within this economy and its wider environs was structured by the political and economic relations between these dominant coastal communities. However, their relations with each other were by no means simple and appear to have been structured by differing degrees of specialisation and dominance in exchange. It is quite striking, for example, that the closest parallels of the large late MBA tool and ornament hoards concentrated in the Hampshire basin and East Sussex should be in the Normandy/Lower Seine basin area; or that the Lower Thames Valley, which had particular access to innovations in weapon technology, should have very close relations with communities in the Seine and Somme river valleys (cf. distributions of British rapiers and basal looped spearheads in northern France). Similarly, the Picardy pin ornament complex of northern-eastern France has its counterpart in the northern and eastern Kent coastal area. Dyadic, cross-channel links of this nature will be more clearly established as we obtain more fine-grained regional distributions of pottery and metalwork, but already a general picture emerges of 'twinning' relationships between different communities on either side of the Channel.

Also, the links are often expressed by similarities in functional categories of metalwork, with some imports, but display clear differences in preferences for particular stylistic and morphological characteristics (such as differences in palstave decoration, the sword series, basal looped versus peg hole spearheads). Hence there does appear to be a different pattern of interaction and exchange linking the cross-channel centres from that found for other centres along the same coastline. It is almost as if centres are specialising in different functional categories of metalwork where relatively easy coastal and riverine transport would be available, while cross-channel connections are maintained with a 'twin centre', perhaps as part of a separate exchange network to do with maintaining access to and supplying specialist sources of raw materials. This would also provide access to changing ideas in technical skills and styles of metalwork. If we add to this the inland exchange networks linking the coasts and river valleys to their hinterlands, then a complicated and possibly hierarchical set of exchange relations emerges as a possible pattern.

A hierarchical ordering of exchange relations would argue against randomised trading in different categories of metalwork, and for the existence of segregated 'spheres of exchange', with each sphere having very different implications for the ordering of political relations. Let us take the weapon complex as an example. During the late MBA and LBA in southern Britain, there develops an increasing emphasis on the production of large 'ceremonial' types of weapons for personal displays of status and display. In the MBA, it is not the case that weapons are mostly found in the Thames valley and East Anglian fens; rather it is the larger and more complex types that are found there, while smaller ranges of spearheads and knives/daggers are found widely distributed over the rest of southern Britain (Rowlands 1976: maps 15 and 27). However, the larger weapons are the more sophisticated items, having clear continental stylistic origins and quite overt associations with elite status, defined symbolically through warlike activity. Their restriction to the South East is consistent with the incorporation of this part of southern Britain into our larger regional economy and with the taking over by local elites of the status identity of other partners within the system: an identity which, as Burgess has often shown, is in turn particularly associated with the more dominant elites of the Urnfield cultures. Moreover, if elite exchange of weapons was partly the means by which alliances were formed between local rulers, then their increased distribution should be a good indicator for plotting the expansion of the regional political economy as a whole. In this respect, we are suggesting that an association between elite exchange, political alliance and the crucial role of the weapon complex in gift exchange formed part of a process of political and economic expansion, within which, from a local ruler's point of view, it was advantageous to be incorporated, given the economic benefits that it brought. This must surely have been a widespread feature of political process in the European Bronze Age as a whole, and there seems little need to look for mobile warrior aristocracies to explain the distribution of several elements of the Urnfield weapon complex into northern France and southern Britain during the late MBA. The same applies to HaC elements at a later date. Significantly, both occur at periods of general marked expansion in the Urnfield/Hallstatt C cultures as a whole, associated with periods of increased wealth and power (Alexander 1979; Coles and Harding 1979), and, in a wider context, with periods of major economic expansion for the centres of power in the Mediterranean world (Late Mycenaean and Greek/Phoenician expansion). With these two specific events, we are dealing with major

processes of political and economic expansion of continent-wide implications, but as such they form only peaks in a continuing process characteristic of the Bronze Age as a whole. It is for these reasons that we have suggested elsewhere that the introduction of the 'Ornament Horizon' bronzes and elements of the Urnfield weapon complex are likely to be regionally distinct and roughly contemporary events, rather than chronologically distinct periods, as Burgess has argued (Rowlands 1976:158; Burgess 1974). However, as Burgess has done much to show, the Urnfield elements introduced into southern Britain in the late MBA are not only restricted spatially to the South East, but also almost exclusively to the weapon complex, suggesting the establishment of political alliances at the highest level between communities situated in the Thames valley and the Seine basin area. The forms introduced break the indigenous MBA tradition, are rapidly absorbed and reproduced in local styles, and are subsequently introduced in well defined but far flung locations in South Wales and Ireland, again breaking local indigenous traditions (Burgess 1974). In between these locations the older traditions survive. The importance of these locations for the trade in metals to the Thames valley scarcely needs to be expanded upon. The same pattern occurs in the Wilburton complex where the changes are almost totally confined to the weapon complex, again of north French and ultimate Urnfield derivation, while distinctively local traditions in tools continue to be produced (mostly narrow-bladed palstaves in southern Britain and socketed axes in northern France). Similarly, finds of Wilburton material outside the South East are confined to South Wales and Ireland, repeating the late MBA pattern. Finally, by the eighth century, a much more complex pattern emerges with changes in the weapon complex being confined predominantly to the South East (Carp's Tongue sword complex material), followed by HaC material, and again we find the South East/South Wales/ Ireland axis. This last phase is also associated with a marked expansion in the range of wealth items in distribution (a generalised feature anyway of this period in Central and western Europe). Wider changes in pottery and settlement also suggest this was a period of significant development for the regional economy as a whole. It seems clear that unless one is willing to see mobile warriors and adventurers moving into southern Britain almost continuously over a period of six hundred years or more, we must assume that these consistent transformations in the weapon complex represent periods of growth and development in highly stable and expansionist political systems. These patterns of stable growth are also associated with significant developments in the amounts of metal, and presumably other resources, in circulation; in various recycling mechanisms for the retention and distribution of scrap and cake metal; and in sophisticated technical innovations in bronze casting, gold-working and sheet bronze working. All of these again suggest economic growth within stable political conditions. Equally, the increased distribution of weapon complex finds suggests that it was through establishing political alliances between Ireland, Wales and the Thames valley that the last area was able to penetrate other more distant local economies, and, through long-distance alliances and exchanges to mobilise and pool resources from these distant areas and feed them into the Atlantic Bronze Age regional economy.

We suggest that by the ninth century BC, therefore, these processes had resulted in the creation of a regional economy, with a core area centring on South East England and North West France, surrounded by a periphery penetrated by the core area for political and economic ends and extending from Ireland to the Low Countries and from the Loire

valley to South Wales. The production of high-quality and technically sophisticated metalwork is the most distinctive feature of the system, with skills in weapon technology an outstanding characteristic. We could go so far as to suggest that, since weapons were critical to acquiring the highest political status, their distribution within the regional economy is likely to indicate the centres of dominant political and economic power for the regional economy as a whole. Its leaders were most likely to have the densest alliance networks, including Urnfield/HaC/D partners in Central Europe.

It is only within this larger context that we may be able to understand fully what defined the Atlantic regional economy as a discrete entity. It is quite striking, after all, that the Atlantic Bronze Age has traditionally been referred to as a separate 'culture province', peripheral to, yet skirting, the Central European Urnfield complex (in its full sense, rather than weapon distributions). Hawkes (1948), Sandars (1957) and others have commented on the interaction between the two and have noticed that the boundaries between them often went through several phases of expansion and contraction (late HaA and late HaB-C), usually resulting in the transmission of a range of Urnfield/HaC elements (mainly prestige weapon/ornament types) into the Atlantic provinces. It would appear, therefore, that the two complexes were systematically related to each other in such a way that changes in the definition of the Urnfield culture complex would significantly affect its Atlantic counterpart.

We would argue that what maintained the boundary of the Urnfield culture complex in Central Europe was its economic orientation to the Mediterranean world, which went through several phases of expansion, contraction and territorial shifts in dominance. Simple distance and transport costs may well lie behind the limits to the incorporation of its northern and western peripheries into the Urnfield culture zone proper, but this is not to say that such areas were not systematically linked to it through both political and economic means. Also, we would expect periods of increased Urnfield 'contacts' in our Atlantic province to coincide with periods of economic expansion in the relations of Urnfield Europe with its outlets to the Mediterranean world. In other words, the Atlantic regional economy was systematically linked to its Urnfield counterpart, acting as a periphery of the latter which could supply raw materials and, in particular, metals. If the Atlantic province owed its wealth to the supply of raw materials, such as lead, tin, gold and possibly silver, to Urnfield trading partners (articulated politically at the highest levels), gaining in return copper, salt and manufactured items for local redistribution, then we have to view the development and expansion of the Atlantic regional economy very much in terms of the role it played in this larger geographical division of labour.

The expansion of the Atlantic regional economy—eighth to sixth centuries

An overwhelming characteristic of the Atlantic Bronze Age in the eighth to sixth centuries is the enormous increase in the production of bronze, the wider range of products available (particularly elite wealth items), and the much wider area over which this bronzework, in particular weapons, is to be found. The same characteristics have been noted independently by Briard for Armorica (Briard 1965); Burgess for South East England (Burgess 1968) and Butler for the Low Countries and Scandinavia (Butler 1956). Burgess has described the expansion of bronze production after the eighth century

in southern Britain as an ‘industrial revolution’, emphasising developments in both the range and distribution of the weapon complexes at this period. Barrett has also pointed to innovations in pottery types and in more specialised forms of pottery production (in Bradley and Ellison 1975). As is well known, many of the fortified enclosures in southern Britain were built at this time. Hawkes (1948) and Sandars (1957) recognised this as a period of expansion for late Urnfield and HaC influences into the Atlantic provinces and as a breakdown in the traditional boundary between the Atlantic and Central European ‘culture provinces’. Significant changes at the local and inter-regional level occurred at this time, implying reorganisation and shifts of dominance, although not necessarily chaos and disruption.

Contemporary developments in Central Europe, emerging by the end of the eighth and beginning of the seventh centuries, must be considered if we are to understand the subsequent development of the Atlantic provinces and the changes in their organisation. First, during late HaB and HaC, the economies of Central Europe were re-orientated towards new trading partners directly to their south. The Greeks were operating within the central Mediterranean by the eighth century; Etruscans and Greeks were in southern France during the seventh; Etruscans were established in the Po valley; and Greeks were at the head of the Adriatic by this time as well. It is well known that Greek and Etruscan expansion had a strong economic motive to gain more direct access to trade partners in Central and western Europe and, to satisfy these increased demands, re-orientation of production and trade in metals and other resources would have been required, as well as control over new communication routes. However, this would have resulted in the disruption of established economic links with Central Europe’s northern and western peripheries, and signs of dislocation can be expected to occur on the boundaries, as the different regional economies readjusted themselves to a new set of conditions.

Second, while one might have expected this to create an increased demand for metals from the Atlantic peripheries, the development of iron technology during HaC in Central Europe seems to have resulted in a decline in demand for the vast quantity of bronze that had been required during Hallstatt B for the production of heavy tools and weapons. These were now being replaced by iron counterparts. In Atlantic Europe, economies based on bronze production would have been threatened by a) the probable decline in exploitation of copper, its reduced distribution within Central Europe and therefore its decreasing availability in the dependent peripheries; and b) bronze surpluses in Central Europe or raw metals for bronze, as well as silver and gold, being supplied to southern trading partners, thereby making surpluses of copper, in particular, doubly difficult to obtain in the peripheries.

Thus the Atlantic bronze industries that had flourished during the eighth century based on access to Central European resources and products would have had to reorientate their procurement of supplies (particularly copper, some tin?) during the later part of the eighth century. Relations between Armorica and north-western Iberia during the St Brieuc-des-Iffs phase probably already involved the former area’s access to the tin resources for which the north-west is renowned. It is also possible that, at this stage, north-western Iberia was supplied with copper from Armorica, and indirectly from Central Europe, since there are few copper ores in this region, and certainly not enough to supply the bronze industry that developed there. The initial phases of bronze production in north-western Iberia is also heavily dominated by Armorican metal types, again suggesting that

Armorica was incorporated into the Atlantic regional system as a valuable supplier of tin. As Briard has noted, the coastal and island situation of most Carp's Tongue hoards in Armorica and the Loire area (Briard 1965:295) implies both the probable location of the centres of production and the crucial role of maritime communication at this time. One of the copper cakes in the Armorican Carp's Tongue material was suggested to be of Iberian type (Briard 1965:47 and 225) and large copper cakes as well as casting debris are frequently included in Carp's Tongue hoards. This suggests that a reorientation towards Iberia occurred during the Carp's Tongue complex phase of the Armorican LBA and that it became the major source of raw metals, principally copper and tin, for the Atlantic provinces. It also seems that this expansion to the south-west served to sustain high bronze production at a time when the Atlantic provinces could no longer depend upon Central European supplies of raw materials and products. Basing himself on a more thoroughgoing comparison of the Iberian and Armorican LBA III metalwork, Frankenstein has pointed out that the closest connections of the north-western Iberian industries are with the Loire valley and Armorica (Frankenstein 1976). Features such as the retention of slots on the shoulders and the engraved midribs of the swords suggest a major contact phase at the end of the St Brieuc-des-Iffs and the beginning of the Carp's Tongue phases in Armorica. Furthermore, many of the classic Carp's Tongue complex elements are not found in Iberia: the elaborate range of bronze hollow-cast arm and neckrings, the open fretwork, the cast razors and ornaments, decorated bronze plaques, and, most noticeably, the harnessing material, including the bugles. In addition, the tool complex developed in a peculiarly Iberian fashion with an emphasis on double looped palstaves and shows no influence from the socketed axes and winged axes characteristic of the Carp's Tongue complex in north-western France. In other words, Armorican influence in north-western Iberia is largely confined to the weapon complex and the technical innovations required for the local production of swords, spearheads, ferrules and probably shields. Hence the penetration and elaboration of bronze metalworking industries in the north-west demonstrates similar features to that found elsewhere in the Atlantic provinces: an emphasis on weapons through high-level elite exchange, undertaken in order to stimulate local production of metals; a major expansion in bronze production in the regional economy as a whole, with consequent demands for increased supplies of raw materials; and a breakdown in the established relations between the Atlantic provinces and Central Europe. Frankenstein has also suggested that the expansion of bronze-working in north-western Iberia in turn came to depend on more secure supplies of copper from the copper rich area of south-western Iberia. North-western Iberia would in return have supplied bronze products, technology and tin which were all lacking in Schubart's 'south-western phase II'. The engravings of Atlantic weapons and shields on the grave stelae of this phase in the south-west certainly imply scarcity at burial and indicate the high social value being placed upon these imports from the north-west. It is also interesting to note that the bronzework found in the south-west consists mainly of weapon or ornament categories and very rarely of tools, implying that these imports were again for the satisfaction of elite demand, rather than for utilitarian purposes. Also, none of them have come from graves, suggesting that these imports were too valuable to be buried with the dead and were inherited, and that the grave stelae with weapons engraved upon them were used as a substitute status marker (Frankenstein 1976). In the south-west, therefore, we would appear to have a classic case of initial

political and economic expansion into an area whose resources were to become critical to the functioning of the Atlantic Bronze Age regional economy as a whole. Expansion of the Atlantic system was not restricted to the south-west during the late eighth and seventh centuries. In late MV-VI, there is a significant growth and shift in the location of metalworking industries in southern Scandinavia, with demand for amber and other resources as a crucial determinant; more complex relations develop between the South East of England, northern England, Wales and Ireland, suggesting that these areas had developed a more independent role and a less dependent participation in the regional economy; and, finally, there is some evidence to suggest direct links between Iberia and Ireland, as if the increasing dependence on Iberian ores has resulted in a westward shift in dominant economic relations.

The terminal phases of the Late Bronze Age are characterised, therefore, by a major expansion of the Atlantic regional economy into a much more complex and specialised system which, through political and economic alliance and exchange, linked the Atlantic coastal provinces stretching from Iberia to southern Britain. Also, much of this occurred independently of, and probably due to, fundamental changes in political and economic relations in Central Europe which were to become more directly dependent upon Greek and Etruscan outlets to the Mediterranean world. In this context, it is particularly significant that Frankenstein (1979) has considered the activities of the Phoenicians in southern Iberia and their general trading strategies of linking up discrete economic systems through the supply of navigational and technical skills. She suggests that the Phoenicians were able to use their bases and factory sites in south-eastern Iberia to penetrate the Atlantic trading routes, particularly those linking south-western to north-western Iberia to Armorica and possibly Ireland. Such routes were carrying raw materials and Phoenician elite items (particularly pottery, cloth and wine) to the north and Atlantic bronze metalwork and other items in the other direction. Daniel and Evans come to a similar conclusion when discussing the origin of the Huelva hoards, which must surely represent a diverse collection of material assembled at various points within the Atlantic network and elsewhere (Daniel and Evans 1967:55). If we are correct in supposing that much of the marine transportation within the Atlantic networks would have been limited technologically to short-haul coastal relays (although we should not forget Caesar's description of the Veneti at a later date), then there would have been enormous commercial opportunities for Phoenician navigators and traders to short-circuit the links and indulge in long-distance trading in bulk quantities. Frankenstein argues quite forcefully that the Phoenicians were really interested in using the bronze metalwork from the north-west to establish relations in the south-west and in southern Iberia, in order to gain access to the metals that they wanted, the silver ores in the hinterland of Huelva (Frankenstein 1979). With the Phoenicians as intermediaries, the Atlantic networks were linked up with those of the western and central Mediterranean. Atlantic bronze metalwork was valued there for its high quality, and, in addition, gold, silver, amber, copper and tin were in high demand in central Italy and the Aegean. The finds of Atlantic bronzes along southern Iberia and the 'island route' of the Balearics, Sardinia, central Italy and Sicily would fit precisely with a route taken by long-distance traders 'tramping' a coastal/island seaway back into the central and eastern Mediterranean from their southern Iberian 'colonies' and using these products to stimulate local production of ores and other products within the western and central Mediterranean. We might consider, for

example, the production of copper by the Nuraghic culture of Sardinia; the 'orientalising' jewellery in Etruscan workshops; and the demand for silver, gold and amber in western Greek workshops in southern Italy and Sicily (Pythecusae and Syracuse, for example). The decline of the western Phoenician sphere in the sixth century coincides with the major phase of Greek and Etruscan expansion in the West and particularly their most intense phase of direct contact with Central Europe in HaD. Hence this would suggest that the expansion of the Atlantic networks in the late eighth century to the sixth occurred earlier and was quite crucially dependent upon the increase in demand that these far-flung connections by Phoenician intermediaries introduced into their local regional economies.

Collapse of the Atlantic regional economy

The decline and breakup of the Atlantic economy is usually seen in terms of invading Hallstatt warriors, using superior iron swords and weaponry, disruption leading to a decline in demand for bronze and the breakdown of the trading networks. However, we can point to some more systematic reasons than these for the collapse of a heavily extended, specialised and probably highly fragile regional economic system.

We have followed Frankenstein and others in arguing that Phoenician involvement was important for maintaining a large integrated regional economy and stimulating increasing demand for its products. However, this involvement was a relatively superficial affair, little more than the manipulation of existing short relay networks, allowing demand to boost production. Outside southern Iberia there seems to have been no Phoenician involvement in direct production; there are no trading posts or factories for the production of goods for local consumption and for the processing of raw materials to be shipped back into the Mediterranean, although these are found on the coasts of North Africa and southern Iberia. Hence the strategy appears not to have developed beyond opportunistic trading to facilitate Phoenician economic involvement in Iberia and the western Mediterranean. By the early sixth century, the Phoenicians had abandoned their role in southern Iberia and in the western Mediterranean as a whole. Partly, this was due to a decline in demand for silver in the eastern Mediterranean and particularly Assyria, to which the Phoenicians were client tributary states (the importance of silver for the Assyrian economy has been dealt with by Frankenstein; while it does not survive well archaeologically, we should not forget that silver is a byproduct of lead extraction!). The Phoenicians were also restricted by Greek competition for their role in the western Mediterranean trade, and by the sixth century Carthage, rather than the eastern Phoenicians, was the only city state powerful enough to keep control over the southern half of the western seas. Finally, Greek and Etruscan access to Central Europe meant that populations in the central and eastern Mediterranean were able to gain resources via these routes, for which previously they had been dependent on Phoenician enterprise in Iberia. To a certain extent, it is true that Carthage attempted to reproduce the Phoenician role in southern Iberia and the Atlantic, but essentially the demand for this no longer existed. In Iberia, the south-east-ern 'Iberian' culture, under Greek influence, was to assert a dominant role over the south-west from the sixth to the fourth centuries.

The Atlantic provinces were therefore deprived of one of the major sources of demand for bronze metalwork and their main supplies of copper and possibly tin, at least in the quantities that had previously been available. The highly variable metal content in the

Armorican axe hoards of this period may well be a function of this situation. Neither was there any possibility of simple contraction of the regional economy to pre-eighth-century levels, since relations with Central Europe and internal economic relations within that entity were now of a very different configuration. Connections with Central Europe, from the equivalent of HaD/Early La Tène onwards, would have had to be formed on very different bases from those that allowed the semi-autonomous development of an Atlantic regional economy during the later Bronze Age. The Armorican hoard evidence, in particular, suggests overproduction of bronzes of highly variable quality, indicating that metalwork had lost a considerable amount of its value by the sixth century. Burying large quantities of it may have been the only means of maintaining some kind of scarcity value. The gradual adoption of iron-working should therefore be viewed in a larger perspective of the general disruption of a formerly complex regional economy, the dissolution of complex networks of political alliance and exchange on which traditional forms of rank and power were based, and the transition to a more isolated and fragmented social landscape by the end of the sixth century.

Conclusion

Cases have been chosen, distributed widely in space and time, in order to establish through comparison the general organising principles underlying the various forms of European Bronze Age society. To establish a unity of resemblances is seen to be a necessary first step prior to the framing of specific questions about the nature of local social forms. These resemblances are not intended as abstractions, however, but to generate observable patterns in the archaeological record, either at the present or as predictions for the future. By providing us with general understanding of the types of society we are dealing with, we may begin to grasp their essential structures and those ‘laws of motion’ of social process on which any scientific prehistory must be based.

1 Relations of dominance and hierarchy depend directly on the manipulation of relations of circulation and exchange and not on control of production *per se*. But circulation and exchange cannot be separated from the production of surpluses needed for such transactions and hence the resources required to produce them (land, livestock, mineral resources). They form a single economic category. Equally, circulation and exchange do not form a single undifferentiated category. The exchange of weapons, ornaments and livestock, for example, forms one system of circulation which is directly politico-ritual in function and operates as a kind of pump to stimulate the production of food and other forms of surplus. The latter, however, circulate as a different set of relations that are articulated to the former, but are not identical with them. It is as if we are dealing with two or more circuits of accumulation in the same society, each of which has political and economic functions, but where hierarchy depends on keeping them separated, so that wealth from one cannot easily be converted into prestige in the other (a phenomenon widely described as ‘spheres of exchange’ but where the political aspect is usually ignored; cf. Rowlands 1973 and 1979).

2 Kinship and alliance networks do not order relations between groups in any direct sense. Instead exchange/alliance networks constitute both the object and the result of competition between social groups. Since alliances are established through exchange,

involving material goods, women and symbolic knowledge, success depends on maintaining the flows of these resources. However, alliances in themselves do not bring prestige, but instead form the support base for local leaders to compete with each other in ceremonial displays of feasting and fighting, in the recitation of heroic deeds, and in claims to ritual and genealogical ties with ancestors and the supernatural world. In the Homeric texts, at least, these were also the means by which claims could be made to land and other material resources which leaders would in turn distribute to their followers.

3 Political conflicts were therefore of a highly generalised kind with few ordering principles except the size of support groups and the density of debts and obligations that could be called upon. Ranking between groups would have been highly unstable, with succession to title forming a main focus for intra- and inter-group competition and changes in status position. Success depended in an immediate sense on maintaining the support of followers and allies, which in turn implied the constant redistribution of resources to them - hence the distribution of prestige items which are not simply baubles for decoration and pleasure, but which symbolically encode allocations and transferences of prestige and power. Thus it is the titles that prestige items encode that are competed for and have to be 'earned' with material and political support. We should therefore anticipate centralisation of authority through monopolisation of the allocation of titles and the tributary alliance networks that this generated. Such processes might be interspersed by phases of decentralisation and fragmentation and by regular shifts of political location in time and space. The resolution of contradiction (for its Hegelian connotations see Taylor 1975; for Marx see Rader 1979) as the source of social movement can first be located as the relations between leaders and their support groups and networks. Desertion of the former by the latter is the cause of local fragmentation and decline. Second, it can be recognised by the manner in which local political units are incorporated into larger systems of exchange. It is the shape and structure of the latter that determine local social reproduction.

4 The 'exchange' networks that result from these processes are essentially expansionist and can extend over vast areas. Since the exchanges involved have potentially ritual, political and economic functions attached to them, they form total social networks, rather than being economic in character. The distinction into levels of the economic, political and ideological, which is basic to Western thought, has no relevance for European Bronze Age society and serves only to divide the continuity of cultural form into arbitrary and meaningless categories and contrasts. Both logically and from comparative ethnographic evidence, such systems appear never to develop in isolation but as peripheries in the expansion of more dominant commercialised or semi-commercialised state systems, in this case the Near East and the later Mediterranean world. It seems unlikely that Bronze Age Europe would be exceptional in this respect. These centrifugal tendencies towards expansion are, at the same time, counterbalanced by a strong focus on territory rights to land and, possibly, ancestrally focused sacred sites in order to maintain a centripetal tendency which always works back to a centre. An emphasis on patrilineality and patrilocal residence combines here with a ritual focus on ancestors and the passing of rights, titles and prestige intact over a number of generations. This provides the means by which strong stable polities would be maintained over long periods of time, even though the superficial appearance would be one of flux and change and extreme instability.

5 A strong emphasis on the principles of patrilocality and the absence of positive marriage rules would be perfectly consistent with this type of political economy. The extant textual evidence would be supported by archaeological confirmation of:

a) social units cohered by strong male fraternal and sibling bonds and virilocal residence, as suggested by Clarke (1973) and Ellison (1978) for British late MBA and Iron Age contexts.
b) high-status females being married out to external partners and to lower-ranking households within the same political unit, and evidence of such women retaining strong natal ties and rank status (for example, in burial). Marriage alliance and political alliance would, to all intents and purposes, be the same thing.
c) Corporate social units being controlled by senior males exercising authority in ritual, marriage arrangements, external exchange and prestations as a function of group diplomacy and the domestic production of the group as a whole.
d) Ranking between, and within, social units clearly established in real or ideal terms, and in some cases associated with clear stratification between commoner and elite statuses. Again status is not defined in overt wealth terms but by those attributes of ritual and symbolic knowledge, personal deeds and genealogically ascribed status in which ancestors and the supernatural may be actively involved. These are ideologically manipulated for the acquisition of prestige and power.

6 Over the long time-span of the European Bronze Age, regular pulsations in political and economic expansion and contraction occur in widely separated regions at roughly contemporary periods. No evidence for ‘contact’ could be established but these wide-ranging spatial coincidences can scarcely be fortuitous and are of great significance for further research on those ‘long cycles’ of political and economic growth and contraction, often extending over vast areas and long periods of time, that could never have been part of the conscious experience of any one individual.

Postscript

Since this chapter was written, a debate emerged over the nature of stratification in Bronze Age Europe (cf. Antonio Gilman 1981).

In this chapter, I have argued that stratification models are inappropriate for the European Bronze Age. It seems incontestable to me that rank differences in European Bronze Age societies were never based directly on control of the means of production (land, labour, technology) nor were they derived from status groups, ranked in a hierarchy by some abstract allocation of power. Absorbing the anthropological argument concerning the non-separation of politics from economics in pre-capitalist societies, I have argued instead that Bronze Age societies in Europe were descent-oriented systems in which categories of power and the resources needed to legitimise power (authorise it), which in this case appear to be a combination of personal prowess, genealogical reckoning, divine support and other forms of esoteric knowledge, were indissolubly bound. Political hierarchies were regulated by grades of titles and positions that could be lost and gained in status competition, control over which had to be constantly and vigilantly maintained and ensured by ‘correct’ claims to proper descent and rightful

inheritance. These titles were linked to rights in particular material resources and symbolised by ownership of status items that were imbued with the charisma and the ideology of a leader's position. These are, of course, very general features of descent-oriented systems and the unique features of European Bronze Age societies discussed in this chapter will only be further elucidated by a better grasp of the nature of Indo-European kinship and social structures in general.

As a first step, however, it is absolutely essential to disprove the suitability of models derived from later periods in European history (and the underlying assumption that what is later is somehow only different in degree from what existed earlier in the same social trajectory) or from the more complex and very different trajectories of the post city-state phases of the Mediterranean world. This includes the nineteenth-century class-based model that has tended to be over-generalised in the course of the rupture of orthodox Marxism from Marx (J. Llobera (1979), 'Techno-economic determinism and the work of Marx on pre-capitalist societies', *Man* 14:2:249–70) and, hence, models that insist on the primacy of subsistence production, and the ownership of land and population on land, as a means of control. An attitude which lies behind this last position views investment in and control over land as somehow the more real and material basis of society. By this means, all other acts of status activity must depend on this as a source of wealth and consequently are mere acts of conspicuous consumption, as if building a temple or a tomb is not a political act, success in which depends on accumulating wealth whose value is socially defined and unlikely to be interchangeable with local surplus product.

There is no question here that in social change all areas of political and economic activity may be transformed and intensified, only that this does not occur in a closed space and that surplus product cannot be transformed directly into the metals, stone, wood, textiles or manufactured items needed to provision the political structure. The fact that the acquisition of such items is critical for the maintenance of certain kinds of political hierarchisation is sufficient to recognise that local production and the forms that this takes cannot be separated from exchange and both are articulated through political processes.

Discussions on this subject often betray a very 'modern' bias when referring to trade. 'Trade' is only considered as a significant variable when it is continuous and in bulk commodities. As is well known, we find the opposite of this in nearly every empirical situation in later European prehistory. Trade in bulk foodstuffs is low and production is directed for local consumption. For the Later Bronze Age, even the bulk of the utilitarian metalwork has a small area of circulation and it is the prestige weapons and ornaments which circulate furthest through gift exchange. But instead of taking this to be a significant pattern for explanation, ethnocentrism intervenes. Such exotic items are small in quantity; they are for conspicuous consumption and hence unimportant. However, as we have seen, politically motivated transfers of small quantities of raw materials or manufactured items are decidedly non-economic in character in these kinds of society. Their significance cannot be measured in quantitative terms nor can we be satisfied with the unequivocal marks of contact that only colonisation or political domination might produce. Instead, we have to get away from this idea that only what can be measured is of significance and rely more on evaluating the material indices of models of societies that are less like our own and more like those that might have existed in European prehistory.

Notes

1 The term ‘lineage’ is avoided here because of its strong association with African segmentary lineage systems.

2 The material expression of funerary ritual is something that archaeology is adept in discovering and, in this case, it has a particular significance. First, the flesh/bone association is a widely recognised feature of funerary rituals in descent-oriented societies. Indeed, Lévi-Strauss asserts that ‘it must be concluded that the distinction of bone and of flesh, wherever it is met with in this, or in an equivalent form, entails a strong probability of the existence formerly, or at the present time, of a system of generalised exchange’ (Lévi-Strauss 1969:393). Second, flesh is associated with pollution, decomposition, discontinuity and the maternal side, and bones with fertility, order, continuity and the paternal side (and their material expression of primary burial/flesh-removing decomposition and secondary burial/interment of the bones in a permanent memorial). Finally, this symbolism may not be unassociated with inequalities in rank and power. Inhuman and cremation are variable phenomena in the European Bronze Age, often associated in the same burial context. It is quite feasible that inhumation/survival of the bones/continuity as a prerogative of high rank may be contrasted with cremation/ burning and destruction of flesh and bones/destruction of the individual identity/low rank.

3 I am well aware of the dangers of pleading the case for ‘invisible exports’ for the late Mycenaean economy. Even so, it seems to me that the circumstantial evidence is very strong for wool and leather products and, in particular, textile production in this economy. Textiles would have been important as gift/trade items to the west and north of the Mycenaean areas. We have very little direct evidence for an association between textiles and high status in the European Bronze Age. However, I might mention the exceptional conditions of the Nordic EBA coffin burials where the bodies of clearly high-ranking personages were laid out on ox hides and often wrapped in layers of technically fine-quality woollen textiles. Is it not likely that this was a more general Bronze Age feature?

4 Also with a total dependence on archaeological material, we move to a more complex combination of ‘ideal’ and ‘real’ elements in the social order. For example, the categories of status insignia from burials are clearly ‘ideal’ representations of status and the irreversibility of its achievement, even though this may be far from the case. Again, the distribution of political authority, in the shape of certain features of a settlement hierarchy, is more likely to relate to the real political and economic conditions underlying the movements of these social systems over time. We are dealing with problems of conscious and unconscious meanings in the archaeological record similar to those found in textual evidence (cf. Rowlands and Gledhill 1977:152–4).

5 Such cases have been recognised archaeologically, most recently by Kristiansen for the Nordic LBA. He argues for the exchange of women in the creation of political alliances on the basis of worn Nordic ornament complexes in alien cultural contexts (Kristiansen 1981). On the archaeological parameters of this problem, I owe much insight to Kristian Kristiansen.

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7
THE CONSUMPTION OF WEALTH IN BRONZE AGE DENMARK

A study in the dynamic of economic processes in tribal societies

Kristian Kristiansen[1]

If we want to explain processes of evolution and devolution, it is a necessary condition that we are able to specify the properties of the social systems involved, and the economic conditions of reproduction. In archaeology this meets with the difficulty of defining relevant indicators and parameters from the data. This is to a certain extent a purely methodological problem, but it also involves basic questions concerning the representativity of archaeological remains (Kristiansen 1974b and 1978). This chapter is a preliminary attempt to describe in quantitative terms the dynamics of economic processes in tribal societies, exemplified by Bronze Age Denmark.[2] The investigation includes both Early and Late Bronze Age (Montelius periods 2–5), which together cover about eight hundred years, from about 1450 BC to 600 BC. The periods seem to be equally long, about 200 years, both according to traditional dating methods and according to carbon-14.

Circulation and consumption of wealth

Wealth was normally consumed by depositing ornaments and weapons in graves and hoards, according to sex, age and rank (Randsborg 1974:45ff.). This naturally necessitated regular replacements, which, however, were dependent on external supplies of raw materials (copper, tin and gold) from Central Europe. The intensity of wealth consumption would thus seem to be an important indicator of the economic dynamic of the social system in Bronze Age Denmark. But as consumption is not a continuous (nor stable) phenomenon, the concept of circulation time, reflecting the period of use, enters as a dynamic link between the period of production and the time of consumption.

In order to explore the relationship between consumption and reproduction of wealth, we will start by focusing attention on the circulation time of bronzes. To obtain this information an examination of wear was undertaken. It was restricted to full-hilted swords and decorated ornaments, and only pieces with the original surface preserved were chosen. This reduced the sample to a few hundred graves and hoards. From the Early Bronze Age both graves and hoards were included, from the Late Bronze Age only hoards—due to a change in burial customs.

The next step was the definition of a scale making it possible to compare the degree of wear on different ornaments and swords. The definition constituted several associated

elements, especially the relationship between horizontal and vertical intensity of wear. This was only to a limited degree caused by polishing. Most of the wear on the ornaments was generated by the use of a covering garment of some kind (Kristiansen 1974a: figure 16; and 1976). A consistent scale reflecting the period of use could therefore be defined, ranging from 'no wear', 'moderate wear' to 'heavy wear' (Kristiansen 1977: figures 1–3). As to the swords, only the wear on the hilt was considered. This was caused by the clothes and the gown (Broholm and Hald 1940: figure 188), as well as by regular use, and a similar scale as for the ornaments was defined (Kristiansen 1977: figures 4–8). Finally it should be added that a unit of wear was defined as the personal equipment of a single person, but when this consisted of a mixing of old and new objects, it was recorded as two or more units.

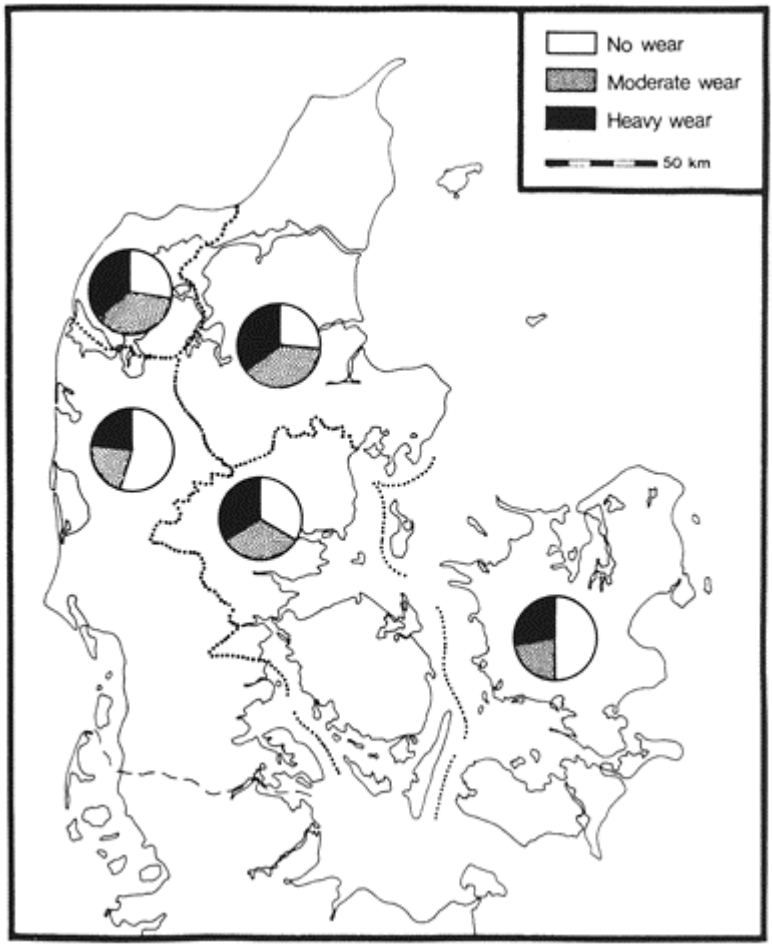
In order to trace geographical variations in circulation time, Denmark was subdivided into five zones according to the number and the distribution of graves and hoards (Map 7.1). A fairly equal number of observations from every zone was aimed at, paired with a uniformity in the record. Bornholm was omitted because of too few observations, just as were periods 1 and 6. Thus we may now proceed to analyse variations in circulation time with respect to time (periods 2–5 and space (zones, 1–5).

On Maps 7.2–3 the distribution of wear on swords and daggers from periods 2 and 3 respectively has been recorded and quantified. (The analysis of the ornaments has not yet been completed.) Several interesting observations can be made concerning the regional development. In period 2, zones 1 and 5 stand out from the other zones, being dominated by unused bronzes, a feature that remains stable throughout period 3 in zone 1, while a slight decline occurs in zone 5. Zones 3 and 4 have rather few unused bronzes in period 2, while zone 2 mediates the difference between the southern and northern zones. X^2 tests of geographical variations indicate that zone 5 differs significantly from zones 3 and 4, whereas zone 1 only differs significantly from zone 3. In period 3, however, the northern zones reveal a strange development. A remarkable increase of heavily worn bronzes occurs in zone 4, while an opposite development takes place in zone 3 (here the number of observations are very few, just as in zone 2, and the figures should be considered with caution). In general, circulation time increases from period 2 to 3, which in all zones is marked by a significant increase of heavily worn bronzes, a feature that is independent of the number of unused bronzes. For moderately and heavily worn swords $x^2=6.59$ on a 0.05 level of significance (Df. 1). It should be added that among this group of heavily worn swords there occur pieces that are worn to a degree unknown in period 2, the edges of the hilt being worn through (Kristiansen 1977: figures 9–10). This development reaches its peak in zone 4, thus defining it as a focus of divergence, which is confirmed by x^2 texts of zonal variations.

The marked regional and temporal differences in circulation time may indicate fluctuations in the external supplies, as well as regional divergences in the access to them. These variations also seriously affected the ability to conform to religious burial customs, which prescribed the deposition of personal wealth objects with the deceased. Thus the extremely worn swords of period 3 probably circulated for several generations by

Map 7.1 The five zones

inheritance, and this may even apply to the whole group of heavily worn bronzes. These deviations from traditional practices reflect periods where the actual demand for keeping the weapons in circulation was stronger than religious prescriptions by death—a fact that is illustrated by several

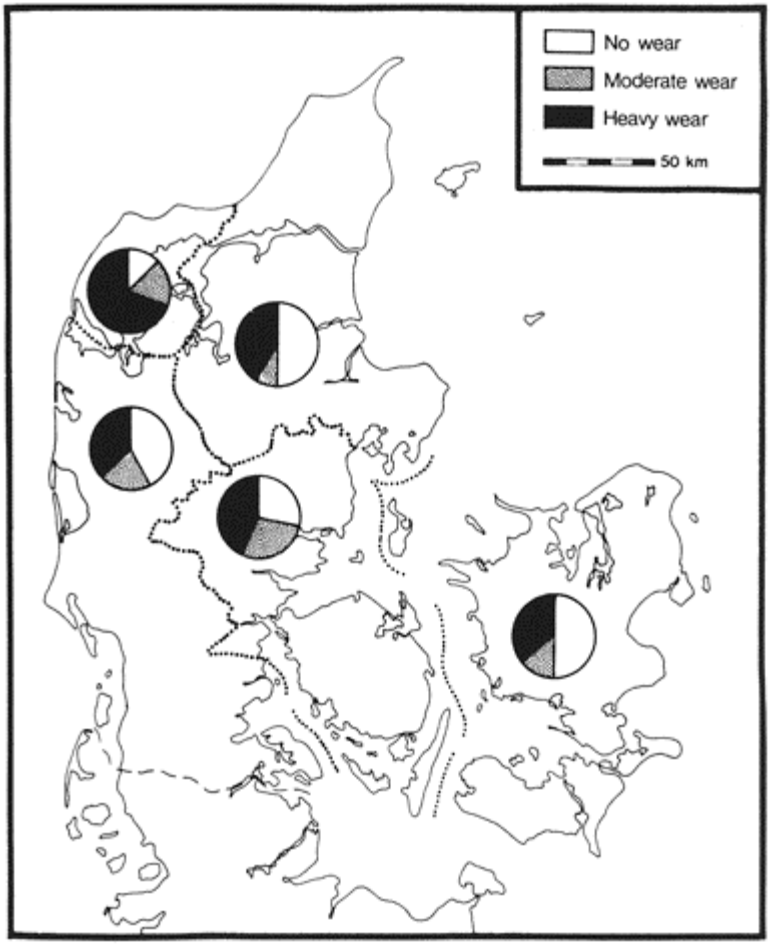


Map 7.2 Period 2. Variations in the circulation time of swords. Sample: 174 observations (zone 1:49; zone 2:33; zone 3:29; zone 4:25; zone 5:38)

examples, the best known being the young man's grave from Borum Eshøj, where a small dagger replaced the long sword in the wooden sheath (Boye 1896: plate 10). Such a situation could be a result of local imbalances in the exchange system, but it could also derive from a general supply crisis. As the increased number of heavily worn swords in period 3 is a phenomenon which characterises all zones, it probably reflects a lowering in the supplies of bronze from Central Europe. If this lasted we should expect an increased circulation time in period 4, reflecting the general reduction of bronze for consumption.[3]

Before we proceed to discuss the evidence of the Late Bronze Age some introductory remarks are needed.

Due to a change in burial customs from inhumation to cremation graves, ornaments and weapons no longer accompanied the burial, but were hoarded separately (Hundt 1955). However, this may be regarded as just another way of canalising the bronzes into the earth, which is demonstrated by the regional complementarity of the deposition of swords in hoards and graves in period 4 (Thrane 1968: figure 32). While zone 4 and Zealand stuck to grave deposition,

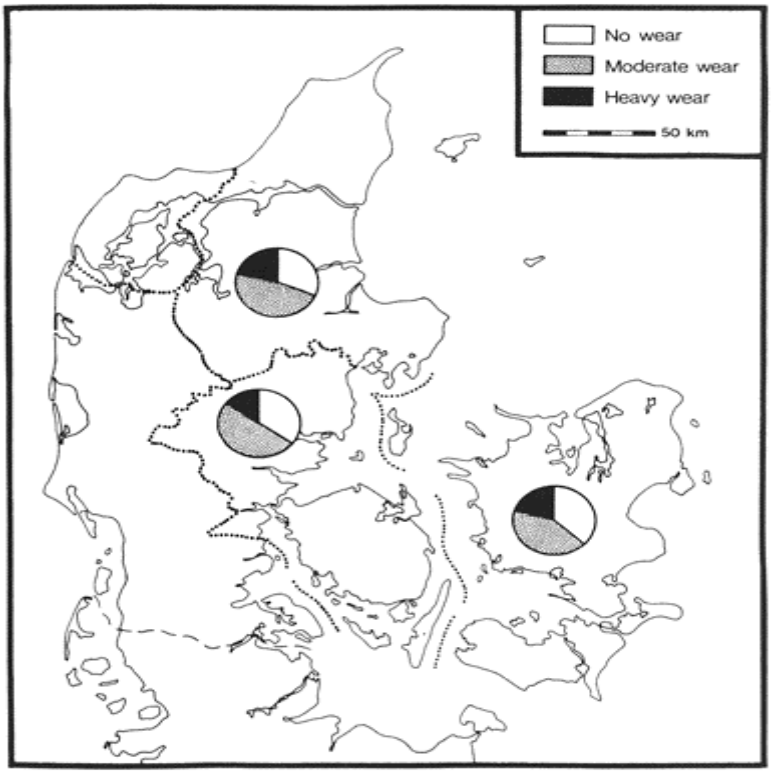


Map 7.3 Period 3. Variations in the circulation time of swords. Sample: 104 observations (zone 1:28; zone 2:14; zone 3:12; zone 4:26; zone 5:24)

the rest of the country had adopted hoard deposition, which gained total dominance in period 5. Our analysis will not, then, be affected by these superficial religious changes, as

they leave the record intact. More serious is the fact that by the advent of the Late Bronze Age full-hilted swords are replaced by flangehilted swords, restricting our observations solely to female ornaments. Variations in circulation time of bronzes between the two sexes in the Early Bronze Age, however, do not seem to reveal serious differences. We may, then, compare the results from the Late Bronze Age with those from the Early Bronze Age.

The general tendency of period 4 is, as predicted, a decrease in the number of new bronzes (Map 7.4). From periods 3 to 4, x^2 is as high as 25.05 (Df.2) at a 0.05 level of significance. The lower figures for heavily worn objects most probably reflect a stabilisation in the supplies at a lower level than in the Early Bronze Age. Between zones 1 and 3 no significant variations can be traced. The most remarkable feature on this map, however, is the almost total lack of bronze in zones 4 and 5, in spite of big quantities of graves. We do find some sword graves, and a few graves and hoards with ornaments, but

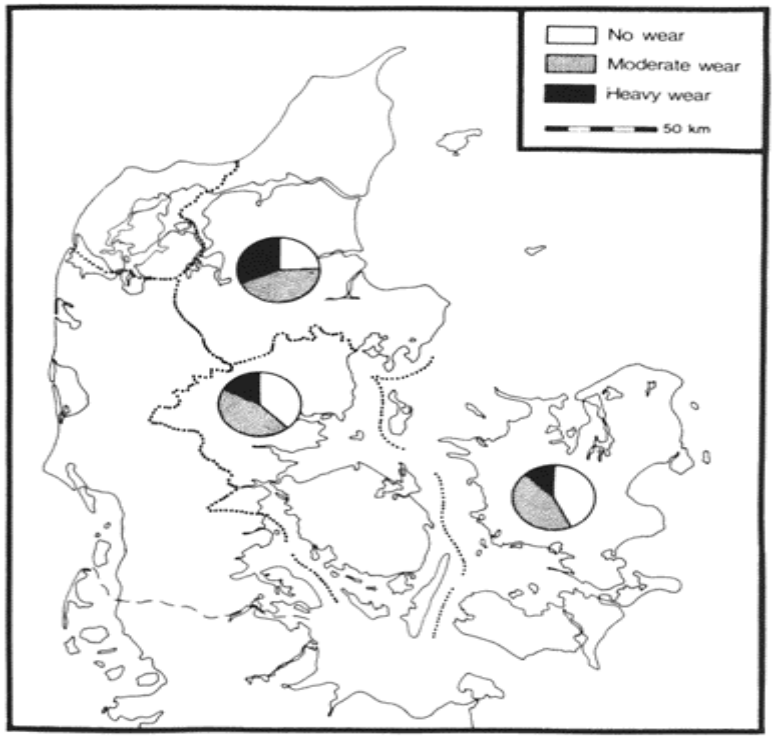


Map 7.4 Period 4. Variations in the circulation time of ornaments. Sample: 117 observations (zone 1:19; zone 2:78; zone 3:20)

not enough to make up a reliable sample. And in period 5 those bronzes nearly disappear. Thus the increased circulation time of period 3 is seen to be followed by a general and increasing scarcity of bronze in these two zones.

In period 5 (Map 7.5) the number of unused bronzes increases in zone 1, a development that is connected to a lowering of heavily worn pieces. But this is not statistically significant. An opposite development, however, takes place in zone 3, as the number of new bronzes is heavily reduced, indicating an increasing scarcity of bronze. X^2 tests of geographical variations indicate that zone 3 differs significantly from both zone 1 and zone 2. The general impression of bronze scarcity in the northern zones is further stressed by the use of bone for smaller implements throughout the Late Bronze Age (Baudou 1960: maps 45–6, 50–1).

To sum up, it appears that there exists an inverse relationship between circulation time and quantities of available bronze for consumption. In order to improve our insight into the nature of this relationship, we will proceed to analyse variations in wealth consumption to see how it relates to the above variations in circulation time.



Map 7.5 Period 5. Variations in the circulation time of ornaments. Sample: 174 observations (zone 1:67; zone 2:63; zone 3:44)

When analysing wealth consumption we are not concerned with those structural variations that may reflect aspects of economic and social hierarchies (Randsborg 1974:45ff.). Instead we will try to make a relative estimate of wealth consumption for each zone as a whole, for which purpose swords are chosen as an indicator.[4] In order to verify if this may be regarded as a reliable indicator, its relation to another wealth indicator, gold, was tested for the Early and Late Bronze Age respectively (Figure 7.1). The correlation turned out to be very good, and it appears that although zone 5 was dominating in the Early Bronze Age, there was a rather good balance between the eastern and western zones. This balance disappears during the Late Bronze Age, as the eastern zones become absolutely dominant, and the distance between top and bottom increases correspondingly.

On Figures 7.2–3 the relation between circulation and consumption is expressed quantitatively. For the Early Bronze Age (Figure 7.2) it is seen that circulation time may change strongly without corresponding changes in consumption, suggesting that mechanisms of consumption and circulation are

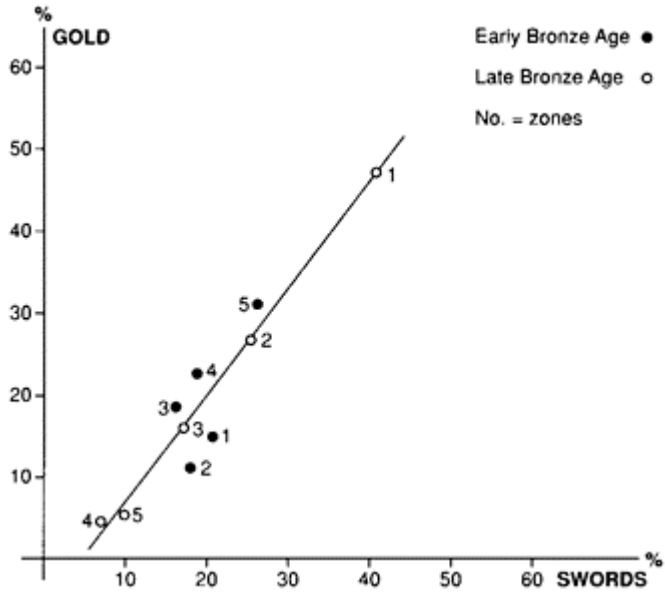


Figure 7.1 Relationship between gold and sword finds from the Early and Late Bronze Age. Sample size: swords 799; gold finds 347. Coefficient of determination (r^2): 0.91

Source: Ottenjahn 1969; Sprockhoff 1931; Broholm 1943; 229ff. and 1944:88 note 2; Thrane 1968; Jensen 1965: fundliste 4; Kristiansen 1975: figure 3

more complicated than expected at first. Several types of relationships between supply, circulation and consumption are possible, and variations are suggested (referring to a situation where bronze is already in use).

a) If supplies increase, this is likely to be followed by increased consumption. In the beginning this includes a great many older, worn bronzes. The number of new bronzes will increase until a stable relationship between supply and consumption is established. A longer period of increasing or stable supplies must pass to make this felt in the record. Thus a sudden short-term increase in bronze supplies results in an increased consumption of worn bronzes.
b) If supplies of bronze decrease gradually, consumption may adjust simultaneously. If the decrease does not exceed the minimal social needs, circulation time remains stable or rises very gradually. But if the supplies *suddenly* decrease, consumption is likely to be more or less abandoned until the situation is stabilised—by social means or by increased supplies. When consumption is resumed the result is a significantly increased circulation time (many heavily worn bronzes). If the supply crisis is lasting, consumption stays low, re-melting takes place at an increased rate and alternative patterns of consumption probably develop.

Thus it is seen that the degree to which consumption and circulation fluctuates depends on how much and how fast the supply situation changes. This may create different patterns of time-lags between supply and consumption. In

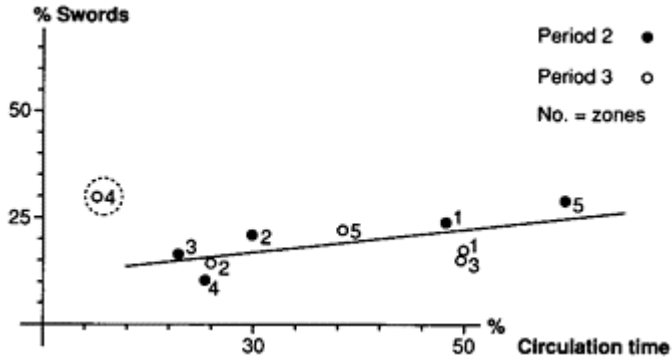


Figure 7.2 Relationship between circulation time and consumption of swords in the Early Bronze Age. Circulation time is calculated by dividing non-worn bronzes by worn bronzes. Coefficient of determination (r^2): 0.03. When excluding zone 4, period 3:0.39

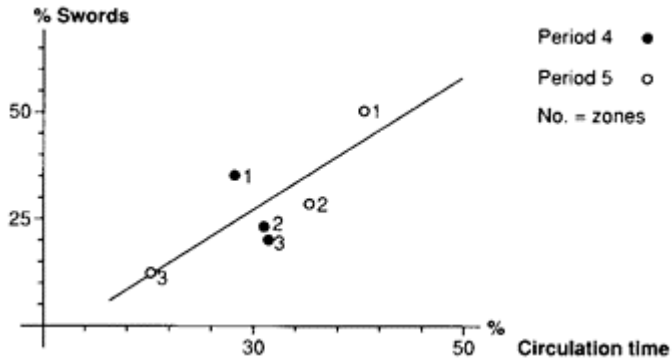


Figure 7.3 Relationship between circulation time and consumption of swords in the Late Bronze Age. Coefficient of determination (r^2): 0.63

general increasing circulation time predicts that a period with less bronze and less consumption will follow. When this happens late in a period decreased consumption will not manifest itself until the following period, but when it occurs early in a period, the adjustment may take place within the same period.

Most divergences on figure 7.2 are explainable in terms of the above considerations. Thus the extremely long circulation time in zone 4, period 3 stresses the sudden accumulation of wealth in this zone as a transient phenomenon, while the persistent low circulation time of zone 1 points to its leading position in the Late Bronze Age. The slightly increasing circulation time of zone 5 in period 3 may only to some extent be said to predict the decrease in consumption in periods 4 and 5, which occur astonishingly rapidly. Only zone 3, period 3, seems unexplainable at present, but here observations are very few. In the Late Bronze Age the correlation between circulation time and consumption is stronger. The general increase in circulation time corresponds to increased differences in consumption, suggesting a more critical situation with less available bronze for consumption, which is stressed by the fact that the number of swords from the Late Bronze Age only makes up 25.6 per cent compared to 74.4 per cent from the Early Bronze Age.

According to the above observations, it should be clear that within period 3 a sudden and marked decrease in the supplies of bronze takes place—probably in the middle or late part of the period, as decreased consumption does not manifest itself clearly until period 4. This is also stressed by the earlier-mentioned fact that in all zones some of the heavily worn swords are extremely worn, reflecting a period of unexpected length with small supplies of bronze—too small for replacing the big bronze-demanding swords. In the Late Bronze Age, supplies of bronze were in general smaller, but increased again towards the end of the period. These variations in consumption and circulation time were further connected to a geographical shift in consumption from western to eastern Denmark. In order to throw more light on this geographical development we will focus our attention on the distribution of foreign imports from periods 2 to 5, as it is assumed that this

reflects the channels through which bronze flowed into Denmark, just as it points to its origin.

Trade and exchange relationships

There exists no complete analysis of foreign imports in the Early bronze Age, whereas the imports of the Late Bronze Age have been given a full treatment by Thrane (Thrane 1975). Thus it is not possible at present to do a statistical analysis of the relation between imports and consumption. Instead we must rely on impressionistic interpretations.

The distribution of imports in *period 2* reveals a western concentration. Some items, such as octagonal swords, were also distributed in eastern Denmark (Sprockhoff 1941:59),[5] while other objects have an exclusively western distribution (Randsborg 1968: figures 12, 14–15, 20). Most imports are of west European origin, from the south German Tumuli culture. From the distribution of octagonal swords it can be seen that the first area of consumption was the Elbe mouth and Schleswig-Holstein, the area south of zone 5, which were the southernmost parts of the south Scandinavian exchange system. This distribution may indicate that Schleswig-Holstein controlled the bronze distribution to the rest of Scandinavia—to the western part in close co-operation with zone 5 and to the eastern part together with zone 1. This would also be in accordance with the high level of consumption and the low circulation time in these two areas, with zone 1 in a second position, being the more distant of the two. Gold, which shows a predominant western distribution (Broholm 1944: figure 44), was probably also of west European origin (Hartman 1970:32ff.), a fact that further supports the idea of a trade system between south-west Europe and Schleswig-Holstein along the Weser river system, with Lüneburg as an important intermediator (Sprockhoff 1940: figures 1–3; Kersten 1952:20ff., figures 9–10; Piesker 1958: tables 67–72; Sprockhoff 1961: figure 2; Laux 1971). The position of western Denmark as a prime area of influence is also emphasised by the distribution of locally produced flange-hilted swords of Central European-'Aegean' origin (Sprockhoff 1931: plates 26–27; Randsborg 1967:24; also Schauer 1971:111ff., 129ff., plates 117B, 118).

In *period 3* western Denmark was still strongly connected to supplies of gold and bronze from south-west Europe (Broholm 1944: figure 65; Randsborg 1968:6–62; 1972: map 2). But an exchange system seems gradually to have developed along the Oder-Elbe river systems, with Mecklenburg as a new recipient area of foreign imports, closely connected to the Scandinavian system (Sprockhoff 1931: plate 28; Aner 1958; Ottenjahn 1969: map 2; Schubart 1972), thus breaking the monopoly of Lüneburg and Schleswig-Holstein. This new situation is reflected in the distribution of, for example, beaten cups (Thrane 1962: figure 30) and pechiera daggers (Randsborg 1970).[6]

Although a certain geographical development in the trade routes can be observed from periods 2 to 3, western Denmark remained the prime area of influence. This is also reflected in stylistic innovations (Randsborg 1968). The distribution of imports thus seems to support the position that variations in consumption and circulation time are related to the control over foreign trade. The more precise nature of this relationship remains to be explored by future studies of the internal exchange system—a task that exceeds the scope of this chapter. But a few points of interest can be made on the basis of

already published evidence. Thus the work of Ottenjahn suggests that zone 5 in period 2 was an important manufacturer of swords which were exchanged with Schleswig-Holstein, and the same is true of northern Zealand (zone 1) (Ottenjahn 1969: map 28). This confirms the idea of a close relationship between these areas, with Schleswig-Holstein in a central position based on its place in the trade system, controlling the distribution of bronze. From here contacts were established with zone 4 along the west coast of Jutland (Kersten and La Baume 1958:47ff.), up through middle Jutland, along the historical Ox Road, and with northern Zealand (also Oldeberg 1933: figures 3–4; Randsborg 1968: figures 69–70; Kersten 1952:14, note 5). In period 3 the western lines of exchange were still functioning (Oldeberg 1933: figure 26; Randsborg 1972: maps 25–26), while new lines of exchange developed between Mecklenburg, eastern Scandinavia and zone 4 (Oldeberg 1933: figures 40 and 56)—an extension of a former more restricted east Scandinavian exchange system (Randsborg 1968: figures 57, 60, 62–63). This situation implied strong possibilities of regional conflicts and, as we are going to see from the distribution of imports in period 4, this was probably what happened.

In *Period 4* zones 1 and 2 established new contacts with eastern Europe. A primary contact seems to have existed between the mouth of the Oder and zone 1 (Thrane 1975: figures 46 and 49)—and as can be seen from the distribution of east Scandinavian types in the Oder area, contacts were commercially reciprocal (Sprockhoff 1937: map 7; 1956: map 24; Baudou 1960: maps 17 and 47). Gold, which now shows a predominant east Danish distribution (Jensen 1966: map 4; Kristiansen 1975: figure 3) also seems to have been a result of these new exchange networks, as its origin most probably was south-east Europe (Hartman 1970:38ff. and figure 3). Western Denmark continued its contacts with south-west Europe—the area south of the Elbe 'knee' (eastern Saxony) acting as middleman and the lower Elbe-Mecklenburg area as distributor. From here exchange was established with zones 2 (the western part) and 3, while zones 4 and 5 were in a more neglected position. This pattern of exchange is indicated by the distribution of, for example, winged axes and beaten cups (Thrane 1975: figures 55 and 81) and by the adoption of west Danish brooches along the Elbe and in Mecklenburg (Sprockhoff 1937: maps 15, 16 and 35).

Thus a western and eastern exchange network existed at the same time in period 4, probably reflecting a dual development (Baudou 1960: map 56), which is paralleled in the relation between Urnfield and Lausitz cultures in Europe. It is clear, however, from the total distribution of imports in period 4 that no strict borders can be observed between east, middle or south-west European imports (Thrane 1975:131).[7] The latter dominate in the western zones, the east European in zone 1, while Funen received imports from both areas. Except for zones 4 and 5, the distribution is rather equal, which is reflected in both consumption and circulation time. North German products are frequent in all zones, indicating the importance of this area as distributor.

Period 5 reveals a changed picture. By now west European imports had become totally dominant, but the primary market was east Denmark, as is seen from the distribution of, for example, spearheads, swords and horse gear (Thrane 1975: figures 30, 74 and 119–120). Eastern Saxony was still an important 'middleman' area, while Mecklenburg and the area around the Oder was in a position to control the distribution to the rest of Scandinavia. From here there was only a short distance to Zealand and Funen, zones 1 and 2, where most imports accumulated (Thrane 1975: figure 132), and which

also displayed the highest consumption and the lowest circulation time. The distribution of vase-headed pins and ribbed arm-rings (Thrane 1975: figure 103) indicate another north-west European exchange system (also Thrane 1975: figure 51; Tackenberg 1971: maps 27 and 31), including the Ems-Weser group (Sprockhoff 1956: map 56), but apparently without economic significance.

Also in the Late Bronze Age a close relationship between the distribution of foreign imports, local consumption and circulation time can be demonstrated. A dual situation existed during period 4, reflecting the growing regional conflicts between east and west Denmark which had already begun in period 3. The result of this can be seen in period 5 with the absolute dominance of zones 1 and 2. The regional development during the Bronze Age cannot, however, be explained exclusively in terms of a shift in foreign trade relations. As demonstrated, the relationship is more complex, as western and eastern exchange systems apparently were at work at the same time during most of the Bronze Age.[8] This suggests that local economic changes may have played a decisive role. In order to evaluate the relationship between external and internal factors it is necessary first to analyse variations in local economic conditions of reproduction.

Economic conditions of reproduction

The task in this chapter is to describe, in quantitative terms, a few significant variables among the variety of relations that constitute the economic foundations of social reproduction. By doing so I hope to explain processes of change as a continuous part of the total reproductive process. I will confine myself to three variables: population density, land use and subsistence strategy. Our main concern will be to establish the relationship between these variables in order to see if spatial and temporal variations are predictable in terms of a systematic relationship between them.

In order to provide some information on population sizes, graves will be used as an indicator. This is only possible if the relative number of people receiving a burial was more or less constant. Thus it might be suggested that increased supplies of bronze in a certain period would increase the number of graves, because bronze items were distributed to a wider segment of the population. In Figure 7.4, which shows the relation between swords and graves—read: relative amount of bronze and number of people—a marked increase in the average ratio is seen. As the number of graves from each period is very constant, except for a decline in period 5, the general tendency is that the number of people buried was independent of the amount of bronze at hand. Figure 7.4 further demonstrates the relationship between falling supplies of bronze and growing regional distributional disparities.

Not all variations in Figure 7.4, however, are a result of decreasing or increasing consumption among a constant population. Some interesting regional and temporal variations in grave numbers also occur, and when related to consumption it becomes clear that the relationship is very complex (Figure 7.5). Thus it is quite evident that the greatly increased consumption in zone 4, period 3, is the main reason for the sudden increase of graves. In several cases, however, consumption and number of graves move in opposite directions (zone 1 periods 4–5, zone 2 periods 2–3, zone 3 periods 2–3, zone 5 periods 4–5), indicating that

		PERIODS 2	3	4	5
ZONES	1	1 : 3.4	1 : 5.9	1 : 7.5	1 : 2.5
	2	1 : 2.9	1 : 5.0	1 : 3.4	1 : 3.1
	3	1 : 3.6	1 : 6.6	1 : 11.8	1 : 10.3
	4	1 : 3.1	1 : 3.4	1 : 9.1	1 : 12.5
	5	1 : 2.9	1 : 4.7	1 : 9.2	1 : 15.5
Average		1 : 3.2	1 : 5.1	1 : 8.2	1 : 8.8

Figure 7.4 Sword—grave ratio

Swords

ZONES	PERIODS 2	3	4	5
1	23.6	17.0	35.2	50.0
2	20.9	14.7	23.2	28.8
3	16.7	15.4	20.0	12.5
4	9.9	30.1	9.6	2.5
5	28.9	22.8	12.0	6.2

Graves

ZONES	PERIODS 2	3	4	5
1	25.0	20.6	33.6	26.4
2	19.4	14.3	10.0	18.9
3	18.7	21.6	30.6	27.5
4	9.8	21.2	11.2	6.1
5	27.1	22.3	14.6	21.1

Figure 7.5 The distribution (in %) of swords and graves

Source: graves after Broholm 1943 and 1946

significant changes in population or consumption manifest themselves independently of each other. Thus in the case of zone 3 periods 2–3 it is evident from the distribution maps that Djursland is settled (Broholm 1944: figures 81–82) while a heavily increased population density (PD) characterises the central part of zone 3 and the north-western part of zone 1 in period 4, whereas the western part of zone 5 is depopulated (Broholm 1944: figure 82; 1946: figure 106). These examples suggest that the number of graves reflects aspects of both consumption and population size. When a marked shift in one of these takes place, it becomes the dominant factor. In most cases, however, the number of graves also reflects significant aspects of population size (PS). This is especially clear in the Late Bronze Age, when consumption decreases whereas the number of graves remains stable or may even increase. With the above reservations in mind, graves will be used as an indicator of relative population sizes.

We will now proceed to analyse the number of graves in relation to the size of the settled areas, and further in relation to the quality of land. Hectares (ha) are used as the areal unit of measurement, and the specific Danish unit of land valuation 'tønder hartkorn' (tdr htk.) is used to express the quality of land in terms of its productive potential (PP), measured in hard corn (barley and rye).[9] This last unit of measurement was unfortunately never employed in the southernmost part of zone 5 ('Søderjylland' or 'Nordslesvig', including the area south of the horizontal borderline to zone 2). This implies that zone 5 is now reduced only to include western Jutland. Graves, tdr htk. and ha were recorded for each parish, the smallest administrative unit in Denmark, in total numbering 1,741 within the research area.[10] The calculations of area eliminated moors, lakes and sand dunes in order to arrive at the actual quantity of arable land.

We will start our analysis by considering subsistence strategies.

Strategy implies choice, in our case, between a range of soil qualities. Thus it is necessary to consider not only the settled areas, but also the unsettled areas. What is the relationship? In order to determine this, the range of soil quality was calculated for each zone, using the average of the ten best and the ten poorest districts (area about 10–15 times greater than a parish).[11] The result is seen on Figure 7.6 as squares of different sizes. Within each square the average soil quality of the whole zone is indicated by an asterisk on the middle line, showing the gradual decline in PP from zone 1 to zone 5. It is seen that in most cases soil of average or of less than average PP was preferred. This is the case in zones 2 and 3, where the more productive areas remained unsettled. Zone 1 lies very close to the average. Zone 4 differs radically from this pattern. Here the very best soil was exploited on an extended scale from Early to Late Bronze Age. Zone 5 also differs somewhat from the general pattern, as it reveals a significant change in strategy from light (low PP) to heavier soil of higher PP.

To sum up, in zone 1 the PP of the settled areas falls a little throughout the Bronze Age; the opposite is the case in zone 2. But the fluctuations are very small. In zone 3 there is a tendency towards the use of better soil, but this is most pronounced in zones 4 and 5. In all zones period 3 is characterised by a preference for better soil quality. We are left, however, with a general impression of remarkable consistency in subsistence strategy characterised by small oscillations probably reflecting local shifts.

It is not possible at present to relate this evidence to regional variations in subsistence, based on settlements, in any significant way. Our knowledge is of a most general kind, only indicating that people of the Bronze Age practised farming, including stock-breeding and grain cultivation (Hatt 1937; Helbaek 1954; Jensen 1967). But it is known

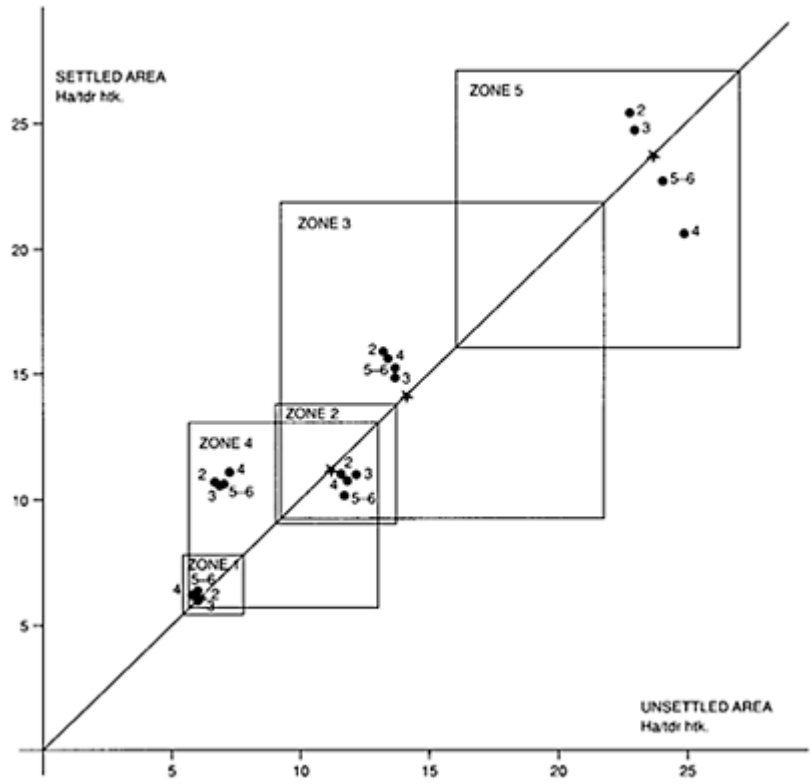


Figure 7.6 Relationship between hectare per tdr htk. of settled and unsettled areas, indicating subsistence strategy. The numbers indicate periods. The squares represent average of ten best and ten poorest districts. The asterisks on the diagonal indicate average of each zone.[12]

that areas in western Jutland (zone 5) were dominated by hard grassed open commons, indicating stock-breeding (Map 7.6). This would also be in accordance with the preference for light soil in most zones, which was less densely forested and easier to transform into grassland. Thus it is obvious that zone 5, the poorest area in terms of PP—in the Early Bronze Age the richest in terms of consumption, did not owe this richness exclusively to agriculture. Stock-breeding, perhaps combined with textile manufacture,[13] are the most probable economic basis. Apparently another economy, dependent on a more intensive soil cultivation, was practised in zone 4. It remains a remarkable feature how intensively this zone was exploited. Also the sudden change in zone 5 towards a more intensified agricultural practice should be noticed. In order to explain these

phenomena we will proceed to analyse the relationship between population density and production.

The relationship between PD and PP demonstrated in Figure 7.7 shows that there exists a linear correlation between the two variables, that is, the area per grave (PD) increases and decreases proportionally with tdr htk. per grave (PP). Each zone is characterised by a specific linear relationship, responsible for the fanned dispersion of the regression lines. Moving down the line indicates increased PD, and vice versa. The steeper the line, the smaller the areal changes—the more sloping, the bigger the areal changes. As a general tendency, high PP implies a better absorption of population changes than low PP. That is, in low PP areas population changes are more directly related to areal extensions and recessions than in high PP areas. Here there is a greater potential for increased PD. Thus we notice a close relationship between PD and PP—the less the PP the more dispersed the population and vice versa. Zone 1 reveals the highest PP and PD, zone 5 the lowest. It should be noticed that PD increases from Early to Late Bronze Age in all zones, with the exception of zone 4, where a strong increase already takes place in period 3. In zones 1 and 3 it is most significant from periods 3 to 4, and in zones 2 and 5 from periods, 4 to 5–6, the last somewhat obscured by an apparent depopulation from Early to Late Bronze Age. The improvement in the PD/PP relationship from periods 4 to 5–6 in both zones 1 and 3 does not

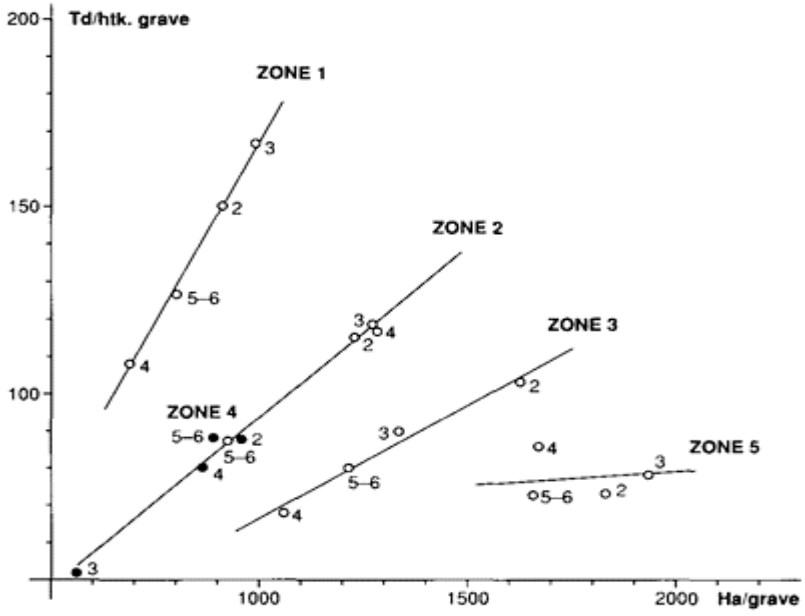


Figure 7.7 Relationship between population density (ha/grave) and productive potential (tdr htk./grave) within the settled area. The numbers

indicate periods. Coefficient of determination (r^2) in zone 1=1; in zones 2 and 4=0.99; in zone 3=0.97; in zone 5=0.02. When zones 2 and 4 are calculated separately the figures are 0.99 and 0.97

re-establish the more favourable level of the Early Bronze Age. Such variations may rather be regarded as short-term cycles within a long-term cycle characterised by increasing population density. This may be explained either by a population increase within an unaltered settlement area (no areal extensions), or by a reduction of the settled area without population decrease (the population remains constant).

Changes in the settled area are demonstrated in Figure 7.8. In zone 1 the settled area is reduced more than is the number of graves, which exhibit their maximum in period 4. The same is true of zone 3 where the maximum number of graves occurs in periods 5–6. And in zone 4 period 4 exhibits more graves but less settled area than period 2. In zone 5, however, there exists a rather good correspondence between settled area and population size, and also to some extent in zone 2, although periods 5–6 have more graves but a smaller settled area than period 2. This general tendency is remarkable, taking the big unsettled areas into consideration, which in most zones had a greater agricultural potential. Only zone 4 is an exception, but here most of the area also seems to have been cultivated. Thus the settled area was reduced in most zones. The result was an actual increase in PD. Figure 7.8 also demonstrates a more extensive land use in zones 3–5 than in zones 1–2. When related to the above variations in subsistence strategies and population density, it seems justified to summarise the evidence of this chapter in a tentative classification of Bronze Age economies.

a) (Zones 5 and 3). On bad to fairly good soil, population tends to be dispersed. Extensive land use dominated by pastures and commons indicates extensive farming based on stock-breeding. Over-grazing followed by ecological degradation (heath) are probable long-term effects of this practice. When new pastures become scarce, productivity falls, leading to a misbalance between PS and PP. Two solutions are possible: emigration and/or changed subsistence strategy producing a higher output. The dimensions of a crisis depend on the PP of land resources, which in general are small. Thus a combined solution is probable.
b) (Zones 1 and 2). On fairly good to good soil, population is denser, land use moderate, probably combining fields and pastures, indicating mixed farming based on both stock-breeding and agriculture. It may be supported by fishing if settlements cluster along the shoreline, as they do in zones 1 and 2.[14] Ecological degradation takes place at a slower rate than in a), and the same solutions are at hand when a crisis occurs. As land resources of high PP are available, settlement dispersion combined with intensified farming is the most probable solution.

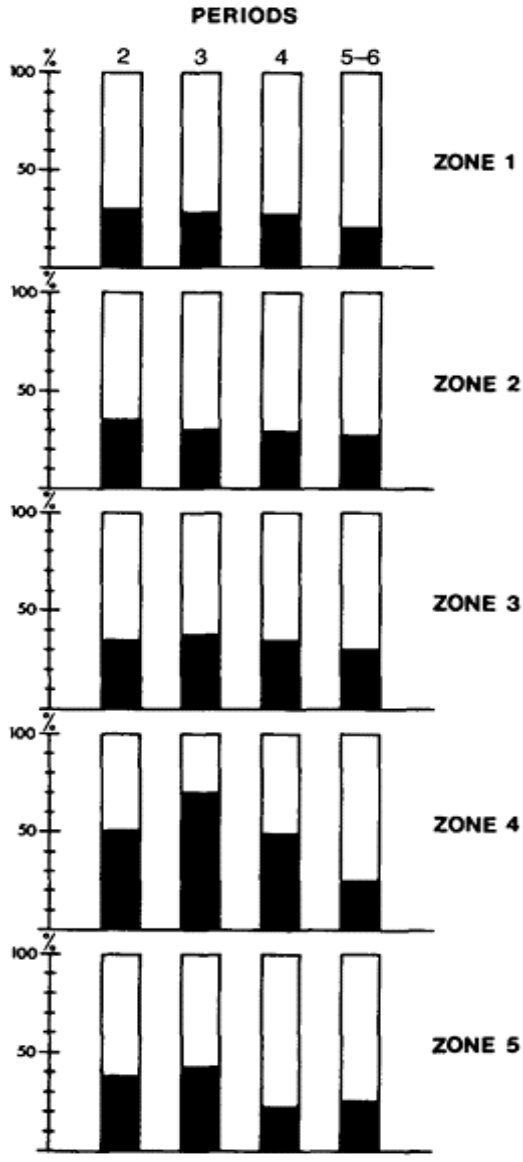


Figure 7.8 Settled and unsettled areas. The dark parts indicate the settled area

A. Preference for light (average or less than average PP) soil

B. Preference for heavy (better than average PP) soil

a) (marginal). Population is dispersed, indicating swidden farming of small plots. Actual land use is restricted, but extensive land resources are required for fallow. When these are reduced below the required minimum, the result is diminishing yields and intensified labour. This may then develop into case b) below, or, through settlement dispersion combined with changed subsistence, into Aa) and Ab) above. Although well known in the Neolithic, this economy is not clearly exemplified in the Bronze Age,[15] but may have been practised on the fringe of the settlement area in zones 1–3. A more intensified variant may also have been employed in zone 5 during the Late Bronze Age utilising the extensive degraded areas as a secondary source of production, such as grazing of sheep.
b) (Zone 4). Population is rather dense, land use extensive, probably dominated by fields and pastures implying intensive farming based heavily on crops. This economy is the result of prolonged agricultural activities evolving from Aa) above, and in zone 4 probably intensified by its position as a fertile 'island' surrounded by less fertile areas (zones 3 and 5). If PS passes the limits of PP, and no technological innovations improving production are introduced, the result is diminishing yields per head. Two solutions remain: starvation or migration.

It has been possible to demonstrate systematic variations between population density, subsistence strategies and land use, indicating that the economy of the Bronze Age was regionally diversified, spanning an evolutionary scale from swiddening to intensive agriculture, but dominated by Aa) and b). This further allowed us to predict those changes that these economies could bring about over time as the constraints determining the economic potential of the zones implied different developmental trajectories. In the concluding section I will try to evaluate the relationship between our three major variables: consumption, exchange and production. By doing so I hope to explain the local evolutionary and devolutionary developments in Bronze Age Denmark as part of the reproduction of a larger system.

The conditions of change. Evolutionary and devolutionary processes

The relationship between evolution and demography has been more extensively explored in recent years (Spooner 1970). The concept of population pressure especially has often been used as an explanatory principle. But as we have tried to demonstrate, population is a relative phenomenon, which can only be properly explained when related to other cultural variables. Thus the significance of population size is closely related to density, while the occurrence of population pressure is heavily dependent on the PP of the social systems involved, whether internally or externally derived. The specific combinations of these elements constitute some of the constraints that determine the developmental potential of the zones. But this also depends on social and political organisation, trade

and exchange relations, which through exploitation of other areas may be an instrument of growth. As wealth consumption is an outcome of the accumulation of surplus above the necessary costs of reproduction, converted into prestige objects through trade and specialist workmanship, both local production and trade played a decisive role. The problem is to determine more precisely the nature of this relationship (leaving the question of political organisation out of consideration; see note 2).

It seems clear from Figures 7.6 and 7.8 that zone 5 was struck by a severe economic crisis in the middle of the Bronze Age, manifested in a sudden change in subsistence strategy towards a more intensified agricultural practice, probably combined with a partial depopulation.[16] This was most probably the final result of an extensive exploitation of pastures through grazing, leading to ecological degradation (heath). Thus the vegetation in zone 5 was already in the Early Bronze Age characterised by meagre commons with heath, a result of intensive grazing, and weeds indicating abandoned fields (Iversen 1973:99). If this strategy had been practised at an extended rate for several centuries, combined with geographical/political expansion and population growth, the final result was likely to take the dimensions of a catastrophe, as reflected in the figures.[17] Although this development most probably was accelerated when bronze was introduced, internal economic conditions were mainly responsible for the sudden decrease of consumption in this zone, as they could not provide the necessary surplus to maintain those exchange networks through which bronze had been obtained. The shift in subsistence strategy may be regarded as an attempt to alleviate the effects of the crisis in order to maintain the exchange system. But the development from periods 4 to 5–6, which shows a gradual decline in consumption, indicates the failure to meet those demands. The consequence was a breakdown of supralocal exchange relations and probably a gradual transformation of the political and social structure.

Although the development in zone 4 could not remain unaffected by the events in zone 5, it displays some remarkable features that should be discussed first. Already in period 3, when the western zones were still at their economic zenith, we find a sudden wealth concentration that was never replaced. Several explanations are likely:

a) It was the result of a short-lived political centralisation, exploiting neighbouring areas.
b) It was a result of a sudden trade boom, organised from zone 4. This might ultimately have led to political centralisation.
c) It was booty from raids brought about by economic crises and/or political conflicts isolating the area from the distributional network. This too could lead to a certain centralisation as a means of defence.

It remains a fact that zone 4 was agriculturally very intensively exploited (Figure 7.6) and, as its PP was high, an extraordinary surplus could have been produced, providing a basis for a commercial and political expansion. But as land use was very extensive, and the agricultural output probably close to carrying capacity, this could very easily turn into an economic disaster if the population expanded too much.

It also remains a fact that the settlement structure changed significantly from periods 2 to 3 from a dispersed to a clustered or ‘centralised’ structure (Randsborg 1974: figures 1–2).

Lastly, it should be noticed that zone 4 expanded and intensified its exchange relationships in period 3, including northern Zealand (Broholm 1944: figure 47) and

south-western Norway (Marstrander 1950; Randsborg 1968: figure 31), while it sustained its exchange networks with northern Germany, especially Lüneburg and Mecklenburg.[18]

It is not possible at present to support any of the proposed explanations exclusively, just as they may be combined in several ways. But the distribution maps of Ottenjahn indicate that the neighbouring areas of zone 4 were drained of full-hilted swords to a radius of 50–60 km (Ottenjahn 1969: map 2), suggesting some kind of economic exploitation. The centralised settlement structure also suggests a change in political structure. In period 4 the boom was over. Zone 4 was isolated from the exchange network, but the settlement structure remained essentially unaltered, and the exploitation of good soil increased. Thus the stagnation was probably partly a result of an internal economic crisis, which was propelled by the economic decline in zone 5, leaving zone 4 in an isolated position with respect to the western exchange network. But also involved could have been political action[19] from zones 1 and 3 against their evolving economic and political power which threatened the system as a whole.

Thus the development in both zones 4 and 5 should be seen against the background of the geographical range of the whole cultural system, including southern Scandinavia and northern Germany, as this represents the boundaries of political and commercial expansion. The economic growth in western Denmark is seen to have been accompanied by political and commercial expansion, including south-western Norway and northern Germany,[20] and this might have been on the point of transforming the system in a more centralised direction. This was blocked, first of all by the constraints imposed by the economy, but perhaps also by political counteraction. The final result of this process was isolation.

If we take a look at zone 3, the development here is also predictable in terms of its internal economy. It had higher PP than zone 5 and was less densely populated and exploited than zone 4. Thus it had economic potential. The settlement expansion and the population increase which characterised this zone in both periods 3 and 4 (Figures 7.7 and 7.8) seem to some extent to have been part of local migrations from zones 4 and 5. This stimulated economic development during periods 3 and 4, where zone 3 displays short circulation time and relatively high consumption (Figures 7.2–3).[21] But it also led to diminishing yields per head (Figure 7.8) and in period 5 the first signs of economic crisis appeared (Figure 7.2). But here zone 3 differed from zones 4 and 5, in having unexploited land resources of higher PP. It remains an astonishing phenomenon that these areas were not included. This consistency in subsistence strategy, despite the prospects of an economic crisis, must certainly reflect important constraints on the social system.

Thus we can observe that by the end of the Bronze Age the whole of western Denmark was experiencing a growing economic crisis, characterised by deteriorating ecological conditions of reproduction resulting in diminishing yields, denser populations and restricted possibilities of geographical expansion.[22] As this is parallelled by decreasing consumption of bronze and increasing isolation we are inclined to believe that local economic development was crucial for establishing those exchange networks through which bronze flowed. When expansion and economic growth was blocked by the constraints of the system (which were altered during that process) the exchange network fell apart and the flow of bronze was reduced proportionally.

Against this background the economic development in zones 1 and 2 in the Late Bronze Age becomes easier to understand. Their leading position was apparently not a

well conducted result of political and economic competition - not in the first place anyway. But the economic decline of zones 4 and 5 put them in an advantageous position. Due to their higher PP, these zones were able to maintain a stable economy without significant changes throughout the Late Bronze Age, and even absorb an increased population—in zone 1 in period 4 and in zone 2 in periods 5–6, where it was combined with a marked increase in wealth, especially in south-west Funen. Here a small coastal area, Voldtofte, reveals a sudden wealth concentration and in the centre of this we find a group of princely graves, a new phenomenon (Thrane 1973 and 1976), apparently reflecting a political centralisation based on the control over foreign trade. This development is parallelled in a few other areas, for example, the Seddiner area (Wüstemann 1974). These tendencies towards accumulation of wealth in nodal points along important trade routes were among other things conditioned by the increased influx of bronze in period 5, as mentioned earlier. But if we want to explain this development it is necessary to extend our geographical perspective to include the whole of southern Scandinavia. In general the Late Bronze Age was a period of enormous economic expansion in Sweden and the Baltic (Sprockhoff 1937: maps 1–3), especially period 5, and exchange networks were established connecting middle and eastern Sweden with northern Germany and zones 1 and 2. This expansion is reflected in extensive forest clearings and intensified agricultural activities (Berglund 1969 with references).[23] Again we have demonstrated the close connection between expanded local production and commercial expansion linking the local area to a bigger system of exchange, canalising the flow of goods and people.

Thus the economic decline in western Scandinavia was counterbalanced by an economic expansion in eastern Scandinavia. Only zones 1 and 2 and southern Sweden were able to maintain their position throughout the whole period, partly due to their central position, but especially due to their high productive potential. The economic development of the Nordic Bronze Age was thus centred around a western axis in the Early Bronze Age and an eastern axis in the Late Bronze Age. When viewed in this perspective we may regard the local economic declines and rises as part of the reproduction of the larger Scandinavian system. In terms of the productivity of the total system this probably remained stable throughout the whole period, but it exploited and exhausted differing areas during the reproductive process responsible for the regional expansions and regressions. As this process lasted about one thousand years, nearly two thousand if we include the later Neolithic, it may be asked, What was the evolutionary potential of the system? Or more precisely: What were the necessary conditions for a transformation of the system as a whole—and which forces were likely to bring about these condition?

We have been able to demonstrate that at least two processes were generated by the reproduction of the Scandinavian system, one evolutionary, the other devolutionary.

We term evolutionary a development towards centralisation and wealth accumulation whose primary basis was a significant increase of absolute surplus, probably implying a growing dominance of vertical relations (Friedman 1975:193ff.). The examples are at present few and of short duration, and they may rather be regarded as evolutionary tendencies that could always be neutralised by the system, as they exploited it (for example, through trade) without altering it. This implies that they were without means to secure their position and to dominate or transcend the system as a whole. But if centre

development was a regular phenomenon, co-operation between centres may have been able to dominate, exploit and perhaps transform the system—as probably happened in Late Hallstatt and la Tène in some areas in middle and southern Europe (Rowlands and Frankenstein 1974; Nash 1976), but apparently not in Scandinavia until much later, and under somewhat different conditions (Hedeager 1976).

We term devolutionary a process where the functioning of a social system leads to a degradation of the conditions of production, resulting in diminishing returns, a blocking of political and geographical expansion which ultimately may alter social and political relations (Friedman 1975:186ff.). In our case this is reflected in a breakdown of the exchange system, decreased consumption and isolation—and in zone 5 apparently a new subsistence strategy.

As variants of the total reproductive process, these opposing evolutionary and devolutionary tendencies did not lead to a transformation of that system. Their developmental potential depended on the dynamics of the whole Scandinavian system and on its articulation with other cultural systems. Any predictions concerning the possible trajectories of structural transformations must include these two aspects. Thus in order to answer our original question—What were the necessary conditions for a transformation of the system as a whole, and which forces were likely to bring about these conditions?—we should consider three important phenomena.

First, the increased PD and shrinking settlement area during the Late Bronze Age (from about 1000BC onwards), and the refusal to exploit new land in zones 1–3. *Second*, the climatic change towards cooler wetter weather around 600 BC. *Third*, the end of bronze supplies and the introduction of iron technology by the end of the Bronze Age (around 500 BC).

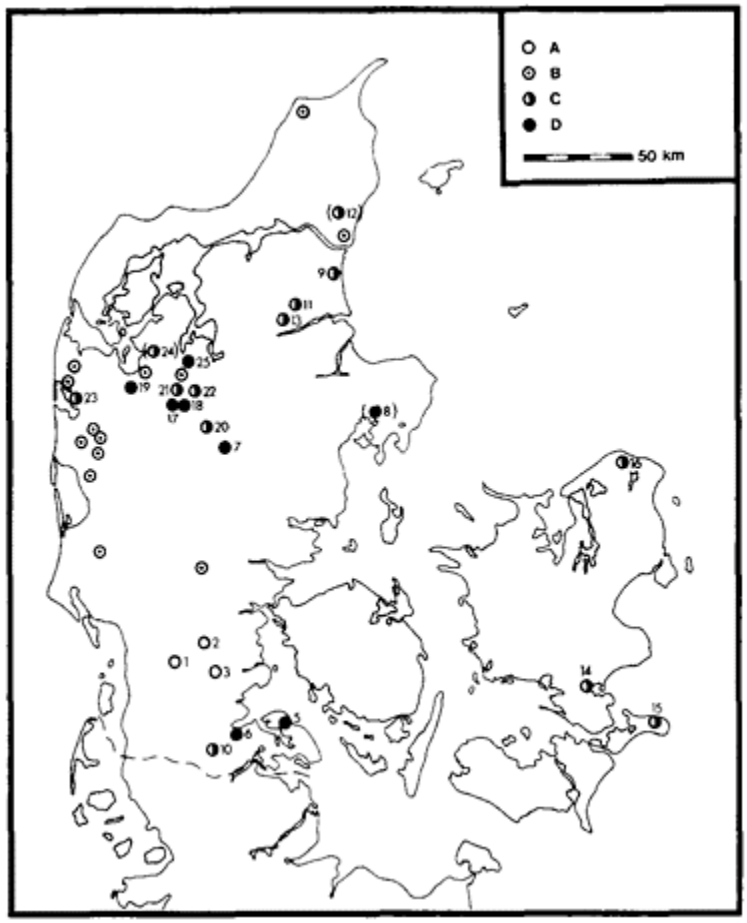
1 The refusal to exploit new land in zones 1–3, despite a build-up of population and the prospects of a crisis, must have been deeply rooted in the social system. The areas of higher PP were densely forested and their exploitation not only demanded hard and unfamiliar pioneer work of forest clearings, but also a temporary change of subsistence base, altering or breaking up former relations of production. This may explain in part the inherent tendency to maintain the existing economy within the known range of available and exploited land as long as possible, that is until the limits of the system's ability to reproduce itself had been reached or even transcended.[24] But the tendency to build up denser populations within more restricted areas should also be taken into consideration, as it might be part of an explanation. There could hardly be any economic reason for this. If the old settlement areas were given up it meant a harder strain on the soil with the risk of exhausting it, resulting in diminishing yields. The settlement concentrations were rather a result of growing political tensions and increasing warfare, perhaps in the first instance caused by fights over land, which was becoming more scarce, later propelled by the new set of economic constraints imposed by the clustering. Thus the settlement concentration in zone 4, period 3, was not an isolated phenomenon, but the first example of a more general development accelerating during the Late Bronze Age. But as this development did not imply any increase in absolute surplus it had no immediate evolutionary potential (for a discussion Carneiro 1961 and 1970) and it should rather be classified as a variant of devolution keeping the system in a state of growing contradictions.[25]

2 Around 600 BC a climatic change occurred. Summers became colder and the weather in general wetter, reflected in a pronounced increase of peat formations in high moors and an extension of humid areas (the so-called RYIII, Overbeck, Münnich, Aletsee and Averdich 1957; Iversen 1973:105 ff.; Aaby 1974: figure 4 and 1976:3). This naturally altered the economic conditions of reproduction, but the positive and negative effects are difficult to evaluate in our present state of knowledge. It might be suggested, however, that the humid climate would increase the leaching of minerals, especially on the preferred light soil of the Bronze Age, thus lowering the carrying capacity, which in turn might trigger an economic crisis (Iversen 1973:115). Its dimensions naturally depended on how close to its reproductive limits the social system had reached.

3 The end of the Bronze Age was a time of economic prosperity in the Mediterranean, initiated by the Greek expansion which led to an intensification of commercial relations with southern and Central Europe. When this developed in Late Hallstatt and Early la Tène into closer economic co-operation, political and commercial relations with northern Europe lost their economic significance (Jensen 1965). Northern Europe was isolated, the exchange system contracted and the following period of the Early Iron Age is characterised by numerous small local exchange systems (or cultural groups). At approximately the same time iron technology was introduced from Central Europe. It should be noticed, however, that it had been employed during most of the Late Bronze Age in the area immediately south of the Scandinavian culture system (Horst 1971: figure 5). Thus it must have been known, but was not adopted. This probably reflects important aspects of the functioning of bronze within the Scandinavian system, where it was closely related to status and the maintenance of vertical relations embedded in extensive exchange relations. But iron may also have been withdrawn from commercial exchange with Scandinavia as it was still a scarce metal, which served important functions in the production process. Thus when introduced in Scandinavia it created a basis for a new and more intensified agricultural technique, reflected in a series of new tools (Steensberg 1943:100ff., 179ff.).

Thus we may conclude that by the end of the Bronze Age conditions were sufficient for a change. The cumulative effects of settlement clustering, climatic change and shrinking supplies of bronze were likely to trigger a severe economic and political crisis. As the introduction of iron technology created a new local basis for an intensification of agriculture, as raw materials could be obtained locally (Hingst 1953 and 1964:222 f., figures 43–44), we might expect changes in both subsistence economy and relations of production.

Unfortunately the archaeological evidence from the earliest Iron Age is very scarce in zones 1 and 2, but pollen analyses indicate that the transition from Bronze to Iron Age (vegetational zones 8 to 9) throughout the country was characterised by extensive forest clearings combined with settlement expansion,



Map 7.6 A: Common with heath under Early Bronze Age barrow. B: Health cultivated in the Early (pre-Roman) Iron Age. C: Extensive forest clearance at zone border 8–9. D: Gradual intensified forest clearance at zone border 7–9

Note: numbers 1 to 25 refer to references given in note 28 to this chapter

Source: B after Müller-Wille 1965: figure 27

whereas a gradual intensification characterised the old settled areas (Map 7.6).[26] Thus in a few centuries the former densely forested areas of high PP in zones 1 and 2 had been settled (Becker 1961: plates 123–126; Albrectsen 1970: figure 4; also Jahnkuhn 1952–1955)—a process that gave the landscape much of its present open character dominated by fields and pastures. The intensive agricultural exploitation was based on a system of crop-rotation including the laying out of extensive field areas for fallow (Iversen 1973:109f.; Lange 1975: figure 3; also Lindquist 1974:29 f.). We do not know much about the relations of production, but they seem to have been dominated by well-organised local egalitarian communities. Thus status marking disappears from graves and offerings, and a new ideology is reflected in the appearance of anthropomorphic gods and numerous small domestic offerings especially of foodstuffs (Becker 1970: figures 1–2).

In zones 3–5 the crisis is also very well documented archaeologically. In the degraded areas, cultivation of heath began (map 7.6)—an impossible task that was not carried out successfully until the nineteenth century. This reflects a severe population problem, accelerated by the impossibility of expansion, which ultimately had to release a migration—which it did around 120 BC when the Teutonic and Cimbric people penetrated Europe and threatened Rome before they were conquered in 101 BC (Seyer 1976:196f., figure 51; Glob 1951). The hard and unpleasant conditions of life are illustrated by the extensive use of collected seeds of weed in food production (Helbæk 1951 and 1958), by some evidence of starvation in skeleton material (Haage 1958; Kühl 1967), and by a short life-span and high child mortality (Gebühr 1975:438 f.; Müller 1976:162ff.). At the same time we witness the formation of organised and fenced villages divided into social units (farms), showing an increasing accumulation of cattle (and probably land) in a single ‘chiefly’ big farm (Becker 1966; Hvass 1975; Haarnagel 1961 and 1963).

Another important consequence of the devolution process was the emergence of landed property (Hatt 1939 and 1955), which appeared in zones 3 and 5 at the transition to the Iron Age in the form of field systems (Hatt 1949; Müller-Wille 1965)—a necessary result of blocked expansion and land scarcity. Investigation in later years has documented the same phenomenon in zones 1 and 2 (Nielsen 1970). When land can be inherited it enters the same category as other moveable goods, it can be transferred and accumulated, creating new means of exploitation and in the long run the possibility of a landed aristocracy. Thus we may term the final result of the general devolutionary development described in this section pre-feudal (in the Marxist sense) or stratified (in the general evolutionary sense, e.g. Fried 1960).

Conclusion

I have tried to demonstrate how the reproduction of a ‘tribal’ structure generated two variations—one evolutionary, the other devolutionary. It is suggested that this is a general evolutionary basis of multilinear developments. Thus a successful evolution of the tribal structure may generate the ‘Asiatic’ state (Friedman 1975:193ff.; Friedman and Rowlands 1977 for further developments), whereas the devolution process may evolve into a pre-feudal mode of production. The developmental order is determined by the transformation of the constraints of reproduction and by the productive potential of the

social systems involved—creating some absolute evolutionary barriers. Thus the material configurations in Scandinavia—and probably in larger parts of northern Europe—during the Late Bronze Age[27] are not simply cultural phenomena, but the outcome of specific economic processes, which may be suggested to represent the decline of tribal organisation.

Notes

1 I am indebted to Jonathan Friedman, of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology in Copenhagen, who has been a rich source of inspiration, both at the interdisciplinary research seminar 'Local Systems, Global Systems and Social Evolution', and in private discussions. I also want to express my gratitude to Lotte Hedeager who has been my constant support and whose help I could always count on.

The first department of the National Museum in Copenhagen always met me with great generosity, just as Troels-Smith and Svend Jørgensen at the National Museum's eighth department. Their critical comments have been inspiring and suggestive, although not fully reflected in the final version (see note 26).

Hans Ejner Jensen, at the Land Register Directorate, provided valuable information and references to the classification of soil (see note 9).

The present chapter presents some preliminary results of a research project carried out at the Institute of Prehistoric Archaeology at the University of Aarhus.

All drawings were done by Elsebet Morville, Moesgård.

2 The term tribal refers to a society whose political and economic organisation is based on local production organised along lines of kinship. Extended production correlates in general with extended accumulation. These features are being analysed at present and will be published separately.

3 It may be asked why old swords were not simply broken up and melted down. It could be suggested that such complicated castings were monopolised in a few specialist workshops, whose skills perhaps were not available at all times for everybody. Rather than melt swords down into simpler tools (with less prestige) it was preferred to keep them in circulation, and those who had access to new weapons could pass older ones along to subordinates or into the ground.

It could also be suggested, however, that there existed a prohibition against melting down prestige goods. This would explain the absolute lack of hoards with broken bronzes from the Early Bronze Age. In the Late Bronze Age a few hoards with scrap bronze may reflect a changing situation due to an increased scarcity of bronze.

As the two alternatives do not exclude each other, and cause the same effects, we will not discuss them any further.

4 Weight was naturally a preferable indicator, but here we await a more complete publication of the work done by Klavs Randsborg (1974).

5 Several of the octagonal swords were locally produced imitations (Hachman 1965:50ff.), but an analysis of this problem is still lacking in publication, although such work was completed by the late Ekkehard Aner.

6 It is also indicated by a shift in consumption of gold and bronze from western to eastern Schleswig-Holstein (Struwe 1971:81ff.).

7 More clear-cut regional borders can be observed in the distribution of locally produced goods (Baudou 1960), just as it has been shown in northern Germany in the works of E.

Sprockhoff. Political influence areas are especially clearly documented by the distribution of prestige ornaments (unpublished analyses by the author).

8 Both the eastern and western exchange systems were well established in the earliest Bronze Age, Period I (Hachmann 1957; Struwe 1971: plates 2 and 5). In this chapter, however, we are concerned with those trade routes that had a dominant economic significance.

9 The last evaluation was carried out between 1805 and 1844. This is the one used here. It was taken from Trap Danmark, a complete topographical description of Denmark (Trap Danmark, 4th edn, vols I–X, 1920–1930). The evaluation was carried out systematically by surveyors. Holes were dug at regular intervals, the depth of the topsoil was measured and topsoil and subsoil were characterised in terms of their composition. The valuation was calculated as a mean of these three figures in a scale from 0–24. This was then transformed into 'hartkorn', a time-honoured term. (References to relevant literature are found in Jensen 1975.) The sandy soil in parts of Jutland, often with heath (most pronounced in zone 5), has generally received too low an evaluation, as just commons. An alternative test with reduced heath was therefore carried out for figure 7.6, but did not change the overall picture. Preliminary work for a new evaluation has been done (using a scale from 0 to 100), published in 1970 by the state as 'Betænkning nr. 581' done by 'Jordboniterings-kommissionen af 7. nov. 1949'. Work on this was never completed.

10 Naturally the size of the parishes varies somewhat within each zone, just as the average size is bigger in zone 5 than in zone 1. But this does not matter as we are working with relative relationships (e.g. tdr htk. per grave, ha per grave, etc.). Thus a certain settlement pattern will create equal figures for ha per grave whether the parishes are small or big.

11 A few districts were excluded because of extremely high figures (more than twice as high as the second highest) due to a domination of heath.

12 Period 5 and 6 were taken together for two reasons: in order to include the closing of the Bronze Age in the analyses, and in order to add up the number of graves so that it was equal for every period (about 1,000).

13 The preserved textiles from zone 5 display a high professional standard both in quality and quantity (big pieces demanding several weavers) compared to those of zone 2 (e.g. Borum Eshøj). I thank weaver Karen Hanne-Nielsen for this information (for textiles in general see Broholm and Hald 1940).

14 The combination of the salt mines of Lüneburg and the fish of zones 1 and 4 may have created a valuable export product, adding a further explanation for the close relations between these areas in the Early Bronze Age.

15 The actual degree to which swiddening was employed in Bronze Age subsistence is unknown. But as the overall settlement structure remained unaltered throughout the whole period, it probably played a restricted role, mainly to keep down secondary forest vegetation.

16 The excavations of C.J.Becker have revealed rather extensive settlements consisting of clusterings of big, well-built houses within a small local area in zone 5 (Becker 1972). Thus it might also be suggested that instead of a partial migration the population clustered within the more fertile areas.

17 Already the analysis of Troels-Smith from Dyrholmen (Troels-Smith 1942) suggested that pastures were dominating within the Single Grave culture, and this has been confirmed by several unpublished pollen analyses from single grave barrows, which are stored at the National Museum's eighth department.

18 Zone 4 bracelets are common in Lüneburg (Laux 1971), just as we find several Mecklenburg ornaments in zone 4, e.g. Broholm 1943:1662 and 1679.

19 A warlike situation would explain the frequent hoarding of gold, both small spirals and impressive arm-rings, normally associated with rich male graves, that characterise zone 4 (Broholm 1944: figure 65).

20 It should be noticed that the rich north Frisian Islands were surrounded in the Bronze Age by fertile areas which are now under water. This is among other things indicated by numerous finds of flint sickles (Kersten and La Baume 1958:46).

21 If we accept the idea of exploitation from zone 4 in period 3, the low number of swords is not representative of the actual richness, which the low circulation time (Map 7.3) then might be a correct indication of.

22 The end of mound-building by the end of the Early Bronze Age also reflects the economic crisis. The tens of thousands of tumuli from that period incorporated an equal number at least of hectares of good surface soil, representing another way of soil exhaustion.

The increasing lack of bronze and the growing political tensions (probably combined with warfare) are also indicated by contemporary mound plundering, especially common in zone 5, classically illustrated by 'Store Høj' (Boye 1896: plates VI–VIII) and 'Arilds Høj' (Kersten 1942).

23 The Late Bronze Age expansion is especially documented in the analyses from eastern and middle Sweden by Florin (1963:60) and Welinder (1974:93ff., figures 27–29).

24 This situation is also reflected by the lack of proper axes for forest clearings. The small celts of periods 5–6 in Denmark were not worth much, whereas the axes from middle and eastern Sweden in the same period were heavy and efficient tools for cutting forest (Baudou 1960: maps 10, 29–34).

25 In this chapter the primary concern has been to demonstrate the devolutionary developments initiated by expansion and over-exploitation leading to degradation, warfare and clusterings or partial migrations. This is especially pronounced in areas of low PP. The developmental processes in areas of high PP have only been slightly touched upon. Here another line of argument might be suggested, regarding competition over trade as a primary force leading to warfare, settlement clustering, degradation and perhaps finally loss of trade. These two processes, which however create similar effects, may act both independently and in combination. It is not possible at present to determine the more precise relationship between them.

26 The classification of the pollen diagrams in Map 7.6 should be regarded with some caution. Most of them do not fulfil the present requirements with respect to sample size, and different diagram styles are employed, complicating comparisons. For these reasons the earlier diagrams of Jessen (Jessen 1934) from zone 3 were excluded.

It should also be stressed that the definitions of zone border 8–9 are disputed and not always easily comparable. They are mainly based on the occurrence of a humidification horizon (RY III, in Denmark originally dated by the occurrence of chronological fixed objects in the stratification, e.g. Jessen 1934), and by the rise of beech above 1 % in the samples. Without C14 dating, one cannot be absolutely sure which RY is represented in the horizon, just as prehistoric peat cutting may have created false zone borders (Jørgensen 1956). As the spread of beech is probably culturally determined, and as pollen diagrams are local, we also need C14 to fix the date of the rise of beech in the samples, which may turn out not to be synchronous all over Denmark.

Thus RY III is generated by a combination of climatic and culturally determined vegetational changes. Recent investigations have shown that climatic oscillations have taken place with regular intervals of 260 years (Aaby 1974). This suggests that climatic changes did not necessarily cause economic changes or crises, unless the social systems had reached the critical limits of their ability to reproduce themselves.

27 The effects of the devolutionary processes are very well documented, both pollen analytical and archaeological, in north-western Europe. References may be found in the bibliography of Müller-Wille (1965). It also seems likely, however, that similar processes took place in

parts of eastern Europe. This is reflected in the many small local groups of the late Lausitz culture (e.g. Buch 1973), and in the change in settlement structure from central place fortifications, combined with open settlements, to local village fortifications with few open settlements (Niesiolowska-Wedzka 1974). Devolutionary processes may also be ascribed to the Urnfield cultures in parts of Central Europe (Bouzek, Jäger and Lozek 1976).

28 1–3: Iversen 1939. 4: Jessen 1929. 5: Andersen 1954: plate XIX. 6: Iversen 1941: plate VI. 7: Iversen 1941: plate V. 8: Iversen 1941: plateII. 9: Mikkelsen 1943: plates V-VIII. 10: Andersen 1954: plate XVIII. 11: Brorson Christensen 1948: plate I. 12: Mikkelsen 1952: plates XXXV-XXXVI. 13:Jessen 1945: figure 2. 14–15: Mikkelsen 1949: plates VIII and XVII. 16: Iversen 1941: plate IV. 17–18: Jonassen 1950: plates VII-VIII. 25: Jonassen 1950: plates III-IV.

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Part II
CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS

8
CENTRE AND PERIPHERY

A review of a concept

Michael Rowlands

One of the great strengths of Marxism as a critical doctrine has been its claim to expose purportedly complete explanations as in fact partial and ideologically biased. As Lukács put it, 'it is not the primacy of economic motives in historical explanation that constitutes the decisive difference between marxism and bourgeois thought but the point of view of totality' (Lukács 1968:27). In the mid-twentieth century, the dominant theory of development in the core countries of the capitalist world economy had added little to nineteenth-century theories of social change. Societies changed due to the logic of their internal historical development and either because of historical accident or indigenous advantages, some were simply more advanced than others. In other words, the framework was historicist and fixed firmly in categories of thought that anticipated all societies moving through objectively similar stages of growth and development. Moreover, each society was moved along in this process by a constant examination of its own origins and an assessment of its rate of progress. This subjective evaluation of an objective past formed the ontological basis on which future growth was deemed to depend. It is more than a coincidence that physical excavation of past fragments and their being brought into order through interpretation and publication should also have developed as the dominant archaeological method by which this process of self-identification would be achieved.

In *Emile* (1762), Rousseau urges his heroine to preserve authenticity against all the dissolving influences of modernity and recommends 'First of all, you must build a wall around your child's soul. Behind the protective enclosure of education the underground work of excavation could go on to recover the buried roots of the human spirit on which true liberation depended' (cited in Berman 1970:171). It is perhaps symptomatic of twentieth-century pessimism that this attitude to the benefits of digging deep had already soured by the time of Freud. 'The destruction of Pompeii was only beginning now that it had been dug up' he says in his description of the Rat Man (Freud 1909:153). This Nietzschean theme that the products of human life (spontaneity) become become corroded when brought into the light of day (conscious reason) has generated a rich discourse much of which is probably irrelevant for most practising archaeologists. Yet in the decline from Enlightenment optimism to *fin-de-siècle* pessimism, excavation retained a privileged if transformed role. The royal road to archaeological knowledge betrays its own origins in an objectivity/ subjectivity dualism that quite unquestioningly accorded privilege to the means of constituting a long and enduring narrative of its own past. Rousseau's advice betrays a related theme that is equally constant. Self-identity can only be constituted through the prior existence of a sense of boundedness. This thoroughly modern virtue assumes that awareness of historical development is a conscious process and is restricted to motivated actors living within the bounds of their mutually accepted limits of self-identity. In this respect there is little difference between historicist,

evolutionist or diffusionist doctrines since for them, the autonomy of the cultural unit is never in doubt, only its capacity for creativity. Yet boundedness requires a definition of 'otherness', an excluded category of the incomprehensible or the undesirable against which the certainty and familiarity of habitual and traditional action can constantly be reaffirmed. Censorship functions as a strategy of exclusion to place such aberrations into the space of the alien, the primitive or the unconscious. Whatever their form, all share common properties in their unpredictability, irrationality or uncontrollable nature in contrast to stable self-identity being the product of belonging to bounded social units embedded in traditional ways of life.

The categories of objectivity and subjectivity have been largely shaped by this peculiarly Western experience to the extent that they have been constituted in constant antagonism to each other (Rowlands 1984b). In archaeology, 'digging deep' in order to reconstruct the particular history of a unique historical community has for long been opposed to a tradition of sceptical disbelief that values an outsider point of view. While the former privileges the search for identity through authenticity, the latter emphasises truth usually by claiming that historical processes exist that operate outside of human conscious knowledge altogether. Moreover subjectivity was attacked as being not only Eurocentric and mystifying but intentionally concerned with denying its own real conditions of objective existence. The total assault on subjectivity in the post-Second World War era is understandable, given that some of the most barbaric acts of twentieth-century history were perpetrated as a justification of the view that objective and subjective conditions of existence were only to be experienced within the same socially defined unit. Various nationalisms, fascisms and the 'gulag' have been pursued in the belief that a subjective definition of wholeness, as a product of historical or racial purity, should physically dominate and control all the objective material conditions which affect it. Given that this has been a constant recipe for militaristic expansion as well as the baleful consequences of a 'hunger for wholeness' which placed all those outside the bounds of pure identity as inferior and non-human, it is scarcely surprising that all attempts to rationalise or integrate subjective and objective approaches in the postwar era have results in failure. Even so, their antagonism is quite misguided and perpetuates a pathology of the Western intellectual tradition. Those who adhere to a scientific, objectivist stance can never cope with the real emotional forces that shape people's perceptions of their own past and the role it plays in the present. And those that espouse a dogged subjectivism espouse a relativism that can make nothing of the ironies and unintended consequences of the history that impinge upon sentient human action. Moreover, those that adopt the psychotic solution of jumbling the two stances together become confused or worse. By the early 1960s in a range of different fields, a solution had been arrived at which recognised the distinctiveness of the two stances and yet which also recognised their complementarity. Both were seen as necessary aspects of the same cognitive process which may be carried on in different contexts without it necessarily arousing conflict between them (cf. Jay 1977). It is to this tradition that attempts by writers such as Braudel, Frank and Wallerstein to revise modern European theories of social change belong and against which their claims have to be judged.

Development and underdevelopment

In the late 1940s and 1950s, the dominant view of world history stressed the independent development of the West, which had now reached a peak of economic and political power, and a world role for the USA in the management of international politics and development. Comparative sociology had demonstrated conclusively that the precocious rise of the West was due to a unique combination of material and cultural factors that were not to be found elsewhere. Through the transmission of technological and managerial skills, economic aid and education, it was envisaged that the developed West could intervene to break the conditions of historical underdevelopment in the rest of the world. These ideals passed from political science into anthropology to generate a distinctive body of fieldwork and publication in this period (see Wold 1982) and also into archaeology through the impact of neo-evolutionist doctrines in America and Britain (cf. Binford 1962; Renfrew 1972).

As a perspective on modern development, these views were most trenchantly criticised by André Gunder Frank (1966, 1969) and Immanuel Wallerstein (1974, 1979a); for the precapitalist eras by Ekholm (1977) and Ekholm and Friedman (1979, 1980) and more cautiously by Jane Schneider (1977); and for the ethnographic non-capitalist world by Eric Wolf (1982). Frank articulated the then heretical position that capitalism had been expansionist since the sixteenth century and wherever it penetrated had turned other areas into underdeveloped dependent satellites (Wallerstein's peripheries) in order to extract surpluses to meet the requirements of at first mercantile and subsequently industrial metropoles (Wallerstein's centres). Both Frank's and Wallerstein's theses are strongly circulationist in arguing that the expansion of a world market has created an international division of labour as a precondition for exploitation to take place. The underdevelopment of peripheral areas was not a result of their archaic social structures but a product of their historical relations with the developed world, ever renewed and intensified by the transfer of surplus and their dependence on manufactured goods and technological innovation from industrialised core areas.

The general argument has not gone unscathed and the literature on the debate is now so enormous as to be impossible to summarise here (cf. Goodman and Redclift 1981: chapter 2) Some of the most astringent criticisms have come from orthodox Marxists who have criticised the emphasis on unequal exchange and the failure to analyse internal class relations within core and peripheral social formations. They have objected also to the functionalism of the argument which denies peripheral formations their own histories of development and resistances to exploitation (Laclau 1971; Brenner 1977). A theory which claims that conscious identity with local social units, whether nation states, ethnic groups, or religious movements, is shaped and formed by outside forces is unlikely to appeal to those advocating political action as a means of equalising the world order. Neither Frank nor Wallerstein (or their critics) have been particularly interested in the precapitalist era. To exaggerate slightly, it might be said that they chose to reproduce the modern/premodern division of world history and saw a 'world system', imperialism and a 'world economy' as uniquely modern phenomena. Prior to the sixteenth century, they argued, history had been the product of expanding polities (world empires) that related to

each other through conquest, militarism and tribute (Wallerstein 1974: introduction). In this respect, Wallerstein can be placed firmly in the substan-tivist camp. By contrast, Ekholm and Friedman have stressed the long-term continuity which exists between precapitalist and capitalist world economies and noted that the transition to the modern world economy was itself the product of the dissolution of a previously unified medieval European/ Mediterranean world economy (Ekholm and Friedman 1979; 1980; also Schneider 1977). In many respects, and in particular the emphasis on the longevity of capital accumulation, their thesis is part of the long-standing primitivist/modernist debate on the characterisation of the ancient economy (cf. Will 1954; Finley 1973). It needs emphasising therefore that it is the scale of interaction, rather than the significance of 'trade' or the existence of primitive or archaic forms of capitalism, that has most appealed to some archaeologists and historians working in earlier time periods. World systems/dependency theory has had greater impact on rethinking the significance of large-scale spatial/temporal shifts in geopolitical centres; on the correlation of expanding peripheral formations with political decentralisation in far-away core areas and on the theorisation of irreversible social change (e.g. Kohl 1978; Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978; Gledhill 1978; Kristiansen 1982; Upham 1982). In addition, more interest has been shown in how it helps to understand cyclical development in early states and empires, in modes of incorporation and resistance to incorporation by peripheral social formations and the effects of both on their internal development (Kohl 1977; Hedeager 1978b; Haselgrove 1982). Questions which previously had floundered in the vaguer language of interaction and diffusion or had never been raised because the subject matters were deemed to belong to separate, specialist disciplines.

However, a simple projection of such ideas into the past has not proceeded without difficulty (cf. Kohl 1987). Kohl summarises the position for the ancient Near East in the following manner: 'the model of a world system, which Wallerstein defined for the modern era only imperfectly, describes structured interactions in antiquity…the development of underdevelopment in the Bronze Age was sharply constrained or itself underdeveloped' (Kohl 1987:22). The reasons for this, he summarises, were that technologies were neither as specialised nor as controlled in the same way; transport systems limited large-scale inter-regional economic integration and the capacity of cores to control and dominate their peripheries for long periods of time were more constrained (Kohl 1987:23). In fact, similar criticisms have been levelled at Wallerstein's characterisation that the modern world has been 'capitalist' in the above sense since the sixteenth century, and it has been argued instead that most of these features are true only for the post-Second World War era (see Wolf 1982). So, whether this constitutes a real capitalist/precapitalist empirical contrast is open to doubt. Nevertheless, as Kohl further remarks, 'models that fail also instruct and consideration of the economic and political linkages among disparate social formations is essential to advance beyond the theoretically simple minded and empirically innocent alternatives provided by neo-evolutionism' (Kohl 1987:24). It has to be the purpose of this chapter to suggest ways in which such theories, used heuristically, can help us to do so.

Systems of social reproduction

Theorists of markedly different positions have chosen to agree that the analysis of social units is distinct from interpreting interactions between them. The reasons for this are complex and rooted in the conditions leading to the development of modern nation states and the promotion of international trade as their optimum means of interaction. The result is a received wisdom which polarises the categories of production and exchange and privileges the first as occurring within a bounded social unit and determines that the latter exists between them. Moreover, the internal circulation of goods within a social unit is assumed to take on a different form from foreign trade and to be influenced by social factors which might otherwise be considered as market imperfections.

Such ideas are characteristic of many general analyses which have interpreted modern social development through posing dualistic evolutionary models of exchange relations. This includes the general influence of Marx, Weber and Polanyi, who, though varying in specific content, tended to dichotomise between capitalist and precapitalist, rational and non-rational, embedded and disembedded economies and thus temporalise what was in origin experienced spatially. Marx's well-known assertion that the exchange of objects precedes historically the exchange of labour and that it took place initially on the boundaries of, or between, productive communities, while internal distribution took the form of an exchange of use values, guides the work of Meillassoux (1971), Sahlins (1974), Godelier (1977) and Gregory (1982). Much the same ethos underlies Mauss's distinction between gift exchange (or reciprocity) as the foundation of social relationships, and commerce as the seeking of profits through trade bringing about social dissolution (Mauss 1954). Polanyi's work was based on a strong political conviction that the function of the economy should be to strengthen social relationships and to eliminate conflict in the allocation of wealth which should conform to the values of each society (Humphreys 1969:203). The subordination of economic means to social ends had been for Polanyi a feature of all previous societies and in this sense he agreed with Weber that the unleashing of a pure economic rationality was the distinctive feature of modern capitalism and, for this reason, it was impossible to use its categories to understand the premodern. Weber's notion that status dominated in the ancient world and 'trading for gain' was of negligible importance and severely constrained is thus still central to debates on the characterisation of the ancient economy (Weber 1976; Finley 1973; Garnsey, Hopkins and Whittaker 1983; D'Arms 1981; Larsen 1987).

In contrast to much of this orthodoxy, Wallerstein has always stressed that capitalism did not emerge in one particular bounded territorial unit but within what he terms a multi-state system (Wallerstein 1979a). His thesis therefore poses state—economy problems that are not singular but plural. The real value of this insight may have been obscured by his overestimating the international aspects of capitalism and his insistence that the 'world economy' has been capitalist since the sixteenth century AD. This tended to distract him and others from inquiring into the unevenness of the process and in particular that a 'capitalist core' in Europe was not formed 'all of a piece' but developed through the formation of increasingly antagonistic and self-contained nation states. Yet, in the sixteenth century, early modern Europe formed an emerging core which shared a certain

unity within which relatively weak states held insecure control over their respective economic systems (Tilly 1977). Even the absolutist regimes of Spain and Portugal were unable to control the flow of bullion and treasure from the New World to the Netherlands and England to fund mercantile development there rather than within their own territories. What shaped this unity is unclear. It certainly was not Christianity, as in the medieval world, nor was there a strongly idealised cultural—historical unity. Ties of diplomacy, court exchange, intermarriage of royals, foreign alliances and treaties of mutual support and defence were their overt manifestation.

The point to stress, therefore, is that the multi-state systems of early modern Europe, depending as they did on military strength and international treaties, were strongly articulated neither with the workings of the international economy nor with their own civil societies. A full developed 'organic state' in which economy, social classes, culture and religion were 'nationalised' and limited to increasingly antagonistic nation states is a post eighteenth century phenomenon. Only then does it make sense to describe production as internal and trade as external or the state-paraphrasing Marx—as an executive committee managing the common affairs of the ruling classes. Moreover, only then can one say that a set of capitalist economic relations had been tamed and possessed by a nation state holding a monopoly of military force and able to regulate their self-contained economic interests within what were to become separate imperial domains.

It would be unrealistic to expect a similar set of contingencies to operate in earlier historical periods, although the incentives to regulate would certainly exist (cf. Liverani 1987 and Zaccagnini 1987). Hence, the stress on systems of social reproduction denies the necessary existence of bounded and self-contained geopolitical units as a starting-point to study interaction. This means more than simply taking 'trade' into account and might imply, for instance, the existence of extensive networks of political alliances imposed horizontally upon local and discrete populations (cf. Howard and Skinner 1984). In such cases, defining inside/outside divisions in social activity may be of less significance than recognising different scales and hierarchies of relations operating at different levels of geopolitical resolution.

Centre-periphery

The pair of opposites, centre (or core) and periphery, has been extensively used to refer to the structure of integrated regional economic systems. In a modern context, these terms were first used in work concerned with understanding deterioration in the 'terms of trade' for agricultural and mineral products in relation to manufactured products in international trade. These two poles were taken as given and attention was focused on what accounted for the deteriorating terms, given that it contradicted Ricardo's rule which states that partners in international trade should benefit equally by specialising in the production of commodities in which they held a comparative advantage in labour and other costs of production. Subsequently, attention turned to the formation of the division of labour through which respective patterns of export specialisation had formed. Centres came to be defined, therefore, as those areas which controlled more developed technological skills and production processes, forms of labour organisation (such as wage labour) and a strong state-ideological apparatus to defend its interests.

Peripheries were said to lack these attributes and to have been modified to meet external demands for raw materials. The functionalism which assumes that the periphery can simply be 'read off' by the role it plays to reproduce far-away centres has, understandably, been a most vigorous source of disagreement, particularly amongst third-world theorists (cf. Laclau 1971; Brenner 1977).

A number of difficulties exist in operationalising the content of this scheme—as it stands—to Old and New World areas of 'civilisation'. In fact to do so would present an array of empirical sequences. In the ancient world, as has been pointed out, trade in bulk commodities over long distances may have been minimal (Adams 1974); land transport costs were high (Adams 1979; but see Hopkins 1983); technologies simple and easily dispersed (Kohl 1987); and resources more likely to be 'luxuries' (cf. Larsen 1987; Schneider 1977). Even Mesopotamia's chronic shortage of raw materials would not in itself imply dependency and a need to ensure regular supplies unless we knew why stone for temples or metals for internal circulation were critical to the reproduction of city states. But this may only be as much as saying that the ancient world does not measure up to the complexity of the modern—which would not be surprising. What we should look for instead are the general axioms underpinning the scheme that may then be operationalised in several distinct empirical settings.

Centres

The definition requires that groups of polities and in particular their ruling elites become net consumers of resources (however culturally defined) from other polities by a variety of relations of exploitation. What is consumed is less important than how it is consumed, that is, the circuits of consumption—production have to be traced to assess their importance for reproducing the whole. Such systems are rarely single polities although competition and the achievement of core hegemony may produce this situation. Usually we find groups of polities of roughly similar size, enmeshed in dynastic ties and treaties to regulate relations with each other in order to minimise conflicts of interest. (Examples may be Sumer, Larsen 1979; Valley of Mexico, Brumfiel n.d.; Maya, Marcus 1984.) It may be the network of alliances and its density and topological form that best define a centre, or those sub-centres that are in conflict for core hegemony. Struggles between rival core polities and tendencies toward core expansion are the likely result of competition for diminishing resources or loss of control over resources.

Peripheries

This requires the identification of polities and elites that are constrained to meet demands for surplus product. The actual transaction may involve transfers between different ruling elites to the perceived advantage of both. Hence peripheral incorporation may not involve devolution but quite the reverse. Yet, it has to be assumed that the costs of meeting these demands in terms of rates of exploitation in the periphery are greater than those at the centre. It also has to be assumed that peripheral elites have less choice in exchange partners and become increasingly dependent on such alliances in order to sustain local domination and stave off attacks on their status orders. Peripheries locked into political cul-de-sacs endure greater exploitation than those enjoying choice as a means of

resistance. Hence, it is to the advantage of core polities to agree amongst themselves to limit competition over access to their respective peripheries in order to increase rates of exploitation. By reducing the capacity of their peripheries to resist, core elites potentially risk the survival of their peripheral partners: a calculation that is likely to depend on awareness as well as the availability of alternative options.

To define a social formation as peripheral requires therefore that it be possible to show that a) however defined, the conditions which reproduce and extend social inequality are dependent on the network of alliances to which local elites belong; b) that the costs of maintaining such a position are unequally distributed, both in terms of the relative rate of exploitation of local populations and the costs to local elites to participate in external alliance. Moreover, accepting the stress on specific forms of capitalist exploitation in the Frank/ Wallerstein model, the most likely difference when compared with precapitalist cases is likely to be that the form of exchange is more politically motivated and directed towards control over persons rather than the direct intervention in the technological conditions of production and commodity exchange. Hence, quantitative measures of the degree of dependence and exploitation are likely to be misleading without a prior assessment of what kind of influence is being exercised over what kinds of social activity.

Structures of exploitation

World systems theory promises a unified explanation of the development of ‘complex societies’ and ‘tribal groups’, the absence of which has long been problematic in unilinear evolutionary models. If the two categories are linked as parts of a single spatio-temporal process, rather than forming an evolutionary sequence, the central question raised is what constitutes the relationship between them? Moreover, it could be argued that the relationship is primary and constitutes the overt categories of centre and periphery.

Unequal exchange

The relation of unequal exchange is given priority in Frank and Wallerstein’s theory of capitalist expansion (Emmanuel 1972). This states that the location of different production processes, labour forms and wage levels determines the transfer of surplus from peripheral primary producers to core producers of manufactured goods. The process of accumulation operates throughout the system to relocate production and capital investment wherever profitability is highest. That this may require the use of violence at times or involve other forms of direct intervention would—in their view—still be selected for by this basic economic calculus.

However, this is specific to the development of industrial capitalism and presumably cannot be generalised to earlier periods. A modified argument has been made which relates to mercantile activity either in the contemporary third world (Kay 1975) or for earlier periods (Wolf 1982:183). This argues that different forms of production, existing as historical givens, are brought into exchange with each other through the entrepreneurial role of specialist traders. Profits accruing through the exploitation of price differences distributed in space are gained by those agents capable of organising trading

expeditions and by the power-holders of the societies they belong to. It is further argued that for merchants to maintain, if not expand, differentials in rates of exchange, it is necessary that they exclude rivals from their sphere of influence since competition would lower exchange rates to the benefit of the producers. Excluding others from competition may be achieved in a number of different ways, for example, benefits accrue to strong states that could intervene to preserve monopoly mercantile interests by force if necessary; or by the development of transport technologies over that of rivals (a feature particularly important in European mercantile expansion but also in Phoenician and Greek trade as well (Frankenstein 1979).

In order to exclude competitors, merchants have to depend on alliances with indigenous power holders to develop their interests. Yet it has also to be in the interest of the latter to harness mercantile activity to meet their needs. As has often been observed, the relationship between state and merchant has therefore rarely been a harmonious one. The relationship of mercantile accumulation to state power has understandably gained a considerable literature which cannot possibly be summarised here (see Curtin 1984). Yet a central theme is the form of domination linking merchant capital to state power. This may involve power-holders acting as discrete providers of trading capital, or wielding a monopoly in the supply of specialist products as well as controlling the means of violence and exerting forms of symbolic domination.

Until recently, far less attention had been paid to how 'complex societies' were able to penetrate and dominate internal circuits of exchange in peripheral societies. In such situations the term 'exchange' has consistently been used to refer to those situations where neither profit nor satisfaction of needs was supposedly a dominant motive for the circulation of goods. What had been discovered instead were various forms of exchange where evaluation of objects takes place within some morally defined hierarchy of value (Firth 1939:44). The study of exchange became the study of idealised relations based on the assumption that giving in the absence of alienation (or in the certain knowledge of a return) engenders social relationships. Once this basic assumption was accepted, the argument narrowed to specifying that different forms of exchange would exist in the same society, one of which would dominate and articulate all the others. Where for Marx, persons and objects became commodities in a system of relationships he called capital, so for Lévi-Strauss, Godelier and others, persons and valuables become gifts in a system of relationships called kinship (cf. Damon 1980). The transition from gift exchange to commodity sale is therefore, in essence, a theory of transition whereby dominance over the circulation of persons is replaced by control over the distribution of things. Normally this is envisaged as an historical transition in evolutionary terms (Mauss 1954:35, 68). Yet if we accept the argument for the co-existence of both forms in some societies over long periods of time, then the question is rather, how did kinship function to dominate and distort incipient forms of capital accumulation? Moreover, on what basis can it be said that kinship functions as a dominant social relationship in non-capitalist societies and how does it determine a particular mode of (gift) exchange? (Godelier 1972).

These are important questions to answer in the context of current interest in prestige good systems and their role as peripheries to more complex centres of state/mercantile development (Ekholm 1977, Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978, Gledhill 1978, Kristiansen 1978, 1982, Weigend *et al.* 1977). Yet, a simple kin-based periphery versus non kin/class-based centre model is unhelpful. Claims to common genealogies and to

ancestry, expressed in the exchange of appropriate gifts, are a dominant political practice in most early states and empires (cf. Liverani 1987 and Zaccagnini 1987). Commerce was subordinated in such societies precisely because local and international power relations were recognised and legitimised through gift exchange. We shall return to the question of their articulation later but more immediately the question to answer is, What do we mean by prestige goods and how does the circulation of such gifts relate to the distribution of inalienable rank in kinordered societies of such varying complexity?

Hierarchy and exchange

Mauss claimed that for exchange to take place, culturally defined objects had to be produced as things (Mauss 1954). Yet, that it was a gross assumption to assume that in being given, such objects were alienated, that is, lost, to the original owner. Inalienable wealth takes on important priorities since the act of 'keeping while giving' (to use Weiner's term 1985) implies not only that it or an equivalent must be returned but that being able to enforce this is, in itself, a means of domination. To lose a valuable is thus to expose oneself and one's group to social diminishment. Now there appears to be nothing in the act of exchange itself to prevent this occurring but when the object in the act of exchange is given prominence, attention is drawn instead to the quality of ownership of a shared property. Mauss's well-known discussion of the nature of the gift focused precisely on how prestige items were embodied with a 'spiritual matter…part of one's nature and substance' that created the obligation to give, to receive and to repay (Mauss 1954:10). He provided a wide range of examples of valuables which circulated but whose possession he described as 'immeuble' or inalienable (Mauss 1954:7, 167). For instance Maori nephrite adzes and cloaks were distributed at rituals marking births, marriages and deaths because:

> Each treasure (ta'onga) was a fixed point in the tribal network of names, histories and relationships. They belonged to particular ancestors, were passed down particular descent lines, held their own stories and were exchanged on various memorable occasions. Ta'onga captured history and showed it to the living and they echoed patterns of the past from the first creation to the present
>
> (cited in Weiner 1985:220)

The emphasis in this and other comparable cases is on the circulation of objects that are endowed with a common spiritual substance and which people possess temporarily as members of a 'community of shared memory'. An equation is postulated between persons and things which denies the possibility of their loss or separation without doing violence to personal or group identity. For Mauss, this contrasted explicitly with the logic of capitalist commodity exchange where goods engender a symbolic detachability of persons from things in order that their value be kept distinct from the objective conditions of their production. Such a statement cannot apply to all capitalist social relations, any more than Mauss's notion of the gift can apply to all non-capitalist relations but the contrast does evoke the notion of dominance of exchange relations alluded to earlier.

Yet, for wealth to be inalienable implies both the power to keep while giving and the power to exclude others from the right of temporary possession. In other words, the term suggests property relations, certainly different from capitalist notions of ownership, but none the less a definition of persons and social relations in terms of possession of things. Marilyn Strathern has recently defined a broad category of societies as 'bridewealth systems' where things come to stand for persons or parts of persons and their circulation to stand for their possession (Strathern 1985:196). The circulation of bridewealth objects can substitute for persons or parts of persons (e.g. their labour) in such a way that their possession will bind people into relations of clientship and obligation.

It should be possible, therefore, to establish connections between the circulation of inalienable prestige objects, the control over persons or their attributes and the distribution of inalienable rank. One possibility, as in the case of the Maori, would be for things to come to stand for qualities possessed by some and not others. Friedman's analysis of the Kachin demonstrates how control over persons and the appropriation of their surplus is linked to control over communal deities which ensure general prosperity (Friedman 1975). Political ritual offices are defined by the right to perform these functions for the community as a whole. The distribution of inalienable wealth is in this case analogous to that of the Maori. It does not in itself define rank but functions to demarcate relative access to the source of power which underlies it. Hierarchy is defined therefore by not having to give and achieves this by closing off access to circulation through rules of endogamy (marriage prescriptions), rules of succession (creating exclusive roles and offices) and by rules of exclusion (creating categories of non-persons). Many West African societies contrast with this general situation in their concern with the jural definition of status (Goody 1962). Here, persons are invested with offices which may be endowed with rights to wealth, knowledge and property. Kinship roles are defined as a certain kind of inheritable estate separate from the persons who hold them. This yields a hierarchy of positions rather than persons, based on the inheritance of offices (and regalia) as well as excluded categories of non-office holders (junior males and women are defined as jural minors). The detachability of persons from things in this context is more complete in the sense that eligibility to office is a matter of defining a position rather than directly exercising control over persons. This in turn can be contrasted with recent generalisations about the nature of exchange in Melanesia where a more direct relation between control of persons and the circulation of prestige objects has been observed (Strathern 1982). Here, it is the person who is the prime form of moveable property and is circulated rather than any material property which s/he owns and others inherit.

The argument so far has demonstrated variability within a category of exchange which shares a common concern with how inalienability engenders certain types of social relations and defines different categories of persons. To paraphrase Marilyn Strathern:

> things can indeed behave as gifts. They may stand for whole persons or for part persons and their disposable attributes. Persons are thus constructed as bundles of assets to be distributed among others (thus making relationships).
>
> (Strathern 1985:202)

Not only does this constitute a system of control over the disposal of persons and their attributes through control over the circulation of things, but it also allows the relationship to be mystified. In capitalist commodity relations, this takes the extreme form of denying that any relation between them exists at all. By contrast, in bridewealth systems there is a general tendency for both persons and things to be explained as supernaturally caused and to figure prominently in the kinds of cosmologies which Bloch and Parry have recently described as 'the systematic attempt to transform death into rebirth or a regeneration of either the group or the cosmos' (Bloch and Parry 1982:42). Any direct connection between the control of persons through the control of things is thus denied in favour of stressing their common derivation from a supernatural origin. To analyse these systems, a distinction is needed between 'power from' which has an ideologically constructed source in sacred origin and tradition and 'power over' which describes control over persons and attributes through manipulating the production and circulation of things (see Merquior 1979: chapter 1 for this distinction). A dynamic for social change lies in the conditions that promote discordance in the relation between these structures over time.

Weiner argues that the circulation of Maori valuables at certain ritual occasions served to re-establish or extend exchange (hence social) relations between the members of dispersed descent groups claiming a common ancestry. The fact that no single line of descent could claim to control the conditions of their social reproduction required that each should be represented and be seen to share in the circulation of the spiritual substance that each held as common to all. Hence the highest-ranked valuables formed a set which no descent line possessed completely but all elements of which had been possessed once and would be again. Such networks formed totalities and the circulation of valuables exactly replicated the limits of a sense of wholeness justified by a belief in a common ancestry. Simply excluding members from circulation could not be the basis for domination since it served only to create a category of non-persons with whom social relations could not be established. However, by making claims to superior ancestry, existing claims could be devalued in the overall hierarchy of social value. Hegemony was established through the continuous expansion of alliances with other more prestigious centres and legitimised through claims to common origin to which those of inferior origin within a totality were unable to lay claim. By this logic, Weiner is able to explain the bewilderment of Maori notables confronted with Europeans whose main concern was to establish alienable rights to property (mainly land) and remove themselves from further exchange obligations. The sorry story of European contact and the dissolution of local hierarchy is a familiar theme and need not detain us here (cf. Ekholm 1977; Sahlins 1981; Wolf 1982). A more relevant and equally widely recognised theme is the identification of centres in kinship-ordered societies as 'ceremonial' in the sense that they hold a monopoly of sacred origin. The cosmological ordering of the Mayan realm is a particularly clear example of how the spatial organisation of ceremonial centres is concerned with symbolic closure such that nothing is left outside (Marcus 1984). The theme is widely replicated and it suggests that a pervasive feature of such forms of closure is the capacity to maintain strict hierarchical equivalence in the relation between persons and things.

What may originally have been a dispersed pattern of circulation becomes 'centralised' in the sense that a single claim to represent the totality of those of common

descent has been successfully achieved. This claim constitutes a denial of exchange due to the fact that gifts which represent the essence of wholeness are never given out but become the monopoly of particular lines of descent. When Polynesian chiefs, for example, were described as imbued with the sanctity of mana and the sacred powers of divine ancestry, this served to separate them physically from non-ritual exchange within their communities. Even indirect contact was dangerous. Tahitian chiefs were carried around so that their feet should not touch the ground and endanger its fertility. Kwakiutl chiefs were constituted as privileged bestowers and commoners as obligatory receivers (and givers) according to Goldman. Here, in his phrase, 'the donor is simultaneously benefactor and destroyer and the receivers are reciprocally the benefited and the destroyed, presumably on the model of the hunter and his animal game' (Goldman 1984:128). In both cases, giving is a privilege derived from superior access to ancestral and supernatural powers. Moreover, the relation between the first beginning (sacred origin) and the present is also expressed through men, more specifically chiefs, acting as universal donors of timeless substance to those of low rank acting as universal receivers, who could respond only with alienable gifts of surplus product.

The social and ideological realities of such systems are thus rooted in the ontology of self. Exploitation stems from the impossibility of envisaging oneself to be outside the claim to wholeness and yet no longer participating directly in the conditions of its reproduction. Such servile status is reinforced further by the fact that what may be received as the inalienable possession of those of high status requires a return in alienable surplus product from those of low rank. Hence, bridewealth or labour given as local surplus is lost from possession as a return for the maintenance of the inalienable conditions of social reproduction. It could be argued that some notion of self-exploitation is more appropriate in this situation yet objectively we are dealing with a notion of 'sacrifice' in which absolute surplus is alienated in return for maintaining the ontological conditions of reproducing the self.

It follows that in all cases where prestige objects circulate as rights, we should find other subordinated systems of production and exchange where goods are categorised as alienable products. A number of authors have argued recently for the co-presence of a number of different forms of production and circulation that may be entwined in different patterns in distinct social settings (Adams 1974; Hopkins 1983; Wheatley 1975; Yoffee 1981). This replicates Polanyi's more subtle point that while different forms of exchange may be present, one would form the dominant mode of allocation which all the others would ultimately serve (Polyanyi 1957). In addition, this raised the issue argued most cogently by Jane Schneider in her review of Wallerstein (Schneider 1977), that distinguishing different 'economic forms' rests on the misplaced acceptance of a utility luxury dichotomy in the analysis of the circulation of goods. As Larsen (1987) points out, few of the goods circulating in the elaborate Mesopotamian commercial networks he describes were intended to satisfy biological or utilitarian needs. If attention is turned to the 'commodities' themselves, we find a more confused pattern in which items that clearly embody various kinds of ontological statement about the definition of the person, power and its origins are imbued, in certain contexts, with commercial (trading for gain) connotations. Nor is this only a feature of so-called 'complex systems'. Strathern, in his comparison of Melanesian exchange systems, has emphasised that the circulation of valuables is used quite unproblematically for personal gain through the attachment of side

increments (Strathern 1971). The supposed universal antagonism between commerce and reciprocity may thus be over-generalised due to the importance of this theme in the GraecoRoman world and its European heritage (cf. Parry 1986).

Cosmology and exploitation

The terms centre and periphery are highly specific to a sense of identity developed in the West. Wallerstein, for instance, has been accused of reproducing a typically Eurocentric evolutionist view of recent world history in which an active and progressive centre subordinates and transforms a passive and backward (that is, primitive) periphery (Goodman and Redclift 1983:47). Nineteenth-century evolutionism was part of an ideological mode of thought which justified a radical break between civilised centre and savage periphery to legitimise exploitation without responsibility. This contrasts strangely with many premodern definitions of the alien which strove to assimilate a savage, wild 'other' as a necessary part of sustaining a cosmic order. Even Renaissance and Enlightenment views of the naked and threatening savage required debate as to whether the latter could be or already was human and could be incorporated into a Judaeo-Christian world view. Such contrasts in the way centres and peripheries are culturally constructed also have to be viewed as the product of long transformational processes that are rooted in a common ontological problem of constituting identity through either the eradication or the creation of difference.

Lévi-Strauss has argued that primitive classifications strive to collapse time into space through a form of cosmic closure which establishes a continuum between culture and nature (Lévi-Strauss 1966). The world as a closed and bounded cosmological order is threatened by the eruption of chaotic material outside of its control. This suggests a timeless, concentric model in which culture as a gift of nature (that is, the supernatural) spreads out to assimilate and order a chaotic world (cf. Friedman 1982:42). The constitution of modern society as an analytic unit is, by contrast, a product of separation and alienation and required the development of science to replace cosmological ordering as its source of existential security. Presenting this as a rupture between a modern, scientific and techno-rational centre opposed to a primitive, prelogical and mystical periphery which should be either civilised or preserved is thus a contemporary myth.

In a premodern sense, a rupture between centre and periphery is denied or at least never considered irreparable. Liverani's discussion of the ideology of the neo-Assyrian empire shows how they viewed their own periphery as a failed cosmos; one not yet realised but one that could be eventually. This 'difficult path' could only be overcome by the virtue of a king, whose duty it was to extend a cosmic order as an embodiment of himself to an unruly periphery which was sterile and blocked until his presence would cause towns and palaces to be built, arid land to be irrigated and a great cycle of creation and rebirth to be extended as a defence against cultural decay (Liverani 1979). Once incorporated (and it is significant that war for an Assyrian king should be like a hunting expedition), the function of a periphery is to serve its cosmological centre to ensure its proper functioning. Periphery to centre is constituted as a relationship in much the same way as that of the identity of the individual to the whole. In other words, the relation between centre and periphery is organic, in contrast to the mechanistic view of modern

ideologies. The Assyrian view is of course a common theme and forms a debatable area in Eliade's work (Eliade 1959). Yet Geertz on Negara, Marcus on the Maya or Wheatley on Shang China all stress the arrangement of centres to enclose an ordered whole and the aestheticisation of an expanding cosmological realm (Geertz 1982, Marcus 1976, Wheatley 1971). Hopkins's discussion of Roman emperor worship is much nearer our modern perception (Hopkins 1978). The difficulties presented to a man who becomes divine in order to create a unified political order has a distinctive twentieth-century ring to it.

Evolutionary and devolutionary cycles

It has often not been sufficiently appreciated that dependency and world systems theories were intended as dynamic models of modern world history. Wallerstein, for instance, accepted the established view that capitalism operates in cyclical rhythms. Short-term or business cycles were already well-known consequences of equalising supply and demand vectors, but the existence of longer-term cycles covering fifty years or more was less certain (first proposed by Kondratieff, cf. Wallerstein 1979c). Work by historians on price formation from the end of the Middle Ages to the eighteenth century had suggested that even longer cycles of growth and decay govern periods of 150 years or more (cf. Braudel and Spooner 1967). François Simiand had already independently suggested that world economic history was characterised by long periods of growth and expansion (A phases) followed by periods of crisis (B phases) which could only be resolved by further expansion (Simiand 1932). For Marx, such crises were specific to the capitalist mode of production possessing a tendency towards overproduction, while Luxemburg would argue later that such crises could be resolved only by the global expansion of commodity markets as a means of continued production and capital accumulation (Luxemburg 1951). Others would now stress a greater variety of causes (e.g. Mandel 1975) but would still accept that historically capitalism has tended to expand in search of markets and raw materials and that such systems have experienced significant crises resolved by renewed expansion.

More complex models have been developed to relate shorter- and longer-term cycles into a single expansionist dynamic. Perhaps the best known is Braudel's model of the *longue durée* (Braudel 1978), which combines short-term cycles of discontinuous change within longer cycles of continuous process. Attempts at a more rigorous synthesis of short- and long-term cycles (given that for many the existence of the latter is still highly debatable, see special issue of *Review*, Wallerstein 1979c) can be found in Kula (1976) and Wallerstein (1980).

It is hardly surprising that a notion of short-term and long-term cycles nesting in a single dynamic should appeal heuristically to those working in earlier time periods. The specification of long-term cycles was sufficiently vague to encourage thinking that this was not a phenomenon limited to the rise of industrial capitalism. Braudel's early work on the history of the Mediterranean world as the product of short-term cycles of expansion and decay of states and empires underlain by a long-term stability of constraining factors was particularly influential (Braudel 1949). Friedman modified this argument in an ethnographic context by asserting that a long cycle would predict

evolutionary or devolutionary stages depending on the material conditions of social reproduction (Friedman 1975). Short cycles are due to 'the variation that occurs owing to political and economic constraints operating within the technological limits defined by the long cycle' (Friedman 1975:187). The fact that short-term cycles should ultimately be determined by the techno-ecological limits on production has been widely criticised (e.g. O'Laughlan 1975; see Friedman 1979:15–16 for a defence of his argument). Nevertheless he adheres to the primacy of the long term in a later article where he states that short cycles of political growth and collapse are embedded in longer evolutionary cycles determined by the conditions of agricultural production (Friedman 1982). In effect, the question is more whether long-term cycles exist at all as autonomous determinants (and if so whether they are the products of biological imperatives rather than a social dynamic) rather than being formed from a coalescence of shorter cycles of political expansion and decay. In answer to this, a number of different views have been produced as to what constitutes long-term cycles. An early precocious attempt is Steward's discussion of cyclical conquests (Steward 1949). The argument is set in the short term, with each era marked by different conditions of expansion and decline, although population pressure and competition for resources is a constant theme. Friedman uses the limits on intensification of agricultural production and an increasing trade density model to explain short-term cycles of chiefdom formation and devolution in Oceania (Friedman and Rowlands 1977; Friedman 1982) and the idea has been used to interpret the European Bronze Age by Rowlands (1984a). Kristiansen uses the intensification of agricultural production model in his analyses of local production cycles in the Scandinavian Bronze Age and argues that they are in turn linked to changes in the regional exchange system (Kristiansen 1978; 1982). Parker Pearson's interpretation of the Danish Iron Age distinguishes only short cycles of differential wealth accumulation leading to an inflationary spiral which, he argues, results in a crisis of major proportions in the long term of a millennium of development (Parker Pearson 1984). Miller, in an analysis of the ideological structures of the Harappan civilisation, suggests that this represented the beginning of an irreversible oscillation between the principles of Harappan/Buddhism versus Vedic Hinduisim/modern Hinduisim that characterises much of later South Asian history (Miller 1985:62–3).

It should be emphasised that most of these cases deal with cyclical change in peripheral formations and so far few attempts have been made to theorise similar kinds of trajectories for more 'complex' states and empires (cf. Friedman and Rowlands 1977; Gledhill and Larsen 1982). Moreover, in contrast to those theorising modern capitalism, archaeologists have had no reason to dismiss previous periods of expansion and contraction as irrelevant, and taking these into account has often meant setting highly contingent and arbitrary conditions on the periods that authors have chosen to study. Outside of the Braudelean theme of understanding what maintains the constancy of culture despite change, the discovery of a single dynamic operating over long periods of time appears hard to find. Hence, whether long-term cycles exist and if so what their relation is to the empirically surer short-term cycles remains problematic.

It has not been sufficiently appreciated that a theory of cyclical change also includes a theory of shifts of centres in space. In other words, expansion and contraction processes have rarely been geographically stable. In the case of shorter cycles, this may involve intra-regional shifts in influence between competing centres within a single core area, as

for example in a competitive city state phase or, in more modern terms, nation state competition in nineteenth-century Europe. However, it has been frequently claimed that these oscillations in intra-core hegemony are interspersed by much larger-scale shifts in the arrangements of centres and their peripheries (called either logistics or secular trends: Cameron 1973; Wallerstein 1979c). In modern history, it is argued that the rise of capitalism in the West cannot be separated from a decline of the earlier Arab domination of the Mediterranean, and the expansion of industrial capitalism in north-west Europe cannot be separated from the decline of the Spanish and Portuguese empires in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Wallerstein 1974). More recently, the 'kapitallogik school' has argued that the current world economic recession is more than another cyclical downturn but represents a significant loss of competitive advantage by the older Western industrialised core and the rise of new centres of imperialist accumulation (Frobel 1980; not all would agree, cf. Klapinsky 1984). Centre-periphery as a relationship does not therefore predict a fixed and immutable position but implies that constituent groups will move through different statuses as a necessary feature of maintaining the relationship.

It is perhaps the historical experience of capitalism that a decline of an old centre should be necessary for the expansion of the whole system (the post-Second World War shift from Europe to the USA for instance) which has prompted the frequent observation that similar events occurred in the ancient world. The shift of centres of imperium from southern to northern Mesopotamia in the third to first millennia BC; the east to west relocation of political centres in the development of the Mediterranean world; the re-emergence of Middle Eastern imperialism in late Roman times have been the stuff of grand narrative world history for many years. With a decline of the West scenario literally in mind, such narratives were clearly serving as contemporary warnings. Max Weber had the fate of Wilhelmine Germany in mind when he claimed that a corrupt bureaucracy conspiring with large landowners to avoid taxes promoted the expansion of a feudalised 'natural economy' in the late Roman empire in the West (Weber 1976). This thinly veiled attack on the evils of socialism and state bureaucracy has spawned some sophisticated variants on the general theme that excessive state control can transform cores into parasitic consumers which eventually undermine their own revenue base. This is broadly the A.H.M.Jones and Brunt position on the decline of the western Roman empire which has recently been given a more sophisticated revision by Hopkins (1980) and Whittaker (1983). Hopkins argues that there was an inner circle of tax-exporting provinces in the early Roman empire which also exported surplus product to gain the money to pay taxes. These 'exports' were consumed in the Italian heartland and in an outer ring of militarised frontier provinces. This stimulated long-distance trade and a vast expansion of goods in circulation through an integrated monetary economy but also decentralised manufacturing to the outer provinces and created a consumption centre that relied increasingly on tax and tribute to be maintained. The crises of the third century AD, necessitating a shift to tax in kind to ensure supplies to the army and the state bureaucracy, made it possible for local army commanders to control taxation directly and establish themselves as rival governments to an increasingly dispensable imperial centre in Rome. The feudalising tendency of the late empire is explained in this revised Weberian model by the linkage between different forms of tax and their effects on production and trade. Polanyi also believed that strong states stifle mercantile activity

because otherwise they would set up competing centres of wealth accumulation. It was Polanyi's contention that ports of trade, not market places, were growth points in the ancient economy (Polanyi 1978:246). The model of 'stagnant' bureaucratic states surrounded by expanding mercantile 'city states' in which the latter would eventually overcome the former has for long been held as a justification of modern European expansion and its historical destiny. Yet it has received some empirical support. Oppenheim once argued that southern Mesopotamia produced a corona of merchant city states to serve as intermediaries or buffers in long-distance trade but which soon outgrew the parent centres and absorbed them into empires (cited by Larsen 1979:99).

In all these arguments, it is ultimately the temporal that is seen to dominate over the spatial shifts in the waxing and waning of particular centres. This is generally true of all the long cycle theories. In Wallerstein's model, for instance, peripheries evolve to semi-peripheral status and new peripheries are formed because of crises and breakdown in their respective cores (Wallerstein 1979a). Whether it is Luxemburg's version of the expansion of commodity markets or Hopkins on frontier provinces gaining from taxation and trade, it is crisis at the centre which promotes growth in the periphery. This could suggest too smooth an expansion/contraction model which more detailed work may well contradict. As Kohl has stressed (1987) the degree of integration between centres and peripheries is often less systematic than might be assumed and often requires direct intervention and coercion to achieve conditions of political and economic dependency. In general, therefore, systematic integration and linkage cannot be assumed and has to be demonstrated. Resistance to incorporation may well militate against the operation of a simple expansion model.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide a general survey of those aspects of dependency and world systems theory that either have or are likely to stimulate thinking in archaeological and historical research. An uncritical acceptance of the arguments made by earlier proponents of these traditions can be avoided by stressing the heuristic value of engaging in debate over these issues as well as justifying their applicability in contexts far removed from those originally envisaged. The fact that, in the process, many of the problems that beset archaeological theory may be seen instead as the products of the era that such theories purport to explain is equally a salutary lesson in archaeological objectivity. If a general point can be made, it is that no certainty exists in extrapolating from the better known (because it is the present) to the less known (because it is the past).

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9
CHIEFDOMS, STATES AND SYSTEMS OF SOCIAL EVOLUTION

Kristian Kristiansen

Chiefdoms and states: a critical assessment

In this chapter, I will clarify the diverse evolutionary terms that have been applied to intermediate-level societies. My concern is to identify basic structural contrasts and large-scale processes that together help explain social change in northern European prehistory during the Bronze and Iron Ages. Although the societies of these times have often been called chiefdoms, I want to emphasise that such a gloss term obscures the critical transformation that characterised European society at the end of the Bronze Age. It is the nature and the reasons for this transformation that I wish to illuminate in this paper.

Several recent works stress the inadequacy of our present evolutionary typology and emphasise that an individual type, such as chiefdom, spans too broad a range of variation (Feinman and Neitzel 1984; Upham 1987; Spencer 1987). Although some might propose abandoning evolutionary theory (Hodder 1986; Shanks and Tilley 1987, chapter 6), it remains the most persuasive explanatory framework in archaeology and we are probably well advised to continue to use a refined evolutionary perspective. Attempts which have been made to redefine evolutionary typologies specify and define variants in terms of scale (Steponaitis 1978), in terms of organising principles of the political economy (D'Altroy and Earle 1985; Earle 1987b), in terms of ecological conditions (Sanders and Webster 1978), and in terms of underlying structural dynamics (Friedman and Rowlands 1977).

Although each redefinition has introduced important new concerns, we are quickly becoming mired in a proliferation of terms without much attempt to relate these terms systematically to each other. For example: How do tribal prestige goods systems, as defined by Friedman and Rowlands (1977), relate to wealth finance in chiefdoms, as defined by D'Altroy and Earle (1985)? How should we compare alternative types such as stratified society, defined by Fried (1960; 1967), or *militärische Demokratie*, originating in the work of Engels (1977 [1891])? In addition, the chiefdom concept has been applied to a range that many would see running the gamut from tribal to state societies. Has the chiefdom type lost its heuristic value?

In my opinion, the reason for this state of affairs is that a few variables have been studied without due consideration of their implications for the organisation of production in the societies under study. Thus cross-cultural studies, such as Peebles and Kus (1977), Claessen (1978) or Feinman and Neitzel (1984), use correlations between variables, such as population size, levels of decision-making, settlement hierarchy, or status distinctions, to define levels of social complexity. Their focus on correlation between variables

overlooks, however, significant differences in structure, such as the nature of tribute/taxation, ownership, labour mobilisation and social classes. Often, such structural relationships cannot be directly observed, but can only be inferred through interpretation of the cultural whole. What may look like a continuum without clear dividing lines can reveal sharp structural transformations in key relationships of economic and social control. Organisational properties cannot be treated as separate variables (traits), because their cultural meaning and material functions depend on their place and function in society. Particularly the articulation between the organisation of the economy and the polity must be stressed for developing a comprehensive evolutionary typology.

The above critique calls for a reassessment of the organisational properties and their articulation in intermediate societies. What I will argue is that a fundamental organisational divide exists between tribal societies, of which the chiefdom is a variant, and state societies.

To Fried, the transition to a state form of organisation was a fundamental one. In an incipient phase, termed *stratified society*, 'man enters a completely new arena of social life' (Fried 1960:721). Most authors have overlooked the fundamental character of this change by focusing on the feature that 'stratified society is distinguished by differential relationships between the members of society and its subsistence means' (Fried 1960:721) and de-emphasising the social and political changes in organisation and exploitation that accompanied this transformation (see Fried 1978). The transformation to stratified society must be recognised as the structural change that unlerlies the evolution of states (Sanders and Webster 1978; Haas 1982).

I believe that, between chiefdoms and fully developed states, stratified societies were an archaic form of state organisation, a genuine phase on the road to fully-fledged states (see Claessen and Skalník 1978). In order to highlight the qualitative differences represented by this phase, I will discuss in more detail some of the characteristics and variability of such incipient states in prehistory.

Stratified societies comprise the basic features of state organisation, such as strong social and economic divisions and an emphasis on territory (rather than kinship), but they lack developed bureaucracies.

> The decisive significance of stratification is not that it sees differential amounts of wealth in different hands, but that it sees two kinds of access to strategic resources. One of these is privileged and unimpeded; the other is impaired, depending on complexes of permission which frequently require the payment of dues, rents, and taxes in labor or in kind. The existence of such distinctions enables the growth of exploitation, whether of a relatively simple kind based upon drudge slavery or of a more complex type associated with involved divisions of labor and intricate class systems.
>
> (Fried 1960:722)

The emergence of new power relations cross-cutting traditional, communal networks is redefined in terms of economic obligations; the requirement to pay tribute or tax replaces traditional social rights and obligations. Economic exploitation is formalised, enforced by military power, and sanctioned legally as well as ritually. Complexity, scale, and other

institutional and political traits are secondary and variable traits to these structural transformations (discussion in Claessen 1978; Johnson and Earle 1987).

Variants of stratification have been recognised by Fried (1960) and others (Claessen and Skalník 1978; Haas 1982). I have chosen two variants of stratified society that seem to cover a majority of cases, which, for convenience, I call decentralised stratified society and the centralised archaic state. These general terms replace older Eurocentric or more historically specific terms such as the 'Asiatic state', *'militärische Demokratie'*, or the 'Germanic mode of production'. This is to stress the general significance of stratified society in world history.

The decentralised stratified society

In his classical work, *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Engels (1977 [1891]) developed a historical case of decentralised stratified society under the name, *'militärische Demokratie'* or the 'Germanic mode of production'. He saw *militärische Demokratie* as the highest level of barbarism, where contradictions between the traditional community-based society and a new social and economic order were played out. In *militärische Demokratie*, military leaders sustained themselves through plunder and territorial conquest. Herrmann (1982) has elaborated on this formulation in the light of modern research.

The decentralised stratified society as a general type can be described in the following way. Subsistence production is decentralised, with village communities or individual farms scattered across the landscape. Chiefs and kings set themselves apart from the agrarian substrate and rule through a retinue of warriors. Freed from kinship obligations, the warrior chiefs and king control, undermine and exploit the farming communities through tribute and taxation. Ownership of land is formalised, and a landless peasant class develops. Regional and local vassal chiefs provide warriors and ships for warfare. Similar social structures may develop in pastoral societies in their interaction with state societies or under internal contradictions of blocked expansion (Bonte 1977, 1979; Irons 1979; Krader 1979; Sáenz 1991).

Towns are absent. Instead trading communities, or ports of trade, are controlled by the central government (Hodges 1982). Specialised craft production is performed by both slaves and free specialists. Centres for craft production may co-exist with local settlements, but the craftsmen are attached to elite patrons. Such trading and production centres may develop into towns of small size, and the control and taxation of long-distance trade may play a significant economic role in development.

In Europe, but also in historical cases in Africa and Asia, the ritual, legitimising role of kinship is replaced by secular and ideological functions, corresponding to the new forms of social and economic control (Mair 1977; Wallace-Hadrill 1971).

Central to the new social form of stratification must be formalised ways to extract tribute, tax and labour. This income then can support territorial conquest to create the larger polities of kingdoms. Although bureaucracies are not institutionalised, written scripts may be employed by specialists to record transactions. The interaction between conquest, warfare and plunder, the control of trade, the formalising of landholding, and taxation leads to decentralised stratified society.

I see particularly in the European sequence a development from more generalised to more specific ways of surplus extraction linked to emerging markets and private land-holding, allowing increasingly formalised taxation and rent collection to develop. Without private land-holding and taxation linked to it, the state cannot be permanently sustained in a decentralised economic setting. In the decentralised stratified society, the basic features of the feudal state are gradually formalised.

The centralised archaic state

The 'Asiatic state' was coined by Marx, although as a concept its theoretical importance was not elaborated in his works. In this initial model, a centralised, ritually sanctioned government is based on state ownership of land administered to generate tribute. For example, see the temple economies discussed fully by Sofri (1975 [1969]). The historical implications of the Asiatic state have been widely discussed and criticised (Bailey and Llobera 1981; Wickham 1985), and it is now clear that an interaction always exists between a private and a public sector in these societies (see Bintliff 1982). On the other hand, general features of this type recur in initial state formation as the principles of theocratic chiefdoms are formalised (Webb 1975, 1987). The formulation of the Asiatic state by Friedman and Rowlands (1977) may be used as a second, alternative path to state society, in contrast to decentralised stratified society.

The centralised archaic state formalises the tribal structure of the conical clan into a ruling elite, legitimised by controlled ritual access to the supernatural. The centralised archaic state develops in regions of high productivity where surplus can be generated and controlled. Through a formalised system of tribute, surplus production is converted into large-scale ritual activities, building of ceremonial centres, organisation of craft production, and centralised trade. Slave labour and a division of labour along lines of kinship evolve into new classes performing special activities.

The internal economic structure consists of a tribute or corvée relation between local lines and their chiefs, and between the chiefs and their paramount, and chiefly and royal estates maintained by debt slaves and captives.

The centralised archaic state formalised the basic components of a developed bureaucracy to administrate production, trade and religious activities. In its further development, both warfare for control of essential resources and commercialisation of production for trade play important roles (Gilman 1991; Ferguson 1991). In comparison with the decentralised stratified society, the major difference lies in the centralised economy with its potential for sustaining a state apparatus and the ritualised genealogical structure of the ruling class.

Evolutionary antecedents to stratified societies

Contrasting with my characterisation of stratified organisation, chiefdoms should be considered as a tribal form of social organisation. Economic and political processes are organised along kinship lines (or kinship relations are defined along lines of production and exchange). Control, embedded in kinship, has not transformed social groups into classes. Nevertheless, even within tribal structures, hierarchy and exploitation may still be a major factor. By gradually eroding traditional rights and increasing exploitation, the

road may be paved for state reorganisation. We are dealing with a progression in which the state represents a formalising of hierarchy and exploitation, a process, if not irreversible, then hardly reversible to a tribal level. Thus a state-class structure rarely disappears entirely in periods of political fragmentation. We should rather speak of state systems that may cycle through a number of organisational forms, such as centralisation vs. decentralisation, feudalism vs. commercialism, empire vs. city states, and so on (Ferguson 1991).

The above redefinition of chiefdoms and stratified society has implications for the category of complex chiefdoms, some of which are archaic states, while others may belong to chiefdoms. But how do we differentiate these types? One of the most important points to consider is how the labour crews that built the ceremonial centres of Stonehenge or platform mounds in Peru were recruited. The significance of such constructions depends less on the total scale of labour involved than on its *organisation.* Was it based upon occasional mobilisation through social obligations and rewarded by reciprocal feasting, or was it based upon formalised control of communities, through land ownership? Only in the latter case are we dealing with a state form of organisation (for an interesting debate, see Haas 1982:183ff.). To recognise the probable organisation of labour requires a consideration of such aspects as the size of individual work parties and the overall design integrity of the monuments.

In Figure 9.1, I indicate two evolutionary trajectories which can evolve from the tribal systems structured on kinship and community. Following Renfrew (1974) and D'Altroy and Earle (1985), I have defined two types of chiefdoms—collective and individualising, based respectively on staple finance and its control over subsistence production and on wealth finance with its control over valuables (Kristiansen 1982, 1984). Wealth finance as defined by Earle has much in common with prestige goods economies as defined by Friedman and Rowlands, just as staple finance with its control over valuables (Kristiansen 1982, 1984). Wealth finance as defined by Earle has much in common with prestige goods economies as defined by Friedman and Rowlands, just as staple finance and tributary systems represent another, if not opposing, strategy of economic control (Earle 1991b). In both cases wealth is considered to be the basic economic operator. Staple finance, however, is dominated by vertical relations of production and exchange, prestige goods being a dependent variable; whereas in prestige goods systems, horizontal relations are dominating and sufficient to establish control of labour and production. These two principles are not mutually exclusive and may be combined in various forms of social organisation, although in pre-state societies prestige goods economies are mostly linked to individualising, segmentary, 'pastoral' societies, while staple finance is rather linked to collective, territorial and 'agricultural' societies. In essence, it seems reasonable that different sources of income used to support emerging elites will result in very different sources of income used to support emerging elites will result in very different internal and development characteristics in stratified societies. Thus chiefdoms based on staple finance may develop into centralised archaic states and those based on wealth finance, into decentralised stratified societies (Figure 9.1).

Evolutionary trajectories and systems of social evolution and devolution

In the preceding section I have considered the internal structure and articulation of two ideal types of social organisation without discussing the historical contexts in which they develop. To do so we must give up the traditional notion of evolution as a unidirectional process taking place within bounded social units (Ekholm 1980, 1981; Friedman 1976; Friedman and Rowlands 1977). Evolution is a *spatial,* as well as a temporal, process. This demands

> that we consider the total space within which reproduction occurs as a process. Within that space we must consider the social structured properties that determine the nature and intensity of flows and thus

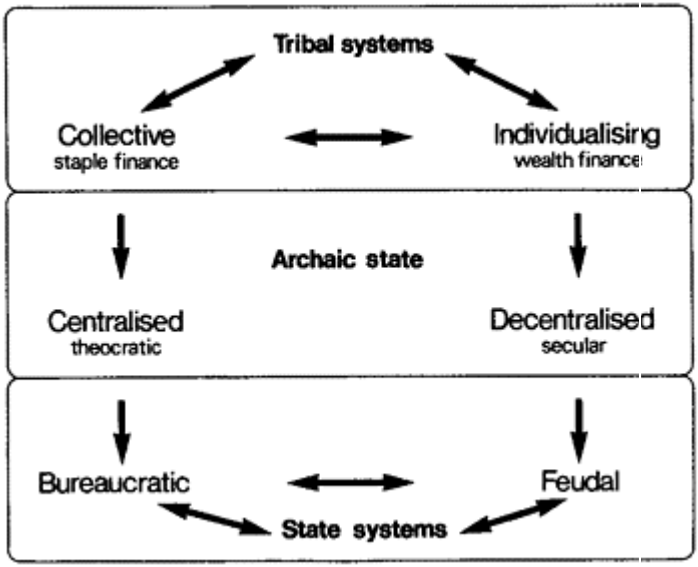

Figure 9.1 A temporal model of alternative evolutionary trajectories

> the rate of reproduction in the larger system. Finally we must deal with society not as consisting of actual societies, but of structures of temporal processes.
>
> (Friedman 1976)

If we are to consider chiefdoms within such a spatial framework we need to understand the principles that lead to and distinguish various social formations. We need to go

behind the prevailing evolutionary typology of chiefdoms and states to define the structuring principles which create spatially dependent social formations. The theoretical premises of my understanding of evolution and devolution are as follows:

1 tribal social organisation may generate several evolutionary trajectories, including variants of chiefdom organisation;
2 their direction and potential depend upon their place within a world system;
3 such a world system can be very large and structurally diverse, including centre and periphery relations from states to tribes;
4 consequently tribes, chiefdoms and states may be understood as parts of a contiguous structure defined in space; and
5 from this understanding it follows that chiefdoms more often than not are dependent in some way upon their place in larger historical cycles of evolution and devolution.

Such an approach has several theoretical implications (Rowlands 1987). The dichotomy between internal evolution and external domination dissolves, and the traditional polarisation of production and exchange can no longer be maintained. The complexity of such world systems—whether based on core-periphery relations (Wallerstein 1974; Friedman and Rowlands 1977) or on interacting regional systems (Renfrew and Cherry 1987)—has yet to be explained. Figure 9.2 gives a schematic outline of such a world system. In the centre, city states and empires have evolved. They are then linked economically and politically to peripheries at increasing distance, where societies can be graded by evolutionary complexity. Cross-cutting this spatial structure is a long-term evolutionary trend towards increasing political centrality and economic control. After the emergence of state systems, it is no longer possible to talk about independent developments. This does not deny autonomous developments, but, as interlocked regional exchange systems have been in existence since the Neolithic, we have to consider processes of change on a larger scale than the local and regional system. Chiefdoms are in many cases, perhaps in most cases, a secondary development. Such an approach naturally has consequences for understanding the ethnographic present. Many ‘autonomous’ chiefdoms and tribes may simply be devolved societies, temporarily cut off from the larger system of which they had historically been a part (Cohen 1978:54; Ekholm and Friedman 1979).

Within such a world system, the regional systems maintain a degree of autonomy, despite their dependency on remote regions for supplies of metal, prestige goods, and ritual information. Long-term trends established within a region may determine the interaction between regions by establishing patterns of economic and political dependency that help determine the course of development within the larger system. If we can identify the dynamics of regional

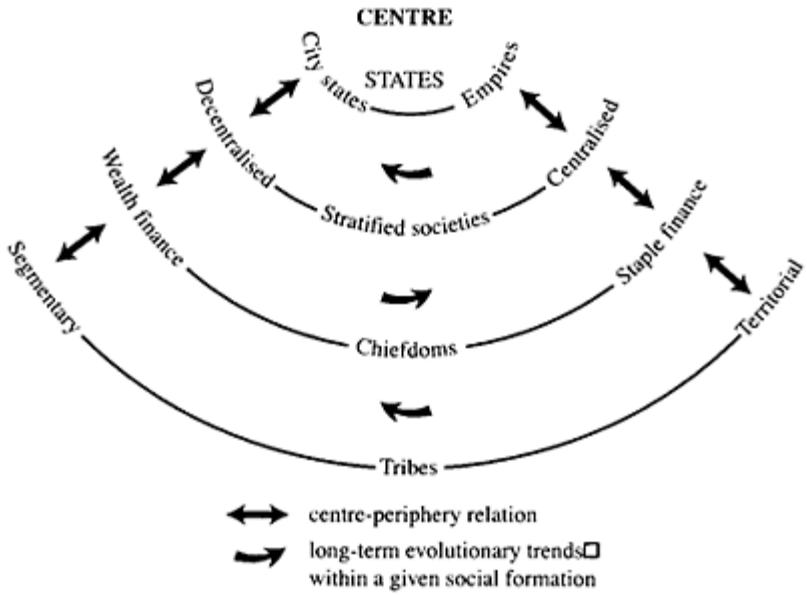

Figure 9.2 A spatial model of centre/periphery relationships among evolutionary types

systems, we are in a better position to understand and to explain major changes and transformations of inter-regional systems, such as the Lapita complex in Oceania (Kirch 1987), the Mid-western Hopewellian in North American (Braun 1986), or the Corded-ware/Bell-beaker complex in Europe (Shennan 1986). The crucial question is: under what conditions do regional interactions become a driving force? We should also face the possibility that less complex, peripheral regions may be decisive for development and collapse in more complex core regions, dependent on their peripheries for raw material, labour and in some cases food.

When applying this global approach to concrete studies, one should avoid rigid institutional concepts and instead should try to identify the underlying organisational properties spatially and temporally. Institutions, like social types, always are an outcome of complex processes creating variations in time and space. Whether institutional variations are to be considered along a continuum or divided by abrupt, even catastrophical, changes will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

Is it possible to identify and come to terms with such large-scale processes in archaeological terms? Since archaeologists are dealing with changing distributions of material culture, we may be in a better position than historians and social anthropologists to deal with processes of large-scale change. A major task is to study the way material culture is employed in social strategies to define processes of expansion and resistance and to form local, regional, and international identities (Gailey and Patterson 1987). The consumption of wealth in time and space should give important clues to identifying processes of centralisation and ranking when compared with the organisation of

production. This should be linked to studies of the way values are established and employed as a means to create power and dependency (Earle 1982). This way of establishing value is often linked to cosmologies where power resides in chiefs' ability to travel and create alliances with distant chiefdoms and centres of ritual superiority (see Helms 1986, 1988a, 1988b). Exchange and political power are linked to one another in creating and reproducing local and regional power structures.

Archaeological case studies

In the following, I will demonstrate how apparently similar configurations in the archaeological record, reflecting rather similar strategies in the development of ruling elites, are based on different systems of production and social organisation. I shall proceed by summarising aspects of social organisation, followed by a discussion of ritual depositions and monument construction, and the underlying processes of change.

The Bronze Age

Both the emergence of tribal elites and long-term changes in the Nordic Bronze Age have been described in recent works (Jensen 1987; Kristiansen 1978, 1987a, 1987b; Levy 1982; Larsson 1986; Randsborg 1974; Sørensen 1987; Welinder 1976). The following section summarises some of the major trends as reflected in material culture, settlement, and ecology. Comparison should be made to the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age of England where similar patterns emerge (Earle 1991b).

Leadership during the Bronze Age was ritualised. Chiefs acted as both war leaders and ritual leaders; chiefly women also had ritual or priestly functions. A dual chiefly organisation, with two male chiefs, was not uncommon and is reflected in recurrent double-male burials. The ritual chiefs had a following of high-ranking warriors, although the nature of this following cannot be specified. War parties seem to have been small, and no major territorial conquest is documented; no defence works existed. Chiefdoms, or rather clusters of chiefdoms, are reflected in localised style variations and in metalwork (Rønne 1987: figure 24; Larsson 1980: figures 71 and 88). These stylistic regions are approximately 500–1,000km^2, 20–40 km across, normally with one or a few central places (Larsson 1986: figure 106). Within this region, local settlement units (individual chiefdoms) are defined by clusters of barrows typically only a few kilometres across. Paramount chiefs were in control of long-distance elite exchange in metals, prestige goods, and related exotic knowledge. The rise of chiefdoms around 1500 BC was linked to an ideological and military complex of aristocratic warriors that spread from the Mycenaean area and Asia Minor through central Europe and Scandinavia. It was characterised by new chiefly regalia including war chariots, stools, swords, razors and tweezers (Kristiansen 1987b).

At the local level, groups of impressive long houses, 30 metres long and 8 metres wide, housed extended families divided into two to three domestic units. To each settlement belonged one or more barrows. Each settlement compound apparently represented a small population whose leader was the local representative of a chiefly lineage; only these chiefs, who represented perhaps 10–15 per cent of the population,

were apparently buried in the barrows. It is assumed that the local branches of the chiefly lineage formed a conical clan with one or a few leading paramount chiefs, normally represented by barrows and settlements of outstanding wealth. The overall ranked structure of the chiefs is reflected by differential access to metalwork. Burials have distinct levels of wealth; elite goods, with chiefly swords, were at the top, and common tools at the bottom. Social diversification was, however, likely based on kinship without real social classes. Both burial customs and material culture were homogeneous, and status distinctions were linked to variations within a common cultural and social framework. This pattern of a common elite style over a broad region is what has been called an international style (see Earle 1989).

Land use was extensive, based on husbandry of free-grazing herds and rotating fields in an open landscape. No fixed field boundaries occur, indicating an unstructured land-tenure system, but the landscape was highly structured by barrows and settlements forming a social and ritual landscape that remained stable for a thousand years.

During the Late Bronze Age, 1000–500 BC, regional identities emerged, most clearly in areas of economic decline. Stress and competition were apparently increasing, but the overall cultural framework was still intact. A small group of large chiefly settlements and barrows appeared in some areas, suggesting new, regional aristocracies (Thrane 1984; Jensen 1981). At ordinary settlements, houses became smaller and more numerous, apparently a trend towards smaller family groups. Sheep and pigs were most frequent at the commoner settlements, but cattle were dominant at the chiefly settlements (Hedeager and Kristiansen 1988:86). As some settlements became larger, local and regional groupings of settlements became clear. The landscape was heavily exploited, and open secondary forests for grazing and leaf-foddering were reduced or eliminated. Agriculture was intensified as a response to the ecological degradation and population agglomerations. Also harvesting of weeds may reflect an economic crisis that ultimately culminated in the reorganisation of agriculture, settlement and social organisation with the advent of the Iron age.

Let us consider some of the long-term dynamics of a chiefdom structure, as reflected in the employment and consumption of wealth and in the construction of monuments (Figure 9.3). Three phases will be used as follows: an *initial phase*, when bronze is introduced and social and economic changes are being prepared; and *expansion phase*, when new ruling elites emerge, employing bronze in prestige building and conspicuous consumption; and finally a *consolidation phase*, when continuity is the dominant theme in burials and ritual, followed by a social decline.

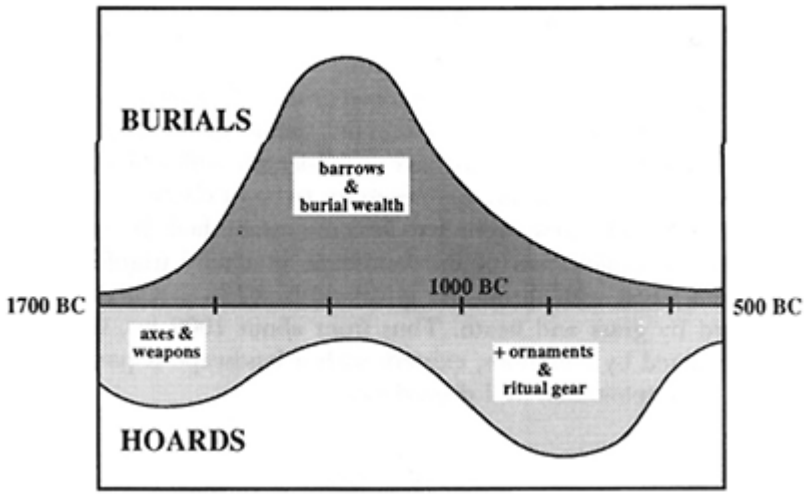

Figure 9.3 Patterns of investment in wealth deposition and in monument construction in the Bronze Age

The initial phase

The Late Neolithic was a final period of settlement expansion, just as the land-scape was generally becoming more open. During the last part of the Neolithic, imported and locally produced bronze axes were numerous and gradually took over the role as prestige items from the flint dagger. The axes were not yet employed as grave goods, but were hoarded. As a prestige object, they replaced the traditional status objects rather than breaking new ground. Around 1700 BC, with the advent of the Bronze Age, both imported and locally manufactured metal objects became more numerous and diverse. Spears, daggers and finally swords were introduced. At this point, the traditional value system of the Neolithic was undermined. New status positions were gradually built up, linked to control over exchange in bronze, metallurgy and new efficient weapons. The first burials with weapons appeared at the end of this phase.

Expansion phase

Suddenly, within a generation at about 1500 BC, the fully fledged chiefdom structure emerged in northern Europe. The new culture was characterised by the original Nordic style and mastery in metalwork, and by the construction of thousands of monumental barrows. At the same time, ritual hoarding became scarce. This period of conspicuous wealth lasted, with some ups and downs, from 1500 to 1100 BC, but, already in the later part, the erection of new monumental barrows and wealth consumption in burials declined and was replaced by the continued use of the old family barrows and more symbolic grave goods. Although burial practice changed from inhumation to crema-tion, this change does not explain the beginning reduction in grave goods, since it was still

common practice to have a full-length coffin or stone cist with grave goods. It was apparently not necessary to boast chiefly wealth and superiority as before. The new order had become established. In economic terms, the intensive exploitation of the landscape gradually transformed a productive mixed forest with shrub and grassland to a less productive land-scape dominated by grass and heath. Thus from about 1000 BC, the open landscape, dominated by commons, existed; such a landscape is particularly vulnerable to over-exploitation and degradation.

Consolidation and decline

During the consolidation and decline phase, wealth consumption was increasingly directed towards ritual hoarding of valuables, especially female ornaments and ritual gear. Burials were reduced in wealth, the most commonly employed burial type being the urn with cremated bones and a few personal belongings. Razor and tweezer became the standard equipment of high-ranking males, and secondary burials in the old family barrows testify to tradition and continuity. In some regions, expecially in eastern Denmark, new ruling elites emerged and demonstrated their power and wealth by constructing monumental barrows, but the overall impression is one of continuity and consolidation.

Behind the façade of cultural continuity, economic stability was being undermined by ecological degradation and declining productivity. Already by 1000 BC, some regions experienced declining supplies of bronze. The ornamental bronze objects were kep in circulation longer, and tool forms were increasingly produced in stone, bone or antler.

During the same period communal ritual for both male and female chiefs became more complex. Wealth was channelled into ritual gear, such as lures, golden drinking vessels, ritual helmets and shields. This shift from display to ritual objects can be seen as a reflection of consolidation and crisis; the ruling elites no longer boasted their superiority in terms of personal wealth and status, but they rather acted as mediators to the gods, thereby controlling the destiny and well-being of society. In ritual hoarding, the gods were offered gifts in return for their help and support. This hoarding may also reflect a crisis of legitimation during a period of declining production.

Late in the Bronze Age, the hoarding of costly ritual gear, such as lures, suddenly stopped. Supplies of metal contracted, and the whole chiefdom organisation, including its cultural and ritual framework, appears to collapse. Virtually no traditions continued into the Iron Age, except some hoarding of heavy neck rings. In conclusion, during this thousand-year cycle, burials, rituals and wealth were employed in changing ways to reproduce the social order of chiefdoms. In Figure 9.4, I have summarised in abbreviated form the major system parameters and their interaction to demonstrate the complexity or multi-causality of change. Despite profound changes, chiefdom organisation persisted without the evolution of states.

Wealth finance, in the form of prestige goods, employed a new international value system to differentiate a warrior aristocracy. Wealth finance was used to establish political dominance and economic control; when the international prestige goods system collapsed, the chiefly structure collapsed with it. In that respect the Bronze Age differed from the Iron Age that was to follow.

The Iron Age

The work of Hedeager (1987, 1988, 1992) provides the rich and diverse archaeological data from the Danish Iron Age summarised briefly here. Unlike the Bronze Age, the Iron Age is not characterised by a homogeneous cultural tradition in time or space; however, the long-term dynamics of wealth consumption in burials and hoards reveal a pattern similar to the Bronze Age.

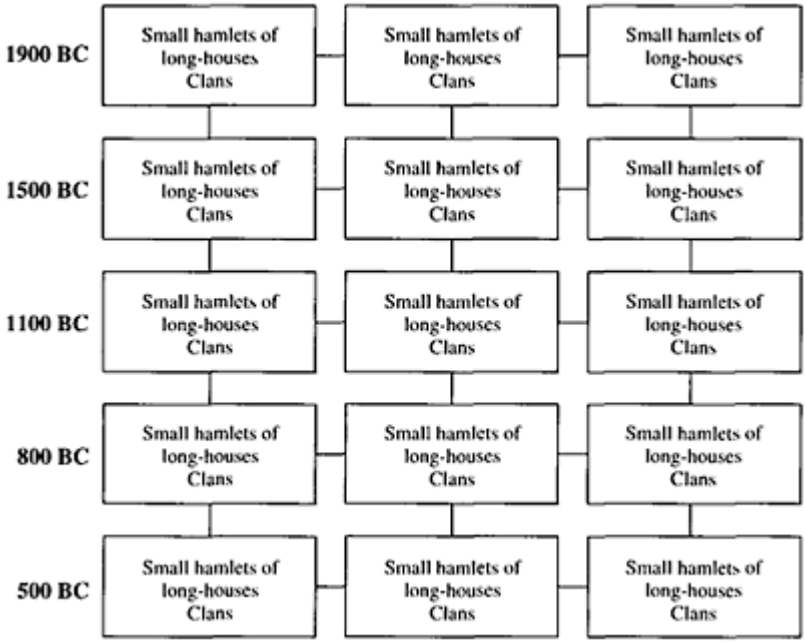

Figure 9.4 Basic components and their interaction in the development and transformation of Bronze Age society

Since some marked changes in social organisation take place during this sequence, I shall outline the basic organisational properties of Iron Age society.

As a response to the economic and ecological crisis at the end of the Bronze Age, production was reorganised with the family farm as the basic unit. In the classic Iron Age farm house, cattle were held at one end and the family at the other. Cattle, kept in stalls, produced manure for the fields that were fixed in a permanent system clearly marked by field boundaries. Although use rights were probably granted to individual farms, the farms of nearly equal size were organised into villages that would have determined crop rotation. The stalled cattle demanded more labour than before to collect winter fodder, and prepare and manure the fields. Meadows were created to produce hay, replacing leaf-fodder from the cleared forests.

The new social relations of production suggest a break-up of the kinship-based community. Land as the basis of production became a defined and limited resource that could be accumulated; like the Greek *polis* (Ferguson 1991), although the village organisation favoured an egalitarian ideology, the economic conditions existed for emerging stratification. Such contradictions could be neutralised as long as new land could be cleared for expanding settlements; and the village organisation offered an ideal collective framework for such work. The first centuries of the Iron Age saw a major settlement expansion into heavy clay soils covered by forest. This expansion was also made possible by new, more efficient iron tools, and, since iron could be obtained locally, central chiefly settlements lost the control that they had once held by manipulating long-distance exchange.

From around 150 BC, as the forest had been cleared and settled, expansion came to a halt. From the first century BC a new warrior elite became distinguished in burials, and large chiefly farms appeared at some villages. The processes of social and economic differentiation continued for the next two centuries, and, by AD 200, settlements were reorganised into fewer, but much larger, individual farms. Land was redivided and granted to individual farms in an infield/outfield system of production; the village had disappeared as an organisational framework of production. The many smallholders had evidently become serfs or craft specialists on the big farms. As settlement concentrated, some grassland commons reverted to forest for timber production and forest grazing. The reorganisation resulted in increased production; large barn and store houses appear together with small huts for craft production. Also the first gateway settlements appear to serve long-distance trade for royal estates.

During the first centuries of the Iron Age (500–150 BC), stratification is invisible. On the contrary, cemeteries demonstrate an egalitarian ideology. Regional diversification, however, was strong, reflecting tribal identities. The rise of a new warrior elite after 150 BC conforms with the re-opening of international trade with the southern Celtic world, as external prestige goods were used to mark diverse statuses. From the birth of Christ, these processes accelerated as the Roman empire took over international trade with the Germanic world.

In opposition to the Bronze Age, social differentiation was based on institutionalised, differential access to land. Local and regional chiefs not only possessed large farms; they also controlled the other farms in the village and other villages. By AD 200, taxation and property relations were formalised through the reorganisation of land; villages and farms, in the hands of a free class of big farmers, provided military service and paid tribute to the king through his vassals. This system reached its climax in the Viking period when internal territorial conquest was replaced by external conquest and colonisation.

The chiefs used revenues from their estates to support a retinue of young warriors, who, freed from kinship obligations, fought for their lord. Regional war chiefs joined in under the leadership of regional kings when territorial battles were taking place. The army, professionalised with a command hierarchy, fought for territory and trade gateways. This whole organisation could only be supported by a system of tribute, although spoils of warfare made their contribution.

The reorganisation around AD 200 formalised for the first time social classes based on property rights. Serfs, or perhaps thralls (slaves), were defined as landless and obligated to pay rent to the landowners.

This whole process towards state formation is reflected in material culture and ritual. The new elites demonstrated social distance not only through burial equipment, but also through selected burial grounds and exclusive burial customs. Some regions, such as northern Jutland, demonstrated their resistance to the new developments by maintaining archaic regional identities in material culture and egalitarian traditions in burial customs. The transformation of Iron Age societies into an archaic state organisation represents a laboratory for testing hypotheses about the employment of material culture in social strategies; evidently the processes differ from those of the Bronze Age. But if we consider patterns of wealth consumption in burials and hoards they are nearly identical, comprising the same three phases (Figure 9.5).

Initial phase

During the initial phase, ritual consumption was collective, exemplified in the hoarding of neck-rings and ritual gear; some of these traditions represented continuation from the Bronze Age, relicts that gave feelings of continuity with the past during a time of profound change. Otherwise little or no consumption was reflected in burials. Barrows were no longer employed; instead new cemeteries for the whole village reflected a distinct break with the hierarchical traditions of the Bronze Age. Burial equipment was modest and reflected the same egalitarian traditions as the village itself.

Expansion phase

About 150 BC, internal processes of social diversification linked to external access to prestige goods, weapons, and status information, led to a radical change in wealth consumption and the emergence of a warrior elite. The new elites employed Celtic and later Roman prestige goods, for establishing and

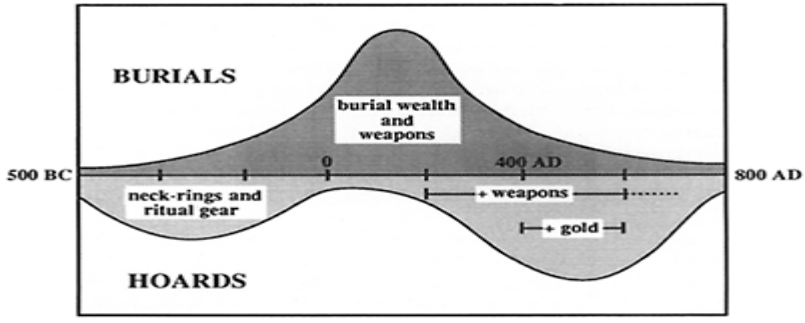

Figure 9.5 Patterns of investment in wealth depositions in the Iron Age

maintaining political power. Roman prestige goods especially were employed in a competitive spiral of consumption to boast and legitimise new ruling elites. As in the Bronze Age, the first period was characterised by rich male burials with weapons, while

the later part was characterised by rich female burials indicating a beginning consolidation with less need to boast military superiority. This corresponded to the introduction of a state organisation after AD 200. Weapons were then hoarded in large quantities after victorious battles or territorial conquests.

Consolidation

The consolidation phase started around AD 400, when wealth consumption in burials nearly halted and hoarding soon reached a climax. Weapons were now in the minority; most hoards consisted of gold in various forms—ornaments, exchange tokens and coins. The elites were sufficiently consoldiated that wealth was no longer deposited in burials. Instead, valuable golden neck-rings and ornaments were offered to the gods in return for their support and protection, a ritual gift-giving of kingship.

Hoarding of exchange valuables represented a new element linked to the development of economic transactions, tax and tribute. The hoards should be considered hidden treasures that were never recovered. Or they could, in the word of the sagas, be considered as treasures hidden to be recollected in the afterlife at Valhalla, where the war heroes met in eternal drinking and war parties.

Although the consolidation phase had much in common with the Bronze Age, and is also characterised by some climatic and economic recession, this did not lead to economic crisis; on the contrary, farms continued to grow and prosper into the Viking period. Quite evidently the new stratified society that was based on staple finance was less vulnerable to external factors. This stability is demonstrated by the fact that after the fall of the Roman empire, the Germanic kingdoms developed new lines of international trade. Another indication of their ideological consolidation was the development of an original Germanic art style to be employed on elite weapons and ornaments, stressing Germanic identity.

By comparison with the Bronze Age, both similarities and differences can be noted. Perhaps the most significant difference is that the social organisation of the Iron Age was able to cope with crisis and use that to consolidate the elite, due to the fact that land and production were controlled by individual families and could be exchanged and taxed. But also warfare and military organisation had reached a correspondingly higher level. This expanding process of economic and social diversification and political centralisation is illustrated in Figure 9.6. Although a stratified society, it was still heavily reliant on a prestige goods economy of wealth finance, especially during the expansion phase. After that, staple finance increasingly took over. Thus neither wealth

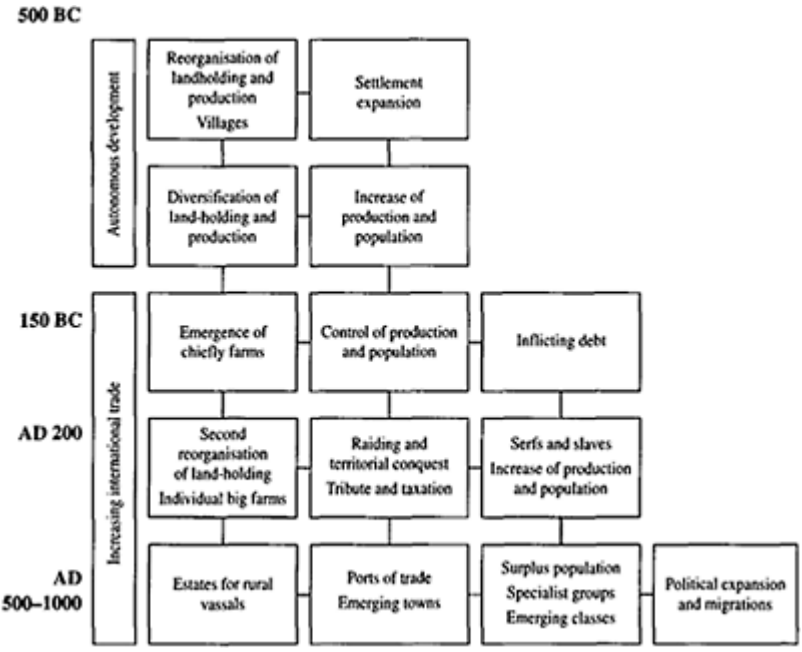

Figure 9.6 Basic components and their interaction in the development and transformation of Iron Age society

nor staple finance are linked to a specific level of social organisation; the different financial bases, however, strongly affect the system's stability and potential for growth.

Concluding perspectives

The two case studies from northern European prehistory demonstrate trends of wealth consumption, monumental works and symbolic behaviour in the rise and consolidation of ruling elites. Without due consideration of the full cultural and social context of these processes, they could easily have been misinterpreted as representing similar organisational structures. Thus, in several works on social evolution, the Bronze and the Iron Age are lumped together in the chiefdom category.

The case studies also contribute to the wider understanding of some of the processes involved in the emergence of elites, centralisation and political control. In conclusion I shall discuss some of the general implications as to the following: the conditions for the rise and fall of ruling elites; the significance of long-term history for understanding processes of evolution and devolution; and the significance of this study for evolutionary theory as discussed in the first section.

The employment of valuables in ritual depositions showed rather similar patterns in both the Bronze and the Iron Ages. In both cases during the expansion phase, weapons or

symbols of warfare played a decisive role; during the consolidation phase, less emphasis was placed on symbols of warfare and ritual investment in burial; and then, during the decline phase, votive offerings were given to the gods. I am inclined to believe that actual warfare played a decisive role in sustaining new power relations, but the ideology of warfare, in much the same way as nuclear weapons, also would have served as a deterrent (see Earle 1987a). It would, however, be wrong to single out one or a few prime movers, such as warfare, in the formation of ruling elites and the state in northern Europe (cf. Carneiro 1970; Flannery 1972). The evidence rather suggests a complex interaction of new ideologies (legitimation and information monopoly), warfare (including new weapons and strategies), and the manipulation or take-over of production through tribute and taxation (Figures 9.4 and 9.6). In that process, which has much in common with the IEMP model of Michael Mann (1986:28ff.), traditional rights and value systems were redefined to serve new interests and classes. What has to be determined, then, are the conditions that allow such structural linkages to be established.

In both periods, adopting external value systems linked to foreign wealth objects was decisive. The new productive system based on the permanent field systems existed for several centuries prior to the take-off in stratification in the Iron Age; it did not unfold until linked to new ritual and social practices. Both cases also saw an introduction of new elite weapons, and, we may assume, new tactics of warfare. In structural terms the emergence of a new elite was a rapid process that coincided with the establishment of networks and alliances with more complex societies and their value systems and cosmologies that could be used to legitimise emerging power positions. But this would probably not have been effective if some means of economic control had not already existed (see Earle 1991 and Gilman 1991 for comparative evidence). In the Bronze Age, the transmission of international value systems took place through interlocked regional systems of exchange, whereas in the Iron Age it was a centre/periphery relationship with the Roman empire and the Celtic world.

At the transition to the Iron Age, the internal processes of evolution and devolution can be further specified. Social organisation did not revert back to a Neolithic tribal level with shifting agriculture; rather, land use during the Bronze Age was transformed into a permanent pattern of land-holding that was strong enough to survive the collapse of the elite ideology of tribal aristocracies. The core components of Iron Age social organisation were developed during the late Bronze Age, but their potential was constrained by the tribal rationality of Bronze Age society. The new economic basis for differentiation could only be formalised in a new structure after the collapse of Bronze Age social organisation.

If we consider the relationship between wealth and staples in the rise and decline of elites, a long-term tendency from wealth finance towards staple finance could be observed, which was linked to changed conditions of political power and legitimacy from expansion to consolidation. These processes not only transformed social relations of production, but were also linked to ecological change.

In the long-term perspective, staple finance and control of land and resources were increasingly formalised from the Bronze Age to the medieval period. This formalisation of the land-tenure system increased the society's stability and its ability to cope with crisis. Only a major ecological crisis and the Black Death during the fourteenth and

fifteenth centuries created a temporary halt in the processes of social and economic evolution.

Despite the fact that social differentiation at the beginning of both the Bronze and Iron Ages was based on economic control, legitimation was still massive, demonstrating that resistance to change seethed within the established social order. Tradition and stability were apparently inherent to the tribal and Germanic systems. Even during the early medieval period, after AD 1100, peasants unwilling to accept the new social order rebelled until the nobility finally gained full control and had their rights universally sanctioned during the sixteenth century as an endogamous high nobility. It is remarkable how drawn-out was the whole progression towards state formation; the basic structure of Bronze Age society persisted for more than a thousand years. Although changing configurations of alliances and regional trajectories of expansion and collapse created temporal and spatial fluctuations, prehistoric evidence contradicts Service's (1972:142) observation that chiefdoms are fragile and short-lived.

Since the communal life characteristic of the Bronze Age chiefdom is evidently resistant to exploitation, what factors finally create the conditions for internal change and transformation? In both cases, a long-term accumulation of unintended economic and ecological consequences of the dominant social strategies could be observed that gradually transformed the productive basis and potential. During the transition from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age the entire structure collapsed, and this devolution created a completely new society and economy based on land-holding and family farms within the collective framework of villages. Once introduced, it became permanent and, in periods of crisis, reinforced the unequal access to land.

The resistance towards change illuminates another characteristic of long-term change and subsequent transformation. During the Bronze Age, both settlement structure and social organisation apparently remained intact even when the ecological and economic carrying capacity of a region was exceeded. If we are to explain the persistence of the traditional settlement pattern, we have to consider its social rationality. Social organisation of the Bronze Age was inscribed on the landscape. Here were the ancestral barrows and ritual places, monumentally situated as landmarks in the landscape. Here resided the power of both living and dead chiefs, and the settlement pattern formed a network that gave access to trade and alliances. Here was a familiar ecology of pastoral farming that produced the animals that were a major source of the society's wealth. Since Bronze Age society was built upon the circulation of prestige goods and the participation in alliances, the importance of pastoralism was a crucial constraint. Although such social circumscription clearly tended to accelerate hierarchy, centralisation and a more formalised land use, such processes were constrained by the inherent tribal rationality. The ecological degradation and economic decline could only be met with new and more efficient technologies and farming practices after the breakdown of Bronze Age social organisation. So in a paradoxical way, the unintended economic consequences of long-term social strategies created the basis for intentional change. This implies that the material conditions for change are unpredictable to the social actors themselves; they can only be constructed retrospectively. The historical moments with opportunities for change are very rare indeed.

Long-term changes, hardly visible in a lifetime, contrast with rapid social transformation, which (when triggered) took place within a generation. Resistance and

competition were obviously important factors at this time, but, since archaeology only records the successful, we cannot describe the many individual opponents and attempts to change these basic conditions. Only during the Iron Age, when such attempts became so strongly organised, can we document resistance to the formation of new systems of power.

In recent years, several authors (Ekholm and Friedman 1979; Mann 1986) have emphasised a distinct borderline at the earliest pristine state formations. Afterwards, a world system developed that advanced the frontier of civilisation, interrupted by cycles of collapse and resistance. As a consequence of such macro-structural transformations during economic expansion, a spatial hierarchy of dependent social formations was created. Figure 9.2 represents an ideal model of this spatial system. Although it would demand a major research project to apply such a model to Europe, the Near East, and northern Africa in prehistory, the spatial structure of Figure 9.2 resulted in an evolutionary differentiation between centres and peripheries. This spatial differentiation, however, does not mean that we can apply a traditional evolutionary perspective of time-delayed diffusion; rather, the long-distance relationships of centre to periphery create an evolutionary gradient representing patterns of development and underdevelopment. The traditional societies at the periphery cannot be characterised solely in terms of their internal organisation, since they were both linked to and borrowed structural and ideological features, although transformed, from the centre. The developments in European prehistory, claimed by some (see Renfrew 1973) to be autonomous, could have resulted from the dynamics of larger interacting systems, representing periods of collapse, cultural closure and break-down of international exchange networks. Centre/periphery relationships, based on the exploitation of raw materials, can also lead to technological development on the periphery; could this explain the apparent chronological priority of Europe in metallurgic know-how? Before accepting the autonomous version of European prehistory, such perspectives have to be explored fully.

In remote regions, such as Denmark and northern Europe, I contend that the rise of new ruling elites was linked to external contacts, rooted in the ancient world system (Rowland, Larsen and Kristiansen 1987). Denmark was part of international networks where production and exchange of prestige goods were the dominant economic operators, directing flows of wealth and power (Kristiansen 1987b). This inter-regional dependency created a rather unified social and ritual superstructure stretching from the Aegean to Scandinavia. On the other hand, it is also clear that internal processes of demographic, ecological, and economic change were decisive for the developmental potential of the region. The time trajectories of regional cycles therefore were decisive for when and how interaction within the larger system took place.

How do these results relate to the recent critiques of evolutionary theory? Is prediction (or rather postdiction) possible? The answer to these questions obviously depends upon scale and complexity. When restricting ourselves to parameters such as ecology and demography within defined regions, long-term trends and possible transformations of a specific social strategy can be predicted. But when local and regional sequences are viewed as part of the operation of an ancient world system, the picture becomes much more complex. Its direction has to be determined by the dominant regional trends, defining both constraints and potentialities, allowing us to predict a range of evolutionary options. They also depend upon the range of technological, military, and economic

opportunity for political control and resistance that characterised the various world historical periods (Mann 1986).

Within any regional social organisation and inter-regional system, a number of evolutionary options exist, but the range in options certainly is limited. These choices are the result of multiple actions and interactions beyond the consciousness of any single individual. Cultural and structural parameters defined limits to what was possible at any given moment in history. This was most clearly demonstrated by the thousand-year Bronze Age sequence unconsciously moving towards its final destiny and transformation, while still living within and constrained by the cultural and social framework of Bronze Age chiefly society.

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10
CENTRE AND PERIPHERY IN BRONZE AGE SCANDINAVIA

Kristian Kristiansen

It remains an astonishing fact that thousands of impressive stone built barrows (cairns) are scattered along the coasts of the Gulf of Bothnia, hundreds of miles north of the central settlement areas and production areas of the Scandinavian Bronze Age (Plate 10.1). We find a similar phenomenon along the Norwegian coast (Plate 10.2).[1] In an environment dominated by Stone Age technology, with only a few imported bronzes, these north Scandinavian parallels in stone to the south Scandinavian barrows in grass and turf (Plate 10.3)

Plate 10.1 Coastal cairn from western Norrland, Sweden (photograph Evert Baudon, University of Umea, Department of Archaeology)

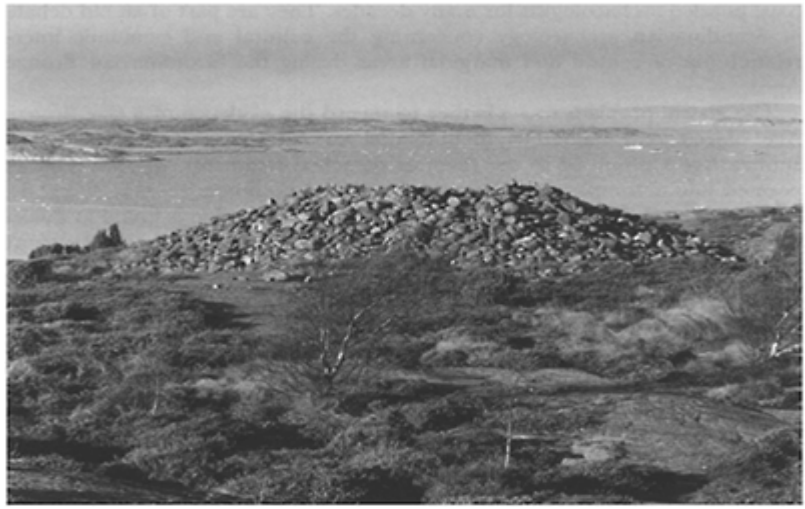


Plate 10.2 Coastal cairn from Bohuslän, western Sweden (photograph Marianne Djurfeldt, Göteborg Archaeological Museum)

Plate 10.3 Barrows from north-western Zealand, Denmark (photograph Ancient Monument Directorate)

have puzzled archaeologists for many decades. They are part of an old debate in Scandinavian archaeology concerning the cultural and economic interrelationship of central and marginal areas during the Scandinavian Bronze Age.

The classic problem was whether to regard the evidence of a few Bronze Age objects and numerous monumental coastal cairns as evidence of a Bronze Age Culture or to see them as detached fragments that were incorporated into a completely different cultural and economic context, based on a Stone Age subsistence (a recent summary of the discussion is found in Bakka 1976). In reality we are dealing with a much more highly differentiated pattern which has been obscured by opposing two *complementary* concepts—that of culture and that of economy. Moreover, the rapid increase of new empirical evidence in recent years on both settlement and ecology in northern Scandinavia has rendered this old dichotomy obsolete. It seems, then, that developments in both theory and data make it worthwhile to attempt a reinterpretation of the relationship between central and marginal areas during the Bronze Age in Scandinavia. It should be stressed, however, that the following is to be regarded as a preliminary outline with no attempt to cover but a selection of the evidence.

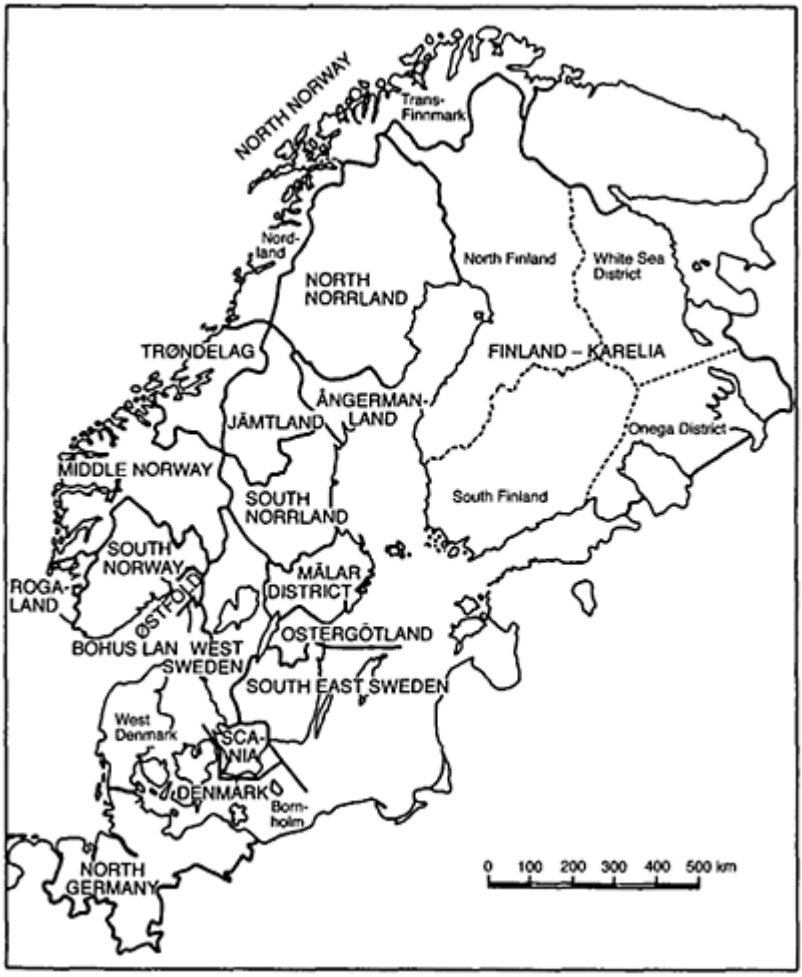
Topographical framework

The research area comprises Scandinavia and the coastal areas around the Baltic Sea, including the lowland areas of the present northern Germany and northern Poland (Maps 10.1 and 10.2). From northern Norway to northern Germany (the Elbeknee) this represents a distance of approximately 2,200 kilometres as the crow flies. The same distance from the Elbe to the south extends into the central Sahara. Most of central and northern Scandinavia is dominated by old bedrock, the Hercynian folds stretching from northern Scandinavia to southern Norway, appearing again in northern England, Scotland and Ireland. Denmark, southern Sweden and northern Germany are dominated by fertile brown soils, moulded during the last glacial period. In combination with the long coastline and the potential for fishing, this makes it one of the most fertile agricultural areas in the temperate zone. Less fertile areas are mainly found in south-western Jutland/north-western Germany and in central Sweden lying outside the last glacial. However, stretches of fertile agricultural land are also found in central Sweden, around Stockholm, and in several areas along the Norwegian coast, especially the Oslo area, the area around Stavanger and further to the north the Bergen and Trondheim areas.

With respect to natural vegetation, central and northern Scandinavia is dominated by the Fennoscandian coniferous forests (pine, spruce and beech), and in the mountains alpine vegetation *(fjeldmark),* while southern Scandinavia is dominated by deciduous forests, in Sweden mixed with some coniferous forest. The areas of deciduous forest generally correspond with brown soil areas.

Map 10.1 Topographical map of Scandinavia

Climatically the division extends east-west. The coastal areas of western Denmark and Norway being dominated by Atlantic climate, whereas the rest of Scandinavia is dominated by Continental climate. In combination with the Gulf Stream along the Norwegian coast, this implies a rather mild winter climate allowing agriculture to be practised very far to the north.



Map 10.2 Geographical regions in Scandinavia

Source: after Malmer 1981: figure 1

Economic setting

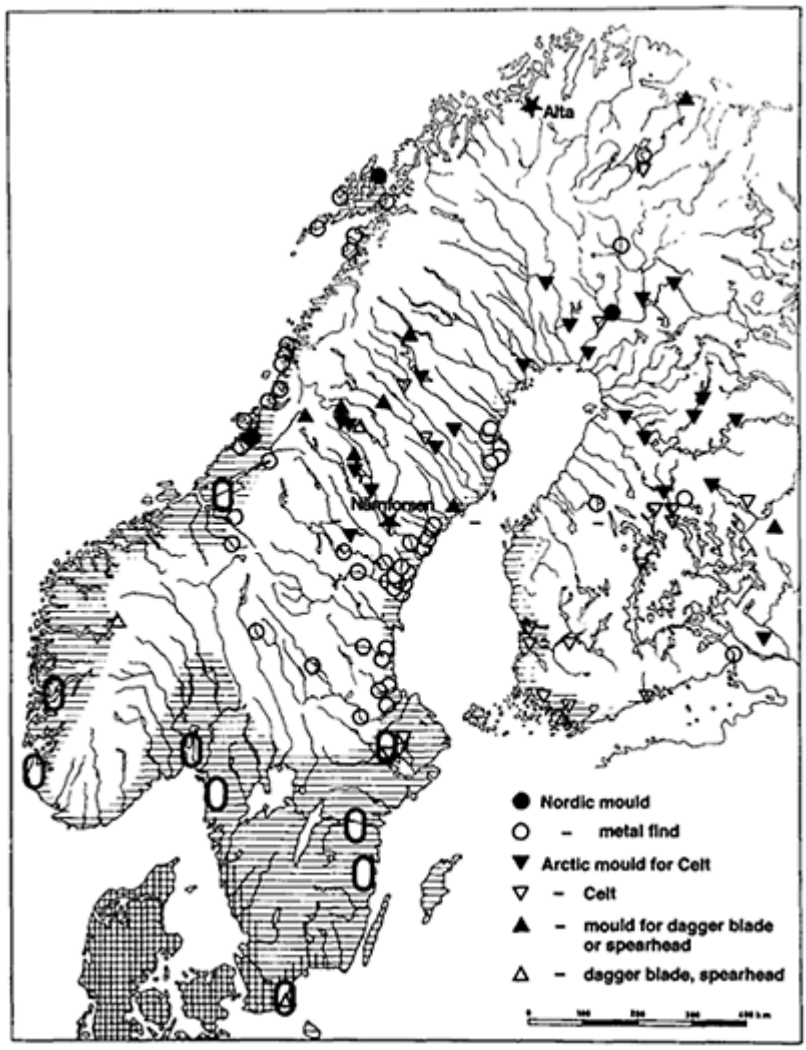
Let us first consider the economic and ecological setting. In recent years paleo-botanical research has clarified that farming penetrated northern Scandinavia during the Neolithic along coastal strips of land suitable for mixed farming and fishing (articles in Sjøvold 1983). In the northern Bothnian Sea, farming, mainly restricted to cattle husbandry, was practised in the later Neolithic in some places (Broadbent 1983:18; Baudou 1982). The evidence is quite scanty, but becomes more reliable from the Late Bronze Age, which

marks an expansion period (Engelmark 1976; Huttunen and Tolonen 1972). By the transition to the Iron Age, this farming pattern had disappeared in the north, due to climatic deterioration. Further to the south, in southern Finland, the introduction of farming displays a rather similar sequence, although in some areas an expansion stage can be established already during the Early Bronze Age (period 2/3), whilst the farming practice does not disappear at the transition to the Iron Age (Tolonen 1981 and 1982; Vuorela 1981 and 1982; discussion in Edgren 1984, Zvelebil and Rowley-Conway 1985). In northern Norway cattle husbandry defines the Early Neolithic, whereas agriculture did not appear until the Later Neolithic. Permanent pastures were established during the Bronze Age, especially during the Late Bronze Age (Vorren 1979; Vorren and Nilssen 1982). Similar sequences may also be found further to the south (Mikkelsen and Høeg 1979). Due to better climatic conditions (the Gulf Stream), the impact of farming was much stronger than in the Bothnian Sea area.

What we find, then, is a pattern of farming practice that followed the south Scandinavian cycles. Deviations appear especially in terms of the intensity of farming (the impact on the landscape was much less significant, settlement was less dense), agriculture did not play any significant role until later, and in periods of climatic deterioration farming retreated further south (Gräslund 1981: figure 2). Expansion stages, transforming the landscape into permanent pastures, took place in southern Scandinavia already during the Middle and Later Neolithic (in some areas from the Battle Axe culture, in others from the Dagger period (Berglund 1969; Andersen *et al.* 1984; Digerfeldt and Welinder 1985; Aaby 1985; Odgaard 1985). In central and northern Scandinavia this expansion did not take place until the Bronze Age, in some areas from the Early Bronze Age (e.g. Gotland; Carlsson 1982), in other areas from the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age (Engelmark 1982: figure 2; Welinder 1974 and 1982). The paleobotanical data of recent years thus confirm the implications of previous archaeological distribution maps as a reflection of farming (for Norway discussed by Sverre Johansen 1979 and 1982; northern Sweden in the series *Early Norrland* and Baudou 1982; Finland in Süriäinen 1982).

The distribution of bronzes clusters distinctively on what are still today regarded as the central agricultural areas. Outside these areas, in the mountainous tracts and along rivers, we only find a few scattered bronzes, but numerous finds of stone and flint tools (Johansen 1981 and 1983: maps 1 and 4). They belong to the same tradition as the central farming areas, indicating a common cultural tradition. The marginal settlements performed specialised seasonal hunting and fishing combined with some farming when possible (Hofseth 1980; Mikkelsen 1980; Odner 1969). The same is true of many coastal settlements along the Norwegian coast (Skjølsvold 1978; Magnus and Myhre 1976:155ff.). Further, it has been suggested that large-scale seal hunting in the Gulf of Bothnia was an essential economic background to the expansion of Bronze Age culture and society (Siiriäinen 1980).

In the interior of northern Scandinavia, autonomous fishers, hunters and gatherers still persisted, but were in regular contact with the farming and fishing population along the coast. The nature of this interaction is still a matter of debate (Selinge 1979:96ff. and chapter 6). The northern hunter-fishers



Map 10.3 Generalised map of Nordic Bronze Age culture with cairns (horizontally hatched)/barrows (cross-hatched) and the distribution of respectively Nordic and Arctic moulds and bronzes in northern Scandinavia. Major regions of rock carving defining centres of ritual superiority are encircled with a heavy line

Source: modified after Bakka 1976: plate 16; Hyenstrand 1984b: maps 18–19; *Norsk Historisk Atlas* 1980: maps 11–13; Oldeberg 1974:92–3; and Baudou 1960

belonged to the Russian Arctic Bronze Age tradition, in opposition to the coastal farmers (Bakka 1976: plate 16), and also distinguished themselves in stone technology (Baudou 1977) (Map 10.3).

On this basis, then, it can be stated that there exists no major dichotomy between southern, central and northern Scandinavia in terms of subsistence. Variations existed in terms of adaptation to regional and local variation in topography and climate. Fishing and some hunting was obviously part of the economy to the north, and a regular exchange between hunters and farmers took place in most of central and northern Scandinavia. However, both to the north and the south the Middle and Later Neolithic 'laid the groundwork for the introduction of bronze and provided the social environment in which it would gain symbolic value' (Broadbent 1983:20). And we might add the introduction of the ritual system and the symbolism of monumental burials.

Thus, we can now turn to a discussion of the significance of the evidence of cairns, rock carvings and bronzes as to the nature of the Bronze Age in northern Scandinavia. We are here basically dealing with ritual evidence and although many of the bronzes are tools used in subsistence, their deposition is often ritual. To understand their context some basic aspects of the meaning of ritual must be outlined.

Ritual, power and prestige

Ritual provides a powerful framework for the establishment and legitimation of rank and political power of an elite (for a discussion see Bloch 1977:329 f.; Goldmann 1970: chapter 23). By institutionalising certain practices and beliefs (songs, dances, myths, and so on), cyclical repetition takes the world out of history and out of time. What has become ritualised cannot be questioned; 'belief' does not exist in primitive social organisation. But, perhaps more importantly, ritual tends to be exclusive—it can only be performed by those that are, in some way or another, qualified. The nature of these qualifications represents the crucial point. In tribal social organisations they are often linked to social prerogatives—such as direct descent from mythical ancestors, or kinship relations with powerful 'chiefs' and gods from outside. When access to external exchange networks and mythical power is unified, a powerful combination of ritual, social and economic dominance is established (e.g. Helms 1979: chapters 4 and 6).

'Exchange is the code through which status information is communicated' states Goldmann (1970:496). This is true in two senses: firstly a monopoly of exchange rests on a monopoly of ritual/mythical information and social and ritual practices. Secondly, such information is always linked to the employment of specific social and ritual symbols. An axe is not just an axe, and a sword is not just a sword. The employment of the long sword in the Early Bronze Age was linked to the spread of a warrior ideology among tribal elites from the Mycenaean/Eurasian area. The war chariot and the stool also belonged to this complex. In the same way the employment of monumental burials not only

demanded knowledge of its ritual, but more significantly it demanded as well acceptance of the principle of demonstrating and distinguishing an elite in burials.

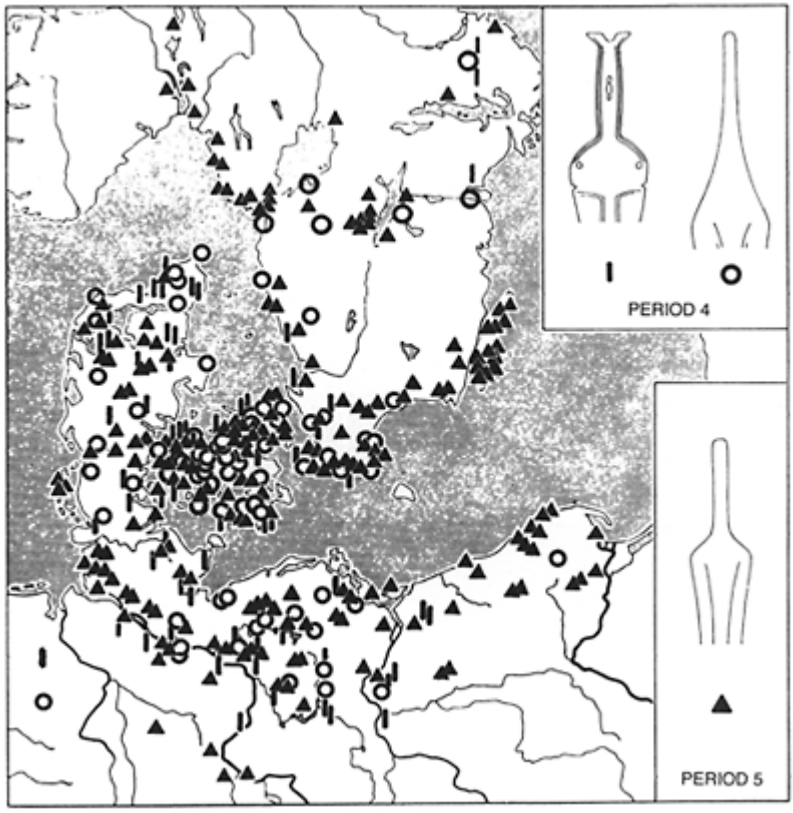
Material evidence is thus closely linked to a system of ritual and social practices. Some items, such as small axes, could perhaps more easily be adopted independently of such social and ritual practices due to their utilitarian functions. Barrows and cairns, however, are part of a complex ritual, just as is specialist ritual equipment like lurs and gold cups. In an intermediate position we find swords and ornaments, whose adoption is related to knowledge of their use and social value (Kristiansen 1982 and 1984; Levy 1982). It is the specific combination of these elements that defines various degrees of social and ritual complexity, both locally and regionally.

I thus propose that social organisation during the Bronze Age was based on a close relationship between prestige goods exchange and the ideology of (foreign) tribal elites. This was sustained by a complex ritual system to which the elite alone had access. The whole of Scandinavia was embraced by this process, but to varying degrees. Only in southern and part of central Scandinavia do we find all diagnostic material features of the fully developed system of tribal elite ideologies. This includes, besides monumental barrows, the regular employment of prestige goods, such as complex ornaments and weapons, in burials and other ritual depositions (Map 10.4), complex ritual gear (lurs, ritual axes, horsegear) (Map 10.5) and rock carvings with ritual scenes, demonstrating the employment of prestige goods and ritual gear (Map 10.3). In some of these areas such objects were only deposited occasionally, in contrast to Denmark/Skåne, where bronze was more abundant. A less developed social hierarchy, but still dominated by the ideology of (foreign) tribal elites, is found in marginal areas in central and northern Scandinavia. It is characterised by cairns, simpler rock carvings and a few bronzes.[2] In these areas simpler tools, such as the Late Bronze Age stone axes, often replaced bronze axes in ritual (Marstrander 1983). The spread of a prestige goods ideology that in a few generations became dominant throughout Scandinavia took place during the Early Bronze Age (period 1) and was firmly established from period 2 in northern Scandinavia following the dating of the cairns (Broadbent 1983: figure 2) and the rock carvings (Malmer 1981), beginning around 1500 BC.

Having discussed the economic and ideological setting, I shall finally try to outline the operation of the system in terms of the social organisation of production and exchange between centres and peripheries.

Centre and periphery

In what way is it possible to talk about centres and peripheries in a tribal context such as Bronze Age Scandinavia? To answer this we have to define their relationship. A basic criterion is their position within a larger regional



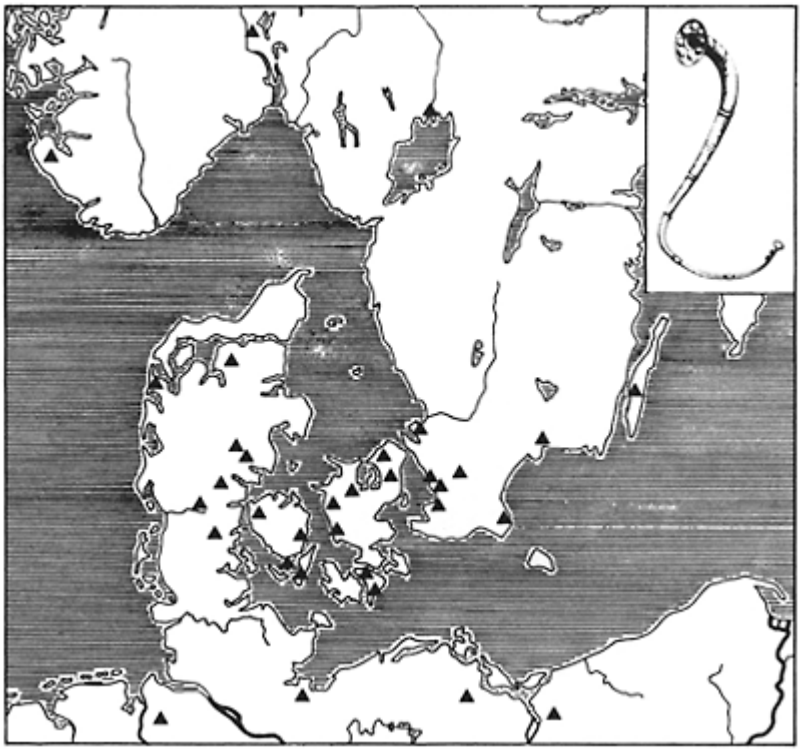
Map 10.4 Areas with chiefly elites in the Late Bronze Age, based on the deposition of swords

Source: after Struve 1979: plate 45, with additions

system and their degree of organisation, complexity and accumulation. Thus southern Scandinavia was directly dependent for its social reproduction on its participation in the larger European network of bronze exchange. It follows that northern Scandinavia should be defined as a periphery from the point of view of its relationship to southern Scandinavia. It may thus be defined otherwise in relation to a circumpolar system (Moberg 1970; Malmer 1975) that is not considered here, but which may have acted as a periphery to Eurasian Bronze Age societies. Scandinavia may thus exemplify a more universal relationship between tribal centres and peripheries in temperate regions.

However, it is necessary to define more precisely in what way and to what extent the various central and marginal areas were dependent on each other. Ekholm and Friedman (1985) have recently suggested a distinction between centres and peripheries defined by *dependent* and *independent* peripheries. Although they are discussing the relationship between highly developed state-like centres or empires and their peripheries, the

distinction may also be applied when discussing centres and peripheries within a tribal framework.



Map 10.5 The distribution of lurs during the Late Bronze Age, defining central areas of social and ritual superiority

Dependent structures 'are those that depend on the larger system for their reproduction but are neither centers dominating their own peripheries nor peripheries dependent on a center' (Ekholm and Friedman 1985:114). It would seem that this definition matches the situation in southern and central Scandinavia with respect to their position in relation to Europe as well as in relation to northern Scandinavia. *Independent structures:* 'These are structures whose operation is characterized by internal cycles of reproduction that are not connected to global cycles. However, such structures are clearly not independent with respect to their conditions of reproduction which depend on their location in the larger system' (Ekholm and Friedman 1985:114).

If we define internal cycles as an independent subsistence base, for example, fishing and hunting, then this definition may be applied to the hunter-fishers of northern Scandinavia who were probably also dependent to a certain degree upon exchange with

coastal fishers and primitive farmers. Defined more broadly, we may also include the whole northern region in its relation to central Scandinavia.

The above defines certain guidelines for classification and interpretation. However, the situation is even more complex when we also consider the local relationship between, for example, coastal farmers and inland hunters. I thus propose two types of centre/periphery relationships for Bronze Age Scandinavia:

1 One based on organisational complexity and dependency on a *regional* scale. Here I propose a distinction between southern, central and northern Scandinavia, reflecting a declining degree of complexity and dependency. The centre/periphery relationship is an indirect one based on the dynamics of regional cycles of production and alliances. The nature of these relations will be discussed later.
2 One based on direct centre/periphery relationship on a *local* scale, where a central area exploits its hinterland by ideological, political and/or economic means. Such centres or dominant chiefdoms did probably exist in southern Scandinavia both in the Early (Kivik/Skallerup) and Late Bronze Age (Lusehøj, Seddin). In northern Fenno-Scandinavia the relationship between coast and inland is different from that of central Scandinavia as the two groups do not conform to the same culture and subsistence. Thus the relationship was rather an indirect one of reciprocal exchange and ideological dominance.

In order to add some flesh and blood to these propositions we shall take a new look at the evidence in an attempt to delineate a processual and explanatory framework for the operation and structure of centre/periphery relationships throughout the Bronze Age. If we first consider regional dynamics, a broad correlation can be observed between agricultural expansion, the ritual deposition of metalwork and the position of rock carvings. During the Early Bronze Age the region around Ostergotland represents a rich and important centre of both rock carvings and metalwork, especially during period 2 (rock carvings and settlement: Norden 1925; Burenhult 1973:100ff.; metalwork: Oldeberg 1974–6; Jacob-Friesen 1967: maps 1–2; landscape and settlement: Carlsson 1982). From periods 2–3 south-west Norway is a central region, from where expansion took place (metalwork and settlement: Møllerop 1962; Myhre 1978: fig. 15; rock carvings Fett and Fett 1941; landscape and settlement: Simonsen 1975). These two Scandinavian regions were influenced respectively from eastern and western Denmark.

During the Late Bronze Age a new expansion in metalwork takes place. In Sweden the Mälar region is now the central region (metalwork: Baudou 1960; settlement and rock carvings: Kjellén and Hyenstrand 1977; landscape and settlement: Welinder 1974) and in Norway it is the Oslo fjord region and Bohuslän in Sweden (metalwork: Johansen 1981; rock carvings: Marstrander 1963 and Nordbladh 1980; landscape and settlement: Hafsten 1958, Furingsten 1984). Influences are now channelled from eastern Denmark and northern Germany. There is a correlation in all these regions between the flourishing of metalwork, farming and rock carvings. There is less abundance of metalwork outside the central regions, more local imitations and less complexity in ritual and rock carvings.

Throughout the Bronze Age there existed direct alliances between these Scandinavian centres and Denmark/Scania as reflected in metalwork. Chiefly alliances could take place over hundreds of kilometres, especially over the open sea, along coasts and by passing many local settlements. Thus, the maintenance of regional centres depended upon a

complex interplay between agricultural expansion (surplus production) and participation in alliance network with southern Scandinavia that gave access to exotic ritual information and prestige goods (Kristiansen 1978 and 1981; Welinder 1977).[3]

The maintenance of this inter-regional network, however, also depended upon the local organisation of centre/periphery relations. Regional centres were more successful than other areas in Scandinavia in dominating local alliance networks and directing the surplus to be employed in creating alliances with southern Scandinavia. Several recent studies have indicated such a local organisation of centre/periphery (C/P) relations. Thus, in terms of ritual complexity of rock carvings Gro Mandt has been able to demonstrate a local C/P structure in western Norway (Mandt 1972) and the same is true in other areas (Kjellén and Hyenstrand 1977:27 f. and 31ff.; Nordbladh 1980:44). In south-eastern Norway, Øystein Johansen has suggested a similar structure based on metalwork (1981), and the same is true of Denmark (recent works by Jensen 1981 and Thrane 1982). Also, in Mälar region, not only the Kung Bjørn Barrow (Almgren 1905) but recent settlement studies as well may be seen to point in the same direction (Jaanusson 1981; articles in Hyenstrand 1984a). Moreover, In Finland Unto Salo has made suggestions of a local small-scale hierarchy, as evidenced in 'The size and location of cairns' (Salo 1983; also Seger 1983).

Such local structures tended to favour coastal farming populations with access to both alliance networks and a richer productive potential. Thus I propose that C/P relations were an essential structural feature of Bronze Age society. They formed a hierarchy from local to regional and interregional C/P structures and tended to direct surplus towards local and regional centres of strong chiefdoms in a system of unbalanced exchange. However, between regional centres of chiefdoms more direct links of trade and alliances could often be established. And strong chiefs from regional centres might send out expeditions to establish new alliances or even found new settlements in more distant areas. If successful, they might lead to overall changes in alliances and regional centres (Kristiansen 1978 and 1981).

It can also be suggested that trade and exchange on a larger scale took place at ritually defined regional meeting places. Perhaps this might be suggested for southern Scandinavia by the systematic grouping of hundreds of cooking pits in some of the very large settlements or settlement agglomer-ations in central Scandinavia (Thrane 1974) and by some of the major concentrations of cairns of fire-cracked stones (Hyenstrand 1978) and perhaps also by some of the central places with hundreds of rock carvings, such as the much disputed Nämforsen in northern Scandinavia. A few isolated hoards with south Scandinavian bronzes in the marginal areas of Fenno-Scandinavia may testify to such long-distance trading expeditions from central Scandinavian settlements.

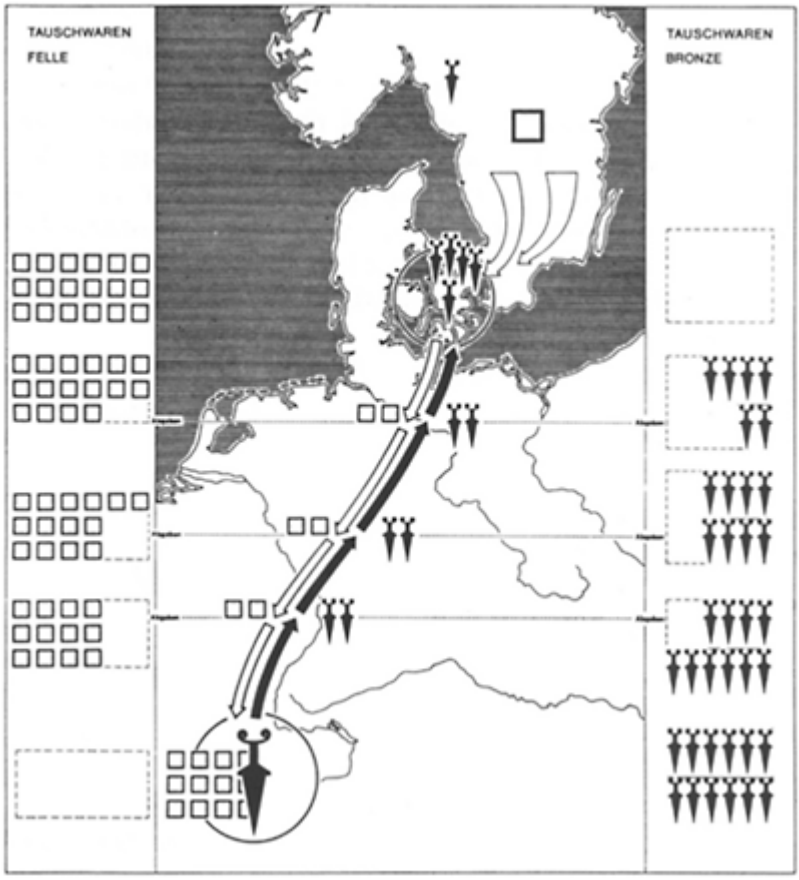
Thus C/P relations were an inherent feature of the operation of Bronze Age society at both local and regional levels. The ability to direct surplus towards both local and regional centres was due to their superior ritual position, as reflected in more elaborate metalwork of ritual gear and/or scenes in rock carvings. Local and regional peripheries were integrated into this ideological framework of ritual superiority, making possible their economic exploitation in a system of unbalanced exchange, whether as part of marriage alliances, gift exchange or trade. Such a structural hierarchy of shifting regional and local C/P relations also provides a framework for explaining stylistic variations in pottery and metalwork.

The impetus to extend a basically south Scandinavian ideology even to the most remote areas, however, was social and economic. The peripheral areas in Scandinavia must have had material advantages that made it possible and worthwhile to maintain alliances with the more southerly regions. Alliances and exchanges are dependent upon the capacity to produce a surplus to give feasts. Here southern Scandinavia had a strong potential, being one of the most productive regions in temperate Europe in terms of natural conditions of fertile soils and good fishing waters. Some of these products, such as dried fish or perhaps sheep and cattle, might have been part of the exchange with Central Europe. But the extraordinary wealth and richness of the south Scandinavian Bronze Age calls for something extra. Besides amber, this was most probably exclusive furs from northern Scandinavia and maybe other products such as seal oil and skins (Map 10.6), although the evidence is scarce.[4]

The diffusion of Scandinavian ritual and ideology northwards should thus be seen as a combined result of regular contact between local settlement units, in combination with more organised trading expeditions extending over long distances. Only in this way could the ideology of south Scandinavia have been accepted and integrated by all local settlements along the coastal areas. And its basis was a pre-existing Late Neolithic network; thus we do not have to think in terms of population movements on any larger scale. However, southern Scandinavia also received ritual influence from the north. As suggested by Mats Malmer, the south Scandinavian rock carvings were an indirect result of an ideological integration between northern and southern Scandinavia. In several localities a temporal overlap is demonstrated, as reflected in reciprocal stylistic influences (Fett and Fett 1941:137; Hagen 1969; *contra* Bakka 1973), perhaps most clearly at Nämforsen and Alta (Helskog 1985).[5]

This whole process represented the integration of the entire Scandinavian region into an international network of C/P relations that linked the Aegean/ Mediterranean region, Central Europe and Scandinavia to a common if transformed ideological framework. In this way it was able to transcend barriers of different subsistence strategies and differences in the level of social organisation. Instead such differences could be manipulated by ritual and ideological means.

With the decline of international exchange networks of prestige goods at the transition to the Iron Age, the whole system of centre/periphery relations



Map 10.6 Generalised map showing the changing rate of exchange between furs (to the left) and metal objects (to the right) from Scandinavia to Central Europe. Southern Scandinavia is considered to control exchange relations between northern central Scandinavia and Europe

Source: after Struve 1979: plate 72

collapsed. The various regions developed autonomous cultural and economic traditions. When we are again confronted with centre/periphery relations in the Iron Age, their foundation is not ritual superiority but commercial and military dominance.

Dedication

This chapter is dedicated to Professor Evert Baudou in Umeaa as a tribute to his wide-ranging contributions to Scandinavian Bronze Age research and to north Swedish archaeology, and to Professor Paul Simonsen in Tromsø for his contributions to the archaeology of northern Norway.

Notes

1 It should be noted that cairns were also built during the Iron Age. Some of the largest along the Norwegian coast have turned out to belong to the late Roman/Germanic Iron Age, which was also an expansion phase in Norway. (For cairns in general see Magnus and Myhre 1976; Meinander 1954; Baudou 1977; and Hyenstrand 1984b:54ff.), and discussion in Bertilssom 1981).

2 This is not the place to enter into a detailed discussion and definition of regional variations in terms of social and ritual complexity. First, they fluctuate throughout the Bronze Age (Kristiansen 1978 and 1981) and, second, it represents a major research project that is already being carried out by a number of people (Thomas Larsson, Hans Lundmark, Marie Louise Stig Sørensen) supplemented by several local studies (in Hyenstrand 1984a). Hyenstrand (1979 and 1984b) has provided some important general guidelines, just as the many earlier typological classifications of metalwork, such as Baudou (1960), provide a valuable empirical background. Larsson (1984) and Lundmark (1984) have provided an interesting methodological framework for analysing regional variation in organisational complexity, and have presented some interesting preliminary results.

3 The abundance of rock carvings of ships—often whole fleets—in the central region gives ritual testimony to the importance of successful trading expeditions by sea and along the long coastlines of Norway and Sweden (Malmer 1981:11ff.).

4 Neither archaeological nor literary evidence from the Mediterranean and the Near East indicates the employment of exotic furs during the Bronze Age. On the contrary furs were taken to characterise more barbarian countries. Hides, however, were widely employed and were imported, for example, from Nubia to the Aegean. Hides were also subject to tribute and taxation. Also in the well-preserved burials from the Early Bronze Age of Denmark (period 2, 1500–1200 BC), textiles are obviously a symbol of status, not furs. Cowhides were employed as shrouds, indicating the symbolic value of cattle. The caps in the male burials, on the other hand, imitate fur, being covered with a thick pile by oversewing (Broholm and Hald 1940). Just as amber is never found in south Scandinavian burials after the beginning of the Bronze Age, due to its high exchange value, the same could be true of furs. I want to thank Torben Holm-Rasmussen and John Lundd of the Antiquities Department of the National Museum in Copenhagen for having researched the ancient literature and reference works on the use of furs and hides.

5 The rich rock carvings from Alta in Arctic Norway have underlined the cultural interrelation between the Arctic, central and southern Scandinavia as reflected in ship design. Also this remote area, with rich hunting/fishing settlements, was influenced by the major social and ideological changes in the Bronze Age. Thus from 1700 BC to 500 BC boats are much more numerous than during the Neolithic, and they are no longer depicted in hunting and fishing scenes but are found alone in association with travelling, gods, spirits or people -reflecting the importance attached to the organisation of travelling and trading expeditions, and to the control over boats, fishing and trade (Helskog 1985).

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11
THE EMERGENCE OF THE EUROPEAN WORLD SYSTEM IN THE BRONZE AGE

Divergence, convergence and social evolution during the first and second millennia BC in Europe

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The world system concept

In the following an attempt is made to explore the significance of applying a world system concept to the Bronze Age. It will be argued that as a heuristic device it may help us to rethink the nature of international connections that characterised Bronze Age Europe and beyond. From approximately 2000 BC onwards, the expansion of international exchange accelerated the pace of change between regional cultural traditions, and—by the very nature of bronze technology—created a dependency in terms of supplies of metal and know-how between different regions that added a new dimension to change and tradition. A changed balance of international exchange relations might now affect local and regional polities hundreds or even thousands of kilometres apart. Although regional traditions were maintained, by recontextualising new information into their cultural idioms (for example, Nordic, Atlantic or Lausitz cultural traditions), they rested upon a common stock of metallurgical know-how and common traditions of social and religious value systems that accompanied the flow of bronze.

This interdependence is the background for applying the concept of a world system from the Bronze Age onwards (Kohl 1987). In the following I shall attempt to characterise the basic components and their internal dynamics in a long-term perspective. It rests upon the assumption that major historical changes and their accompanying social transformations were rooted in the long-term accumulation of unintended small-scale changes that gradually created a new platform for intentional reorganisation and innovation. When finally triggered, changes occurred very rapidly, often affecting larger regions (Kristiansen 1991). Major social transformations are thus characterised by a historical balance between regional long-term changes on a small scale and inter-regional short-terms changes on a larger scale (we could also characterise it as the balance between the slow filling of a glass of water and the final drop that that will make it run over and flood its surroundings). To achieve this it is necessary from time to time to take a historical overview, at the sacrifice of local and regional variations, in order to construct a general theoretical framework for understanding and explaining the historical dynamics of large-scale changes in time and space. The insights emerging from such a venture may subsequently help us to add new perspectives to local and regional sequences, and to understand better their specific historical and cultural peculiarities.

In the following I shall therefore take a closer look at the implications of a world system approach in helping us understand processes of convergence and divergence during the Bronze Age, and to explore more generally their archeological manifestations and possible historical causes. My aim is deliberately to break down the traditional barriers of academic specialization, as they have been defined by region and period, since history is not constrained by scholarly specialisation. On the contrary, it is exactly what happens between the boundaries of chronological and regional, or even national, periodisation that has to be explained.

Traditional and modernist constraints

The modernist constraints of traditional concepts such as 'Bronze Age' and 'Iron Age' and their Eurocentric implications of progress were elucidated by Rowlands in a recent paper (1984). This apparently reflected a general mood. During the last few years a number of younger scholars have made notable contributions towards breaking down the barriers of traditional specialist scholarship, and have taken a fresh, and theoretically informed, look at developments in Europe, or larger regions in Europe, from a long-term perspective. Although popular in scope, the works of Brun (1987), Collis (1986), Cunliffe (1988), Pauli (1980) and Wells (1980 and 1984) are attempting to relate archaeological cultures and material to principles of social organisation. Change is mostly ascribed to the balance of centre and periphery relations, between the advancing frontier of civilisation and its increasingly civilised hinterlands, interrupted by periodical setbacks. Despite cyclical growth and decline, higher stages are reached by each cycle. The basis for much of these new large-scale interpretations has been the working out of models of social organisation and change in concrete studies, for example in the work of Buck (1986), Bradley (1984), Champion (1982) and Champion (1985), Frankenstein and Rowlands (1978), Härke (1979 and 1982), Nash (1978 and 1985), Ostoja-Zagórski (1974 and 1983), Palavestra (1984), Pauli (1985) and Waldhauser (1979 and 1984). While these studies obviously owe much to the foundations laid by the systematic excavations and classifications of an earlier generation (earlier is not necessarily defined by age, and nor is new), these new types of studies represent a real breakthrough in the understanding and direction of European Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age research. However, in order to accelerate this change in direction, I suggest that we should now take a critical view of research over the past ten years, by putting it into a larger comparative framework of prehistoric change during the preceding millennium, and by comparison with other historical epochs elsewhere in the world. This is to raise some more fundamental questions about the nature of social evolution and the interaction between Europe, the Mediterranean and Asia. Does the transition from Bronze to Iron really represent something new, or does it reflect a more widespread cyclical pattern of devolutionary and evolutionary processes in the history of Europe and western Asia? What is specific for this region and epoch, and what is general and can be found elsewhere? To undertake such a venture one has to select concrete areas and parameters of controlled and contextualised comparison. Since the Late Hallstatt and Early La Tène periods are not only documented by archaeological sources, but also by written evidence, we do know how to interpret a number of archaeological manifestations of such fundamental

phenomena as migrations, defended sites, and so on. I shall therefore in this chapter give a brief outline of some developments during the first millennium BC as a point of departure for raising these more basic questions of interpretation and explanation.

Convergence and divergence during the Late Bronze Age (1000–750 BC)

As has been demonstrated by much recent research, the social landscape of Europe around 1000 BC was rather homogeneous. It was characterised by numerous overlapping exchange networks, linking most of Europe to common traditions in metalwork, and by dense popoulations and settlement clusters in an intensively exploited landscape, often of good lowland soils (Harding 1987; Wells 1989). This is evidenced first of all by increasingly dense settlement patterns and demographic growth, such as has been demonstrated in the Lausitz culture (Buck 1986; Gediga 1967: maps; Stepniak 1986), in northern Germany (Horst 1978: figure 6), in the Urnfield culture, for example, the Knoviz settlement (Bouzek *et al.* 1966), in the Lake Shore settlements in Switzerland (*Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt* 1981). In particular, Late Hallstatt B3, corresponding to (late) Montelius 5, was a period of remarkable settlement density. In many regions this demographic growth was accompanied by the (re-)establishment of fortified settlements, as evidenced from the west in England (Cunliffe 1982, summarised in Bradley 1984: figure 6.2), to the Lausitz and Urnfield cultures in Central and eastern Europe (Brun 1987:56 and 148; Furmánek and Horst 1982).

We are also beginning to get a clearer picture, at least in some regions, of subsistence and the exploitation of the landscape (Jockenhövel and Ostaja-Zagórski 1987; Jäger and Ložek 1987; Küster 1988:231–91). This new evidence suggests that an open, intensively exploited landscape, which was to continue into the Iron Age in many regions, emerged not later than 1000 BC. In the north this is well documented through numerous pollen analyses (Bradley 1978; Hedeager and Kristiansen 1987) and in Central Europe, especially in Czechoslovakia, pedological research has demonstrated the massive impact of Urnfield settlement on soil formation (Jäger and Ložek 1982). It reflected an intensification in agricultural techniques and practices, as demonstrated in the widespread production of sickles and tools, and in the employment of storage pits and granaries in settlements.

This general trend, however, also contains a number of diverging tendencies and discontinuities, both regional and temporal, at which we shall now take a closer look.

The East and the West

Bronze Finale II and III, as defined by Briard (1965), was a period of metal consumption (deposition) in the West, especially southern England, north-western France, and to some extent Portugal and Spain (Coffyn 1985; Coombs 1988), and metal alloying (Northover 1982). At the same time the classical south-west European Urnfield Culture, characterised by urnfields and modest metal consumption, expanded into France, creating two different cultural zones, as has been excellently demonstrated in a recent study by Brun (1988b). At their interface hoarding was especially prevalent (Brun 1988b: figures

3–4). If we combine the settlement evidence from England with the evidence of metalwork, what we see is a competitive system of metal consumption and exchange in a predominantly pastoral economy of diminishing economic returns, as has been demonstrated in the works of Bradley (1984), Rowlands (1980), Pearce (1983) and Champion's crisis model for Hallstatt B (Champion 1982). The economy was apparently based upon an integration of river valley farming settlements and upland settlements for grazing. Leather knives, reflecting the impact of the working of hides, are especially linked to this north-west European Late Bronze Age economy (Roth 1974).

The Atlantic socio-economic zone contrasted with the Urnfield culture, that was characterised rather by a heavier emphasis on agriculture, egalitarian village communities and little conspicuous consumption in burials. It should be stressed, however, that one strategy does not exclude the other. Transhumance and pastoral strategies are also to be found in various regions of Central and northern Europe, and became in some regions increasingly important during the final Bronze Age, reflected in the increase of sheep at many settlements and a concomitant decline of cattle (Hedeager and Kristiansen 1987:86), and in the seasonal employment of cave settlements. In more forested regions such as Poland or southern Germany, the pig was the important meat producer (Jockenhövel and Ostoja-Zagórski 1987:46ff). Above the traditional level of farming communities, we find in several regions a social hierarchy of ruling chiefs buried in rich wagon graves or burials set apart from the urnfields (Gomez 1984). This chiefly group is also characterised by the employment of various types of metal drinking service, of body armour, swords and helmets, either imported or locally imitated (e.g. Schauer 1975; Goetze 1984; Kytlicová 1988). It is thus a mistake when scholars dealing primarily with the Late Hallstatt and Early La Tène characterise the Late Urnfield culture as unstratified. It reflects the bias of comparison with the Late Hallstatt princely burials.

While metal consumption increased in the West, and in the final phase took on enormous proportions, suggesting over-production and the employment of axes as a currency (the Amorican axes), quite the opposite development characterised the eastern Urnfield zone. As has been demonstrated by Furmánek (1973), metal consumption declined drastically during Hallstatt B2–3 and never recovered. This development corrsponds to the expansion of use of iron tools and iron technology (Lazlo 1977; Pleiner 1980). At the same time the so-called Cimmerian bronzes appeared, reflecting the expansion of nomadic groups with a new ideology of ruling elites, characterised by horsemanship, wagons and barrows (Podborský 1970: chapter 5; Bouzek 1985: figures 2.21 and 2.23; Werner 1985), developing an east European cultural koine—the Thraco-Cimmerian culture (Bouzek 1983). It was accompanied by the introduction of larger horse breeds (through trade?), as reflected in larger bits, by new wagon technology, and probably also by new military tactics (Kossack 1988). While the Thraco-Cimmerian intrusion at first stopped at the river Tisza (Patek 1974), the whole technological and ideological complex of horsemanship and ruling elites spread all over Europe (Kossack 1980), including burials in 'kurgans'. In some regions we find the new horse and wagon equipment in burials, for example, in southern Germany, in other regions they occur separately (for example, phalerae or bits) only in hoards. That is the case both in the Nordic region and in western Europe (Jocken-hövel 1981). Because of these ritual differences in deposition, the full impact of the Thraco-Cimmerian influence has not been recognised.

Thus, at the transition to the Hallstatt culture, marked changes occurred in eastern and western Europe whose consequences were more clearly seen during Hallstatt C with the general change in style, technology and metalwork, influenced by the continued impact from the nomadic region, stretching from the Caucasus to Hungary and the eastern Balkans and trade between the Mediterranean/Italy and the eastern Hallstatt area (Gergová 1987: figure 5.1; Kromer 1986: figure 48; Bouzek 1985). In this way the new orientalising style spread both overland through eastern Europe and later through the Greek and Phoenician colonies in the Mediterranean (Kimmig 1983a; Kromer 1986).

It can hardly be doubted that the large-scale metal consumption and inflation in the West was somehow related to the decrease of metal production in the East, the development of iron technology, some expansion of nomadic groups, and more significantly, a new ideology of ruling elites (Taylor 1989). This also affected the structure of exchange. The old centres of bronze production and metal toreutics in the Carpathians ceased to supply the north, and moved west and southwards to the eastern Alps and northern Italy (Fekete 1983), where new links of exchange emerged, later supplying Venetians with horses from the nomadic rulers in Hungary (Bökonyi 1983; Harmatta 1968). Instead a new axis of exchange emerged (during Hallstatt B2–3), stretching from northern Italy over Switzerland to the Lower Elbe and further on to Scandinavia, northern Germany and Pomerania, but avoiding the Lausitz region (Thrane 1975: figures 30, 74, 103 and 130). At nodal points along this line rich princely burials point to the emergence of new centres, such as Seddin (Wüstermann 1974) on the Elbe and Lusehøj on Funen (Thrane 1984), that were linked to the control of exchange. Another competing line, which dominated rather during Hallstatt C and early D, stretched from the eastern Alps to norther Germany/Poland, reflected, for example, in the Billendorf culture (Buck 1986), and in the distribution of bronze situlae (Stjernquist 1967). Amber, lavishly employed in art work on both sides of the Adriatic moved in the opposite direction (Palavestra 1987 and 1994).

The Nordic region thus represented a zone of competitive metal consumption, mostly in hoards, in many ways similar to western Europe. Although at the end of international exchange networks, the north was rich in metal and in imported goods from Italy and Central Europe.

The Hallstatt culture—continuity or discontinuity? (750/700–450 BC)

Since the Hallstatt culture has been excellently summarised in several recent articles and collected works (Eibner and Eibner 1981; Brun 1987; Kimmig 1983a; Kromer 1986; Jeren 1986; Ulrix-Closset and Otte 1989), I shall proceed to discuss some general problems with only sporadic reference to the literature. The Hallstattt culture represented an amplification of processes begun during the preceding period at the elite level, while in metalwork it represented a break, from Scandinavia in the north to the Mediterranean in the south, although some regions maintained closer links with earlier traditions, for example, the eastern Hallstatt region (Kromer 1986). In pottery the geometrical style came to a climax. By now the new elite culture introduced in Hallstatt B3 had developed its own style mixing oriental and ThracoCimmerian traditions, and it flourished over most of Europe, although with a clear focus in the old Urnfield region of Central Europe.

Elite burials in barrows with wagons and weapons become dominant, just as new central hillforts are founded in many regions, later evolving into the royal defended sites of Hallstatt D, in the West, however, often in new locations (Härke 1989; Pautreau 1989). This is a major reason for seeing Hallstatt C as representing discontinuity, not only in cultural but also in social and economic terms (Demoule 1989:165ff.), reflecting the rise of a new, more decentralised warrior elite (in that respect it is worth remembering that the Hallstatt thrusting sword, more than other types, is the sword of a mounted warrior, or a chariot fighter, although such sword types had been employed since the earlier Urnfield period, for example, the Hemigkofen type). There is a marked tendency in many regions towards upland settlement, suggesting animal husbandry was an important factor, just as salt production took on new dimensions. It further coincides with a climatic trend towards a cooler and wetter climate, favouring grazing. Timothy Taylor has recently suggested that this re-orientation in settlement and economy should also be linked to the dominance of iron extraction and production in new upland locations, where wood was available (Taylor 1989). In Hallstatt D lowland settlements were re-established and once again became dominant. Intensive micro-regional surveys and excavations on the loess in the Rhine area, however, have demonstrated overall settlement continuity from Late Urnfield down through La Tène (Simons 1989: figures 58–60; also Demoule and Ilett 1985). It suggests that the re-orientation of settlement is mainly linked to the larger defended sites. However, there is much to suggest that Hallstatt C in some areas in the West represented a break in continuity, a result of the further expansion from the eastern Hallstatt region of the new social, economic and technological practices.

Beginning in east Central Europe during Hallstatt B3/C and moving westwards, the processes of centralisation, control of production and trade at nodal points accelerated during the Hallstatt period, to climax during Hallstatt D between 600 and 450 BC (Brun 1987:186). Although much of this development was linked to the intensification and commercialisation of trade with Greek colonies and the Etruscans, its foundations are also to be sought in local conditions in Europe. That included the merging of new elite culture, military tactics, iron technology and, not to be forgotten, improvements in both agriculture and other spheres of production. In that respect Europe and the Mediterranean underwent a rather similar development.

Compared to the preceding period there are remarkable changes, however, not only in the scale of centralisation and specialisation, but also in the clustering of wealth and selected prestige goods in the central zone of princely burials and settlements. If we look at the distribution maps in, for instance, Kimmig's work (1983a), it is clear that Central Europe has set itself apart, and is now able to monopolise wealth, beginning already in Hallstatt C. Only the Hallstatt sword of bronze was distributed more widely, whereas the iron sword still remained within the central region, as well as iron ingots (Bukowski 1986: figure 3). But have we been blinded by this accumulation of mainly imported wealth in Central Europe, thereby wrongly inferring a higher level of political centralisation and control than in other areas in Europe? If we consider the Lausitz culture, for example, the Billendorf culture, we find in principle the same type of chiefly barrows, but with less wealth than in the centres, just as fortified settlements point to centralised political control (Buck 1986). Also in the West, in England, we find elaborate systems of hill-forts, that have been interpreted as evidence for the emergence of new hierarchies and control of land and production (Cunliffe 1982 and 1986). In a series of

stimulating articles, the nature and the degree of centralisation has been critically discussed (e.g. Haselgrove 1986; Hill in press). Others, like Collis and Bradley, would rather see the hill-forts as reflecting fragmentation and endemic warfare due to overpopulation, diminishing returns and perhaps declining supplies of metal and trade. But as fragmentation presupposes some measure of previous centralisation, we should probably see these processes as interlinked.

Since the Central European political system of princely graves did not supply western and northern Europe with luxury articles, as they used to, but rather with traditional bronze products, and some iron ingots (Bukowski 1986), and since these supplies were seen to decline drastically during Hallstatt D, leading to collapse and reorganisation in several regions, it seems reasonable to infer that Central Europe was able to monopolise trade with the Mediterranean to such a degree that the West and the north gradually became of less interest. It could also, however, be a result of internal problems and lack of surplus production in these regions. That remains an open question to which we shall return.

What level of social organisation did the princely burials represent? Here several interpretations are at hand. Some researchers, like Härke (1979 and 1982) and Champion (1982), consider the regular spacing in territories of equal size, 40 kilometres in diameter, as an indication of autonomous chiefdoms of the complex type, as defined by Earle (1978) and Steponaitis (1978), characterised by settlement hierarchy and vassal chiefs encircling the centre as satellites (Kromer 1986:60 and 61; Brun 1988a: fig 5.7). Such chiefdoms probably competed with each other, through warfare and conquest, alternating with confederations. This could in fact account for some of the abandonments. Others, like Frankenstein and Rowlands (1978), in their case study of the western Hallstatt/Early La Tène, suggest a more complex structure of political control over larger regions of vassal chiefs (of up to five levels), based on control of trade and local distributing of prestige goods (for a comparative case study, see Hedeager 1978). An early centre was on the Heuneburg, later moving to Hohenasperg, defining areas of dependent vassals up to 100 kilometres away. It is supported by an analysis of similarities in grave goods. Similar uniformities are demonstrated by Palavesta for Jugoslavia (1984). This interpretation further presupposes a centralised and formalised trade southwards through one or a few gateways (princely centres). Given the nature of Greek and Etruscan trade, that is perhaps not an unreasonable suggestion (Kimmig 1983a). Also the observation, made by Härke, that the northern fringe of the west Hallstatt princely settlement was dominated by large enclosures, pasture and cattle husbandry with no chiefly centres may suggest some degree of regional economic specialisation and exploitation from the centres.

No matter how big or small the polities were, the Hallstatt princely structure demanded the control of resources, in terms of manpower, warriors, specialists, industrial products and food, far beyond what a single centre could obtain by its own means. This would, rather, place the Hallstatt structure at the level of archaic state formation or transition to statehood, characterised by the development of an independent elite exploiting/taxing and controlling a peasant population and industrial production, representing an initial development of social and economic classes. Regions further apart were exploited either through political alliances and tribute, or through raids and plunder. The clan mounds of the eastern Hallstatt region and the Magdalenenberg would suggest endogamous royal clans, probably of conical clan type, or alternatively, as proposed by

Kimmig, clients. Also the nature of ritual could be taken to support a kind of divine kingship, like some African kingdoms, or Hawaii (Mair 1977; Spriggs 1988). The royal courts or capitals, such as the Heuneburg correspond very well to this (Kimmig 1983b).

A retinue of warriors must have been attached to the elite to secure control, and this is also testified in burials. It is the latter phenomenon that has led some to interpret the Hallstatt elite as a 'militärische Demokratie' (Dušek 1973), a suggestion I consider to be somewhat misleading. According to the above we should rather characterise the Hallstatt phenomenon as a centralised archaic state or complex chiefdom (Kristiansen 1991). Much in the material culture supports such a more far-ranging interpretation, such as the spatial exclusion and differences in material culture, in settlements and in burials between different social groups, forming a centralised hierarchy.

The impact of Greek and Etruscan trade and lifestyle on the development of royal courts in Central Europe is both well known and generally accepted. The apparent correlation between competitive changes in Greek, Phoenician and Etruscan trade routes with the geographical movement and collapse of princely centres has been seen as a confirmation of the dependence on long-distance trade and the supply of prestige goods (Pauli 1986: maps). Others, like Bintliff (1984b), have disputed this dependence, and would see internal processes as more significant. The princely wealth is, rather, considered an abnormal addition on top of an otherwise quite normal and recurrent development in European prehistory of complex settlement patterns and central places, linked to internal developments of agriculture and demography. What he forgets, however, is that nearly all such 'normal' cases can be correlated with control of either mineral resources, specialist production and/or long-distance trade.

This question is ultimately linked to the problem of explaining the collapse of the Hallstatt centres, the development and take-over of Celtic princely centres (the Hunsrück-Eifel culture) and the subsequent Celtic migrations and settlement.

La Tène—continuity and change (450 BC-0)

In the following I shall restrict myself to discussing only a few themes concerning the nature of Celtic expansion and social organisation, based mostly upon the collective works and synthesising books of recent years (e.g. Pauli 1980; Champion and Megaw 1985; Spindler 1983; Bittel, Kimmig and Schiek 1981; Audouze and Buchsenschutz 1989; Kruta, *Les Princes Celtes et la Mediterranée* 1988). But let us begin with the prelude to Celtic expansion—the decline of royal Hallstatt centres of the sixth and early fifth centuries BC.

The decline of the royal Hallstatt centres and the subsequent development and expansion of La Tène culture represent a structural transformation of social, political and economic relations. The development of La Tène art is a self-conscious reflection of this rise of new centres to dominance, taking place in a well defined geographical and social context of a new elite culture which assimilated oriental/nomadic animal motifs and Greek/Etruscan art (plant motifs) and turned them into a new artistic idiom (Frey 1980; Megaw and Megaw 1989; Megaw 1985; Kruta 1988). From this it also follows that I do not consider it justified to derive either Celtic culture or language from the larger Central European Urnfield and Hallstatt tradition (also Pauli 1980a). Any such identifications

should be restricted to the western groups, which rather points towards western Europe and the Atlantic region as the original homeland of Celtic languages.

Several hypotheses have been put forward to explain the collapse of Hallstatt royal courts, and they can be summarised under either internal or external forces as the prime mover. Pauli (1984 and 1985) has presented the best argued case for internal contradictions leding to social revolt against an elite that over-exploited both social and economic resources. The plundering of the princely barrows, probably rather shortly after their construction (only in the Magdalenenberg can this be dated by dendrochnology to 504 BC—50 years after the construction, which also led to abandonment of the royal court) could be taken to support such a proposition). According to this one might, as suggested by Bintliff, see the collapse of external trade relations as a consequence of internal disruption, rather than as a cause. As we have already noticed, there had been a build-up of population and increased exploitation of the environment since the Urnfield period, so it could well be argued that both the ecological and the social carrying capacity had long been transcended.

In the prestige goods model of Frankenstein and Rowlands, external factors of change or decline in trade relations are seen as being potentially disruptive to the reproduction of the royal elites and their vassals, since their ability to maintain political and military alliances were eroded. Consequently control could not be maintained, the system could not reproduce itself, and revolts from former vassals and destructive warfare between centres to maintain monopolies would lead to collapse, or to the formation of new centres and incorporation of the former as a vassal. Daphne Nash has developed a model for the transformation that takes into account the need for warriors and their incorporation in centre/periphery relations (Nash 1985). She proposes that the royal centres were able to expand their influence by creating a dynamic periphery of more distant warrior societies that raided their hinterlands to supply slaves to the centres for further sale to Italy and Greece. They also served as mercenaries at the royal estates, and perhaps also in the Mediterranean. In this way the royal centres were able to expand by exporting internal conflicts to the periphery, maintaining peaceful conditions at home. When this was temporarily blocked, according to Nash because of a change in trade routes, Massilia had acted as a port of trade during most of the sixth century (Nash 1985: figure 3.1), the warrior peripheries took over control of trade, now with the Etruscans (Nash 1985: figure 3.2). In that process they destroyed and subsequently came to control the former Hallstatt centres (summarised in Cunliffe 1987: figure 15). (It should be noted that the region where the La Tène A chiefly warriors emerged had old traditions of warrior graves/hoards, going back to the Urnfield period, when they also controlled trade and alliances with southern England/the River Thames, from where the Hallstatt sword eventually originated. The whole structure may, then, have older roots (see maps of Late Urnfield and Hallstatt C swords by Cowen 1955; Schauer 1971).)

With a further decline in trade, the same policy of exporting internal conflicts out of the centres was turned first against Italy, and later to other regions in Europe in the form of migrations. In that process Celtic warriors also served as mercenaries during the turbulent Hellenistic period, which tended to reproduce an unstable situation of feuding warrior aristocracies at home also. As has been pointed out by both Nash and Pauli, however, the shift of dominance from centre to periphery in the Hallstatt culture and the first migrations into northern Italy were a complex process with some temporal overlap.

Pauli especially has stressed that groups of 'Celts' moved into northern Italy during the fifth century (Pauli 1986), thereby paving the road for later migrations (including the sack of Rome in 387/386 BC), which represented the culmination of a process of intensified social and economic interaction.

There remains the question of how we are to understand the Celtic migrations and the subsequent formation of *oppida* from the later second century BC onwards (Duval and Kruta 1979; Collis 1984b). It seems to me that the apparent egalitarian nature of Middle La Tène society stands in too sharp contrast to the rather sudden rise of the *oppida* and the highly stratified archaic states of the Late La Tène, as presented to us through classical sources (e.g. Crumley 1974). This of course depends on the interpretation of the latter phenomenon, where I rely on the studies of John Collis (1984b) and Daphne Nash (1976; 1978; also Bintliff 1984b: note 67). However, if one accepts that *oppida* and state formation were linked to the expansion or influence of the Romans (Frey 1984), and the subsequent lack of opportunities for Celtic mercenaries abroad, it is possible to assume a rapid development in social and political organisation. But even then, some of the building blocks must have been in place already. We should therefore once again focus attention upon the nature of Middle La Tène social organisation.

Perhaps the function and maintenance of La Tène culture can offer a point of departure for discussing the nature of Early and Middle La Tène society. Although La Tène art and culture originated as a response to a new Early La Tène elite, it came to characterise the following centuries. This phenomenon raises a number of questions concerning the use of material culture in social strategies and its transformation from elite culture to perhaps a wider ethnic identification (articles in Duval and Kruta 1979). La Tène Culture is in that respect probably one of the best documented instances of the formation and expansion of a new cultural style, and for that reason its interpretation is of more general interest. The similarities in material culture over long distances are, as often noted, remarkable, although in part to be explained by the widespread migrations (e.g. Kruta 1979). But we also have to think in terms of intensive social and economic interaction, including a decentralisation of specialist production, as demonstrated by Sara Champion (1985). Thus, in a period of marked decline of external trade and exchange, the internal lines of communication and exchange were apparently intensified and expanded geographically. But how did that come about, if society was organised at a rather low level of small political entities?

Let me attempt an explanation: the migrations were initially a well organised strategy to deal with increasing internal demographic problems and problems of political competition among elites (see the classical descriptions of Livy and Pompeius Trogus referred to by Pauli 1980:32–3 and 1985:23ff., that the old kind of the Bituriges, Ambigatus, sent out two young princes, Bellovesus and Segovesus, his sister's sons, with a large following to occupy new land). Following the successful start of the migrations, they became widespread; a new pioneer spirit and ideology of moving to new lands became dominant, and La Tène culture came to symbolise it. Such periodic waves of adventurous journeys and migrations are well known from the Germanic and Viking periods up to the discovery and the migrations to America and they were all linked to demographic pressure and internal contradictions that were transformed into expansion and thereby exported, often following upon a longer period of trade and political contact. Thus, although society in the Middle La Tène may seen egalitarian, this was only partly

so, due to the selective pressures of migration and colonisation. There were war leaders and retinues of young warriors, just as there were farmers and craft specialists, as also suggested by Nash (1982) and S.Champion (1985) and demonstrated by Bujna (1982). Indeed, the term 'militärische Demokratie' can be applied here. Farmers supplied young warriors to the chiefly retinues, as reflected in the cemeteries, and for several generations the prospects of a military career for young peasants became a dominant feature of social organisation. The ideology was that of egalitarian, military expansion demanding a high degree of solidarity between social groups and co-operation, most distinctively reflected in burial rites. Social hierarchy was for some generations concealed, and in reality also softened and opened up to young socially upwardly mobile Celtic warriors during the expansion phase.

In most of Europe, the Middle to Late La Tène saw significant developments in agricultural and industrial production that created a new basis for the rural economy and for surplus production, another prerequisite for 'urbanisation' and state formation. Here Waldhauser's studies since the mid-1970s of micro-regions have produced remarkable new insights into the processes of social and economic life, demonstrating a diverse and well organised local production and distribution of basic raw materials (Waldhauser 1984)). He has also demonstrated the social diversification of Celtic society, from warrior elites to consolidation and industrialisation with stable political and religious leadership (Waldhauser 1979:150ff.).

Thus, Celtic society maintained the basic components of a stratified society at the transition to state formation, it did not revert to a more tribal or chiefdom level of social organisation. Due to the dominant ideology of migration and warfare, and the rise of the local farming communities to social and economic importance, this was to some degree concealed in burial rituals. To be very bold, could the migrations have originated out of a failed attempt of archaic empire formation or take-over? And could they have led to the periodical formation of large-scale political control in some regions, as is suggested in some classical sources (for example, Livy's account of the Bituriges as the leading Celtic people controlling one third of Gallia, and providing the king for all Celts)? These are perhaps unanswerable questions, but consider that the Vikings were able to maintain political control over vast regions for shorter periods, including England. And yet, we find no developed towns, but royal princely burials of the Hallstatt type, a few centres of trade and manufacture, primitive coinage and some proto-urbanisation of Late La Tène type, although not as large. Also other traits show striking similarities between Celts and Vikings, especially heroic ideology and bards, dramatic behaviour in warfare, and a dramatic art style. In these respects we can also draw close parallels to pastoral societies. We are apparently dealing with social and cultural regularities to which I return in the final section.

After these questions let us take a look at the rest of Europe, especially the north, to see if developments here were following similar lines as in Central Europe, and how they were affected by these external changes. This may perhaps throw some more light on the Central European region (also Jensen 1994).

The north and the south: internal crises or world system crisis?

Traditionally the changes and social transformations in Europe are seen as responding to changes in the centres of civilisation. In periods of crisis and decline the barbarians may try to take over the centre, sometimes leading to dark ages. But inevitably the civilization process proceeds and presses forward the borders of state formation and dependent peripheries. This scenario has very elegantly been outlined by Brun in his recent works (1987 and 1994), and it does describe some important aspects of real macro-historical processes. But how are we to locate cause and effect in this interaction between centres and peripheries? We should be aware that the regional systems in Europe also developed according to internal conditions, thereby maintaining a degree of relative autonomy. This could be decisive both for when they were ready to enter into larger international networks, and also for when they retreated from such networks. We need not automatically assume a priority of the politics of the centre. In that respect it is indeed remarkable that major social transformations took place not only in the Central European royal sites, but also in large areas of northern Europe, and in the Mediterranean as well.

In most of northern Europe a marked decline in international trade and exchange, as reflected in declining supplies of metal and other goods, can be observed between 600–450 BC, that is during Hallstatt D, in some regions earlier, in some later. This has often been seen as a result of the monopolisation of international trade by the Hallstatt kingdoms, but intensive research over the last 10–15 years has revealed another picture, or another aspect of it. For the Billendorf culture in eastern Germany a steep decline in late Hallstatt D in both cemeteries and settlements has been linked to an ecological/demographic crisis that was exacerbated by a climatic recesssion. Demographic pressure and over-exploitation of the rather sandy soils led to the formation of sand dunes and destruction of fields (Buck 1986: figure 20). In Poland the studies of Ostaja-Zagórski (1974, 1983) have provided even more evidence for such a demographic-ecological crisis, leading to the formation of rigorously organised village communities of the Biskupin type that finally collapsed and were replaced by small scattered hamlets, and perhaps some migrations. Also in Denmark, paleo-economic evidence points to a degraded environment during the final phase of the Bronze Age, which resulted in a reorganisation of both settlements and agriculture in order to restore productivity. Family farms with stalled cattle became the basic social unit, producing manure for the permanently enclosed fields (Kristiansen 1980; Sørensen 1989; Jensen 1994). From La Tène A onwards a new egalitarian ideology, as reflected in village cemeteries with only few grave goods, reflected the new social conditions, just as many bog bodies, sacrified or executed, testify to social conflicts. In many ways this new social organisation was an inversion of the elite culture of Bronze Age society.

In England research and excavation programmes of hill-forts have testified similar processes. Around Danebury (Cunliffe 1986), many of the open setttle-ments were abandoned and more people moved into the hill-fort, whose defences were strengthened. This seems to be a general trend.

What we see over large areas in northern Europe, then, is densely populated settlement areas, deteriorating environments and increasing social conflict. This led to social

reorganisation of a more collective type. In the Lausitz culture and in England, populations agglomerated within highly organised defended sites, while open settlements were more or less abandoned. In some areas this organisation broke down and settlement dispersed, or migrated to new regions. This development of tightly packed defended sites corresponds well to Collis's model for various types of settlement development and defence (Collis 1982: figures 9.2 and 9.3). It represents a political fragmentation in situations of blocked expansion, over-population, degradation of land and endemic warfare. It contrasts with central settlements, eventually fortified, for specialist production, redistribution and trade, surrounded by open agricultural sites. Such a pattern reflects the ability of a political elite to secure peaceful conditions over larger areas, whereas large agricultural populations in defended sites reflect fragmentation, warfare and devolution. Many examples of this latter development can be given, from eastern Asia (Friedman 1979:220ff.) to ancient Peru (Earle 1987). Thus, there is no need to ascribe the fortification to the Scythian attacks alone, since fortification is a general phenomenon over larger regions.

The evidence from northern Europe thus suggests that internal conditions had reached a critical level. In such a situation a change in climate or the decline of prestige goods, needed for the social reproduction of the elite, could be the triggering factor releasing internal contradictions and resulting in reorganisation. But how did these changes relate to changes in Central Europe and the Mediterranean? Were they somehow connected? This is, in the last instance, dependent upon our chronologies, where I do not feel able to decide (at least not at the present moment) if there is a significant time gap or not between these regional changes. Most probably they started in the north at the beginning of Hallstatt D, and continued in Central Europe one or two generations later. Despite this, there are many similarities in the process.

It is noteworthy that in all regions there is a marked change in social organisation and ideology, from elites towards the community, from hierarchy towards equality. It is also noteworthy that similar trends could be observed in the Mediterranean, the fall of tyranny and the emergence of democracy in Greece around 510, and the spread of new populist religions. In Italy we witness the replacement of monarchic rule by oligarchic 'republican' regimes. But also political and economic events of far-ranging significance took place around 500 BC. Greek colonisation came to a halt, and was followed by the Persian wars, introducing a more unstable period. And from the East the Scythians raided into eastern Europe, and probably sent shockwaves much further inland, and also influenced La Tène culture, although this is debated (Sulimirski 1961; Dušek 1964; Bukowski 1974).

The expansion of nomadic groups was a recurrent phenomenon in the prehistory of Europe, whose eastern regions always had been interacting with pastoral groups and vice versa and borrowed from each other. Pastoralists need some agricultural produce, normally obtainable through peaceful exchange and trade relations. In periods of crisis, either in the agricultural communities or among the nomads, they might quickly expand deeply into Europe, sometimes leaving few traces, sometimes influencing large areas, depending upon the nature of their expansion and political domination. It could either be in the form of conquest and tribute paying, or/and in the form of more permanent migrations, since European agrarian communities were in most periods not able to stand up to the military superiority of pastoralist warfare. It should also be remembered that

archaic nomad states had been in existence at least since 1000 BC east of the Carpathians (Krader 1979; Chazanow 1978; Sulimirski 1970), probably much earlier, and were therefore capable of co-ordinated actions on a quite large scale. Since the nomads of Asia/eastern Europe were bordering strong states to the south and unfriendly environments to the north, eastern Europe offered a convenient outlet in periods of crisis and expansion. The pastoral nomads were therefore structurally and historically an integrated part of European history since the third millennium, a northern bridge to the civilisations of western Asia, transmitting new influences and developments in warfare.

So the question must finally be raised—Were all these regional trends and dramatic historical events somehow interlinked? Were Europe, Asia and the Mediterranean so interdependent that major changes in one region would lead to predictable changes in the other regions, forming a kind of interrelated world system? At the level of macro-history the answer is apparently in the affirmative, although much needs to be discussed and analysed further before the processes can be explained. But it should be noted that by the re-opening of international trade and the formation of *oppida* culture in Late La Tène, the rest of Europe was immediately drawn into these processes.

The European world system of the first and second millennia BC—a comparison

To increase our understanding of long-term historical processes and their archaeological representation, I use changes during the first millennium BC as a starting-point for comparison with the preceding millennium, since I believe there are striking similarities both in terms of historical processes and in terms of regional interaction, forming larger ‘world systems’, comparable to the first millennium. But there are also differences, which may help to explain why the first millennium in the end came to represent an evolutionary breakthrough, culminating in the Roman empire.

The organisational framework of Early Bronze Age society was the pastoral farmers of the Corded Ware culture, followed by the copper-producing Bell Beaker cultures. A rather decentralised and homogeneous social landscape characterised most of Europe at the advent of the full Bronze Age, with a uniform material culture, constituted by numerous overlapping exchange networks (Kaliscz and Kaliscz-Schreiber 1981; Gilman 1981; Shennan 1986). With the advent of bronze at the beginning of the second millennium BC by the alloying of tin and copper, bronze-producing communities of some complexity soon emerged in the ore-bearing regions in Central Europe (generally Coles and Harding 1979). In the initial phase both north Caucasian/Anatolian and east Mediterranean influences were at work, probably transmitting some of the new technology (Bouzek 1985a; *Slovenská Achéologia* 1981), which was reflected in the early Unětice culture (Nitra) in east Central Europe. Other chiefly centres were located in western Europe, where also Mediterranean/Mycenaean influences played a role in the formation of the classical Wessex culture and related cultures in western Europe (Schauer 1984), although the nature of this is disputed (Harding 1984). From 1900 to 1600/1500, however, a major centre of bronze production and distribution rose to dominance in the Carpathians, extending into Moravia and Bohemia. In Romania it is termed the Otomani culture, a term I shall emply, although other names are used by Hungarian and

Czechoslovakian scholars in their regions (e.g. Mad'arovce). From this culture bronze tools and ingots were distributed to large areas in Europe, and northwards even to Scandinavia (Kristiansen 1987a: figure 4.4).

In opposition to the earliest Bronze Age chiefdoms, the Otomani culture developed a complex social organisation characterised by a structured settlement hierarchy around fortified settlements of urban character. One of them, Spišský Štvrtok, was burned down and 'sealed'. The excavation revealed several bronze hoards and other signs of centralised bronze production and trade, just as gold hoards appeared in a central chiefly building (acropolis). Finds of amber, working of bone, and antlers, testified to the highly centralised control of both production and long-distance trade. The works of Vladár (1973 and 1977a and b), Ordentlich (1969 and 1970) and others, have demonstrated the role of the Otomani culture as a centre of metal production and trade, linking and transforming influences from the Aegean world to larger parts of Europe (also *Jahresbericht Frankfurt* 1977; Hänsel 1982; Schauer 1985; Sherratt 1987). It has been suggested that the Mycenaeans received their gold from this region, and many finds of Mycenaean origin or influence bear witness to these connections (Bouzek 1966; Vladár 1973; Davis 1985; *Symposia Thracia* 1982). Also the rise of fortified settlements of 'urban' character, with unique architectural features, such as stone walling and a central acropolis, has been seen as reflecting civilisational influences from the Aegean.

There are thus striking similarities between the Otomani culture and the Late Hallstatt culture (D) in Central Europe, both in terms of their organisational complexity (the rise of commerical centres or royal residences), and their central role in a larger system of trade. This is supported by a comparison carried out by Bintliff (1984a: figure 1 and 1984b: figure 4) of the territorial structure of fortified centres of production in the Otomani and Late Hallstatt cultures, which revealed territories of nearly identical diameters of about 40 kilometres around each centre. Also in both regions there developed a new material culture, that was transmitted to larger regions. In opposition to the Hallstatt culture, the Otomani culture did not employ princely burials, wealth was rather consumed in hoards. Burial traditions were communal, which became decisive for later developments in the Urnfield culture.

As in the Hallstatt culture, a zone of warrior societies developed at the north-western periphery of the late Otomani culture, normally termed the Tumulus culture (Holste 1953; Kovács 1981; Ošdáni 1986; Furmánek and Horst 1990; *Dynamique du Bronze Moyen en Europe occidentale* 1989). After a period of close interrelations during the sixteenth century this culture expanded rapidly from 1500 onwards, leading to the decline of the Otomani culture, in some regions apparently rather violently. The Tumulus culture was characterised by barrows of chiefly elites. Burials were dominated by weapons, long swords and axes. The economy was mainly pastoral, in opposition to the Otomani, originating in the old traditions of the Corded Ware cultures. This change in subsistence strategy was favoured by a cooler and more humid climate, whereas the preceding period had been warmer and drier (Bouzek 1982). The warrior elites probably exploited their local farming hinterlands, while controlling pastures, herds and exchange in metalwork, for which purposes they also constructed fortified settlements on a smaller scale. They applied new chiefly regalia, such as stools, war chariots, razors and tweezers, originating in Asia Minor and the Mediterranean. The new ideology of warrior elites spread rapidly to larger regions in Europe, including Scandinavia (Schauer 1985; Kristiansen 1987a). At

the same time trade with the Mediterranean for a period shifted away from the Black Sea and the Danube towards the western Mediterranean, Italy and the Rhône valley, from where links were established with the Tumulus culture, for example, Hagenau and south-west Germany (Harding 1984: chapter 4; Sestieri 1988): all in all, a situation comparable to the Late Hallstatt/Early La Tène shift.

Culmination and change came around 1200 BC, or shortly before, with the emergence of princely barrows in Central Europe (Točik and Paulík 1960; Paulík 1962), reflecting close connection to the eastern Danube/Aegean, and the appearance of scattered traits of Central European weaponry and material culture in the Aegean (Bouzek 1985a and 1985b). Metal toreutic, inspired from the Aegean, started to flourish in the Carpathians, supplying the European 'market'. Since the Mediterranean and Near Eastern regional systems collapsed shortly after (*Jahresbericht Frankfurt* 1975 and 1976; Sandars 1978; Liverani 1987), these events have naturally been seen as related. It has been proposed that Central European mercenaries played a role in the dramatic events leading up to the collapse, later followed by migrations from the Balkans and Central Europe (Crossland and Birchall 1974; Sandars 1978 and 1983), which seems justified from the evidence (Bouzek 1985a: chapter 3). In Europe a populist change in religion towards agrarian fertility rituals took place, strongly influenced from the Balkans (Kossack 1954; Bouzek 1985a:176ff.), along with a complete change in burial ritual towards large communal urnfields.

The Urnfield culture (Müller-Karpe 1959; Furmánek and Horst 1987) represented a period of agrarian intensification, settlement expansion and a re-orientation of trade and exchange, in part due to the breakdown of international trade after the collapse in the centres of civilisation. These changes were favoured by a fairly dry climate allowing fertile lowland areas to be intensively farmed (Bouzek 1982). Metal production boomed, showing great similarities all over Europe, and the use of bronze tools in production became widespread. At the local level micro-regions of local exchange and distribution, rather similar to those of the La Tène period, can be demonstrated (Herrman 1966), whereas regional and supra-regional groupings were due to trade, warfare and alliances at the chiefly level.

The Urnfield expansion and reorganisation probably originated in the old core areas of the Otomani culture that had retained the basic traits of communal agricultural life and large cemeteries, and seen a build-up of population (Plesl and Pleslová-Štiková 1981). To this we may add that the Hungarian/ Pannonian plains were probably vulnerable to drought, especially if the landscape had been heavily exploited and cleared of forest. It has been suggested that the early Urnfield period was characterised by extensive migrations and, although this has later been disputed, there is much in the evidence that indicates large-scale changes and disruption of earlier networks of trade and exchange. Thus, in the initial Urnfield phase the east-west connections were strengthened, and in Scandinavia there was a period of scarce supplies of bronze. A whole generation of chiefly swords were kept in circulation for a prolonged period, being totally worn down, as in no other period (Kristiansen 1978:162). Also in England scrap and melting down of old metal dominates (Pearce 1983:123 and 238ff.). In both regions supplies of metal did not increase substantially until after 1000 BC. In terms of social organisation and economy, agriculture became dominant, just as settlements were organised in villages, corresponding to the communal burials.

The urnfields represented an ideology of egalitarian village communities, but above that we also find rich chiefly barrows, sometimes separated from the urnfields (Hundt 1956 and 1958; Müller-Karpe 1955). Again, the similarities with the Middle La Tène are striking, both in terms of material culture and in terms of agricultural and technological developments. The egalitarian ideology demonstrated the social and economic importance of newly founded farming communities, but they also suggest that they had by now been defined as an economic class apart from the chiefly elite. The widespread geographical similarities in bronze weapons and ornaments, in combination with the egaliltarian ideology similar to La Tène, makes it possible to suggest some large-scale migrations during the Urnfield period, accompanied by intensified social and political contacts. As in La Tène, they followed a collapse of international exchange with the Aegean/Mediterranean and a collapse of warrior elites as the dominant form of social organisation.

Summary and conclusion

In conclusion, I suggest that the processes of cultural and social change during the second and first millennia BC were basically similar, due to similarities in organisational frameworks and in historical conditions of regional interaction, summarised in Figure 11.1. The internal properties or structural components

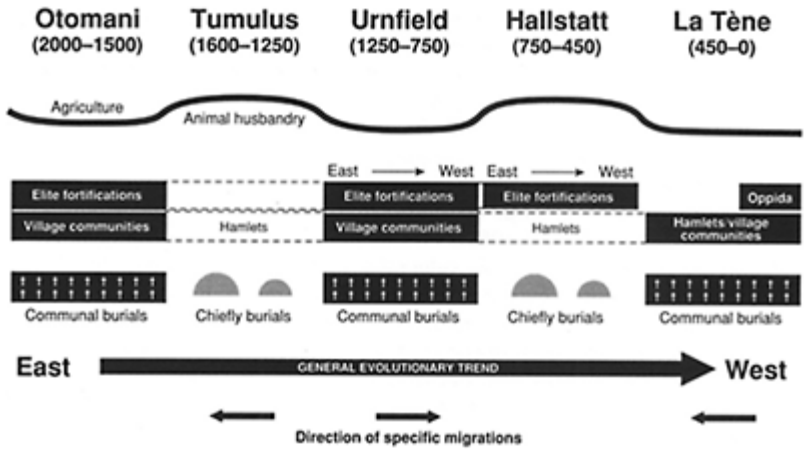

Figure 11.1 Schematic outline of the dominant trends in settlement, subsistence and burial ritual from 2000 BC to 0 in Central Europe

of Bronze Age society generated a number of recurrent trajectories that were based on a limited number of structural or organisational variations, which I shall first summarise.

Structural variants

We can distinguish between at least three different variants:

1 *Sedentary centres of production and redistribution* developing in regions of high productivity, agriculturally and/or in terms of mineral resources/trade. Social hierarchies were based on accumulation and distribution of wealth to vassals/ peripheries (Otomani and the Hallstatt princes). There was a settlement hierarchy around large fortified settlements that served as both elite residence and as centres of production and tribute collecting/redistribution from surrounding farming communities. In such systems internal contradictions and competition are channelled into still more elaborate vertical lines of hierarchy and dependency, and into wealth consumption. If hierarchies collapse, for example, by losing their peripheries or by exhaustion of metal ores, the dense farming populations may migrate to take new land, supported by warrior elites (for example, the Urnfield culture and Middle La Tène), or develop into trajectory 3 below.

2 *Warrior societies* developing by transforming internal contradictions and competition into territorial expansion and competitive exchange and consumption (Bonte 1979; Nash 1985). This creates a budding-off effect of continuous new chiefdoms, linked by extensive prestige goods exchange (the Tumulus culture). Subsistence is predominantly 'pastoral' (cattle/sheep husbandry), employed in exchange relations as movable wealth (for example, the Scythian 'Siggynnians' in Hungary, trading horses to the Venetians in northern Italy, who sold them to the Greeks). Chiefly warriors may be employed as mercenaries by the sedentary centres or by warring city states, as in the Celtic period, for payments in prestige goods. In periods of crisis and decline they may either develop bands of raiders and mercenaries, and/or they may take over control of peasant societies ('militärische Demokratie'), as happened in several regions during the Urnfield and La Tène periods. During the late Urnfield period, competitive warrior societies continued to dominate in the northern peripheries, while more stable hierarchies of warrior elites/farming communities developed in Central Europe. It might be suggested that the Cimmerian influence during Late Urnfield, and the subsequent dominance in Hallstatt C of warrior elites, were due to a process much like the one described for Hallstatt D to La Tène A by Nash (1985).

3 *Large peasant communities* living in highly organised, fortified settlements. These develop in periods of blocked expansion, where competition and contradiction lead to warfare, contraction of settlement and political fragmentation. This could be a result of demographic growth/over-exploitation in regions of low productivity (the Lausitz culture), and/or of exclusion from larger networks of centre/periphery exchange of goods necessary for social reproduction. They may disperse into smaller units to take new land (migration). In regions of less demographic pressure, settlements may be reorganised in small villages, a suitable organisational unit for settlement expansion and migration, characteristic of the Urnfield and Middle La Tène period.

Determinants and constraints

The development of these variants, which of course represent ideal types along a continuum, were part of the reproduction of a single structure of cyclical transformations. The different strategies were both dependent upon each other for their reproduction and potentially in opposition to each other, competing for dominance. Due to the location of

basic factors such as agricultural productivity, mineral resources and the demands of more developed states in the Mediterranean, geographical constraints and competitive advantages can be defined. But within that there was, as we have seen, still room for both competition and some variation.

It follows from this that no single factor may account for the observed structural changes, although some factors, such as *climatic change*, may reveal striking patterns of parallelism with changes in settlement structure. This has been pointed out for Central Europe by Bouzek (1982: figure 4), just as Burgess recently has presented an illuminating parallel between the second millennium BC settlement expansion and final collapse of upland settlements in England with a similar sequence leading up to the medieval crisis and abandonment of settlement (Burgess 1988). Climate thus represents both potential and constraints to subsistence, but social and economic forces remain the prime movers when the environment is exploited not only close to, but often beyond its carrying capacity, as defined by the cultural and economic rationality of prehistoric communities. In such situations a climatic fluctuation may trigger the collapse of an unstable economy. One of the lessons we may learn from the Bronze Age sequences is that demographic pressure and over-exploitation of the environment was an inherent feature of prehistoric farming.

It should further be noted that a climatic change had different consequences depending upon both environmental factors and subsistence strategies. A warm and dry climate, as prevailed during the Early Bronze Age (Bronze A2/B1) and the Urnfield period in Central Europe, favoured intensive farming on lowland fertile ground, while it might lead to drought and crisis in the steppe regions and in the Mediterranean, just as in some upland environments. This could lead to both regional displacements of settlement (for example, farming communities leaving the Hungarian/Pannonian plains during the Urnfield drought), or to local adaptations (for example, a change of subsistence strategy from lowland to upland farming in periods of moist, cool climate, as during the Tumulus or Hallstatt C periods). For these reasons it may often be diffcult to distinguish between local changes in settlement (for example, from upland to lowland, or from one valley to another) and regional changes and migrations on a larger scale (Furmánek 1986 with examples of local displacements). Thus, pollen diagrams and settlement evidence testify to reductions in settlement and land use in several areas in western Europe during the early Tumulus and Early La Tène periods which quite evidently reflect that some groups were leaving—but how far? Only the combined textual and archaeological evidence of La Tène allow us to give an answer; from earlier periods it can only be obtained through local and regional settlement projects in combination with pollen diagrams of land use and vegetation.

The location, exploitation and eventual exhaustion of *mineral resources* is another important determinant factor. Some of the changes in dominance of bronze production can thus be linked to the exploitation of new ores, for example, the Alpine region during the Urnfield period. This could obviously lead to changes in commercial relations, although cause and effect are not always easy to determine. It follows from this that the systematic extraction and production of iron after 700 BC had significant social and economic consequences, and was consciously delayed in some regions, such as the Nordic, for the very same reasons. Since iron was widely available locally, in contrast to copper and tin, it democratised the production of subsistence tools and weapons, thereby

shifting the focus of political power from the control of exchange to the control of land and its produce through tribute and taxation. In this way it undermined in some areas the traditional system of legitimation, based upon exchange and ritualised rank, to one based upon land and direct control of production and producers, now defined not as kin, but as farmers (emerging social classes). This, however, was a gradual development, which already started in the Early Bronze Age in eastern Central Europe, where bronze was available in large enough quantities to have the same effect locally and it continued westwards during the Urnfield period. Although the spread of iron technology in many regions in Europe represented a threat to existing social formations, this was not the case in other areas, such as the Mediterranean. Here the production and exchange of prestige goods made of bronze did not cease markedly after the introduction of iron. The full economic implications of iron were probably not released in most of Europe until the subsequent millennium.

Finally technical and organisational improvements in *production* and in *warfare* were decisive by defining a new framework for how many people could be sustained in an area (production), and how many people could be controlled/ defended (military organisation). This again might extend the range of political control leading to the formation of larger political units. Above I have mentioned the implications of iron-working for extending the range of efficient farming tools to wider segments of society, for example, the scythe and the creation of hay-meadows, although this of course was a gradual historical process. Also technical improvements in farming could raise the productive potential of a region, if it was coupled with efficient means of storage and distribution, as during the Urnfield and Middle La Tène periods, which on the whole were the two periods that saw most improvements in farming techniques and practices (new crops, new tools, and so on). None of these factors, however, in themselves created new conditions except if they were coupled with corresponding social and economic developments. Most often their application arose out of social or economic needs rather than the other way around, as demonstrated in the case of the spread of iron-working. Also the introduction of new and more diverse crops, which characterised the Bronze Age, was often a response to new ecological and economic conditions created by intensive exploitation of the environment, for example, the increased use of millet (Jäger and Lozek 1987).

However, most improvements in production during the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age were not revolutionary, but rather extended the range of available economic strategies and techniques, which allowed for a more efficient adaptation to a wider range of environments, just as it provided a higher level of resistance towards climatic and ecological changes.

With respect to military innovations and the organisation of warfare, the implications of metal weapons were more far-ranging, as they created a new ideology of heroic war leaders, linked to the spread of the long sword and the lance in the earlier second millennium BC. Thus, from the Early Bronze Age onwards, warfare changed direction and became both more efficient and also more ideological, as it was freed from traditional kinship hostilities. Instead it became organised around war leaders with a following of young warriors (early forms of retinue, see Steuer 1982: chapter 7; Kristiansen 1987a). War chariots and mounted warriors were most probably also introduced during the Middle Bronze Age (Kristiansen 1987: note 6), and at least from Urnfield times onwards the thrusting sword testifies to mounted warriors, if not cavalry.

The emergence of strongly fortified central settlements already from the Early Bronze Age indicates that warfare had taken on new dimensions, both in terms of internal political control and in terms of the ability to defend and attack large fortifications, with the potential reward of getting access to the revenues of tribute and trade from a larger area.

I therefore suggest that the nature of warfare, as it is known to us from the Early Iron Age, was already practised in its basic forms from the beginning of the second millennium BC. From this period onwards changes in weapon equipment and use occurred nearly simultaneously from the Mediterranean to northern Europe, which most probably also included some knowledge of military tactics and organisation.

Long-term regularities

In Figures 11.1 and 11.2, I have attempted to summarise the main regularities in the cyclical transformations of Bronze Age and Early Iron Age societies over two thousand years. The diagrams are descriptive, so I shall briefly attempt to explain some of the causal factors at work and their interplay.

In Figure 11.1 I suggest two types of regularities: one between a certain type of social organisation and the structure of material culture (settlement and burial types), and one between a set of recurrent and interacting causal factors creating similar forms of social organization. I propose that, beginning in the early second millennium BC, European societies during the following two millennia oscillated between two dominant types of social organisation—one based upon sedentary centres of metal production and distribution/ redistribution controlled by an elite, another based upon a more decentralised social and economic setting of warrior societies. While the first type had a basis of well organised farming communities with a ‘democratic’ ideology reflected in communal burials with few social distinctions, the other type is characterised by a chiefly ideology of visible burials (often in mounds) with a more lavish display of wealth. The first type is predominantly agrarian, and mainly linked to periods of warm, dry climate, whereas the second is predominantly ‘pastoral’, based upon animal husbandry, and corresponds to periods of cooler, more humid climate. These differences are reflected in the preference of site locations. Lowland settlements on the fertile soils along lakes and streams (for example, the pile dwellings) dominated during periods of sedentary agrarian settlements, while upland settlement location dominated during periods of ‘pastoral’ warrior societies. Some transhumance or exploitation of upland regions was an integrated part of the lowland agrarian settlements, just as traditional farming was part of the economy of upland ‘pastoral’ settlements. What we see reflected in the archaeological material is the dominant social and economic strategies, which according to paleobotanical work also contains a good deal of prehistoric reality, but not as black-and-white as the archaeological record would have us believe.

Changes in the employment of wealth in ritual consumption that accompanied the cyclical transformations of the first and second millennia BC therefore offer important insights into the relationship between social strategies and their material correlates. The display of wealth in burials during the rise of new elites was in all cases followed by more ‘egalitarian’ traditions in burials. As could be demonstrated, these changes represented shifts in the dominance of different social groups, and perhaps also different

levels of social organisation, but not a real change from ranked to egalitarian society. On the contrary, they rather indicated the consolidation of elites, with less need to boast their wealth and power, and the emergence of a peasantry socially and economically separated from the elite. It further meant that production and distribution of goods (such as ornaments and tools) were decentralised, or at least some of them, now taking place outside the centre in the villages. Rather than reflecting a more democratic and individualising society, this may signal that political control had taken on new and more efficient forms and therefore did not need to control production physically (for example, Middle La Tène, and some regions during the Urnfield period). It corresponds to similar long-term trends observed in Denmark during the first millenniums BC and AD (Kristiansen 1991). I therefore consider the discussion whether the beginning of the Iron Age represented a significant change in economic and commercial possibilities for enterprising individuals to be somewhat misleading by focusing too narrowly upon a single period of change (Gosden 1985; Rowlands 1986; Wells 1989). Entrepreneurs always existed and operated according to prevailing social and economic conditions, becoming chiefs, military leaders, traders, and so on. From the Iron Age onwards social and economic conditions changed, defining a new context for enterprising individuals. To begin with it was not vastly different from similar changes taking place during the second millennium BC from Otomani to Tumulus and Urnfield cultures. It was only in a long-term perspective that the potential of Iron Age social organisation for establishing more efficient systems of power and dependence unfolded, and even so this demanded the contribution of the Roman empire.

The transformational succession between the two types of social formations in Figure 11.1 depended upon long-term regional changes on one hand and interaction between regional systems or centres and peripheries on the other. Thus, the sequence presented in Figure 11.1, which mainly relates to Central Europe, cannot be understood without reference to the larger geopolitical context which these societies were part of.

Figure 11.2 presents in schematic form the changing relationships between regional centres of metal production/agrarian production and their peripheries, supplying special products (amber, lead, horses, slaves). This may in some periods develop into regional hierarchies. 1) may correspond to Bronze

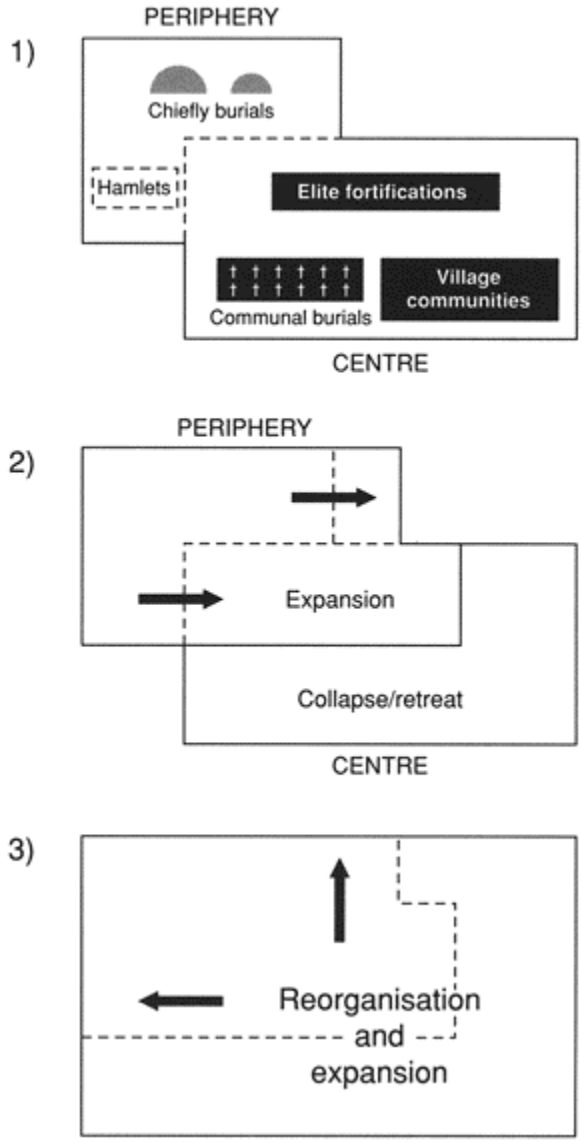

Figure 11.2 Geographical model of the changing relationships between centres of metal production/agrarian production and warrior peripheries supplying special products and services, suggesting regular shifts in dominance through time

A2/B1 both in Central Europe and in the Mediterranean/Iberia. 2) may correspond to both the Tumulus culture and Late Hallstatt/Early La Tène in relation to the Mediterranean. 3) may correspond to the Urnfield and Middle La Tène periods. If we try to extract some larger geopolitical regularities from this scheme two types seem to emerge.

Type one is characterised by the intensification of connections between the Near East/Mediterranean states, Central and northern Europe, forming a regional hierarchy of indirect centre/periphery relations. These are the periods when new centres of production, distribution and trade between the Mediterranean and the rest of Europe appear (Otomani and Late Hallstatt), characterised by the demonstration of power and wealth in burials and hoards.

The second type follows upon the collapse of centre/periphery rela-tions, due to political fragmentation in the Mediterranean, or alternatively a re-orientation of Mediterranean trade from south-north to east-west. These are periods of expanding farming communities in Central Europe (the Urnfield period/Mediterranean collapse and Middle La Tène/re-orientation of trade), characterised by a more 'democratic' ideology, especially in burial ritual.

During the transition between these two geopolitical systems, warrior societies appeared, either influenced from the eastern steppes or simply as an internal outcome of the changing balance between the centres and their peripheries, which was mainly due to declining supplies of exotic goods from the centres (the Tumulus culture, Hallstatt C and La Tène A). If we include the first millennium AD, the same pattern can be observed. The Germanic expansion followed upon the collapse of the Western Roman empire, whereas the Viking expansion took place in a period of blocked north-south trade, due to the expansion of the Islamic/Arab empire in the Mediterranean. It can further be observed that during these periods of internal European expansion/colonisa-tion, new indigenous art styles developed as a self-conscious response to the situation (Celtic, Germanic and Viking art), all based upon curved motifs, including animal art (I want to thank Andrew Sherratt for drawing my attention to these larger regularities in his comments).

In such complex systems it is impossible to determine and define cause and effect as a one way process. External and internal factors were interrelated, and in some periods they clustered, leading to rapid changes and shifts in dominance. We should also be aware that local processes of evolution and devolution always occurred. Such local declines and rises were nomally an inherent feature of the reproduction of larger regional systems. In the long run the balance between such multiple local processes determined the developmental potential of the regional system. Dominance, exploitation and the emergence of hierarchies, whether local or regional, were normally the result of multiple local processes of centre/periphery relations, that directed surplus towards dominant centres in a process of unequal exchange. But the mechanisms to extract surplus changed according to the nature of dominant social relations, whether they were warrior aristocracies (raiding, taking tribute and trading=wealth finance), sedentary agricultural communities (tribute=stable finance), or commercial centres of metal production and trade (trade=wealth finance). Also ritual superiority played a role in directing surplus to chiefly and ritual centres in many regions (Kristiansen 1987b). Thus, it was the articulation of these strategies at local levels that determined the potential for regional dominance, for example, in the form of regional confederations. Only in exceptional cases, such as the Late Hallstatt centres, would that give rise to larger polities and

domination from a single centre. On the other hand, it has to be admitted that such aspects of Bronze Age social organisation have been given little systematic attention. We may therefore under-rate the capacity for the formation of larger polities.

The cyclical trends of evolution and devolution during the first and second millennia BC suggest that developments in Bronze Age Europe were resistant against the formation of more rigid social differentiation and state formation. This was apparently due to a combination of inherent social and ecological constraints, in combination with the nature of inter-regional and international trade with the expanding centres of civilisation in the Mediterranean. Although much of Central Europe displayed the basic features of being in a transition to archaic state formation during the Bronze Age, areas of tribal warrior aristocracies, and areas of diminishing agricultural returns, tended to constrain developments towards state formation. But the balance between these developmental trends changed during the Bronze Age. This was reflected in a geographical shift of the cycle from the East (the Carpathian region) during the second millennium to the West (the Alpine region) during the first millennium BC. In this way larger areas were encompassed by the processes of detribalisation. The basic lay-out of these centre/periphery relations are summarised in Figure 11.2. It meant that after 600 BC processes of archaic state formation could finally dominate and unfold, supported by the emerging city states and empires in the Mediterranean. The significant difference between the two cycles was that European Bronze Age societies were able to run down the civilisational frontier in the late second millennium, while that was not the case nearly a thousand years later.

It follows from this that European social evolution did not progress in a unilinear fashion from simple to higher forms of social organisation, as has been commonly believed (Champion *et al.* 1984). Traditionally the transition from Bronze to Iron Age has been considered a significant evolutionary leap. Colin Renfrew used this to justify the view that migrations did not occur until the conquest migrations of the Iron Age, since they demanded a higher level of social organisation (Renfrew 1987). With the exception of *oppida* and urbanisation at the close of the first millennium, developments during the first millennium were not significantly different from those of the second millennium. We have to project back the social complexity of the first millennium, and the notion of a European world system, another thousand years. And we also have to give up the modernist welfare society myth that change and progress was always peacefully and freely exchanged, and that conflict, disruption and migrations did not take place in prehistory.

Concluding perspective

Regional interaction between empires of productive irrigation agriculture in the Near East, commercial city states in the Mediterranean, nomads to the north, and ploughland agriculture and mineral exploitation in temperate Europe created a unique world system from approximately 2000 BC onwards. This combination also contained a good deal of resistance to the expansion of traditional state and empire formation in temperate Europe and Asia, and it tended to check, or halt, the civilisational process through counteraction from both the nomadic and agricultural peripheries (Mann 1986: chapter 2). During the

first millennium the processes of state formation, however, came to dominate in most of Central Europe and the Mediterranean. This created an evolutionary division between northern and Central Europe, whose evolutionary trajectories became divided, although always interacting with each other. This dynamism between 'egalitarian' traditions in the north and more complex state formation in Central Europe was during the first millennium represented by Celts and Germans—whose ethnic identities, if they ever had a historical meaning outside the realm of classical writers, were the outcome of processes of centre/periphery relations and regional processes of social transformation. It is therefore meaningless, and historically unjustified, to use them more widely, and even worse to trace them up to our own time, as if the processes of history and changing social conditions did not matter.

On the other hand, there were probably basic structural constraints to long-term historical processes. It might be suggested that the structural divergencies created during the first millennium BC between northern Europe, Central Europe and the Mediterranean determined the later course of European history by establishing the structural foundations upon which it came to rest, for example, the limits of the Roman empire in Europe. The question that remains to be answered is, what was the balance between world historical processes of evolution and devolution against the forces of specific historical conditions? It can perhaps be argued that while most of the processes we have been discussing, from the formation of warrior elites to feudalisation are general processes, it was their specific combination in a world system which generated the long-term trajectory that made possible the transformation of the European periphery to a centre. But I also believe that the specific regional conditions in Europe played a significant role. Its inability to cope with demographic growth, its agricultural constraints, its recurrent demographic and ecological crises, and its inherited pastoral warrior ideology of expansion, transforming internal competition and fragmentation into external expansion, preventing European empire formation, are conditions that can be traced back to the second and first millennia BC or even earlier.

Acknowledgement

I want to thank Antonia Gilman, Andrew Sherratt and Heinrich Härke for commenting on the original manuscript. Needless to say there is much with which they do not agree, although what caused disagreement differed between them—the informed reader will know where. In this way their comments have been constructive and useful.

Note

This chapter was written as an interpretative sketch for a seminar discussion. I have retained most of the original text, as a more solid documentation and discussion would demand a whole book, which I have written in the meantime. The manuscript was drafted in 1988, and I have attempted to incorporate a few signficant titles that appeared in 1989/90, such as the important collection of articles on the Bronze-Iron Age transition in Sørensen and Thomas (1989), and similar works on the Middle Bronze Age: *Dynamique*

du Bronze Moyen en Europe occidentale (1989), *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Kultur der Mitteleuropäischen Bronzezeit,* edited by Furmánek and Horst (1990) and the most recent Hallstatt symposium, edited by Ulrix-Closset and Otte (1989). Together with the collective works on the Urnfield culture (Plesl and Hrala 1987; Brun and Mordant 1988), the fortified settlements (Furmánek and Horst 1982) and several similar works on the La Tène culture, such as Pauli (1980), Bittel, Kimmig and Schiek (1981), Dobiat (1984), Collis 1984b), and most recently *Les Princes Celtes et la Méditerranée* (Kruta 1988), we are fortunate now to have an easily accessible up to date overview of the first millennium BC and the latter half of the second millennium BC.

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Part III
CONTACT AND COLONIALISM

12
THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF COLONIALISM

Michael Rowlands

The immediate associations of colonialism are with intrusions, conquests, economic exploitation and the domination of indigenous peoples. Not surprisingly, colonialism has received a great deal of attention from anthropologists (e.g. Asad 1979; Wolf 1982; Thomas 1994; Peps 1997) and historians (Dirks 1992; Cohn 1996) who have been concerned with both the lessons to be drawn from the histories of modern colonialism and the implications for the future. Moreover, while earlier studies focused more on the political and economic conditions of exploitation, recent work has shifted to the study of colonial cultures and ideologies both in the role these played in masking or rationalising forms of oppression and in constituting colonial relationships (Thomas 1994).

By contrast, colonialism has received scant attention in archaeology where it is relatively undertheorised, despite the wider attention given to its related concept of imperialism (Larsen 1979; Garnsey and Whittaker 1983, but cf. Van Dommelen 1997, 1998). In archaeology, the term colonialism has been avoided due to fear of modernist bias, in favour of the more concrete term colonisation implying the more specific description of the movements and settlements of people. Colonisation has been used to refer to both territorial and commercial incentives but has proved vague and elusive in detailing the relationships between homeland and diasporic communities and between colonisers and colonised. The use of the past to justify contemporary colonialism implies that archaeology has never been able to approach the subject without a basic assumption that arguments for continuity between ancient and modern colonialism should be dismissed out of hand and specific parallels avoided. This reluctance has led neither to conceptual clarity nor exposure to a wider comparative literature to stimulate debate. The fact that archaeologists still debate whether historical archaeology should be defined as the archaeological study of literate ‘civilisations’ or the period of European expansion from 1492 (neither of which is particularly helpful) is symptomatic of the confusion that exists in relating material culture to texts.

Comparing colonialisms

Colonialism is a concept that has been defined in various ways to suit particular theoretical persuasions. In archaeology, two aspects have been considered as fundamental: first, the presence of one or more groups of foreign people in a region some distance from their place of origin (the colonisers), second, evidence of socio-economic exploitation or relations of domination over the colonised (usually majority) population. Colonialism refers therefore to power relations (rather than descriptions of movements of peoples) and the relations of domination and resistance relating coloniser and colonised. Theorists of modern colonialism have recently criticised the taken-for-granted acceptance of binary categories such as domination/resistance, coloniser/colonised, civilised/primitive for reducing complex differences and interactions to the binary logic

(self/other) of colonial (that is, the coloniser's) power (cf. Prakash 1994; Van Dommelen 1998). The value of retaining and developing colonialism as a comparative concept lies precisely therefore in making explicit what is being avoided by not using the term: power relations.

This requires making explicit the dangers of projecting modernist concerns into the ancient world and vice versa. The fact that modern colonialism was so often legitimised by claiming continuity with ancient practices (for example, the French claim of continuity with Roman rule in their annexation of North Africa: or the British in Egypt: cf. Mitchell 1988) supported a 'continuity thesis' in the comparison of ancient and modern colonialism. Perhaps there has been an over-reaction in the avoidance or denial of this theme which has inhibited assessment of continuity and discontinuity in forms of colonial domination. In the premodern state in Europe, as elsewhere, power was made visible through theatrical displays in the forms of processions, royal progresses, coronations, funeral rituals, that guaranteed the well-being and continuity of power of the ruler and the benefits to the ruled. Managed by specialists, priests, scribes, artisans, and so on, colonial/imperial relations were often extensions of this 'theatre of power' (cf. Geertz 1980). From the eighteenth century onwards, modern European states transformed the nature of state power through the gradual extension of officialising procedure and the rationality of bureaucratic order and control (Foucault 1977). Defining and classifying space, the separation of public and private spheres, the categorising of the body, counting and classifying via censuses, registrars, the standardisation of time/space and language, created an orderly world which in turn was projected outwards as civilising practice in colonial rule (cf. Stoler 1989; Thomas 1994; Dirks 1992). Accompanying this transformation of the modern world were invented rituals of tradition that embedded it in notions of the past that were primordial and enduring (cf. Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). French ideologies of nationalism that asserted continuity with Roman rule were quite compatible with this extension of colonial administration and rational ordering of space and time (cf. Rabinow 1989). What this should emphasise is the relative difference between ancient and modern colonialism which the colonisation/colonialism contrast has served to obscure. Moreover, while use of the term colonialism allows comparison of differences in shared characteristics, it should not imply any direct or simple parallelism between ancient and modern. A focus on difference need not undermine the insights to be gained through making contrast.

The difference between ancient and modern colonialism has been stressed by a number of authors (including Thomas 1994:3; Wolf 1982:101–25). The contrast between Renaissance and modern European colonialism is equally stark in the change from respect to contempt for the 'colonial other' (cf. Pagden 1982). In Renaissance Europe, the Christian understanding of non-European peoples seems to have followed a classical understanding of difference as a measure of lack rather than inferiority. One of Columbus's most frequent observations on the New World Indians refers to their lack of clothes, 'except a patch covering a single area' (Thomas 1994:72). There is not a great deal of difference between this Renaissance view and the Classical attitude to the other (Hartog 1988). The observations made by Herodotus about the ancient Egyptians and the Scythians implied that difference in the classical world could be interpreted as a consequence of lack of, or an inversion of, 'civilised' characteristics, without the overtones of racial contempt towards the 'other' that developed in nineteenth-century

European colonialism. The passage of modern colonialism through evolutionism created classificatory hierarchies of the civilised/primitive kind justifying forms of racism, genocide and brutality previously unthought of.

Yet, while there are many fine descriptions of the exercise of modern domination, recent postcolonial writers have argued that the coloniser's view has consistently overdetermined the capacity that colonial-regimes had to dominate and control. They highlight instead the contradictions and impasses in the exercise of colonial power and how the colonised resisted the incorporation into the 'civilising mission' as inevitable to their historical progress (Prakesh 1994; Bhabha 1990). There has been an equally strong tendency to write histories of ancient colonialism from the coloniser's viewpoint. In the revised (1980) version of *The Greeks Overseas*, Boardman could still write about the relationship between colonial Greeks and colonised natives that 'in most places, the Greeks and Sicels got on well enough, if only in a relationship of master and slave' (Boardman 1980:190). The one-sided preoccupation with the coloniser's point of view is also seen in recent publications where the 'native' is 'influenced', adapts or resists, but within a space determined by colonial power (cf. Ridgway 1992). The term colonialism can itself be criticised for assuming a unitary and homogeneous historical process that obscures the reality of more indeterminate and incongruous practices and activities by agents who never saw themselves as either colonial or native in aspiration. Snodgrass has recently argued for an equally weakened view of colonial identity for the ancient world and expresses a growing view that the exploiter/exploited, colonial/colonised binary logic obscures a far more unstable and fragile reality of power (Snodgrass 1994:2).

Perhaps the most salient characteristic of ancient colonisation, the relation between colony and homeland, has also undergone revision in the ancient model (cf. Morel 1984). The degree of independence of the western Greek colonies has long been a matter of debate but, as Snodgrass asserts, the key question is the degree to which independence allows divergent development and originality in the periphery (cf. Kohl 1987 for a similar argument about technological development in central Asia in the third millenium BC). The contrast between commercial and territorial colonisation also repeats a long-standing contrast between Near Eastern and Mediterranean colonisation (cf. Polanyi 1957) which is put in doubt by current indecision over whether the identities of Greek and Phoenician colonists can be clearly distinguished or whether such terms give a false sense of cohesion to a far more unstable and hybrid world of mobility and transfers. Current opinion is now veering to seeing Greek and Phoenician colonisation of the West as a far less 'spider-like' web of dependencies and contacts with the Aegean and the Levantine coast at its heartland (Snodgrass 1994:8). If the strategies of ancient colonisers were less coherent than previously imagined, then comparisons with white settler strategies in North America or Australia in the early modern period may not be so far off the mark, particularly if the 'discovery of freedom' in new lands can also be advocated for the ancient periphery (the invention of the *polis*/city state in Sicily; cf. Snodgrass 1994:8).

What contemporary writings on ancient and modern colonialism share is a lessened confidence in the applicability of the modernist association of colonialism with domination, conquest and resistance (Van Dommelen 1998). Morel concludes that decisions to locate colonies were determined by a high degree of caution on the part of the Greeks, 'as if they had drawn back, or hesitated wherever powerful and organised peoples were installed before them' (Morel 1984:128). A mercantalist reluctance to get

tied down and become dependent on one trading partner is almost a universal feature of all trading colonies historically and has as much to do with maximising outlets as avoiding political control (cf. Curtin 1984). Snodgrass also emphasises the strategic and opportunistic character of Greek colonisation, including a preference for settlements to cluster in sight of each other on stretches of highly indented coast rather than inland with increased risk of native encounters. Clearly patterns vary by region, but generally ancient colonialism in the early phases did not have the same emphasis on conquest and rule based on the racial inferiority of native populations characteristic of modern colonialism. New lines of research are opened by the evidence of transfers of power through material culture to new populations that probably never considered themselves as either foreign or native but the product of various forms of mutual borrowing and appropriation. Nor did this necessarily happen at points of colonial contact. Greeks and Phoenicians appear to have been culturally hybrid and by no means the transmitters at the interface of unified 'cultures' (cf. Rowlands 1994). This is consistent with Morel's and other criticisms of the Hellenisation model of Greek expansion as superficial, which now seems equally relevant to both Greek and Phoenician interaction in the western Mediterranean (cf. Snodgrass 1994 who summarises the argument for a 'cosmopolitan origin' of the colonies, involving populations of diverse origins and motives and their integration with various elements of local populations in the same settlement). It may be worth noting that early modern European colonies were also often mixed affairs where it was only with the arrival of wives and children that the population became 'colonised', that is, stratified on race/class lines (cf. Stoler 1989).

The dualism that underlies nearly all archaeological theorising distorts and reduces discussion to a matter of the degree of 'contact' between native and foreign rather than how local structures of power were experienced and contested by actors of diverse origins who could play positive and dynamic roles in localised processes of power, knowledge, appropriation and control. Resistance, as Keesing points out, is a minefield of conceptual problems and may take many forms other than the obvious one of violent outbursts of disobedience (Keesing 1992). Low-key affairs of avoidance or non-compliance, the so-called 'acts of everyday resistance', may not be based on any explicit ideology. Garbled ideas about discontent and non-compliance are as likely to be expressed through transforming the material culture of the dominant into local forms that, however modest the act, may still merit the label resistance. Mundane acts of resistance, by whom and for what purpose can be expressed informally around particular events that may be peculiar to the colonised or simply an area of life over which they retained control (cf. Comaroff 1985 on the discussion of the history of Zionist cults in South Africa). Relations of power and exploitation may take many forms and are embodied in a diversity of everyday social practice as well as life events such as funerals or celebrations that may involve displays of conspicuous consumption inconsistent with the practices of everyday life. For the archaeologist, the important point is that both mundane events and acts of display which escape simple binary categories such as domination and resistance may be found in the same context and constitute the daily realities of the creation of 'colonial' societies. Resistance as a metaphor is valuable, therefore, precisely because it draws attention to those facets of power relations that are easily overlooked because the actions that relatively powerless people engage in are different from the dramatic events that draw the attention of historians. Other important contributions to these debates have

come from political science (Scott 1985; 1990) and the Subaltern Studies School writings on the Indian peasantry (Guha 1983); but for archaeologists and anthropologists, one of the most important has been an assessment of the contribution that their disciplines made to the perpetuation and legitimation of modern colonial rule (cf. Asad 1979). This act of scholarly excavation has scarcely begun in archaeology but the glaringly obvious role of the British Schools as outposts of colonial society, or the links between archaeologists such as Mortimer Wheeler or Kathleen Kenyon and the colonial service, the link between Biblical archaeology, searching for the origins of Western civilisation and European imperialism, or the way archaeological excavations and 'expeditions' were and still are conducted today as a means of defining 'native' views of the past, are scarcely understood.

To some degree a willing complicity in reproducing the colonialisms of past archaeological practice depends on the degree to which identity and dependence on powerful others provides an access to a future for the powerless. Anthony Appiah has asked whether the post in postcolonialism was the same as in postmodernism, and concluded by stating that what both share in common is the negation of a previous authority. If postmodernism negates the modern as rational then the postcolonial negates the authority of the colonial state as the only path to modernity (Appiah 1991). Contemporary archaeology is replete with signs of the powerless taking back their archaeological pasts and reshaping them in local terms that do not describe them as a variant of food production, urbanism or the origins of the state. It suggests that defining epochs of colonial archaeology, as well as an archaeology of colonialism, is part of the same process of producing a sense of discontinuity, a clearing of the ground in order to create new pasts to allow new futures.

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13
THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE AND REGIONAL CONTEXT OF EARLY IRON AGE SOCIETY IN SOUTH-WESTERN GERMANY

Michael Rowlands and Susan Frankenstein

For later European prehistory, the seventh to fifth centuries BC mark a period of renewed and more intensive interaction between the Mediterranean world and Europe north of the Alps. It represents, however, only a stage in the general sequence of the symbiotic development of the two regions during prehistory and history, which has led to the observation on more than one occasion that Europe and the Mediterranean world form a larger system within which local sequences of change must be studied (e.g. Braudel 1972:168–70).

However, the present tendency in prehistoric studies is to regard Iron Age cultural developments in Central Europe as essentially independent phenomena, related only in terms of trade with the Mediterranean world. The economic structure of Hallstatt society has been viewed in terms of a feudal model in which a warrior class owned land and other means of production and thereby controlled a peasant class from which they appropriated surplus to exchange for imports and elite consumables. Thus, relations between south-west Germany and the Mediterranean world have been viewed primarily in terms of interaction and exchange between autonomous units and not in terms of their interdependent development as part of a single regional system.

This chapter will argue, therefore, that the internal structure of local soci-eties in the European Iron Age have always to be viewed in the context of their occupying a dependent position in a regional system dominated by the expansion and growth of the more complex and competitive city states and colonies in the central and western Mediterranean. It is only by studying the processes that regulated and organised this larger regional economy that we will be able to understand the conditions for the emergence of local state forms in the late Iron Age based on a semi-commercialised economy which may, in the long term, be crucial for our understanding of the expansion of Rome into western Europe and the particular decentralised feudal/mercantile formations that followed.

We must begin, however, by considering the appropriateness of existing explanations for the Early Iron Age based on comparisons with later medieval feudal systems. Kimmig, the most influential of all Heuneburg authorities, has adopted and elaborated the concept of *Fürsten* in many publications and used the terms *Adelsitz, Fürstmsitz* and *Herrensitz.* as alternative designations for these settlements which he regards as functionally indistinct from medieval burgs and defines by the proximity of *Fürsten*

graves, the presence of southern imports and the layout of the settlement to include an acropolis and suburbium. Also, Kimmig regards the late Hallstatt *Fürsten* as intrusive—probably Celtic—and made up of individuals who established their sites of residence and styles of life in ways contrasting markedly with those of other settlements of the time. Thus the original model of a) an indigenous feudal society in contrast with and therefore influenced by the Mediterranean world is distorted by b) an attempt to impose a model of conquest and domination, thus separating the *Fürsten* graves from their local context and c) attributing the *Fürsten* with aspirations to a civilised (that is, urban) way of life.

Underlying this use of a feudal model is a belief in a cyclical course of historical development. Thus, early medieval society is regarded as a reversion to a pre-Roman situation, The effects of the emergence and expansion of Rome are minimised and the dominance of a specifically European and timeless social form is assumed. There is, of course, considerable value in relating post-Roman society to its pre-Roman counterpart, but if the relationship between Early Iron Age and early medieval society is to be tested, then the general situation must not be assumed to be the same. By the late Iron Age (mainly La Tène C), certain developments had taken place in Central Europe which had clearly altered the structure of European society as it had been in the Early Iron Age. During the Late Iron Age the existence of far-reaching trade networks within Central Europe (and beyond it), the establishment of large-scale manufacturing centres, often within walled urban settlements, and the minting of coins are known. Thus, this was a society of essentially different economic and political structure from the Hallstatt D society Kimmig is trying to elucidate. When early medieval society is compared with a pre-Roman counterpart, it is to the Late Iron Age therefore that one should refer. This is not to deny that use of such structural analogues is not required at the theoretical level nor to argue instead that the archaeological ‘facts’ will speak for themselves. Quite the contrary, we would argue that such analogues have always been made and that a similar but more explicit methodology needs to be employed. We would criticise the use of a feudal model as unsuitable in structure to explain the Early Iron Age concrete situation and instead propose an alternative model derived from various anthropological theories of exchange.

Dehn appears to make an equally inadvisable recourse to later medieval history when he notes that there are reports from the Middle Ages until the beginning of this century of transhumance from the area north-west of the Alps—in particular the Swabian Alb—to Burgundy and sometimes further south (Dehn 1972). There seems to be no justification to refer to such specific instances of movement when they are confined to later historical patterns of economic specialisation and regional divisions of labour stimulated by the market demands of urban centres. An ecological determinist rationale arguing for transhumance as a necessary adaptation to harsh winters would equally be subverted by the fact that long-distance transhumance is not an ecologically consistent feature even in the later history of temperate Europe but varies with economic circumstances (Slicher van Barth 1966:167, 213–14, 255).

A more useful starting-point is provided in the largely unpublished work of Driehaus, where he attempts to interpret the evidence from the Heuneburg graves and settlements in terms of the economic role of the Heuneburg. Following Kossack’s (1959:10) recognition of, and emphasis on, craft centres in Ha C, Driehaus stresses the economic function of the Ha D *Fürsten* residences, particularly in the provision of technical skills, facilities and

raw materials for the construction of elaborate artefacts such as wagons and the mass production of simpler items, such as the bronze armings known to have been made at the Talhau. These specialist craftsmen, he suggests, had to depend on their 'customers' for subsistence products and raw materials. Iron, charcoal, wood, skins, wool and surplus foodstuffs would have to be obtained from a large area serving the Heuneburg (Driehaus n.d.: 282–3). He proposed that the extensive workshops at a *Fürstensitz* would have supplied those *Fürsten* who were not resident at the *Fürstensitz* and whose graves are found further away. A significant part of Driehaus's interpretation is this proposed dependence of the *Aussenposten* on the dominant *Zentralen* which, in the case of Ha D, would be the Heuneburg and Hohenasperg, and as yet unknown sites in the Upper Rhine and Switzerland.

He interprets the grave goods of the *Fürsten* in terms of trade and production. But he offers no adequate explanation of the way in which trade and production for exchange were organised and how they contributed to the maintenance of the *Fürsten.* Instead, Driehaus resorts to a notion of individual ability and choice and attributes the *Fürstengräber* to men who could recognise the 'economic possibilities' of their time and use them to achieve high rank within their society. By attributing modern economic principles of supply and demand, production capacity and business acumen to the organisation of Hallstatt society, he misses the social mechanisms which control and organise economic functions.

The formulation of a model of prestige-goods economy

It is proposed here that real progress in our understanding of the Early Iron Age in south-western Germany can only be achieved by the rigorous application of a model based on general anthropological theories of exchange, and in particular on the work of Meillassoux (1960), Dupré and Rey (1968), Dupré (1972), Ekholm (1972), Sahlins (1963, 1968, 1972), Strathern (1971) and others. Their formulations have been tested on cases in different parts of the world. The association of political power with control over access to foreign goods which are assigned high status has been observed and analysed. They have defined and demonstrated the function of these 'prestige-good economies'. The general value of their work on relations between economic and political organisation and the explanatory value of their theoretical framework will be demonstrated by the formulation and application of a model of the prestige-good economy to the Central European case.

Of course, the nature of the archaeological data differs from the data they used to test their hypotheses, that is, traditional accounts, some historical documentation, and present ethnic distributions and organisation. But the advantage of the data available to prehistorians is to provide a unique opportunity both to extend the application of the model to different data and to test the model in constant conditions over a long period of time.

The general theory attempts to relate certain aspects of internal group structure to external ranking as a process of hierarchisation over time and refers to the writings of those anthropologists (cited above) who have focused on the control gained through the manipulation of external exchange relations by descent group heads (e.g. Strathern 1971),

and those which have been concerned with the competitive, demographic aspects of competition and ranking between descent groups (e.g. Dupré 1972; Ekholm 1972).

The specific economic characteristics of a prestige-goods system are dominated by the political advantage gained through exercising control over access to resources that can only be obtained through external trade. However, these are not the resources required for general material well-being or for the manufacture of tools and other utilitarian items. Instead, emphasis is placed on controlling the acquisition of wealth objects needed in social transactions, and the payment of social debts. Groups are linked to each other through the competitive exchange of wealth objects as gifts and feasting in continuous cycles of status rivalry. Descent groups reproduce themselves in opposition to each other as their leaders compete for dominance through differential access to resources and labour power.

At an early stage, in a tribal system made up of groups linked together in this form of simple competitive alliance, it can be anticipated that only locally domestic goods would be available for social transactions. It would seem likely therefore that it would be those groups that were able to produce a surplus of foodstuffs—as a function of a differential in productive capacity—that would stand to benefit, in the short term, in the local political arena. Investing such surpluses in wealth objects for the acquisition of more wives and hence dependants, acts to increase the demographic strength of the local support group in order to meet the demands of continuing in this competitive cycle.

No sumptuary laws or monopolies in acquiring wealth objects are necessary for this to occur. Since clan heads are the owners of means of production, they control the dispersal of surpluses and the exchange of wealth items for individual members to reproduce themselves. While all groups have access to external exchange, it is those with the economic and demographic capacity to gain access to new sources of prestige goods or to particularly large quantities of existing prestige goods that would establish a dominant position. A cycle of differential growth in group size and dominance emerges therefore which has two main aspects. First, the increased capacity to obtain wealth objects through external exchange implies that a clan head will be able to maximise his network of matrimonial alliances to obtain wives for himself and his descent group members. Second, it implies that poorer descent groups will become dependent on more dominant descent groups for supplies of wealth objects needed for their own survival. These poorer descent groups will therefore be encouraged to direct their economic activity, that is, their supply of domestic resources and specialities, towards dominant groups rather than towards external trade partners.

This more hierarchical situation agrees very closely with the pattern Ekholm has found in her analysis of the Kongo kingdom (1972), to which she adds the dimension of a cycle of social debts. Members of poorer descent groups fall into debt if unable to pay wealth objects for social debts and instead have to deliver a member to the superordinate group. This person would be stripped of his—or her—original status, and be incorporated into the superordinate group. Dominant groups may either retain their own women by marrying them to debt slaves or give them to potential or actual allies for the creation or maintenance of external alliances.

At this point in a process of hierarchisation, a dominant chief can reinforce control over the internal circulation of wealth objects by narrowing down and monopolising the range of items acceptable in social transactions within his domain. The use of domestic

wealth objects will be devalued and restricted to relatively minor social transactions, and a sphere of foreign wealth objects will be formalised to take their place. The exchange of luxuries consumed by emergent elites, reinforced by sumptuary laws, will form an important part of the process. By controlling the size of payments or the form in which payments are made and the supply of elite status items, leaders confirm their superordinate status over the heads of segments within their own descent groups and over other dependants. The chief s control over external trade in wealth objects is absolute so that he alone obtains commodities from a foreign source which he can then redistribute in the form of status insignia, funerary goods, bridewealth, and so on. Tribute, in the form of domestic surpluses, it passed up through the same system. These commodities are then used by the dominant chief for obtaining wealth objects from his external trading partners.

This serves to emphasise the importance of political control over the domestic resources that form the source of exchangeable wealth for external trade. Under these conditions, there will be a tendency to select for those resources that are not found to be redistributed evenly and can therefore be more easily controlled. The exploitation of metals, salt, shells, stone and so on, within a domain would be controlled and the products passed up as tribute through the political hierarchy to a superordinate chief, who would use them in external trade. Descent group heads would out of necessity have to direct the labour power available to them to produce such commodities to be pooled and passed up to a central point together with foodstuffs and other ideological signs of subordinate status. The exploitation of certain resources that require labour-intensive techniques (for example, mining) would be limited to those clan heads capable of controlling a sufficiently large workforce.

But, when the technical skill required for the working of certain resources—such as metal—is not accessible to everyone, then control over production of wealth items is as convenient as control over the actual sources. There would be considerable incentive to develop specialist skills not attainable at the local settlement level and to control the use of these skills in the production of prestige and status items (as observed by Dupré (1972) in the Tsengi-Nzabi system). Foreign trade would increasingly be restricted to proving luxury items in exchange for domestic surpluses for the consumption of dominant clan members. Centralised control over the production of local prestige items hence facilitates an increased monopolisation and consumption of wealth by elites with a minimum of redistribution to subordinate members. This is an emergent process to be found to varying degrees at different levels of hierarchy.

A dominant chief has to redistribute sufficient quantities of prestige goods to his subordinates. Failure to do so would undermine his superordinate status, since his dependants redistribute in turn to their dependants. In a sense, therefore, tribute is not a one-way flow but appears as an agreed exchange between subordinate and superordinate chiefs for the maintenance of the political position of each. For this ranking to be maintained, subordinate lineages must not be allowed to participate in external trade for wealth objects. This may be checked by the fact that reciprocal exchange can only occur between equals, that is, a dependent chief cannot trade with a dominant chief of another tribe. While at the beginning differential control over labour power creates imbalance in inter-lineage clan competition, at an expanded point in the process of centralisation large

segmented clans may result though absorption of dependent lineages whose leaders maintain elite status through various sumptuary laws.

A potential equilibrium exists at any point in this process of hierarchisation given a stasis between the productive capacity of local groups and the limit of unacceptable levels of appropriation of surplus products by leaders needed to gain access to new sources of wealth objects. Further expansion is possible only if a dominant chief manages to maintain a monopoly on trade and acquire a new source of foreign wealth objects. He is then able to use his economically strengthened position to transform his external relations with trade partners of equal status into internal relations of superordinate and subordinate rank. The formerly dominant chiefs would no longer be his status equals and would become vassal chiefs, no longer in a position to trade with other dominant chiefs, and would have to direct their trading activities to the now paramount chief.

From this state of the political system, three possible lines of development can be envisaged, although over time they are not mutually exclusive. First, unlimited expansion—particularly at the level of the formation of new external political alliances—is likely to be checked by the tribute demands on dependants that it would entail. The increasing demands for the exploitation of local domestic resources and the attraction of manpower into craft production, to serve the need of external exchange, would compete for labour-time needed to provide basic foodstuffs. With increasing hierachisation, we can expect an emphasis on warfare to gain slaves to meet an increasing demand for labour. Thus the need to expand the size of dominant descent groups at the expense of subordinates will intensify in ratio to the amount of tribute demanded and the supply of wealth items available for redistribution. This inflationary spiral has logical contradictions which would ultimately bring about the collapse of the system.

The second possibility is for the paramount chief s monopoly over external trade to be broken, particularly if external trade relations are with an economic system organised on different principles. For example, if specialist traders are representing an external source, it may be to their advantage to maximise the number of outlets and to subvert the monopoly of the dominant chief. This development is likely to occur in conjunction with the first possibility since the tendency to maximise outlets can be seen as a response to a situation of diminishing returns contradicting the capacity of a local paramount to satisfy the needs of external trade partners necessary to maintain his own monopoly. If this occurs, then vassal chiefs may regain their independence and competing centres would develop within a previously uniform political domain. Each of these centres will compete for control over population and resources in order to expand at each other’s expense and at the expense of the originally dominant centre.

Third, if the external trade connections of the paramount chief are broken—either because of changes in the external system with which he is linked, or because of shifts in the location of trade routes and blocks in communication—due possibly to internal conflicts resulting from the above tendencies—then he is no longer able to maintain his superordinate position over vassal chiefs and sub-chiefs. In turn, their position will be at risk unless they are able to establish independent external trade relations, for example with the paramount’s former trade partners. Sub-chiefs in the peripheral areas will be the first to lose their supply of prestige goods and thus their means of control over population. The political domain will appear to contract from the periphery inwards as

supplies from the paramount chief increasingly fail to percolate down through the hierarchy of vassal chiefs.

This type of system is therefore unstable both in terms of contradiction within its internal functioning and also in terms of dependence on an external system over which it has limited practical control. Its internal conditions of existence rely on the capacity to mobilise lineage resources in order to maintain dominance over tribute relationships. As part of a wider regional system in which there may be a number of relays between a paramount and the suppliers of wealth objects, these systems are linked into a wider structure based on more abstract relations than have been dealt with here.

It is worth noting, however, that production for exchange is a constant feature of this type of social system. It is a matter of scale rather than discrete change whether this involves only local surpluses and wealth items or involvement in a wider regional system. It is the latter strategy that allows local societies to participate in a wider system of circulation of wealth and realise their fuller evolutionary potential. Thus must be particularly so when links are established with external systems organised on different economic principles. In such situations, trade partners may exchange what could be viewed by their respective populations internally as low value domestic items for external high value wealth items. Both partners gain in a manner significantly different from trade between similar systems; since this would necessitate an exchange of commodities used by both partners as wealth items before trade could take place. The conversion of low values to high values acceptable to both partners can therefore only exist when the systems of trading are organised on different rationalities and have different needs of each other such that maximum profits for almost zero costs may be achieved. This would account in general for the phenomenal expansion of local tribal systems that historically established contact with trading partners in city states, mercantile capitalist or industrial capitalist systems.

The internal contradictions described above are realised, therefore, within the context of a wider set of external contradictions, through a dependence on external demand and a wider productive area over which such local centres have no effective political control. One can, therefore, predict a cycle in which increasing external demand can be satisfied by local intensification only at the risk of bringing into play internal contradictions which in turn create conditions of instability that threaten the security of external trading partners. At the local level, any attempt to maintain the structure through an increased use of force both to obtain new sources of labour (slaves) as well as to cohere existing power relations would be subverted by the response of external trading partners who would maintain their position by subverting local monopolies and by establishing new links with more stable structures.

It has been convenient to think in terms of a single source of external demand for understanding the development of this local pattern. But the reality of these situations is more complex. Competition between centres at the local level (periphery) is likely to be replicated and stimulated by competition for dominance among their external trading partners (core centres). Disruption and subversion of long-distance trade is a constant feature of the history of such local systems. Since the expansion of core centres is dependent on their capacity to monopolise their peripheries, this must entail the reciprocal development of competing points of accumulation within the core area consistent with their ability to control access to resources in the peripheral areas. Hence,

the emergence of local competing centres in peripheral areas is directly related to the emergence of competing centres in the core area.

There is point at which the centres in the core area will recognise the value of using mass-produced objects—known from experience to be to the taste and requirements of their contacts in the peripheral areas—to maintain their dependence. In contrast to the previous phase of exchange between core and periphery—in which existing, heterogeneous sumptuary items were used—a situation is now found in which an increased interdependence has stimulated core centres to devote part of their productive effort to the manufacture of a restricted range of wealth objects specially for peripheral demand. This development would provide an incentive for intermediaries to adopt a more specialised role in their intervention between core and peripheral centres. A middleman function already exists in controlling and facilitating flows of goods along natural communication routes, but a more secure position exists in directly supplying the manufactured goods and luxury items primarily for specialist traders. With gradual acculturation of populations in the immediate hinterlands of the core centres, an intermediate zone is formed between core and periphery (Wallerstein 1964). In many cases it can be expected that these populations are largely dependent on playing a middleman role in the exchange between core and periphery. There is also a tendency for a spatial extension of the intermediate zone into the peripheral zone, such that the system's peripheral zone is constantly being extended outwards.

Finally, two patterns of change can be predicted within the system as a whole. First, the internal contradictions within peripheral domains combined with competition for advantage among core and intermediate centres will generate a regional pattern of considerable complexity seen in the expansion and decline of different centres in all three zones. Hence, we can expect localised shifts in dominance in one part of the regional system to affect either directly or indirectly—other parts within it. However, since the relationship between the core centres and peripheral areas is the basis of the regional system, crises in the core area could lead not only to a shift in dominance in the peripheral area, but also the collapse of the whole system of dominance. A crisis in the core area can therefore undermine the system of local dominance that it has generated on its periphery. Hence, the relations between core centres are critical for the maintenance of the system as a whole, while crises in the peripheral areas will represent only minor oscillations of shifting dominance (Wallerstein 1974).

Second, the peripheral domains will be at greatest risk if a crisis occurs in the regional system as a whole. Increasing antagonistic relations between core centres could disrupt the regional system and the stresses thereby set on the peripheral zone would put the very survival of the peripheral structures at risk. Thus, the rivalry between core centres will be overshadowed by the repercussions in peripheral domains, which may in turn threaten the existence of the core centres.

The archaeological indicators

The processes embodied in the general model imply certain essential characteristics that, when translated into material culture form, can be used to reinterpret the available archaeological data in a more meaningful way. At this point there is an inevitable loss in

analytical depth and precision as the transition is made from general modelling to hypothetical transformation of the model into material culture terms and subsequently the matching of material expectations to what is available in the archaeological record.

In the structure outlined in the model, political power is not directly linked to subsistence; so that by definition foodstuffs would not be passed up as tribute. Therefore we need not expect the intervention of centralised political authority in subsistence production, involving either technological innovation or the introduction of new crop complexes in order to increase surpluses. Instead, mobilisation of resources occurs within clan or lineage segments for the support of local leaders, sub-chiefs and paramount chiefs. Local resources include both foodstuffs and local specialities, but it is the production of the latter that is more likely to be controlled and at least in part passed up as tribute for redistribution and use in external trade. As a correlate of this we can expect direct control to be exercised over certain craft activities, particularly over the production of those artefacts requiring degrees of technical skill to which high social value and esteem could be attached, for example, metalwork, pottery and cloth. Hence there should be a degree of correspondence between the esteem or value attached to certain craft items; their significance as status conveyors in the political system and the point in the political hierarchy (hence settlement pattern) at which control is exercised over their production. We might expect, therefore, that fairly utilitarian items -such as woodwork, basketry and domestic pottery—would be manufactured at a domestic household level; low-value commodities such as tools or simple ornaments manufactured at the village level; and through an ascending hierarchy of grades of wealth objects and insignia, to the production of the most sophisticated prestige items being controlled at the paramount level.

This in turn would place a greater responsibility on more dominant chiefly clans to support craft specialists. Since dominance is largely a function of the productivity of support groups, the demand for labour and size of descent groups increases in proportion to relative importance in a chiefly hierarchy. The support of part-time to full-time specialists and the intensification of craft production for internal redistribution and for external exchange depends, therefore, on the capacity of a paramount chief s support group to intensify food production, primarily by changing the ratio of labour to land rather than through technological innovation. Hence, chiefly power is ultimately contingent on the number of dependants absorbed into a chiefly clan, a factor which may be reflected both in the settlement pattern evidence (size and number of domestic structures, storage of food surpluses, workshop areas) and possibly in the burial practice (for example, ranking and number of secondary burials in relation to primary ‘chiefly’ burials).

As already discussed, external exchange between trade partners involving the reciprocal exchange of domestic resources and wealth objects is the basis of the cohesion of this political structure. Inter-regional trade, therefore, can be seen as a series of links between the heads of separate political domains and possibly specialist traders representing more distant trade partners. What passes between them may be both a mixture of foreign status items as well as exotic raw materials which could be fashioned locally into wealth objects and status insignia for redistribution. Internally, the distribution of such items within a domain should show a high degree of stylistic uniformity and a scalo-gram effect in the sense that a more complex assemblage of status

insignia and wealth objects can be anticipated at higher levels in a chiefly hierarchy than at lower levels. Hence in strongly hierarchical structure, vassals and sub-chiefs are likely to obtain insignia of their status from a paramount, so that political ranking will be represented by differential access to status insignia and regalia. Both of these effects in the distribution should in turn be confirmed by technical and compositional evidence linking widely dispersed craft items to a single, centralised point of manufacture which, in the case of the more important categories of insignia and wealth objects, should be situated in the settlement of a paramount chief. Similarly, where more than one domain is linked to a common external source of foreign imports and raw materials, it is unlikely that clear-cut differences in wealth and insignia will be found in each domain, although it could be anticipated that different values will be applied resulting in different combinations of materials and status insignia in different domains.

The extent of a domain and the definition of its sub-domains in an archaeological context could be recognised minimally by the uniformity of particular combinations of prestige objects, by tracing them to centralised points of manufacture and distribution and contrasting their distribution with the greater stylistic variation of domestically produced commodities. The structure of each sub-domain can also be defined by the different ranked status of burials, reflecting levels in the political hierarchy. In some cases the presence of secondary burials in a tumulus may be used to understand the internal ranking within a group.

Spatially, the political structure appears as a series of sub-domains with a single political domain. At the most developed stage in the hierarchisation process, each domain or sub-domain will have a paramount or vassal chief at its head. The vassal chiefs would be linked by tribute relations to the sub-domain of a paramount. Below the vassal chief or paramount, one can anticipate at least one level of sub-chiefs who could have political authority over a number of village heads or over an intermediary level of lesser chiefs.

While control over external trade is a prerogative of the paramount, control is restricted to those resources and items that carry highest status or value in internal and external exchange transactions. Control is exercised therefore not by force but by limitations on the kind of goods that lesser chiefs are able to mobilise for external exchange. Hence, it should be impossible for them to obtain external trade partners and receive those goods that are in fact controlled at a higher level. The structure itself therefore determines what kind of goods or resources can be channelled into external exchange at different levels within the hierarchy. In the sense that vassals and sub-chiefs are legitimated through their relationship to a paramount, they have a vested interest in maintaining the structure, as long as the tribute/redistribution network continues to maintain their position. Ideological functions will also act to maintain and legitimate the structure, particularly in the framework of mythical charters and ritualised access to resources and right to modes of address, behaviour, costume and other ceremonial and ritual paraphernalia.

Since the position of a paramount depends on his controlling external exchange of highest status goods, he in turn acts as a dependant of an external system whose structure may be only vaguely comprehended. In the same way as vassal chiefs will have a number of the accoutrements of a paramount, the paramount will take on patterns of dress, custom and even burial rites characteristic of the cultures with which he is in contact.

Finally, certain tentative predictions can be made concerning the patterns in the archaeological record that derive from our understanding of the logical contradictions inherent in such structures. For example, internal conflicts within a dominant clan or between it and rival descent groups, resulting from the intensification of tribute and redistribution required in order to maintain expansion, could be witnessed in evidence of hostilities and dynastic change at the paramount's centre. A continual state of insecurity might put the perpetuity of external exchange relationships at risk. If external partners solve their problems by establishing links at lower levels in the hierarchy then a collapsed pattern of competing centres within a previously uniform domain should emerge, with each subdivision now being distinguished by the same criteria that had previously characterised the domain as a whole.

The case

There is now considerable evidence that the emergence of a powerful chiefdom in the Heuneburg area in Ha D was due to internal changes in the Ha C, Alb-Salem cultures, rather than due to conquest or a change in population. Continuity is recognised in the tumulus cemeteries which have both Ha C and Ha D1 burials; in the burial site characteristics of Ha D, that is, inhumation, which is seen to begin in Ha C; in continuity of settlement, for example, at the Heuneburg; and in continued use in Ha D of pottery styles of Ha C origin (Paret 1933–1935b, 1935–1938; Zürn 1943). But as is well known, the D1 developments in the Heuneburg area coincide with the establishment of trade links between the western part of Central Europe and Greek colonies and Etruscans in the western Mediterranean via the Rhône valley and the western Alpine passes. Our concern, therefore, is to first establish the internal structure of the Heuneburg, as one of the domains affected by these contacts, and subsequently to establish its position in this wider exchange network.

The Heuneburg domain in the D1

The primary evidence for the internal structure of the Heuneburg political domain comes from burials. On the basis of this evidence, four levels in the political hierarchy can be defined:

1 *Paramount chief status.* This is defined by inhumation burial in a wooden chamber, containing a wagon and horse trappings, imported (or locally made) bronze vessels for wine drinking, imported gold sheet and objects, silk and gold thread, large quantities of cloth, imported glass, amber and coral. The wagon and inhumation burial are traditional Ha C indicators of chiefly status (Kossack 1959; Ruoff 1974) but the other features are characteristics of Greek and Etruscan burial custom and status.
2 *Vassal chief status.* This is defined by a similar, but simpler, burial by inhumation with a wagon, horse trappings and bronze vessels. However, many of the imported sumptuary items—including the gold, the quantities of glass, the amber and coral—are lacking. Instead, technically sophisticated bronze weapons and jewellery are found; there is evidence to indicate that they were produced at the paramount settlement.

3 *Sub-chief status.* This is defined by the presence of a wagon or usually by a part of a wagon associated with burial by inhumation. Contents may include imported items, also elaborate bronze daggers, belt-plaques, bronze or lignite arm-bands of centralised manufacture and distribution.

The distinguishing characteristic of all three of the highest status levels is the presence of a wagon, which has been shown by Kossack (1959) to be a traditional indicator of high status during the Hallstatt period in the eastern and western zone north of the Alps.

Below the sub-chief level, two other status levels can be recognised:

4 Minor chief or village chief status is defined by exclusion from wagon burial and absence of imported sumptuary items. However, some of the centrally produced items—such as daggers, belt plaques and arm-bands—are found in some burials, as are the widely distributed, small items of bronze jewellery, such as earrings and fibulae. Other items, which appear to be locally produced, such as simple bronze arm- and foot-rings, iron weapons and pottery, are among the contents.

5 Most of the burials below the first four status levels are less likely to have been recorded and are usually known to occur as poorer secondary burials in tumuli. The usual contents are represented by simple bronze ornaments, such as a fibula or arm-ring, an iron implement—such as a knife or a spearhead. In many cases, however, it can still be said that certain items—like the fibulae—were centrally produced and must have been redistributed through the chiefly hierarchy to this low status level.

Using these definitions, it is possible to reorganise the grave contents in tabular form to show a scalogram effect of descending frequency in combinations of elite goods in what is assumed here to represent differential ranking in the political hierarchy (Table 13.1). The general validity of these subdivisions would seem to be confirmed when plotted on a distribution map showing the subdivisions of the paramount chief and those of his vassals (Map 13.1).

The empirical evidence seems initially to fit the pattern predicted in the indicators quite well. All status ranks within the Heuneburg domain appear to be defined in relationship to each other through their differential access to polythetic sets of status items which—in 10 out of 14 cases—can be justifiably interpreted as foreign prestige objects or access to centrally produced status items necessitating high degrees of technical skill and the use of imported raw materials. The table would also appear to display a second pattern of variation reflecting a difference in the function or value attached to these different items. While the first six items (wagon, horse-trappings, bronze vessels, cloth, gold, glass/amber/coral) co-vary on a presence/absence basis with rank, the lowest order items—in particular the smaller items of bronze jewellery such as earrings, fibulae and arm-rings—occur at all levels in the hierarchy. In other words, if these polythetic sets simply represented insignia of political rank, then one would expect these lower order commodities to occur mainly at the lower rank levels. Instead, these items are found at all levels of the social order and seem better interpreted as items indicative of adult social status and clearly needed to be acquired by all social adults (male/female). They could not, therefore, be used to indicate political rank but performed more general functions within the society. But there is considerable evidence to suggest that even the band earrings and snake and bow fibulae were centrally manufactured and distributed, that is, their complexity of form and general uniformity of style would

indicate non-local production and distribution. This pattern of uniform value and centralised manufacture and distribution would support their being interpreted as prestige items which all adult males would have had to acquire to achieve full adult social status. If their distribution was controlled from a central point, then we must assume that this provided a significant source of power over the whole adult male population for the central chiefdom institutions.

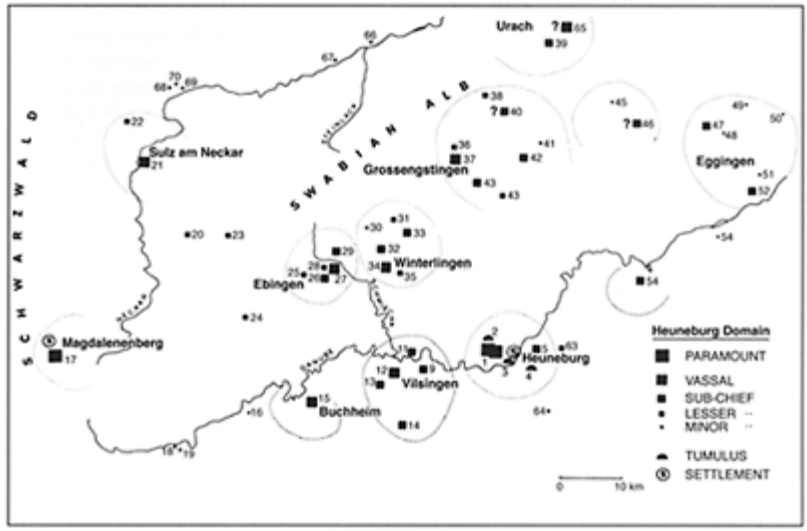
Table 13.1 Scalogram of grave contents of paramount, vassal and sub-chief in the Heuneburg domain, Ha D1

Site no.	*Burial*	*Wagon*	*Trappings*	*Bronze vessels*	*Cloth*	*Gold*	*Glass/Amber/coral/ivory*	*Bronze weapons*	*Lignite*	*Bronze belt plates*	*Bronze arm-rings*	*Bronze fibulae*	*Iron Weapons*	*Bronze pandent and earnings*	*Pottery*
1	Hohmichele I	×	?	?	×	×	×			×					×
1	Hohmichele VI	×	×	×	×		×			×		×	×	×	
12	Vilsingen	×		×							×		×		×
15	Buchheim	×	×	×			×						×		×
34	Winterlingen	×					?						×		
27	Ebingen I	×	×					?		?		×	×		×
21	Sulz a.N.	×													
52	Eggingen	×													
37	Grossengstingen	×													
65	‘Urach’	×													
5	Ertingen			×			×		×					×	
63	Hailtingen			×									×		×
26	Ebingen			×						×	×	×	×		
29	Truchtelfingen	×						×				×			
9	Laiz	×								?					×
38	Meidelstetten	×											×	×	×

42	Marbach	×					
46	Böttingen	?			?		
13	Engelsweis	×					
32	Bitz	×				?	
47	Berghülen	×					
54	Emerkingen	?					
33	Gauselfingen	×					
11	Sigmaringen	×				?	
14	Ringenbach	×					
40	St Johann	?					

The way in which the different levels in the hierarchy are linked to each other and ultimately to the paramount chief can be shown in greater detail. As stated above, the three highest status levels are linked by possession of a wagon. As Kossack (1959) and Driehaus (n.d.) have pointed out, these are complex artefacts composed of elements requiring different kinds of specialist skills. Schiek (1954, 1956) has shown that all the wagons of D1 (his type A) have marked similarities in the details of their construction. Thus, Schiek (1956:132) describes the similar hub arrangement of the Hügelsheim, Vilsingen and Winterlingen graves and a grave of unknown location in the Urach area, that is, iron rings with a bronze sheet covering. An iron ring joining the *Nabenhals* to the *Mittelstuck* (hub) covered with bronze is found in all the above graves and also in Hohmichele VI. The Vilsingen wagon had bronze hub-caps as did the wagon from Suiz a.N. (Paret 1935:21; Schiek 1954). Among these wagons, Hügelsheim, Vilsingen and Winterlingen are described by Schiek (1956:133) as forming a 'special group' within type A because the details of their construction are so alike that he believes they must have come from a single workshop. All the D1 wagons listed by Schiek (1954) have large-headed iron nails fixing the iron tyres to the felloes. Different types of semi-cylindrical and cylindrical fittings are found at Hohmichele VI, Vilsingen, Hügelsheim and Laiz. Bronze spoke covering is found at Vilsingen and Hügelsheim; and various types of strap crossings are found in Hohmichele VI, Buchheim, Ebingen and Kappel.

In Ha D1, the manufacture and distribution of these wagons must be attributed to the Heuneburg (cf. Driehaus, n.d.). Significantly, iron tyre fragments and large-headed nails are known from the settlement.



Map 13.1 The Heuneburg domain, Ha D1. List of sites:

1 Hohmichele, Gem. Heiligkreuztal.

2 Kleine Hohmichele, Gem. Heiligkreuztal.

3 Lehenbühl, Hundersingen.

4 Bettelbühl, Hundersingen.

5 'Rauher Lehen' Ertingen, Kr. Saulgau.

9 Laiz, Kr. Sigmaringen.

11 Sigmaringen 'Ziegelholz'.

12 Vilsingen, Kr. Sigmaringen.

13 Engelsweis, Kr. Stockach.

14 Ringenback, Kr. Sigmaringen.

15 Buchheim, Kr. Stockach.

16 Ludwigstal, Kr. Tuttlingen.

17 Magdalenenburg, Villingen.

18 Mauenheim, Kr. Donaueschingen.

19 Bargen 'Zimmerholz', Kr. Konstanz.

20 Dautmergen, Kr. Balingen.

34 Winterlingen, OA, Bailingen.

35 Harthausen auf der Scheer, Kr. Sigmaringen.

36 Grossengstingen, Kr. Reutlingen.

37 Grossengstingen, Kr. Reutlingen.

38 Meidenstetten, Kr. Münsingen.

39 'Burrenhof Erkenntsbrechweiler, Kr. Nürtingen.

40 Würtingen St Johann Gem. Würtingen.

41 Steingebronn, Kr. Münsingen.

42 Marbach, OA. Münsingen.

43 Oberstetten, OA. Münsingen.

44 Indelhausen, Kr. Münsingen.

45 Zainingen, Kr. Münsingen.

46 Böttingen, Kr. Münsingen.

47 Berghülen, Kr. Ulm.

48 Asch, OA. Blaubeuren.

49 Tomerdingen, Kr. Ulm.

21 Sulz-am-Neckar, Kr. Horb.
22 Dürrenmettstetten, OA. Sulz.
23 Dormettingen, Kr. Balingen.
24 Bubsheim, Kr. Tuttlingen.
25 Hossingen, Kr. Balingen.
26 Ebingen, Kr. Balingen (Schmiechatal).
27 Ebingen, Kr. Balingen (3 km south-west of Ebingen).
28 Ebingen, Kr. Balingen (Degenfeld).
29 Truchtelfingen, Kr. Balingen.
30 Hermannsdorf, Kr. Sigmaringen.
31 Bitz, OA. Balingen.
33 Gauselfingen, Kr. Hechingen.
50 Beimerstetten, OA. Ulm.
51 Ermingen, OA. Blaubeuren.
52 Eggingen, OA. Blaubeuren.
54 Emerkingen, Kr. Ehingen.
55 Öpfingen, OA. Ehingen.
63 Hailtingen, OA. Riedlingen.
64 Buchau, OA. Riedlingen.
65 'Urach', Kr. Reutlingen.
66 Tübingen 'Flurgeigerle'.
67 Wolfenhausen, Kr. Tübingen.
68 Salzstetten, Kr. Horb.
69 Hochdorf, Kr. Horb.
70 Untertalheim, Kr. Horb.

The form and materials of other grave goods show further connections between these graves: for example, there are iron *Hiebmesser* in Hohmichele VI, Vilsingen and Winterlingen (and Steingebronn, without a wagon). Similar imported bronze vessels are found in Vilsingen, Winterlingen and Ertingen. Harness fittings occur in Buchheim and Hohmichele VI (distinctive types of strap-crossing). There are particularly striking similarities in the grave contents of the paramount burial at Hohmichele VI and the sub-chief burial at Ertingen (Paret 1933–1935a; Schiek 1954, 1956), which is within the Heuneburg subdomain. They share certain forms of bronze pendants, amber and glass beads and whetstones.

These connections between sub-vassal and paramount chiefs are further strengthened by the evidence for centralised production of bronze, iron and lignite objects, painted pottery and cloth (Bittel and Rieth 1951:50) in the Heuneburg. Large scale bronze-working, that is, the many 'workshop areas' in Phase IV levels and the indications of casting debris, moulds, discarded casting, are relevant here. Although iron-working is noted in many publications, very few details of the evidence are given. The most detailed data is still that of Bittel and Rieth (1951:33–4, tables 10 and 11, figures 5a and b) in which iron material from a trench within the settlement is described and illustrated: it included knife fragments, even a thrusting knife *(Hiebmesser),* and the pieces of iron tyre and nail. Bronze working and finds of fibulae, sheet bronze and scrap are referred to by Kimmig and Gersbach (1966, 1971) and Kimmig (1968, 1975). Bittel and Rieth (1951:32ff., table 11) refer to moulds and other casting evidence from the site. The extent and the nature of bronze and iron-working on the Heuneburg is still unpublished and has to be deduced from the finds in the burials and their interpretation.

Bone spacer beads are found, lignite and jet-working is also known to have taken place (Rochna 1962; Kimmig 1968). In addition, as Zürn (1943) had predicted, the centre for the production of the characteristic painted pottery of D1 has, on the basis of the range and variety of finds there and the specialised firing techniques involved, been located at the Heuneburg (Bittel and Rieth 1951; Kimmig 1968:78).

According to Kimmig (e.g. 1968), the glass found in the graves was made locally—at the Heuneburg. From the large numbers of loom weight and needles found on the fortified and open sites, we know that cloth production was on a large scale, and from the cloth embroidered with silk or golden threads found in the *Fürsten* graves, we know that some of the cloth was of extremely high quality (Riek and Hundt 1962; Hundt 1969). It was probably distributed as a prestige item, thus contrasting with locally made material. In other words, there is direct evidence of workshop production as well as the stylistic and technical evidence to link the distribution of most of the status insignia and wealth objects found in the sub-domains to the paramount centre. The objects distributed from this centre also vary in quantity within each sub-domain and are found in large numbers only within the Heuneburg sub-domain, for example, Hohmichele I contained more than 400 glass beads, amber bead necklaces, and large quantities of cloth (lining the chamber and covering the wagon), while elsewhere they are found in much smaller quantities.

As mentioned in the indicators, this pattern of centrally redistributed prestige items showing marked uniformity in style should contrast with regional variation in the locally produced, primarily domestic, craft items. At the present time, this pattern is found for the domestic pottery: many local wares were produced on the Alb during the Ha D1 period (Zürn 1943), in contrast to the richly decorated forms that were manufactured at and distributed from the Heuneburg. It is significant to note that of all the items found in the graves of every rank only certain kinds of ironwork and pottery can be said to be of local manufacture. Hence items that were considered of importance to be disposed of in funerary ritual appear to be mainly those that were distributed through the chiefly hierarchy. Also, as Driehaus (n.d.) and others have noted, craft skills were invested in the production of items that required considerable technical expertise, combinations of raw materials and workshops to produce, that is, items that were being passed down were also symbols of chiefly control over complex craft skills and the acquisition of raw materials that could not be replicated at the local level. The centrally produced and distributed items are more complex in technique that those made locally and may have been either imported or manufactured at the centre from imported raw materials, that is, hollow bronze neck rings, ‘barrel’ arm-bands of bronze sheet or lignite, bronze sheet earrings, amber beads and pendants, glass beads, bronze pendants or imports, such as the snake fibula with rosette and horns form Ebingen (Paret 1933–1935b). Where found in small quantity, the status value of the item is likely to be considerably increased, for example, one glass bead in a grave at Ebingen and others from Durrenmettstetten (Paret 1924) and Magdalenenburg graves.

If this interpretation of the distribution of prestige objects as reflecting the extension of political control by the paramount chief is correct, then confirmation can be expected from evidence of tribute being passed up from sub-chiefs and vassal chiefs to the paramount. In this regard there is said to be evidence for prehistoric iron-working on the Uracher Alb (for example, Paret 1961); thus iron-working can be proposed as specialist activity in the Grossengstingen and Winterlingen sub-domains on the Alb. The exploitation of lignite in the (Balingen) area of the Ebingen sub-domain has already been demonstrated by Rochna (1962). It seems likely, therefore, that the iron and lignite known to have been worked at the Heuneburg were passed up as tribute by the vassal chiefs of these sub-domains. Furthermore, the worked lignite was used in external exchanges: eastwards, in southern Bavaria, and westwards, in the Upper Rhône centres

(from where it would have been further distributed to Switzerland, especially the Bern area, Alsace, and west of Freiburg i. Br.). Rochna (1962) regards the armrings, narrow and broad armbands found in southern Wurttemburg as D1 material; their occurrence in the more distant regions of Switzerland and Alsace are generally regarded—by him and others—as of a later (mainly D2) date. He stresses the location of the lignite finds on river crossings in Bavaria, and their association with the characteristic pottery with red painting on a white background (cf. Kossack 1959). He also emphasises the problem of locating the sources of lignite and suggests that in D1 at least three types were in use. The lignite material of armbands found in TailfingenTruchtelfingen, Ertingen, Dottingen and Tannheim is the same. This supports the proposed centralised manufacture and distribution from the Heuneburg, despite the fact that some material found there is of a different type.

The inclusion of hides and fleeces, boar's tusk (mounted in bronze in Hohmichele VI) and an iron-ore pendant in paramount graves can be interpreted as symbolic representations of tribute given to a paramount by his vassals.

This evidence appears to confirm the predicted material flows that articulate the sub-domains in a hierarchical relationship to the paramount chief. Clearly if the redistribution of wealth objects, possibly together with more basic materials, was the primary responsibility of the Heuneburg paramount to his vassals, then his capacity to do so depended ultimately on his ability to mobilise the necessary resources to maintain specialist craft activity at the centre, to store and redistribute their craft products and foreign prestige goods, and to organise the external flows of the domestic resources of his domain. The paramount's ability to perform these functions seems to have been determined to a considerable extent by the size of his household and its productive capacity to supply craft specialists with foodstuffs and probably to support other 'retainers' attached to his household. There is no evidence that foodstuffs or labour were demanded as tribute nor that the development of powerful chiefdoms in Ha D1 was accompanied by intensification of the agricultural system, either in terms of new crop complexes or new tools. One must conclude, therefore, that a paramount's position depended largely on the size of his household in order to mobilise more labour—and therefore produce—on more land than other households at lower levels of the hierarchy. The large granaries within the fortified Heuneburg settlement (phases IVa 1 and 2) would have been needed to store grain for consumption and seed. A very rough estimate of the size of a paramount's household, in comparison to lesser chiefs, can be gained from the more recent excavations of secondary burials associated with a paramount in a tumulus. At the Magdalenenburg there are well over a hundred secondary burials associated with a *Fürsten* grave and dated principally to Ha D1, while at Mauenheim, which can be interpreted as a sub-chief level of the Magdalenenberg hierarchy, there were ten secondaries in each of two tumuli with wagon graves (Spindler 1971, 1972a, 1973; Wamser 1972). Figures for other *Fürsten* graves are distorted by poor or partial excavation combined with robbing and destruction of the graves in antiquity. Tumuli belonging to lower categories than these have sometimes survived intact and tended to be associated with an average 3–5 secondaries so that although the figures are in themselves unreliable, there does seem to be an overall pattern of declining numbers of dependant burials associated with ranking in the political hierarchy. A simple analysis of the surviving secondary burials in the Hohmichele indicates that internal ranking within these

descent groups existed (Table 13.2) in that access to insignia and wealth objects within the group replicates to some extent the ranking found within the domain as a whole.

Table 13.2 The Hohmichele grave contents

Grave no./ burial rite	*Wagon*	*Horse-trapping*	*Bronze vessels*	*Glass*	*Coral*	*Bronze pendant*	*Gold*	*Amber*	*Cloth (other than clothing)*	*Iron weapon*	*Bronze belt plaque*	*Bronze fibula*	*Bronze ring*	*Bronze pin*	*Pottery*
VI/inhumation	×	×	×	×	×	×		×	×	×	×	×			
I/inhumation	×	×		×			×	×	×		×		×		×
VIII/inhumation										×	×	×			
XI/cremation							×					×			×
XII/cremation								×					×		
VII/inhumation											×		×	×	
IX/cremation									?				×		×
II/inhumation												?	?		×
XIII/cremation												×	×		
X/cremation													×		×
III/inhumation												?			
IV/inhumation															×
V/inhumation															×

The hypothesis presented in the model predicted that if access to different sets of prestige goods was regulated and control of their use was the basis for manipulating power relations, then this would be confirmed by evidence of centralised production and the exclusivity of the distribution of such goods in burial and other contexts. Table 13.1 confirms that Ha D1 wealth goods in the Heuneburg area do divide into such predicted groupings and that different categories of items appear to have been distributed and

acquired consistent with the different levels of rank and status. The distribution of these graves (Figure 13.1) also shows that persons of the highest rank were part of a dispersed hierarchy and were not 'in residence' at a paramount centre. The Heuneburg paramount formed the centre of a network of political alliances (dependent in terms of his subordinates and equivalent if not competitive with his external partners) that politically integrated a large area of south-western Germany (mainly Baden-Württemberg). The spatial pattern in particular predicts a system of semi-autonomous small chiefdoms (that is, relatively self-suffi-cient economically and socially), the heads of which recognise one of their number (at the Heuneburg) as of paramount (superordinate) status. Since their relationships of superordinacy/subordinacy to each other is determined by success in competitive exchange, access to external trade and size of following, a paramount would effectively be *primus inter pares*, successful only for so long as he is able to dominate the local exchange and redistribution networks through access to more powerful trading partners than subordinate chiefs can acquire.

Hence for a paramount at the Heuneburg, confirming and extending his external trading partnerships is critical for maintaining and enlarging his position. We are therefore presented with two potentially different patterns in the archaeological record. First, burials of dependent chiefs that would contain high status prestige items which can be derived principally from the Heuneburg paramount and his external trading network. Second, burials of his exchange partners that might contain gifts from the Heuneburg paramount, but will also contain other goods—not found within the Heuneburg paramount's domain—indicative of the partner's independent position in the wider exchange system.

In the first case, 'status insignia' act as prestige items circulating within a particular chiefly rank, such that they not only act as symbols of power but access to them forms one of the bases of power of a chief. The model would also predict that these items would circulate from paramount to dependant as part of the total social relations linking the two categories. Hence, it is likely that the Heuneburg paramount would be giving valuables to his dependants through the formation of marriage alliances with them and through feasting, hospitality and other acts of chiefly generosity. His immediate dependants would then, in turn, have the resources to act likewise to their dependants in each sub-chiefdom. They in return would give him local resources and specialities as signs of respect for his authority and in discharge of reciprocal obligations. It would be these commodities (such as the iron, lignite, wool, possibly slaves) which a paramount would use to exchange with his external trading partners, while being saved himself the direct labour of their extraction, exploitation, refining, and so on. Instead, the labour of a paramount's immediate dependant group can be used to produce the domestic prestige items to be redistributed, the production of foodstuffs, and the organisation (transport costs mainly) of external trade. As can be envisaged, the labour demand for a paramount is far greater that that of any of his dependants in order to satisfy these requirements and he therefore acts as a prodigious provider for women to produce children and a recruiter of slaves and clients to incorporate into his household as direct producers.

In the second case, a paramount's external trading partners will be selected for their capacity to provide him with necessary prestige goods and raw materials for internal redistribution. We can predict, therefore, that the Heuneburg paramount's relations with his 'outside world' will be governed by the wider regional trade network that he has been

able to latch on to. In this case, however, the relation is one of equivalence (although potentially it could and would be seen desirable by both partners to convert it into a dependent relationship and would therefore be competitive in nature). The partnership is likely to be established and maintained by gift exchange and very likely the exchange of women, and would act as the basis on which exchanges of different resources (for example, Heuneburg tribute for Upper Rhine imports) could be affected.

External relations of the Heuneburg in Ha D1

Initially, eastern contacts were probably dominant, that is, the copper and salt resources of the Salzburg area in particular, which had supplied large parts of Central Europe with these basic raw materials for a long time. Copper would have been required at the Heuneburg in ever-increasing quantities for the production of high-status bronze items, including the large amounts of sheet bronze needed for the manufacture of vessels and for the trimmings of wagon wheels, and possibly bodies. Salt was a commodity of which the acquisition and distribution could easily be controlled by a paramount.

Whereas in south-west Germany one finds in Ha C a localised development from Ha B in the eastern Hallstatt region, Ha C has been shown to be radically altered through the development of production for exchange and trade with the south. Kossack (1959) has identified and interpreted these changes in Ha C society, using evidence from graves, to emphasise the essentially peripheral nature of south Bavaria in relation to the centres in the Salzach—Enns area, the south-east Alpine area and later the Swabian Alb and further west. In the transition from Ha C to Ha D, it was the demands of the eastern centres for surplus products to use in trade with the south that leads to the development of the western Hallstatt region. But it is clearly the emergence of the possibility of direct access of the western Hallstatt centres to the south that coincides with the eclipse of the development of the eastern Hallstatt region.

As yet, the earliest evidence for the connections between the Hallstatt region and an emergent south-western German centre comes from the Magdalenenburg where the transition from Ha C to Ha D1 shows evidence of material flowing from both the east and—presumably via the Rhine—directly from the south-west. Connections between the Magdalenenburg and the eastern Alpine region are suggested by the horse trappings in the central burial; the decorated belt plaques (graves 71, 72, 78) which Kilian-Dirlmeier (cited by Spindler 1973:13) believes to be related by the type of decoration and its arrangement to Bavarian or Hallstatt parallels, and the double-horned fibula in grave 81 of Slovenian origin. The existence of connections with chiefdoms to the west and indirectly with emerging western Mediterranean trading networks is indicated by the presence of an acebuchal type of belt in grave 65 (Spindler 1973, 1972b). The direction of the exchange by which gold, glass, amber, lignite and copper were obtained can only be surmised. In early Ha D1 it can be suggested that the eastern exchanges were dominant. It was the intervention of the Heuneburg chief in the eastern exchange which enabled him first to control the flow of valuables to the Magdalenenburg paramount, second to dominate and subordinate the Magdalenenburg paramount; and third to take his place in exchanges with the Upper Rhine centres and thus, indirectly, enter into the *western* Mediterranean network.

In Ha D1, Kossack has argued that the Heuneburg obtained its supplies of amber from further east and the Durnberg is a likely source of copper and salt which were probably both internally redistributed and passed on by the Heuneburg paramount to centres on the Upper Rhine or direct to the south. Riek cites the only parallels for the Hohmichele glass beads as coming from Bavaria and the Hallstatt cemetery and considers that they were probably made in Etruria and the Po valley, that is, they reached the Heuneburg through its eastern exchange partners. The Heuneburg therefore maintained its links with the eastern region but by this period we may be recognising a reversal of the Ha C pattern and the eastern Hallstatt region supplied raw materials in return for wealth items and luxuries coming from the west via the Heuneburg.

Initially, it would seem likely that the Magdalenenburg was the western exchange partner of the Heuneburg chief. The evidence for their connections comes from the fortified settlement at the Kapf. Hübener (1972) has compared the pottery—especially the large-bellied pots of the painted pottery, on white background—from the settlement with that of Heuneburg phases IVa, b and from the graves of the Magdalenenburg tumulus where contents include the band-earrings, daggers, belt-plaques and *Tonnen* arm-bands which are found throughout the Heuneburg domain (Spindler 1971, 1972a, 1973). This evidence indicates that by Ha D1, the Magdalenenburg was linked to the Heuneburg—and with the exception of some items of costume, like the pins in the women's headgear, used the same insignia of social status and possibly political rank: daggers, glass, amber and coral beads, and so on. It may even be suggested that graves 39 or 67 represent the descendants of the Magdalenenburg paramount who became dependent on the Heuneburg paramount and were buried with some of the insignia of the sub-chief status, antenna daggers. Through the Magdalenenburg, the Heuneburg gained access to the *Goldgruppe Fürsten* (Driehaus, n.d.: 208). Thus the Heuneburg had established access to the eastern and western exchange partners through a series of intermediary alliances.

The clearest indication of exchange relations between the Heuneburg paramount and the Upper Rhine centres is from the wagon burial at Hügelsheim (Kr. Rastatt). Schiek (1954, 1956) has emphasised the similarities in construction detail of this wagon and those from Vilsingen and Winterlingen. This would indicate the distribution of these centrally manufactured wagons to vassals and external exchange partners. It is suggested that the Upper Rhine centres—of which Kappel (Kr. Lahr), Schlatt (A. Staufen), Ihringen (Kr. Freiburg) and Ensisheim (Arr. Gebweiler, Haute-Rhin) represent other chiefly burials—were independent of the Heuneburg but that reciprocal gift giving and exchange of domestic and imported resources linked them. The trefoil bronze jugs found in Kappel and Vilsingen, and the golden *Kahn* earrings found in Hohmichele XI are indications of these exchanges. The Kappel chamber, like that of Hügelsheim, is said to have been lined with bronze sheet (Schiek 1954:156) which is only replicated in the Heuneburg domain in Ha D2 at Giessubel 3, but the strap-crossings are like those found in the Hohmichele VI. The Kappel bronze vessels are thought by Kimmig and Rest (1954) to have reached the Upper Rhine via Marseille and the Rhône route since parallels for the trefoil flagons (shown by Frey (1963) to be of Etruscan manufacture) are found in southern France. The other contents include a finely decorated bronze sheet belt—with eastern Alpine and southern decorative elements according to Kimmig and Rest (1954)—and gold neck and armbands, and a bronze bowl thought to be of local manufacture.

It is unfortunate that the settlement deposits from the Münsterberg in Breisach do not help us on this early Ha D situation. R. Dehn (personal communication) correlates the Late Ha/Early La Tène level at the Münsterberg with Heuneburg I, and Kimmig's 'Vixen' sherds (1969) are associated with Marnian-like wheel-made pottery and Ionian/Pseudo-Ionian amphorae sherds. Thus, for Ha D2 there is evidence for the southern and western exchange activities for this Upper Rhine centre. Its role during Ha D1 is not yet clear.

There are, however, significant indications of another possible centre for early Ha D at the Britzgyberg, near Illfurth in Upper Alsace. The Britzgyberg has been described by Spindler (1972c) as a *Fürstensitz.* The sondages and excavation carried out between 1967 and 1971 have been briefly published by Schweitzer (1970, 1971, 1973) and Stahl-Weber (1972). The site is an *éperon barré,* in the Largue valley, in a situation that Stahl-Weber (1972) believes would enable the occupants of the site to control the passage between the Rhône and the Rhine. Furthermore, the habitation deposits contain much evidence for bronze-working—an ingot, slag, castings—including rejects—moulds, and so on—iron-working and weaving. Many finds which are only briefly described would have parallels in the D1 material from the Heuneburg: iron arrowheads, miniature vessels, serpentiform fibula with disc, pottery situlae, a polychrome vase.

Map 13.2 shows the distribution of the Upper Rhine graves with a wagon (Hügelsheim) and with gold and rich bronze contents (Ensisheim, Ihringen, Schlatt, Sollingen, Kappel). All are thought to be of D1 date by Schiek, except Schlatt (not listed, 1954: figure 6) and Hatten, which is certainly of a later date since its contents include a beaked flagon (Frey 1957; Dehn and Frey 1962). Driehaus (n.d.: 270) dates all these *Fürsten* graves—with the exception of Hatten—to D1 and, following Kimmig (1969) accepts the Breisach Münster-berg as a *Fürstensitz,* but not the dominant centre of this group of *Fürsten* (288), Driehaus (208) believed that the 'Heuneburg group' of *Fürsten* graves was earlier than the *Goldgruppe* of the Upper Rhine which differed in burial rite and which in fact came to dominate. He also suggested that the same social structure would be represented by both groups.

The nature of the distribution of these graves, as seen in Map 13.2, along the Upper Rhine suggests that these chiefdoms may have retained their independence without one being able to dominate the others, although they were

Map 13.2 Distribution of Fürsten graves in the Upper Rhine valley

certainly involved in exchanges, as indicated by the similarity in the contents of the graves—gold bands, bronze vessels, and so on. (Their independence of the Heuneburg paramount is indicated by the different combination of high-status insignia, including items not found in the Heuneburg domain even at the highest level, such as gold bands.) Exchange therefore took place between equals but a situation probably existed in which there was competition between independent chiefdoms to control access to their own hinterland and continue to attract the external trade partners to direct their economic activity to them rather than to a competing chief. The Heuneburg—Hügelsheim exchange partnership may have been established to counteract the dominance of the *Goldgruppe* centre further to the south. The exceptional Hatten burial may represent a later phase of this more northern centre. As will be discussed below, the status items of the *Goldgruppe,* gold arm- and neckbands, were to dominate the insignia of highest political rank of the Ha D2 paramount at the Hohenasperg.

To summarise: although rank differentiation had been recognised, for example, in Bavaria, and expressed in similar categories of status insignia by Kossack (1959), the scale of political development during D1 in the Heuneburg area is of a different order of magnitude. In other words, we appear to be dealing with conditions of expansion in which formerly independent local chiefs become incorporated as dependants of a

dominant chief who was able to control their economic activity. This development seems to occur as a result of changes in the external relations of a particular local chief. In terms of his external relations a Heuneburg paramount was able to achieve a dominant position in the local regional economy. Eastern partners would have found it more advantageous to direct their trade through him rather than a number of smaller chiefdoms. He in turn, by controlling a more extended redistribution network, would be able to satisfy the eastern partners' demands as well as act as their intermediary for long-distance trade further to the west—and possibly north—through his Upper Rhine connection. He would be able to perform the same function for his western trade partners. Once these links were established, his former equals within the Heuneburg domain would be blocked by his monopoly. They would therefore have no alternative but to depend on him, but this dependence would also have been seen by them to be to their advantage in maintaining local control. In Ha D, the external stimulus for these developments is to be found in the wider connections established with the Greek and Etruscan world.

We know that from an early date (Ha C) relay points for connections between the Rhône, the Alpine passes and the resources of Central Europe were being established along the Upper Rhine. As would be expected, external trade with these Upper Rhine chiefs is reflected in the earliest phase of the paramount's existence at the Heuneburg, for example, the gold, coral and silk thread and certain bronze vessels in Hohmichele VI and I. Indirectly, the Heuneburg was linked with the Greek enterprises at the mouth of the Rhône and with Etruscan centres in central and northern Italy (Po valley) (via the Alpine passes and probably the Rhône route too). The intensity of these contacts can be judged by the degree of acculturation represented by the construction of the mud-brick wall with bastions, and the adoption and adaptation of Mediterranean funerary customs, such as the inclusion of wine-drinking services in graves, by the Heuneburg paramounts. The bossed rim bronze dishes, of Etruscan manufacture, show an interesting distribution (Dehn 1965, 1971: figure 2) centred on southern France, Central Europe (in the 'heart of the Late Hallstatt area' (Dehn 1971:84)) and in the south-west Alpine area. Dehn correctly notes that this could be further evidence of the Etruscan use of the Rhône route (as amply demonstrated by Buchero finds of the seventh century BC in southern France noted by Benoit (1965:51ff.)) or else the use of western or eastern Alpine passes by intermediaries in the exchanges which brought one of these bossed rim dishes into the possession—and eventually the grave—of a Heuneburg paramount (Hohmichele VI).

The development of the western Hallstatt region must be seen, therefore, as a result of the expansion and competition for trade with their hinterlands by centres in the western Mediterranean leading to the opening of new trade routes and/or intensification of existing contacts. Competition among core centres in the western and central Mediterranean for supplies of raw material and possible slaves would appear, therefore, to be the determining factor regulating the order of the regional economy. In turn, it would be the differential capacity of local rulers to meet these demands and gain a new access to wealth for their role as relay points in long distance trade which determined local political expansion and growth.

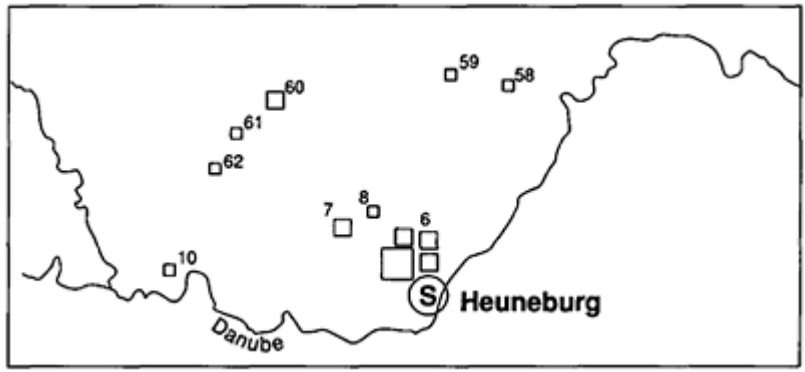
Hallstatt D1–2/3 development at the Heuneburg and the rise of the Hohenasperg

During late Hallstatt D1 there is evidence of two destruction levels in the occupation at the Heuneburg. Following the second, most extensive, destruction phase, the settlement is reoccupied but both the layout and the fortifications show a break in continuity. The open settlement at the Talhau is briefly reoccupied, also showing a break in continuity, and then abandoned. A group of tumuli constructed on the Talhau is interpreted by Gersbach (1969) as the burial ground of the 'new dynasty' now reigning at the Heuneburg. These burials are of Ha D2 and D3 date and can be related to the now dominant Hohenasperg centre. True, the crisis at the Heuneburg, associated with changes in both settlement and burial patterns, coincides with a more general shift in dominance at the local level. In Ha D2–3, in the areas that were previously vassal domains of the Heuneburg paramount, there are no clear indications of the continuation of the D1 political hierarchy. Wagon burials are no longer found in these subdomains and one cannot detect any significant variation in the grave contents within and between these former vassal domains. As general distributions of D2 and D3 material shows (Fischer 1967; Zürn 1952), this does not imply any significant emigration of population from these areas but rather the disappearance of the complex ranking hierarchy reflected in the D1 burials.

The Heuneburg remained occupied throughout the D2/3 phases but, as the distribution map of high ranking graves shows (Map 13.3), its area of control has now contracted to the area Immediately about the older paramount centre. Control over the former vassal domains has been lost and the authority of such vassal chiefs appears to have been undermined. This would fit one of the lines of development predicted in the model when vassal chiefs no longer able to obtain prestige goods from their paramount to distribute to their dependants would lose control over their domains. The paramount at the Heuneburg appears to have maintained his political independence and the structure of his own sub-domain—as can be seen in the continuity of settlement and the survival of burials of *Fürsten* status in the area during D2/3. However, certain significant changes had occurred. Whereas previously sub-chiefs were dispersed within the sub-domain, they now appear to concentrate and possibly be resident at the Heuneburg. Evidence for this is in the four Talhan tumuli at the foot of the Heuneberg. All four are generally classified as *Fürsten* graves (e.g. Schiek 1959), but Tumulus 1 is regarded as exceptional in the wealth of the grave contents and the presence of a wagon and must here be interpreted as the burial place of a paramount, while the other three (e.g. Zürn 1970:108) correspond to sub-chief status within the ranking hierarchy previously defined. In contrast to these, a number of burials of minor chief status are still found dispersed within the Heuneburg sub-domain, perhaps significantly situated in an arc on its boundaries.

The Talhau burials and the general contraction of the Heuneburg domain in D2/3 can in fact be related to the emerging dominance of a new centre to the north, situated at the Hohenasperg, Asperg. It is significant that the political development of the Hohenasperg area should coincide with the contraction of the Heuneburg domain and the loss of its vassal sub-domains. The development of the Hohenasperg could be linked with the

rupture of external trade relations that characterises the crisis in the Heuneburg domain and would have



Map 13.3 The Heuneburg domain, Ha D2–3

caused the 'relatively poor grave contents' reported for the primary burials in the Talhau tumuli (Goessler 1923:208–18). This crisis in D2 at the Heuneburg also coincides with the penetration of the Hohenasperg domain on to the edge of the Alb and the absorption of some of the peripheral Hueneburg subdomains. For example, the Burrenhof sub-chief—whose domain was part of the area probably supplying iron to the paramount during Ha D1 seems to have been one of the few Heuneburg vassal chiefs to maintain this status into Ha D2 with Hohenasperg insignia.

Zürn (1970) has defined the area between the Alb, Schwarzwald, Stromburg and Schurwald, as the Hohenasperg area. As in the case of the Heuneburg area there is evidence here for continuity in population and burial places, for example, Hirschlanden, Mühlacker, Deckenpfronn and possibly at the Hohenasperg too. Once again, the majority of settlements were small and dispersed and there are two known—and presumably fortified—hilltop settlements which are at the Hohenasperg (Zürn, 1970:120) and the Hohennagold, Nagold (Paret 1933–1935b, 1935–1938). The Hohenasperg and its surrounding graves has been classified as a *Fürsten* residence by Kimmig (1969). It is unfortunate that the status of this site cannot be confirmed by excavation, since there are reports from both the Hohenasperg and Hohennagold of Hallstein and Early La Tène sherds.

The Hohenasperg political domain is defined by the distribution of gold-work, coral, jet, glass, amber and sophisticated bronze jewellery often with applied coral or gold. Of these, gold, coral, amber and bronze must have been obtained through external trade. That the collection and distribution of these items was centrally controlled will be shown below. It seems likely that the centralised manufacture of prestige goods and the distribution of foreign wealth objects took place at the paramount's settlement at the Hohenasperg. Zürn (1970) has suggested that gold-working can be attributed to the Hohenasperg settlement on the basis of the quantity found in the area about it.

The graves of the Römerhügel (Ludwigsburg) (Zürn, 1970, with bibliography) and Grafenbühl (Zürn and Herrmann 1966; Zürn, 1970; Schiek 1974) attest the highest political status for this period (see Table 13.3):

1 In contrast to the Heuneburg, the status of these paramounts appears to be more absolute in relation to lesser chiefs: wagon burial is reserved for the highest political status and—with one exception (Bad Cannstatt 1)—is not found for lesser chiefs. They also contain gold neck—and armbands. The southern imports—also restricted to paramount graves—appear, for example, in the Grafenbühl, to be a collection of 'exotica' of different origin and even age and are not representative of any one particular southern centre. They should be viewed as a collection of gifts from a southern power or his intermediaries to satisfy the paramount chief s need for the accoutrements of southern civilisation.

2 Vassal chiefs can be recognised in the burials which share with the paramount graves the inclusion of gold neck- and armbands; they also contain

Table 13.3 Scalogram of grave contents of the first four ranks in the Hohenasperg domain, Ha D2

Site no.	*Burial*	*Wagon*	*Southern imports*	*Bronze vessel*	*Gold neck-ring*	*Gold arm ring*	*Gold earnings*	*Other items-bronze or gold*	*Amber*	*Coral*	*Jet/glass*	*Bronze neck-ring*	*Bronze arm foot-ring, etc.*	*Bronze belt plate hook*	*Bronze fibula*	*Iron spe Arhead*
5	Grafenbühl	×	×	×	?	?		×	×							
6	Römerhügel	×	×	×	×			×								
8	Bühl			×	?	?										
17	Bad Cannstatt I	×		×	×	×	×	×					×	×	×	
	Bad Cannstatt II			×	×	×	×							×	×	×
38	Dussslingen			×	×	×		×						×		×
36	Baisingen			×	×	×			×				×			
13	Schöckingen*					×	×	×		×		×	×			
11	Hochdorf*						×		×	×		×	×	×	×	×

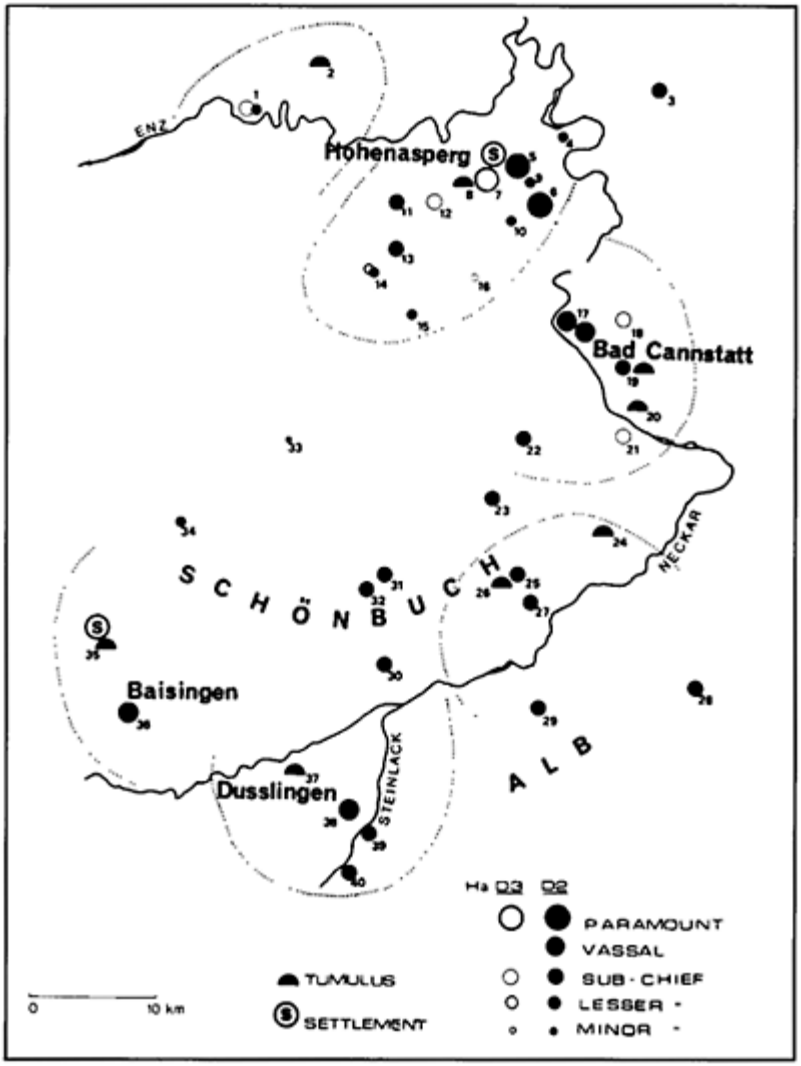
3	Kleinbottwar			×					×			×	×		×
27	Schlaitdorf			×							×	×			
39	Nehren			×	×										
31	Weil			×								×			
32	Weil			×								×			
29	Rommelsbach			×	×	×									
28	Burrenhof-Erkenntsbrechweiler			×											
25	Neuenhaus			×											
23	Echterdingen			×											×
40	Belsen			×											
30	Waldhausen			×											
14	Hirschlanden 11*					×	×	×	×	×	×	×			
15	Gerlingen 2						×	×			×	×	×		
34	Deckenpfronn 1							×	×	×		×			
9	Osterholz 5								×	×		×			
4	Beihingen									×	×				

Note : Asterisks indicate burials in the Hohenasperg sub-domain

bronze cauldrons: Bad Cannstatt I and II (Paret 1935, 1935–1938; Kimmig and Rest 1954; Zürn 1970:122ff.). Düsslingen (Kr. Tübingen) (Schieck 1954; Zürn 1970) and

Baisingen (Kr. Horb) (Schiek 1956; Zürn 1970) are the graves of the vassals of the three domains of Bad Cannstatt, Düsslingen and Baisingen. In addition, it seems probable that one of the large tumuli in the Mittelstadt area and another in the Vaihingen area would also contain burials of this rank.

3 Within each of the sub-domains, including that of the Hohenasperg paramount, sub-chiefs can be recognised. Their status is defined by a small quantity



Map 13.4 The Hohenasperg domain

of gold: usually in the form of earrings, for example, Schöckingen (Kr. Leonberg) (Paret 1938–1951; Maier 1962), and the many sites listed by Paret (1935–1938:63–4, note 7), which feature on Map 13.4.

4 In each of the sub-domains another level of the political hierarchy can be recognised below that of the sub-chief: it is characterised by the possession of other items distributed from the centre, such as rich bronze jewellery, often with coral inlay, jet, amber and glass beads, for example, Gerlingen 1 (Kr. Leonberg) (Riek and Hundt 1962) and Hirschlanden 7 and 11 (Kr. Leonberg) (Zürn 1970:53ff.).

5 Dependants of chiefs at each level of the hierarchy have access to bronze jewellery (rings), often poorly finished: the production of these simple bronze items was probably under the control of the local chief, for example Hirschlanden 3. See Table 13.3 for a table of the graves and their contents.

The sub-domains of the Hohenasperg roughly follow the Neckar and its tributaries, the Ens and the Schmiecha (Map 13.4). The orientation of these domains therefore seems to be strongly influenced by the need to control the river valleys, thus giving a roughly north-south linear distribution. It is also striking that sub-chiefs within the Hohenasperg sub-domain had greater access to goldwork and other prestige goods than would appear to be the case with the other sub-domains during D2. The closer connection between Bad Cannstatt and Hohenasperg can also be seen in the exceptional inclusion of a wagon in a vassal chiefs grave.

Lacking evidence of industrial activities from the Hohenasperg settlement, indications of centralised production and tribute collection are more indirect than in the case of the Heuneburg. It is likely that the Düsslingen sub-domain would have been involved in the exploitation of the jet resources indicated by Rochna (1962) in the Balingen area. The iron of the Alb was probably exploited in the Urach area—as in D1—and possibly passed directly to the Hohenasperg: this would have been the economic basis to the political survival of the Burrenhof sub-chief. Furthermore, stock-rearing can be suggested for the highlands of the Schönbuch; this would have supplied the paramount with hides and fleeces. There is evidence for the production of high status cloth from the Grafenbühl (central chamber) (Zürn 1970), where cloth with gold thread was found.

Certain industrial activities can be suggested as having been under the Hohenasperg paramount's control, and hence carried out at the Hohenasperg. Both Paret (1935) and Schiek (1956:133) believe that the wagons of Ludwigsburg and Bad Cannstatt I (Schiek's Type B) came from the same workshop. The complexity of the bronze- and iron-working and the similarities between the two suggest that this workshop would have had to be part of a larger complex of metal- and woodworking facilities. The evidence for high status cloth suggests that certain cloth production would also have been carried out by craftsmen at the paramount's centre. The use of coral, amber and gold in small quantities as inlay or as application to simpler bronze types, for example, pins and fibulae, implies centralised production of the basic types in workshops where these foreign materials were available and worked into larger items. This would be supported by the marked similarities in the neck- and armbands and also the fact that the same techniques were used in the working of the amber and coral found throughout the domain. Both copper and tin would have had to be obtained through external exchanges and the manufacture of bronze vessels, neck-rings, fibulae and belt plaques would have been centralised while the manufacture of simpler items, such as plain bronze rings, could have been under local

chief control. The working of iron may have been centrally controlled, since Zürn notes that the ores were not generally available throughout the Hohenasperg area.

The stylistic evidence and the limited range of the gold types indicate that the gold found within the domain was being worked at and distributed from a single centre, which is assumed to be the Hohenasperg. Similar techniques were used on jet, amber and coral and similarities in the items produced in gold and these other materials suggest a common centre of manufacture. Gold was also used in small quantities as applications to baser metals (silver and bronze) and amber and coral were used to embellish simple bronze items. Gold was particularly important in denoting political status and the access to and control of this commodity must have been one of the bases of the Hohenasperg paramount's authority. Hartmann (1970) has shown that the gold found in Ha D2 contexts is not Rhine gold, but was obtained from more distant sources that were being widely traded in Central Europe at this time (as in Ha D1 and Urnfield times). Hartman has shown the analyses of the gold of the Hohenasperg paramounts' graves and all the other gold-rich graves of Ha D2 (including Talhau 1, 2, 3, 4) to be of one type. A second type of gold is represented in a few graves of this period. But both types are represented in the Upper Rhine area, for example at Kappel. This indicates that the Hohenasperg access to gold was through the Upper Rhine centres. Rochna (1962) has suggested that gold was exchanged for jet between the Hohenasperg and Upper Rhine centres in this period.

Exchange relations clearly existed between the Hohenasperg paramounts and the Upper Rhine chiefs. Exchanges in gold, jet, probably amber and glass would have been facilitated by reciprocal exchanges between the chiefs; these exchanges are reflected in the assortment of Mediterranean exotica found in the Grafenbühl. The Römerhügel contains a shallow bronze dish with handles like one found in Hatten (Frey 1957). The only other parallel is from a grave in southern Bohemia (Dehn 1971). Dehn (1971) believes that they are the products of a south-east Alpine or northern Italian workshop, but what is significant here is that their distribution implies connections between the eastern Alpine area and the Upper Rhône, as well as an Upper Rhine-Hohenasperg link. Schiek (1956:78) notes that the best parallels for the large, hollow-headed gold pins from Schöckingen are found in Switzerland, but that the graves of Ihringen and Gundlingen were reported to have contained similar pins.

The extension westwards of the Upper Rhine exchange relations is suggested by the 'Vixien' material from the Münsterberg, Breisach (Kimmig 1969). A possible intermediary in exchanges between the Upper Rhine and the coastal region near Marseille is the site of Camp de Château, Salins (Jura), where a variety of Lower Rhône and even Phocaean wares are found (Dayet 1967). This would also be a likely route for the trade in gold which possibly came from Iberia.

The exchange relations between the Hohenasperg and Heuneburg are clearly shown by the burials in the Talhau tumuli which contain the gold neck- and armbands which are such important elements of rank insignia in the Hohenasperg domain. The four pins with decorated amber heads found in Talhau I, 4 and Hochdorf (Kr. Vaihingen) (e.g. Paret, 1935–1938) are so alike, according to Schiek (1956:79), that he regards them as products of a single workshop. Furthermore, Schiek cites the only small-headed pins found in *Fürsten* graves as coming from Talhau I, 4, Talhau III and Ludwigsburg, secondary burial no. 5. Presumably, these would have been passed on to high-ranking lineage

members by the exchange partners. There are no southern imports in the Talhau burials (although Black Figure wares and southern amphorae sherds are known from the settlement). Since the Heuneburg chiefs appear to be subordinate to the dominant Hohenasperg paramount, it would be unlikely that the latter would have derived his southern imports and other foreign materials through the Heuneburg, but both would have been involved (as described above) in exchange alliances with the Upper Rhine centres. The Heuneburg chief may have maintained his alliances with the east which would have enabled him to maintain his own sub-domain and establish himself high in the Hohenasperg ranking, and also facilitate exchanges with the Upper Rhine for the southern produce—not necessarily of high status—like wine which was consumed in his settlement.

As found in Ha D2 in the Heuneburg area, the authority of the Hohenasperg paramount was to be undermined and his domain limited to what was formerly his sub-domain. The last of the paramount burials at the Hohenasperg, the Kleinaspergle, contains a combination of imported bronze vessels, gold ornaments, vases and other items which are clearly Early La Tène (or Ha D3) in date and represent a realignment of the external connections of the Hohenasperg paramount (Paret 1935–1938; Schaaff 1969; Zürn 1970:118 with references). Other graves within the reduced domain confirm the continuing redistributive role of the paramount, for example, secondary burials within the Römerhügel and Grafenbühl, also Hirschlanden grave 13, Sirnau (Paret 1935–1938; Zürn 1970) and others.

The open circles on Map 13.4 show the reduced Hohenasperg domain during D3/Early La Tène. The most notable examples of the paramount's new contacts are the Kleinaspergle grave contents and the evidence of his stela there, and the carved Hirschlanden figure from within his domain (Kimmig 1965; Zürn 1965, 1970; Beck 1974).

Jet provides most evidence of the external relations of the Hohenasperg paramounts. As Rochna (1962:62) points out, jet beads are found in greatest frequency in the southern and central Württemberg area, and their distribution extends through the Lower Rhine area to near Lake Constance. During Ha D3 (Early La Tène), there are further indications of the paramount's links with the emergence of the dominant Middle Rhine chiefdoms in the large lignite armrings found in the Kleinaspergle and the grave of Reinheim (Kr. St Ingbert) (Keller 1965). Furthermore, another ring of this type was found in grave 44 of the Durrnberg, near Hallein. This indication of the continued exchanges—now probably indirect—between the dominant paramount in south-western Germany and the chiefs of the Salzberg area is supported by Schwappach's (1973) evidence for the combination of 'western' and 'eastern' stylistic elements in Early La Tène ornamentation. Exchanges in salt, copper, tin and amber would have been other material bases of these alliances.

Notes on developments in Early La Tène

We can only make certain suggestions as to the causes of the regional shift of dominance that occurs in Early La Tène from the Upper Rhine and south-western Germany to the Middle Rhine centres.

Unlike the relative decline of particular centres such as the Heuneburg or the Hohenasperg, a regional shift in dominance represents a major dislocation in the wider regional system. It is necessary therefore to move from a concentration on the local situation in Central Europe to changes in other parts of the regional system which set the conditions for such realignments to take place. A delicate balance of interests and alliance formed the basis for the relatively fragile existence of the Greeks in the western Mediterranean, the success of which is witnessed by the fact that Massalia and other Greek or Hellenised populations in southern France and the mouth of the Rhône achieved a peak of dominance and expansion in the late sixth century BC. However, increasing competition between Greeks and Etruscans for control over trade in the western Mediterranean becomes a consistent feature in the later sixth century BC. The documented decline in the flow of imports into Massalia towards the end of the sixth century, the contemporary increase in Etruscan wares coming via the Alpine routes into Central Europe and by-passing the Rhône; the expanded role of Greek trading colonies in Adria and Spina and the expansion of Greek trading contacts at the head of the Adriatic serve to indicate a decline in Greek economic activity in the western Mediterranean in the face of competition with Etruscan and Carthaginian interests. This shift in economic power must form the context for understanding the shift of focus in Central European trading networks from the Rhine-Rhône route to an increased dependence on the Alpine passes and access to trading populations in northern Italy and at the head of the Adriatic. It can be suggested that since traditional centres in the western Hallstatt region would be heavily connected in east-west trading alignments oriented to these traditional outlets, there would be a marked incentive for specialist trading populations controlling the western Alpine passes to attempt to by-pass centres on the Upper Rhine and establish new alliances with local rulers that until then had not been directly but only peripherally integrated into the southern trade via the western Hallstatt region. One such area was the Neuweider Basin, where the Lahn and the Mosel flow into the Middle Rhine. One of the centres on the Middle Rhine at Kärlich has the largest number of situlae of Tessin origin and of the six isolated vehicle burials some are likely to be late Hallstatt in date. Along the Hunsruck and penetrating the Eifel and the Taunus, situlae and wagons of the same date are found to be widely distributed. It is possible that Kärlich initially acted as a relay point for internal exchange between independent chiefs based in areas rich in iron and copper. During late Ha D—Early La Tène, Kärlich appears to dominate in these exchanges and it is significant that wagons, as high-status indicators, are no longer found in areas where Tessin situlae are distributed, except at Kärlich. The likelihood that the Rhine-Mosel area had by now become integrated into a single political domain centred on Kärlich would be supported by the uniformity of the pottery and bronze jewellery recognised in the area. There seems little doubt that this dominance depended on the position of Kärlich on the Rhine and its control over imports of situlae brought in or locally manufactured by Tessin and the Golasecca traders. Driehaus has convincingly shown the importance of control over the rich ion ores in the Hunsruck and parts of the Eifel-Taunus region in Early La Tène. He has tried to relate the location of rich graves to these deposits and has postulated the immigration of ‘iron lords’ to account for political developments in this area. By reallocating the graves into more consistent categories, one finds that far from being located near the iron sources in the Hunsruck, the true paramounts are positioned for trade on the Rhine (Map 13.5). This interpretation would

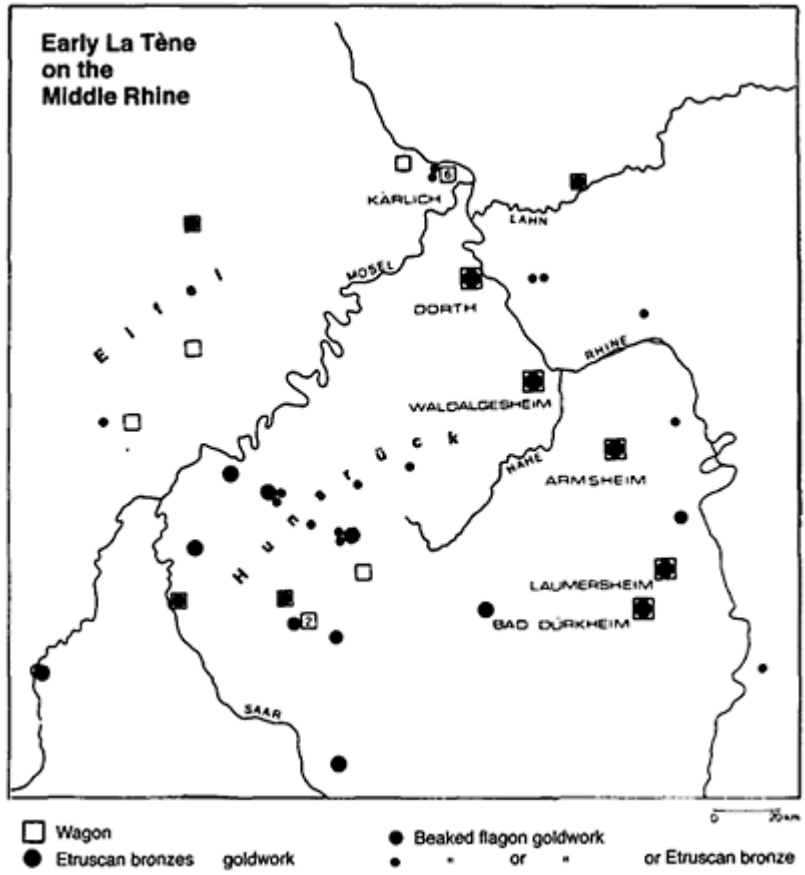
see the redistribution of luxury imports in the Hunsruck coming through a filter of paramounts controlling access to the Rhine. It would also explain why it is in these chiefly burials that, in addition to the goldwork, one finds the exceptional imports of this period, for example, sets of Etruscan basins at Dorth, the pilgrim flask, strainer handle and the Attic *Kantharos* at Rodenbach; and later the Campanian bucket at Waldalgesheim. In contrast to these, only one exceptional bronze amphora import has been found within the Hochwald-Nahe area. As far as one can tell from primarily status items in burials, one of the important categories of import being circulated by paramounts to their dependants on the Hunsruck are the Etruscan beaked flagons and occasionally other Etruscan bronzes or specialised gold work. In return, it seems that iron, copper and possibly salt were sent back to the Rhine as tribute. It would also seem reasonable to suggest that typical features of Early La Tène culture, such as the use of two-wheeled chariots as status indicators and the use of carved stellae as grave markers, can best be interpreted as part of an Etruscanising influence that would serve to culturally identify paramounts with their external trading patrons.

The attraction of Central Europe for the city states and colonies of the Mediterranean is indicated in the increasingly antagonistic relations between the latter for the control of access to its resources. The economic rationale is clearly represented by the different values attached to imports/exports by local paramounts and external specialist traders. Local resources such as iron, copper, salt, wool, hides, graphite and possibly slaves were due to paramounts as tribute and had value only to the extent they could be used in exchange for luxuries and status items, which would extend and help confirm political control. To the external specialist traders such low-cost manufactured items or discarded exotica of the classical world were a low price to pay for the primary raw materials that could be obtained in return and sold for high profits in home markets.

As mentioned earlier, partners in peripheral areas are unlikely to endanger the regional economy as a whole. It would be partners or disturbances in the main centres of the Mediterranean world that would most radically affect all parts of the system. The mid- to late fifth century BC is a period of more intense competition, antagonism, and warfare among the core Mediterranean states which, in terms of the northward expansion of Rome, the contraction of Carthaginian influence in the western Mediterranean in face of the competition from Magna Graecia and a culminating disaster in the Peloponnesian War, appear better understood as regional aspects of more basic failures in the political and economic systems of the Mediterranean world.

Regardless of the causes, it is true to say that this disruption of economic and political control must have rapidly undermined the bases of the political expansion of Central Europe in Ha D/Early La Tène. The fragile political structures made possible by their dependence on the Mediterranean world would, we suggest, have been rapidly undermined by these events in the latter area. It is significant that what has been taken as one further disaster, the movement of Celtic populations into the southern fringes of the Mediterranean basin, occurs subsequent to these crises of the later fifth century BC. It can be argued that these movements are directly attributable to the preceding failure of the core centres to maintain the stability of the regional systems that had evolved by the mid- and late fifth century BC. This implies that movements of Central European populations into northern Italy and elsewhere may not be a coincidence or due to opportunistic

advantage-taking of weakened power structures in the Mediterranean, but a result of the collapse of the political system in the periphery that the Mediterranean city states had at first stimulated and subsequently left at risk.



Map 13.5 Early La Tène on the Middle Rhine

Conclusion

We have attempted in this chapter to explain certain internal features of the political units that existed in south-western Germany in Ha D/Early La Tène. In addition, we have seen that the development of these societies, although weak in comparison with contemporary Mediterranean civilisations, was dependent in a very significant manner on the latter. Moreover, the political structures that developed in south-western Germany (and in other

areas at this and earlier periods, where societies are found in similar structural positions) was of a form that provided particular advantages to external trading partners seeking supplies of raw materials and perhaps slaves. We would argue, therefore, that the particular form that these tribal societies took was directly determined by their role serving as one specialised sector within a larger geographical division of labour centred on the Mediterranean world. This argument would be in accordance with a similar phenomenon of dependent development noticed for later historical periods (e.g. Frank 1967; Wallerstein 1974) and more specific ethnographically documented situations where prestige-goods systems have evolved on the periphery of highly centralised states as a structural precondition for the further evolution and development of the latter (e.g. Ekholm 1972; Dupré 1972).

It might be argued that this represents a unique historical incident peculiar to the particular conditions of urban development in the Mediterranean world in the first millennium. On the contrary, we would argue that they represent an instance of a more generalised phenomenon that had occurred at earlier and later periods in prehistory as well as being documented in the 'ethnographic present'. As such, this argument encourages neither diffusionist nor trade hypotheses as an explanation but rather suggests a more worthwhile focus on the structural development of local 'societies' through the role they play in larger spatial and temporal units of reproduction (e.g. Friedman 1976). It would be insufficient, therefore, to see such peripheral 'tribal' societies as independent phenomena linked to such states through the mechanisms of trade. Trade does, of course, take place, but its form and direction and the transfer of value involved is determined by the structural relationship which exists between local social systems that are materially connected in this way. The differential development of such systems and their dependence on each other for their own local evolution determines the nature of the kind of interaction that occurs between them. It must be obvious, therefore, that we will be unable to understand what form this will take until we have a clear understanding of the internal structure of such local societies and, in our particular case, the nature of the more dominant systems at the centre and the forces that drive them to expand against each other and transform less developed societies on their peripheries as a necessary correlate for their evolution. It is in this sense that 'trade' as such is epiphenomenal, when considered before the former task is completed.

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14
THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF COLONIALISM AND CONSTITUTING THE AFRICAN PEASANTRY

Michael Rowlands

> Beside [Asia], Africa looks like a shapeless, uncouth giant.
> A flat cake without a form, vast and amorphous.
>
> Leo Frobenius

For more than thirty years historians and archaeologists have worked to counteract primitivist ideas about the absence of change, the cultural backwardness and technical failure of Africa. In the 1950s it seemed as if little had changed to alter Hegel's view that 'Africa is not an historical continent; it shows neither change nor development…as we see them today, so have they always been' (*The Philosophy of History*, p. 6). If it was still unproblematic for a modern historian to reiterate Conrad's horror in *Heart of Darkness*, 'there is only the history of Europeans in Africa…the rest is darkness and darkness is not a subject of history' (Trevor-Roper 1963:871), then the work of researchers in African history since has been both consciously and unconsciously guided by the quest to refute it and to represent the African past as a unique synthesis of oral tradition, archaeology and history, the autonomy of which was beyond doubt and would support the claim that Africa had made a privileged contribution to the diversity of human cultures (cf. Phillipson 1985:10; Connah 1987:6).

Either justifying or dispelling the desire of Europeans to reach out for an idea of what Europe is not, the 'primitive', the 'Orient', 'Africa' has been the hidden text in archaeological research, resulting in prioritising certain work strategies and exhibiting a sensitivity to political issues that only recently have begun to impinge more forcefully on the consciousness of those working in the heartlands of the 'great civilisations'. Accounts such as Garlake's work in Zimbabwe (Garlake 1982), or Hall's in South Africa (Hall 1984) are graphic demonstrations that writing the past in Africa is always a politically mediated act. It is a sign of some success that writing on African archaeology can no longer be couched in such primitivist language as 'Africa during the late Pleistocene remained a kind of cultural museum in which archaic traditions continued without contributing to the main course of human progress' (Clark 1971:181).

Yet there is a danger that an archaeology that continues to be defined by assessing Africa's position on an externally derived and 'universal scale of civilisation' risks staying within it and thereby reproducing it in an inverted and potentially reinforced form. The concept of Africa is, after all, European in origin, and it has more to do with the construction of the civilised identity of the latter through its constitution of otherness than it has to do with explaining contemporary political and economic realities. To wish

to argue that Africa has its own food-producing revolution(s), or independent iron-working traditions (Diop 1960), or that it lacked literate civilisations because its rich environments did not produce the constraints required for people to give up freedom (Phillipson 1985:10), or that oral tradition based on speech is superior to and more authentic than literacy based on writing (Fage 1981) are symptomatic of the tendency to continue a long tradition of defining 'Africa in difference', and thus reinforcing its separateness from and potential inferiority to the rest of the world.

Moreover, it prevents the discipline engaging more constructively in understanding the origins of the discourses on African primitivism that it has so far attempted only to refute empirically rather than intellectually. In turn this failure inhibits recognition that underdevelopment in Africa is not of timeless origin, but is a result of a confused representation of a reality of recent origin: the product of the reorganisation of local economies in the late precolonial and early colonial periods and, perhaps most significantly, a belief in the existence of an unreconstructed traditional African peasantry, sunk in ignorance and superstition, and incapable of change without external (that is, European colonial) intervention. In the first part of this chapter I present a brief survey of some of the conditions which called into reality a certain kind of fiction called Africa; in the second part I argue that an historical archaeology of European contact can evade these snares and contribute to an historical archaeology of contemporary political and economic relevance.

The concept of Africa

The idea that Africa is an idea has an origin. Knowing what this is must be part of the process by which we understand how Europe reached backwards in time or outwards in space to discover what Europe is not (cf. Rowlands 1984). Europe, the Orient and Africa are thus concepts derived from the experience and internalisation of their interaction rather than objective historical facts.

Since the beginnings of Western discourse on 'otherness' an idea has existed of an Ethiopia, or a Libya or an Africa that has allowed a 'primitive other' to be defined, distinct in its negativity from the broadly successful definition of the Orient in the European scale of thinking about such things (Said 1979:204, 208). It was relatively recently that 'Africa' came to be applied to the whole continent. The label of *'terra incognita'*, by which the continent was known for so long, more aptly betrays a sense of absence, distance and a perception of the place as a void. Naming the place was a problem: Ethiopia, Libya, Sudan, Guinea, Niger, etc., have all been used at different times to refer to larger or smaller parts of this unknown land. Ethiopia is Greek in origin and is first referred to in Homer as a place of 'sunburnt' people (*The Odyssey* 1.22); Sudan is Arabic and has the same connotations of blackness (versus white). Africa comes from the Latin, and referred originally to the region around Carthage, although its etymology is confused (Miller 1986:10). Leo Africanus, whose *Description of Africa* first appeared in 1550, effectively spread to Europe the knowledge of Black Africa that Muslim traders had acquired over the centuries. Africa, as he describes it, is as distinct from the Islamic East as it is from Europe, and is inferior to both. In the Arabic myth of origin, Africa was created and derives its name from Ifricos, king of Yemen, who was the

first to conquer and inhabit it and thus give it form (Miller 1986:13). Its meaning as a place of separate colour and as a subjugated colony is thus established at an early stage in Western perception.

Miller gives a convincing account of the major elements that come to define Black Africa for nineteenth-century European civilisation. This is the origin of the overtly racist definitions of Africa as 'black'; stripped of reason and moved only by a blind, sensorial desire. The civilising standards of Egypt or Ethiopia are thus to be accounted for by their closeness to white Mediterranean civilisations, and hence their weakened status as African. Blackness is therefore nullity or absence; a depiction of void, which combines with a lack of reason; an absence of consciousness or logos (Miller 1986:27). Hence, from Homer's sunburnt Ethiopians to Trevor-Roper's view of history, based on Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the association of blackness with nothingness is at least consistent. Moreover, it justifies that the void has to be filled from the outside; the miraculous appearance of the white races in Africa inaugurates history and knowledge. After all, that which is dark can only be known by shedding light on it.

If Africa is separate, distant and a void, to Europeans it was also ambiguous and incoherent. For example, Homer's Ethiopia was both remote and delightful; a place of sensual pleasure (Snowden 1970:148) and a place of monstrous troglodytes and other unhuman beings (Miller 1986:26). Africa is at the same time a lost paradise and a hideous nightmare. This ambivalence in the writings of the ancient world has been carried down the ages and received by us as double valency in all things African (Miller 1986:32). Yet it is a dualism that cannot be sustained; its elements, polarised and apart, continually threaten to dissolve into each other. Distance and remoteness that combine monstrousness and the delights of fulfilment are collapsed in Africanist writing into a single idea: that of blackness. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writings, what comes through is a condensing of the association of colour with nullity. Africans are black, idolatrous, superstitious and given over to sinful pleasures, and it is all a consequence of an inability to control the passions (Hirschman 1977). Absence of control is documented by the absurd lengths to which Africans are said to go in superstitious devotions to objects and fetishes. Beliefs in idols, as objects worshipped in their own right rather than as symbols or reflections of an idea, clearly demonstrate an absence of reason and an incapacity for reflexive thought: 'Instead of a God of authority, repression and all-defining constancy, there is a god of released tension, wish fulfillment and malleability' (Miller 1986:47). No wonder that Marx should use 'fetish' to describe the alienating practices of capitalist commodity production, and that Mauss would rapidly dismiss its anthropological relevance as a concept because it connotes only 'an immense misunderstanding between two civilisations, African and European' (Mauss 1969:144).

In their identification of an object called Africa, Europeans experienced a fantasy of fulfilled desire in which the distinction between dream and reality was abolished. As a consequence the dogma emerges that Africa was the epitome of economic backwardness and the antithesis of European economic dynamism. For example, one of the justifications of colonialism in Africa was that it brought its peoples 'under the rule of law' (Richards 1985:10). This dual valency of dream and reality, timelessness and backwardness, romanticism and monstrous contempt, still organises Western popular perceptions of Africa, as well as the consciousness of some of its archaeological and ethno-archaeological practitioners.

Colonial representations

The economic backwardness of precolonial Africa had become firmly established colonial doctrine by the First World War. Whereas European travellers from the sixteenth century had marvelled at the range of craft and agricultural products available in local markets (Skinner 1964), from the later nineteenth century into the 1920s and 1930s the tendency was to stress the predominance of the self-sufficient African peasant economy; and the dominance of agricultural production, its low yield and wasteful exploitation of the environment, due to a reliance on a primitive technology, lack of transport, communal land tenure and the extended family (Hopkins 1973:9; Guyer 1984). Moreover, a number of anomalies from the standpoint of classical economic theory, notably the absence of a land market, the absence of labour time accounting and the idea that social rather than economic values were being maximised, served only to problematise further whether the 'native economy' could ever be rationally organised.

Different European colonial powers responded in different ways to the problem of what development meant in the African context. Cameroon in West Central Africa is of particular interest because it was under the colonial authority of Germany, Britain and France at different times. Like other West African colonies, it was created without a substantial white settler population, with quite explicit motives of economic exploitation through the use of force which should entail minimal administrative and military cost. When the German protectorate of Kamerun was declared in 1884 in order to defend the interests of German traders by preventing a trade monopoly of the Benue region by the British, a debate was already being pursued as to the proper nature of development under colonial rule, derived from German experience in Togo and South-West Africa (Stoecker 1986). The terms of the debate were already well known in Europe, where predominantly agricultural populations in Germany and Russia were perceived to be the main obstacle to economic development and, in particular, to the ideal of industrialisation. At the turn of the twentieth century, Stalin's particularly brutal solution to the problem of the peasantry in Russia was not yet seriously contemplated. The 'peasantries' of eastern Europe and Africa were uneasily associated as sharing a common problem of backwardness, and to be incapable of progress. Encouraging progress meant solving the central question of whether, in a predominantly agricultural population, development was best left to a *laissez-faire* market principle which would encourage African small farmers to produce cash crops for the world market, or whether this was too unreliable, and rural food production to supply the towns and workers could only be organised by the state. In the first scenario the role of the colonial administration would be to encourage an entrepreneurial spirit among the owners of small farms, stimulate the flow of cheap labour to foreign capitalist-owned enterprises in the colony, raise revenue in cash to meet administrative expenses and break peasant self-sufficiency.

By the 1880s the liberalist view was under attack in Cameroon. This was partly due to what was widely perceived to be the non-capitalist rationality of African farmers. They were perceived to be incapable of development on their own. In part it was also technical problems encountered in transport, and the failure to break the monopolistic practices of coastal trading societies like the Duala, that together convinced representatives of the German trading companies that the forced appropriation of land and labour was the only path to successful development of the colony. Moreover, the decades from 1870 to 1890

saw a major industrial recession in Europe, the collapse of prices in primary tropical products (in particular palm oil) and the development of intense rivalry between the European trading companies to achieve increases in productivity at lower costs (Hopkins 1973). The main thrust of German expansion of the 1880s was directed towards the interior to bypass coastal trading monopolies, to develop the plantations and expand inland trade, and to solve problems in the supply of labour. The policy of imposing a fully developed capitalist economy on the colony was pursued vigorously in Cameroon in the 1880s and 1890s under the governorship of Von Puttkamer. He favoured direct taxation methods (a poll tax) to force Africans to work, and labour conscription, land expropriation and the establishment of large concession companies that were to be given exclusive rights to the products and labour of large areas of Cameroon, which they pursued often with the utmost brutality.

However, the alternative liberalist philosophy was never completely quashed. It gained increasing support in Germany as a result of the failure of plantations and concession companies to make significant profits (and in some cases their success in making significant losses), and also as a consequence of a wave of genuine revulsion at the stories of brutal oppression that the missions, in particular, relayed back home. It was strongly believed that the worst aspects of the industrialised societies of Europe should not be reproduced in Africa. The colonies might instead be a haven for poor white German settlers to establish new farming settlements in Africa, alongside independent African farmers, and produce for a world market. This was not only an influential populist argument in Germany, it was also deemed by many to be the rational economic development for small-scale peasant farming populations in many parts of the world (cf. Richards 1985). Moreover, the costs of maintaining colonial rule by violence were becoming prohibitive, given that the promised economic profits were not forthcoming. However, the problem for those advocating the liberalist argument remained the supposed non-capitalist rationality of the African small farmer. There was no guarantee that indirect rule of the benevolent kind advocated would produce the desired results if the African peasantry was left to its own devices. This would require developing an African elite capable of recognising its interests and setting an example for others, and also recognising the benefits of education and religion.

Due to such pressures in German, Governor Von Puttkamer was recalled from Cameroon in 1906 and replaced by Governor Seitz, who pursued the ethical policy outlined above. This was effectively the beginning of the dogma that a traditional and anarchic African peasantry in Cameroon had existed before European contact and should be subordinated to the interests of a more powerful capitalist world economy. Seitz's policy, supported by the Basel Mission, was aimed at finding ways in which this could be effected as painlessly as possibly. Seitz believed in setting up self-contained peasant communes in the German colonial protectorate, which would collect their own revenues and administer their own affairs (a classically German and Russian populist policy on how best to organise the peasantries of eastern Europe, cf. Hussain and Tribe 1983). Seitz's intention was to protect Africans from excessive European exploitation, to avoid the need to rule by force, and to make the colony more self-sufficient and less under the financial control of the German Reichstag in Berlin. One aim was also to develop a new system of African political control in Cameroon, in which a small, educated, black African elite would be created to perform roles that until then had been filled by German

expatriates. The same policy elsewhere in German colonial Africa was met with great hostility by white settlers, who probably correctly recognised that it would result in the creation of an educated African class capable of effective resistance to colonial rule. In Cameroon the absence of a significant white settler contingent meant that the opposition was muted and, if Germany had not lost its colonies after the First World War, Cameroon might have been one of the first independent African states.

The ideological battle within the administration of German rule in Cameroon, as elsewhere in Africa, had its material effects as local African 'societies' battled to comprehend and resist what was being imposed on them (Chilver 1967). The question is, how do we gain some idea of these effects when the characterisation of the African peasantry was itself a product of these debates? Debates, incidentally, that were not just limited to Africa, but originated as the 'agrarian problem' of the peasantry in eastern Europe at the turn of the twentieth century. The firm belief that countries with predominantly rural, peasant populations must find a different path to capitalist development from that experienced in Western European industrialisation was exported to Africa (Kitching 1984; cf. Mitrany 1954; Sabel and Zeitlin 1985). Moreover, by the time of the First World War, the problem of the African small-scale farmer as non-rational and uninterested in commercial matters, embedded in mystical superstition and witchcraft, had become firmly established as the precolonial and pre-European contact 'reality' that colonial rule had to break for effective development to be possible. Not only did Europe therefore create the fiction of the African peasantry, it also then extrapolated the fiction into the African past as a natural reality that it was Europe's civilising task to change and reform in order to make such populations amenable to capitalist development.

The archaeology of precolonial nineteenth-century Bamenda

In the confrontation of such opposing ideologies, the question is whether archaeology can form an independent basis for reconstructing the nature of late-precolonial African societies. In Cameroon the case is perhaps more open, in the sense that it was never the location of large precolonial African kingdoms that attracted numerous earlier European travellers, and whose accounts can be matched against later twentieth-century colonial representations. We therefore have a more straightforward problem of assessing the archaeological and oral data available in the absence of a consistent literary history derived from European contact sources.

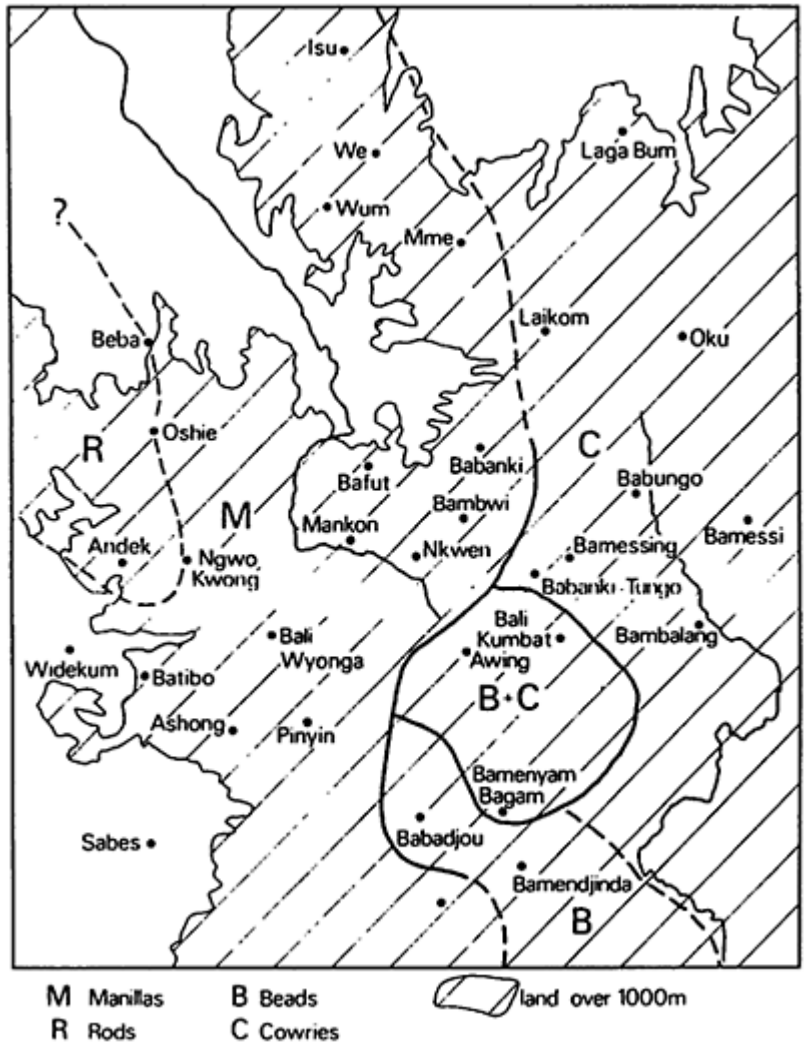
The case I describe is based on fieldwork carried out in the Western High-lands of Cameroon and, in particular, the Bamenda region (Map 14.1). This is a high-altitude savannah area (due to long-term human interference) which was first contacted by one of Puttkamers's contracted explorers, Eugene Zintgraff (cf. Chilver 1961a). He was immediately impressed by the density of population and the resources of what came to be called 'the Grassfields', and worked assiduously to create the political conditions that would allow this to be used as a labour reserve for plantations on the coast, as well as a new opportunity for the production of cash crops and for trade by the concession companies. Yet the area had been vaguely known to Europeans since the sixteenth century as a supplier of iron spears and cutlasses to the coastal peoples around Rio del Rey (Ardener 1968:87). In the eighteenth century relations between this area and the

coast were strengthened through the slave trade, and the Grassfields regularly appear as a source of slaves to Europeans at Douala and Calabar (Warnier 1985:151). Perhaps the best general piece of evidence to indicate the extent to which the Grassfields had been incorporated into European-dominated trade circuits by the time of German colonisation is the distribution of late-nineteenth-century money forms (Map 14.2). When combined with evidence of types of transaction, this shows that the area was divided into three trading zones; one characterised by the distribution of cowries and dominated by traders from the Hausa emirates to the north; a second by the distribution of small glass beads of Mediterranean manufacture and distributed, particularly in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, by French and Dutch traders through the port of Douala; and a third characterised by brass manillas that gained increasing importance during the middle and late-nineteenth century, and were distributed by British traders through the port at Calabar. The Calabar trade gradually supplanted the Douala trade during the nineteenth century, and was beginning to compete effectively with the northern Hausa traders for products such as ivory, slaves, wild rubber, kola nuts and palm oil at the time of colonisation (cf. Chilver 1961b).

The degree to which local social exchange was transacted in foreign currencies by this period can be gauged by:

a) Bridewealth payments and fines were made in brass rods at German contact; local market exchanges were conducted in either cowries or brass rods or their equivalents, and they could be exchanged at special border markets. Beads were no longer important except in very small transactions, but were used to decorate elaborate masquerade costumes, ancestral figures and calabashes of chiefdom nobilities. No separation of wealth items into spheres of exchange existed, and value could be stored and realised in any of these currencies. Hoards of brass rods and cowries are regularly found hidden on compound land to this day. Elders will account for them by saying that they would often acquire brass rods at times of the year when they did not want to use them, i.e. they were stores of wealth.
b) A money—commodity—money circuit was standardised and extended to the sale of persons, in particular that of male slaves and boys to Europeans on the coast or for the internal slave trade. Female slaves were more likely to be bought locally and absorbed into complex marriage systems involving control by marriage lords over their offspring.

Map 14.1 The Cameroon 'Grassfields'

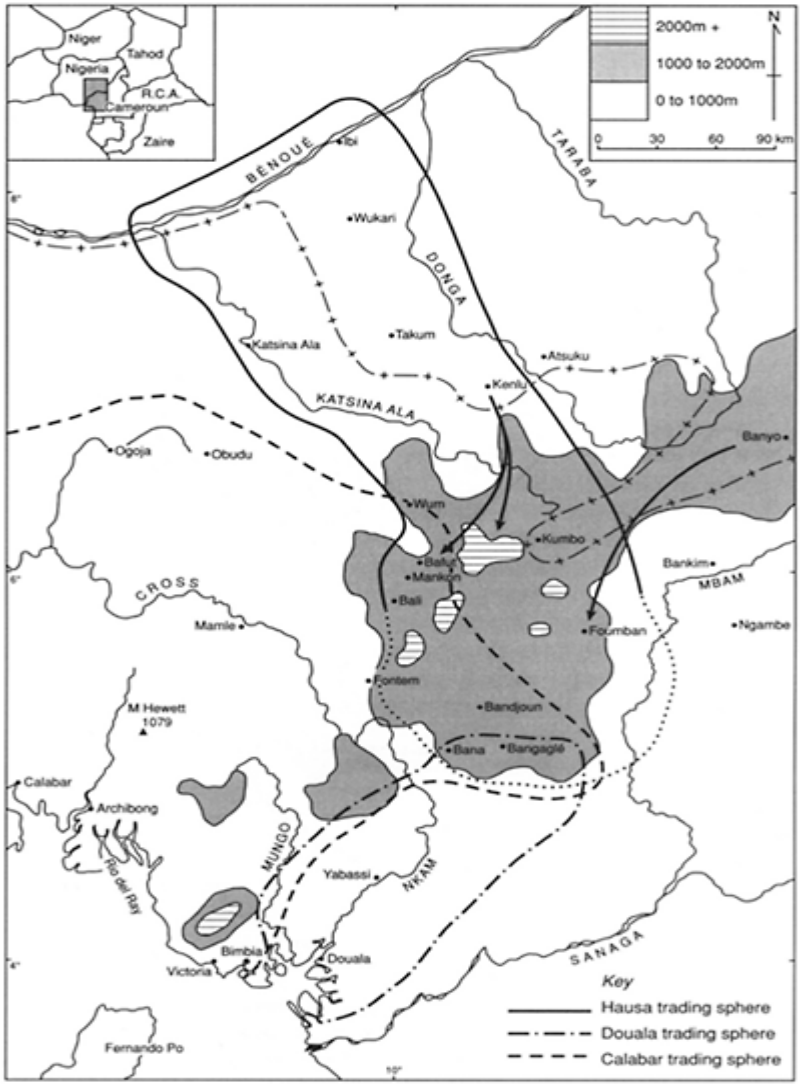


Map 14.2 Monetary zones on the Bamenda plateau, *c.* 1890

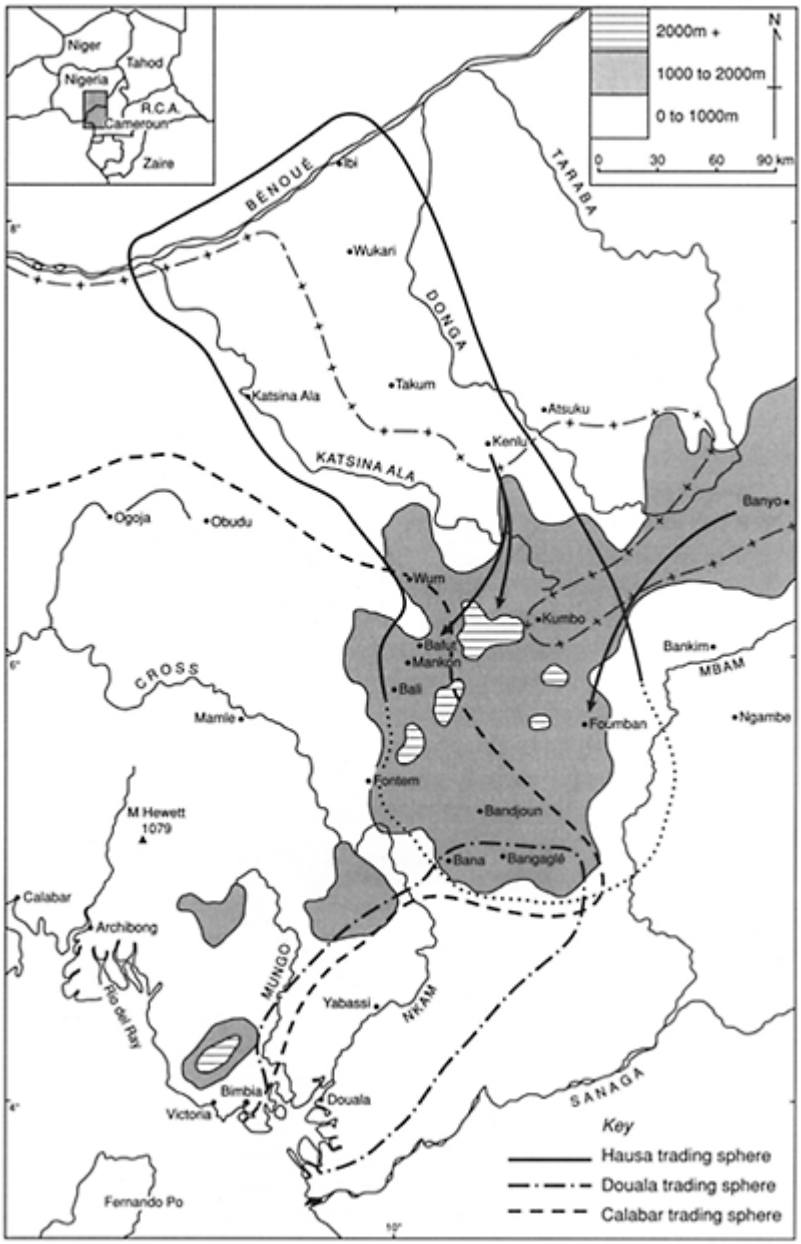
c) Maps 14.3 and 14.4 show the expansion and contraction of these trading spheres throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Douala trade, which includes the areas with evidence of the earliest centralised chiefdoms, is shown to be in decline throughout the nineteenth century, while the Calabar trade expanded and was beginning to encroach on the dominant Hausa trade at the time of German conquest.

Although this evidence demonstrates that the Grassfields was a part of a larger European-oriented regional system, it says little about the nature of the incorporation or its effects. The archaeological evidence to be derived from a study of the history of iron production

in the area gives a different picture of the organisation of precolonial craft production and specialised production



Map 14.3 Trading spheres at the end of the eighteenth century



Map 14.4 Trading spheres at the end of the nineteenth century

for exchange from the colonial view that Africans lacked technical skill and initiative.

At the time of the German conquest, most villages were producing small amounts of iron, using a shallow bowl furnace technology (Figure 14.1a). The 'primitive nature of the technology' was remarked upon by Zintgraff (Chilver 1961a:10). The results of a field survey of iron-working sites and technologies and their scale of production shows that two other furnace technologies had been used to make iron, but were abandoned a short time before the German conquest (Figures 14. 1b and c). A low, cylindrical furnace using a double bellows (Figure 14.1b) seems to be the earliest and most widespread form. Corrected carbon-14 dates for sites or associated material give a range of dates from the third to seventeenth century AD (AD+245+915; AD+610 +1260; AD+1305+1669; Ly 3065–3067). This technology continued to be used to produce indigenous iron up until the 1940s in the more remote northern parts of the Grassfields (Jeffreys 1952). At some period, certainly no later than the seventeenth century, a larger 'clump-furnace' technology was developed that was capable of vastly increased rates of production (Figure 14.1c). Some indication of the difference in scale of production that was introduced can be gauged from a comparison of the amounts of smelting debris remaining at the two types of furnace site (see Table 14.1).

Table 14.1 Production levels of iron furnaces, Bamenda plateau

	Number of chiefdoms	*Number of sites*	*Volume of debris (m^3)*
Cylindrical furnace	10	98	6,470
Clump furnace	6	274	214, 500

The clump-furnace technology is restricted to a number of village chiefdoms in the Ndop plain, and it replaced the earlier cylindrical-furnace technology. Moreover, all the later furnaces were located within the defensive boundaries of the chiefdom, whereas the earlier form has a more dispersed distribution (Map 14.5). Also, rituals of protection of compounds only include sites of the older furnace type and, where remembered, family heads still use them to identify ancient compounds where ancestors might be buried and require propitiation. The later type of furnace is not treated with the same respect, nor are women refused entry to such sites. This suggests that innovations in the iron technology coincide with the movement of settlement into defended sites, and the new furnace did not have the close association with compound land and property as the earlier type. Although the latter appears to have been lineage property and intended mainly to supply its members with iron, the former appears to have been organised at a village or chiefdom level for wider exchange. The iron produced also seems to have been of a superior quality. It is quite probable that these specialist iron producing chiefdoms of

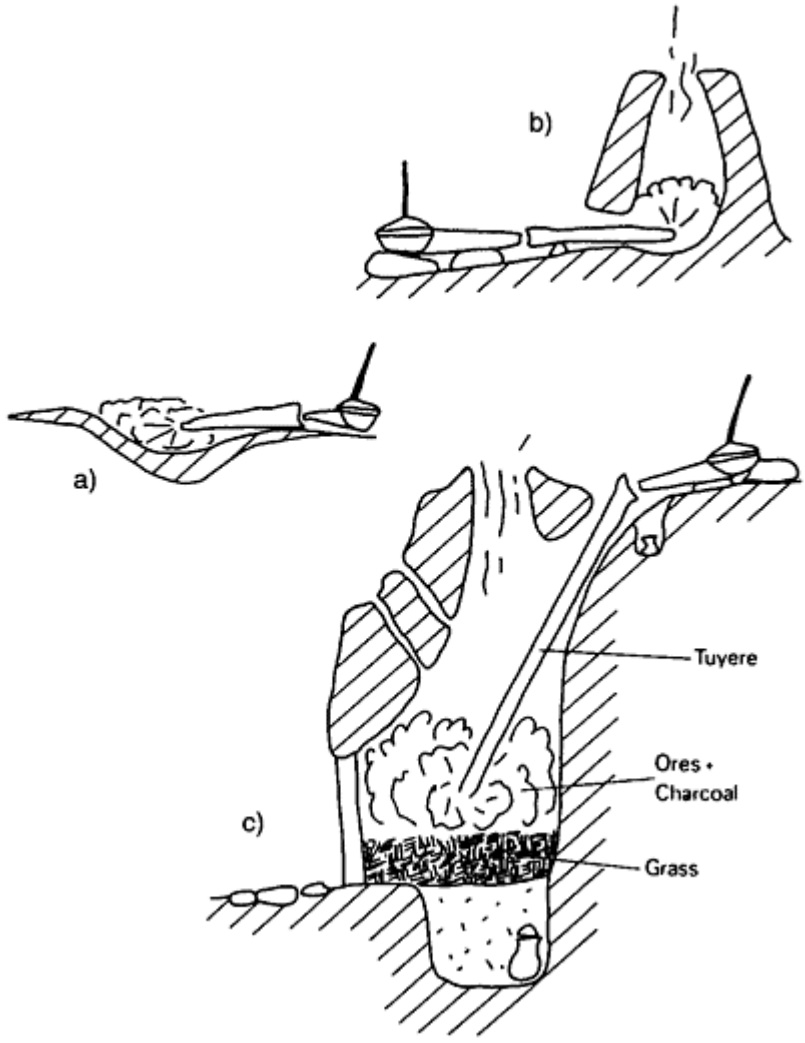
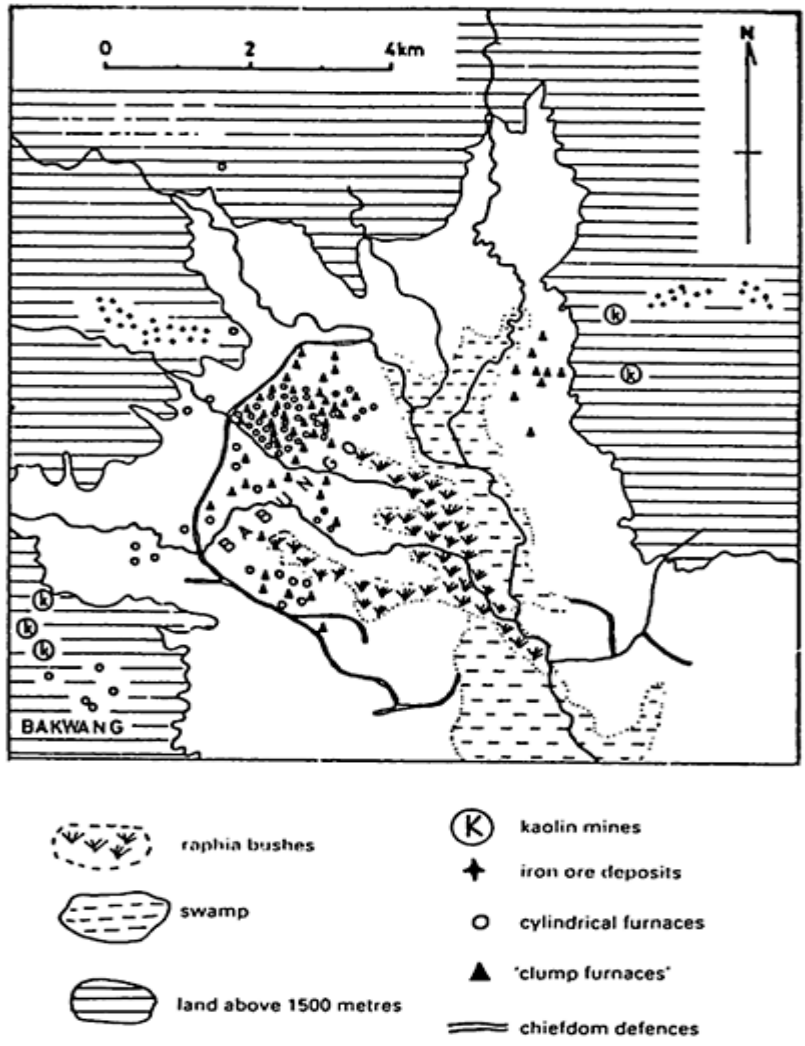


Figure 14.1 Furnace types of the Bamenda plateau in the nineteenth century

the Ndop plain were the source of the weapons and hoes said to have been favoured over European imports by coastal populations around Calabar in the seventeenth century (Ardener 1968:87). Also, when Zintgraff visited the Ndop chiefdom of Babungo in 1889, he observed the technology, was presented with a sword and commented on the faultless quality of the iron being produced (Chilver 1961a:21).

Although more accurate dating is a priority, the general sequence of iron-producing technologies suggests that these centres of specialised production and the system of

regional exchange of which they were a part collapsed in the last two or three decades of the nineteenth century. The diffusion of an open-hearth—bowl technology was the devolutionary response by populations that were now no longer able to buy their iron hoes, spears and cutlasses at local markets or through trade friends, and had to re-invent a means of satisfying immediate needs (in particular, the male obligation to supply wives with hoes which otherwise would have required brass rods to buy the European-



Map 14.5 Distribution of iron-working sites, Babungo

imported forms). The devolutionary nature of the technology is underlined by the fact that easily available iron ores were no longer used, and smiths travelled to the older centres to mine and re-use the slag. The most likely explanation for the collapse of these specialist iron-working centres was their failure to compete with imports of European iron ingots and hoe blanks brought into the region in vast quantities from Calabar during the late nineteenth century (cf. Warnier 1985:114).

However, it would be too easy to interpret these local transformations as a consequence of increasing European domination. The relationship between production and exchange, power and ideology in nineteenth-century Bamenda was more complex than this, and decline in one part of the region was part of a wider pattern of chiefdom competition and expansion to paramount status.

Chiefdoms, states and the regional system

According to oral tradition, the chiefdoms of the Grassfields in the nineteenth century were in a constant flux of political conflict, economic rivalry and competition for each other's population. Such rivalries still structure local contemporary politics, and there is little doubt that German colonisation both interrupted and, for a time, facilitated a regional process of 'state formation' (Rowlands 1979).

When Zintgraff first established contact with the chiefdoms of the Grassfields in 1889, these processes had already reduced competition for paramount status to four contenders (Figure 14.2). This policy was to use superior military technology to support one against the other in order to create a German client state—a policy that still figures in local politics as 'the Bali question'. Consequently, local forms of hegemony were reinforced (for example, Zintgraffs favoured partner chiefdom was given tribute rights over thirty formerly independent village chiefdoms in the 1890s, and punitive expeditions were directed against its rivals for paramount status). The German policy to create a client state in the Grassfields only reinforced a more general tendency towards the development of large concentrations of population in the centre of the plateau (Rowlands 1979, 1986). Perhaps the most extreme version of this is to be found in the development of the kingdom of Bamum during the

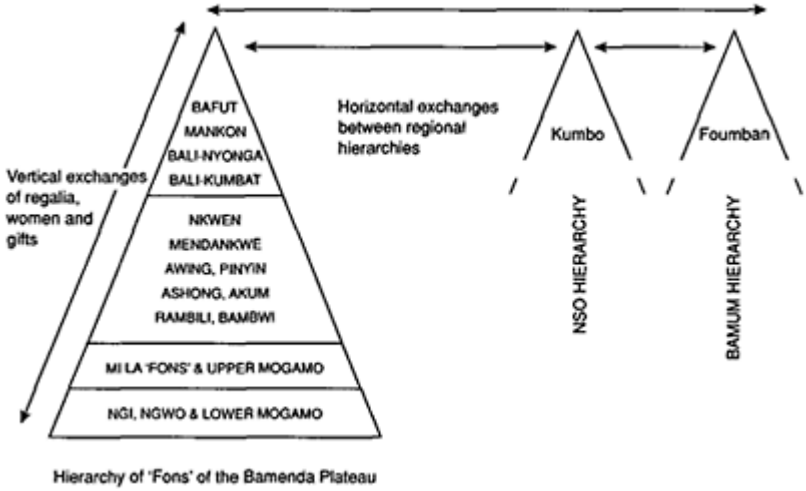
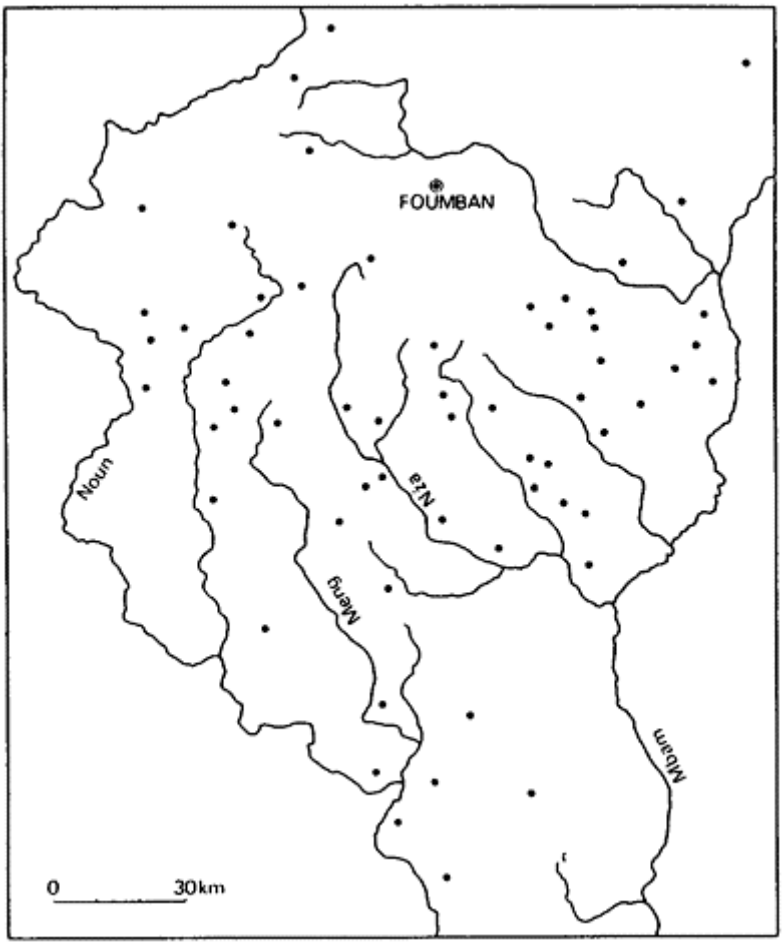


Figure 14.2 Hierarchy of fons and notables of the Bamenda plateau and their relations with neighbouring hierarchies

nineteenth century (Tardits 1980). This kingdom, situated in the eastern Grassfields, contained about 70,000 inhabitants distributed over 8,000km^2, more than half of whom occupied a defended centre of 400km^2, corresponding to the contemporary capital of Foumban. Map 14.6 shows the distribution of settlement in Bamum before the concentration into the capital which, based on the accounts of ex-slaves and the dates of three expeditions into Bamum country by Fulani slave raiders, is said to have occurred in the reign of Fo' Mbuombue between *c.* 1824 and 1835 (Tardits 1980:127). A middle- or late-nineteenth-century date for a similar concentration of population around the palace site of Mankon, a smaller chiefdom in the western Grassfields, is suggested by the fact that informants were still able to take the author to named compound sites and shrines that were occupied by the ancestors of present elders early in the nineteenth century. A pattern of highly dispersed, low-density lineage-clan settlement attached to local shrines, oathing stones and places for sacrifices seems to have been transformed within a short period into a few centres of densely defended settlement around a palace-ritual



Map 14.6 Distribution of surveyed sites abandoned by *c.* 1835. Populations either dispersed or incorporated by Foumban. Sites identified by field surveys, eponyms and oral traditions, after Tardits 1980

complex during the early to middle nineteenth century. However, these centres were the product of a much longer period of intense rivalry ands absorption of the populations of less fortunate neighbours. The distribution of four major chiefdoms on the Bamenda plateau at the end of the nineteenth century (Map 14.7) confirms that the centre of the plateau had emerged as the optimal position for political growth with dispersed, acephalous populations located in the hill ranges to the north and west.

The political, economic and ideological determinants of this process have been discussed elsewhere (Rowlands 1986), but there are several points that are of particular importance as far as understanding the kind of social reality that early German colonists were unwittingly involved in creating and then con-

Key

- ■ chiefdoms of 8000+ inhabitants. Recognised as 'friends' by Nso + Bamum
- • chiefdoms of 1000+ inhabitants and hereditary 'Fons'
- • settlement of less than 1000 inhabitants and without established 'Fons'

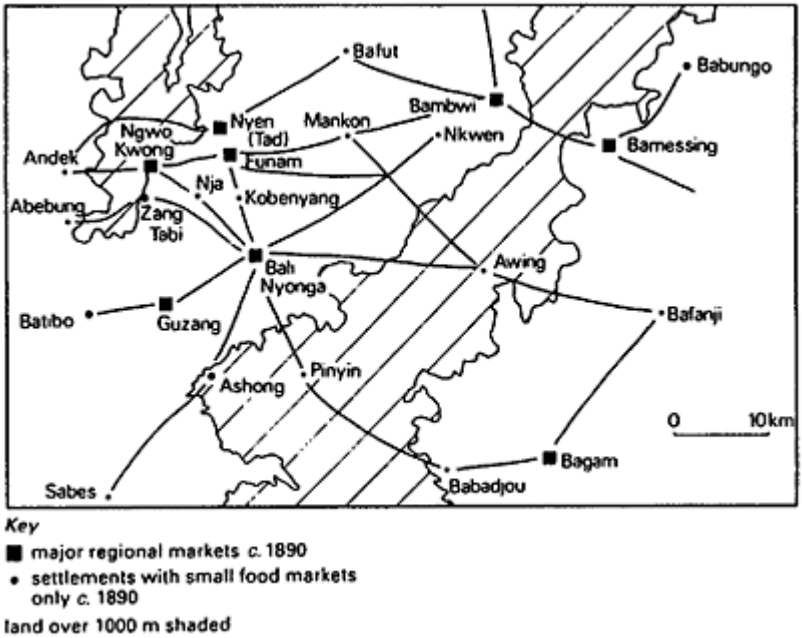
land over 1000 m shaded

Map 14.7 Hierarchy of chiefdoms and fons of the Bamenda plateau in the late nineteenth century

fronting as the burden of colonial administration. One was that the major regional markets and the centres of small-commodity production, such as the specialist iron-producing centres of the Ndop plain, were all located at the interstices of the major

political centres of the region or on the borders of the Bamenda regional economy (Map 14.8).

The absence of major markets and craft production in centres of densest population and political power was a source of considerable unease to European colonisers. Besides its irrational economic signification, it meant, practically, the absence of food markets to supply soldiers and administrators at the military forts. Yet this unease was based on a misunderstanding of the reality of trade and economic specialisation in the regional economy. The tendency for trade and production for trade to be controlled or marginalised in premodern states is quite well known (cf. Brumfiel 1983). The Grassfields shared a similar tendency to that described elsewhere, for acephalous polities exercise less control over trade. Hence, markets in these tended to attract both local and long-distance traders who specialised in the movement, often in large quantities, of local specialities and foodstuffs. It was rare that transactions involving prestige items, slaves or local products of high value would appear at these markets; instead their exchange was organised through 'merchant houses' in the larger chiefdoms, that is, nobles or palace officials who had the title and wealth to organise trading expeditions in such items. Trading by poorer men in the centralised polities was effectively limited to local markets and the exchange of foodstuffs. The richer title holders/merchants would instead operate through trade partnerships, and firmed marriage alliances with powerful traders in other chiefdoms—in some



Map 14.8 Principal markets on the Bamenda plateau at the end of the nineteenth century

cases, apparently, extending to having partners in the European trading entrepôts at Calabar and Douala on the coast. Titled men, as heads of merchant houses, were able to restrict the trade in high-value commodities to their own households and networks of trade friends, and to limit free trading activity in the larger chiefdoms, except for the most localised of food markets.

Moreover, the production of iron hoes and weapons, woodwork and pottery was as costly in male labour time and, given that labour-accounting was differentiated by the value attached to the category of people involved rather than by valuation of the product, this meant that household heads would, if possible, avoid using household male labour for compound production, and use it for long-distance trading instead. The high costs of male labour in craft production would instead be passed on to smaller and less powerful chiefdoms, while the profits from trade could be converted into increased agricultural production by using wealth to acquire more wives to expand household production.

In the period before German annexation of the Grassfields it appears that the increasing importance of gaining access to European trade goods favoured the mercantile strategies of the central chiefdoms over that of producing for exchange. The value of European goods such as manufactured cloth, guns, gunpowder and personal ornaments was so great that only participation in the trade in slaves could provide the wealth needed to acquire them. The intensification of the spiral of political expansion and warfare to acquire war captives to sell; the need to belong to large and powerful households in large and powerful chiefdoms; the restructuring of regional economies into central trading polities dominating peripheral craft producers and border regional markets created a political economy that was expansionist and militaristic, and that relied increasingly on European support and, eventually, intervention.

With the change of colonial policy after 1906 towards a less-exploitative colonial regime, this trend appears to have been reversed for a while, at least until the beginning of the British mandate period. The post-1906 ethical policy reversed previous colonial policy for pragmatic as well as humanitarian reasons. German colonial interests required the free movement of wage labour to the coast and elsewhere, to work on plantations and government projects. A free trade in commodities had to be encouraged and new markets developed, cash crops promoted and the internal slave trade restricted. This resulted in a more open regional economy in which population movements, a cash crop economy, labour migration and new markets broke up the older mercantilist regimes. By the early 1900s significant alternations had occurred as far as the internal organisation of the regional economy was concerned. Disaggregated from the original unity of the political economy of the old regimes, the autonomy of household enterprises, the apparent dominance of agriculture, the absence of markets, the limited nature of exchange and the strong control over the circulation of wealth through the indigenous title systems came to be viewed by European colonisers as the worst aspects of the ‘primitive peoples’ they had to govern and somehow bring into the modern world.

Conclusion

The strategy adopted in this chapter has been to understand the origins of European categories of thought about Africa, as well as to try to refute them empirically. In an

important sense this means recognising how such ideals have entered perceptions of, and consequently influenced polices and attitudes towards, reality in such a way that separating the two over time may no longer be possible.

Yet this can emphasise only further that certain priorities in African archaeology need to be re-thought. One of these is the need for an historical archaeology of Africa that would address itself more cogently to understanding the origins of the contemporary economic and political conditions that beset the continent. Many of these require a more long-term view of social change than 'colonial history' allows, yet African archaeology appears too preoccupied with demonstrating its value to an international audience concerned with the 'big questions' in human prehistory. The purpose of this chapter has been, instead, to show that a longer-term view of the development of West Cameroon is archaeologically possible. The limited insights of the social reality around which policy formulations were made in the early colonial period were themselves a product of contemporary European perceptions of what a precapitalist society should be like, as well as the limited experience of an empirical reality that itself had evolved as a response in part to precolonial contact with Europeans. Without the archaeology of the sequence that produced the conditions that facilitated this misrecognition, there would be no alternative but to accept the existence of an 'African peasantry' as a 'traditional' if recalcitrant category.

Acknowledgements

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15
RITUAL KILLING AND HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATION IN A WEST AFRICAN KINGDOM

Michael Rowlands

The politics of sovereignty

The sacralisation of power, by which a ruler reigns not by force but by the supernatural powers vested in him, is a well known feature of all anthropological studies of archaic states (Hocart 1927, Dumezil 1968, de Heusch 1972, Sahlins 1985). Frazer and Hocart documented the worldwide distribution of divine kingship as a special kind of mystical power emanating from the ritualisation of cosmic order. In Africa, a number of early diffusionist studies were devoted to investigating the origins of divine kingship through studies of the distribution of certain characteristic traits. Lagercrantz (1950) carried out the most exhaustive typological comparison, identifying the principal features of divine kingship as the presence of ritual regicide, royal incest and prohibitions or taboos against the person of the king.

More recently a number of structuralist and structural historical interpretations have come to the fore. For a number of anthropologists, like de Heusch (1972) and Sahlins (1985), and in a different manner Clastres (1977), myths of archaic kingship are discourses on power and the origins of violence rather than historical narratives *per se.* For Clastres, the coercive power of the state represents a breakthrough from the conditions of divine kingship, the principle of which is anti-power or power devoid of force or any kind of sanction. Coercive power cannot therefore be indigenous to society but must be in origin external to it, a product of usurpation and external conquest. Sahlins argues that where power is constituted as a forceful seizure of sovereignty, usurpation is itself the principle of legitimacy. The advent of power constituted in a violent act is the great historical crime which introduces a new political order based on coercion and the principle that might is right.

A tension exists in these arguments over whether these represent real historical events or not. In neo-evolutionary accounts, the origin of the state as a system of control is undeniably real, whatever doubts might be expressed in the imposition of universal schemes. Indo-European and Judaeo-Christian myths of the origin of violence in ritual sacrifice are also implicit in these evolutionary formulations and certainly guided Frazer, Hocart and others in their comparative work on divine kingship.

What the myths often encode is a narrative which associates the introduction of ritualised violence with 'stranger kings', the warrior or political chiefs that come from outside and impose their will through trickery and usurpation, acts of incest, fratri-, matri- and patricide, and ritual killing. A common theme is also the incorporation of these strangers by their marriage with or forceful abduction of local women. The theme of the king as outsider, an emigrant warrior, exiled because of power disputes or for a barbarous act, who takes refuge elsewhere and by strength, ruse or rape violently dominates an indigenous population, recounts how a rule of people through kinship was replaced by governance based on force.

The evolutionist argument for the replacement of kinship order by a principle of coercion in real historical time can be reversed. Ekholm (1985, 1991), for example, has argued that some of the most frequently mentioned ethnographic examples of divine kingship are the consequence of hundreds of years of depopulation, oppression and marginalisation due to European expansion and colonialism. This chapter is concerned with documenting how the ritual elaboration of sacred kingship and ritual sacrifice in the West African kingdom of Benin can be understood as the response by local power-holders to the threat of European expansion immediately prior to colonial rule. This is not to deny that sacred power in Benin was not an indigenous form of considerable antiquity, but rather that it was ritually transformed during the nineteenth century as a means of averting what was correctly perceived as the hegemonic purpose of European powers. Following Sahlins's concept of mythopraxis, I will argue that the logic of sacred power in Benin was transformed from an earlier form more grounded in political and military conquest and control to a later form directed to ritual closure against external sources of dissolution and loss of control. Curiously enough, embedded in this ritual elaboration was, I shall also argue, the rationale for accepting its inevitable failure and inability to resist forces for change. In the historical fiction of the 'stranger king', the founder of the first dynasty of Obas of Benin, lay an acceptance in the inevitability of violent change coming from the outside and Benin's future under colonial rule.

In 1897 the British entered the city of Great Benin, leading a punitive expeditionary force which proceeded to sack the town and burn it to the ground. The overt justification for the expedition had been the massacre of seven Europeans who, led by vice-consul Phillips, had mounted a trading expedition into Edo territory the year before, although the Oba had expressly forbidden them to do so. What the members of the punitive expedition encountered in the city became the subject of numerous newspaper reports:

> To convey some idea of the number of crucifixions and sacrifices witnessed in this 'City of Blood' it will be necessary to enter into a few gruesome details. Facing the principal entrance to the King's compound, stood a large sacrificial tree on which two bodies were crucified, and scattered in all directions around its base, lay numbers of decapitated and disembowelled sacrifices, in various stages of decomposition, amongst which were the decapitated remains of three Europeans who had evidently been gagged and their hands bound behind their back before execution… Continuing my way to the south I came upon the large plain leading to the Gwato path, and there witnessed one of the most horrible sights that it is possible for the human mind to conceive, i.e. one hundred and seventy six

> newly decapitated and mutilated human sacrifices strewn about in all directions, besides countless numbers of skeletons—truly, a most gruesome sight and one not to be easily forgotten.
>
> (quoted in Ling Roth 1903/1968:69)

The vast number of lurid accounts and photographic reproductions of the 'City of Blood' published in the ten years after the sacking of the city ensured that the memories were kept alive (Bacon 1897; Ling Roth 1903/1968). Even so, there is no doubt that in fear and anticipation of British retribution, a large number of slaves and war captives had been sacrificed in order to protect the kingdom from attack. Roth speaks of the large sacrificial trees stationed at each of the corners of the city wall with crucifixions and numerous decapitated bodies and human bones at their base and in the bush around them (Ling Roth 1903/1968:67). Moreover, this had become an established practice during the nineteenth century. Not that human sacrifice was not a long-standing feature of royal power, but its scale and arbitrariness developed considerably after 1823 when Adams reports that 'Human sacrifices are not so frequent here as in some parts of Africa; yet besides those immolated on the deaths of great men, three or four are annually sacrificed at the mouth of the river, as votive offerings to the sea' (Adams 1823). But, forty years later, Burton was to see 'green and mildewed skulls lying about like pebbles' and noted that the victims were all slaves which were to the Edo court 'as the wretched peasant of Western Ireland to the English patrician'. Gallwey, who visited Benin in 1893 to open up trade, describing what he calls the customary massacres of slaves or, in their absence, the capture of any poor enough to be unable to buy themselves free with a fine, observed that 'human sacrifices are of frequent occurrence and the rule is one of terror' (Ling Roth 1903/1968:66).

The direct reason given for human sacrifice is the need to support the magical powers of the Oba and of Osa and Osuan, the attendant head priests of the cults of Uwen and Ora. But this seems to be consistent with a transformation in meaning of sacrifice. One of the first mentions of human sacrifice takes place in or around 1682, when two Capuchin friars attempted to prevent a sacrifice for the benefit for the Edo to their ancestors and barely escaped with their lives from the attending crowd. What the nineteenth-century accounts describe is the exclusion of people from the sacrifice of slaves by the court and town chiefs to sustain their own authority.

The Oba of Benin in the nineteenth century is described by observers in terms of the classic features of African divine kingship. In 1801, Adams describes 'the King of Benin as fetiche and the principal object of adoration in his dominions . . . not only is he God's viceregent on earth but a god himself, whose subjects both obey and adore him as such' (Adams 1823:111). Beauvais reports that 'The king is looked upon as a kind of demigod, who can live without food and drink, subject to death but destined to reappear on earth' (Ling Roth 1903/1968:62). The political isolation of the Oba at the time of the British conquest is observed by Gallwey who says, 'Benin city is a very powerful theocracy of fetish priests. The king is all powerful though he would appear to be in the hands of his big men and very much tied down by fetish custom.' This came out at his trial, where it is clear that the Oba tried to prevent the massacre of the Europeans in the Phillips party but was ignored by his powerful chiefs.

His isolation was an extension of the prescription that his destructive magical powers had to be hedged in by prohibitions to make them work positively for the Edo people. He should only come out of the palace twice a year for ceremonies for the people as a whole, should not be seen, his feet should not touch the ground, since his powerful force would destroy its fertility, and a future king should be the issue of incest with a real or classificatory sister. Except for ritual regicide, this matches Lagercrantz's three criteria for the definition of divine kingship in Africa (Lagercrantz 1954). These were regicide, prohibitions on the person, and royal incest, to which de Heusch has added the practice of royal witchcraft and cannibalism. The Oba is like the Kuba king whose powers are like sorcery, dangerous and yet indispensable for the orderly running of the universe and society (Vansina 1964), or the Lele, where the Tundu chief, after committing incest with his sister, is forever shut up in his house (Douglas 1963:199). The repetitive theme is on the separation and exclusion of magical powers which must be kept within boundaries of social order for them not to be destructive, that is, by dissolving of those boundaries. Moreover, the ritual accomplishment of this containment exemplifies the triumph over destructive mystical forces. The Kuba king lies with his sister but marries a grandniece of his own clan to which he now no longer belongs; the Lele chief is sterile after his single act of incest; the Oba's sacrifice of human blood on the altars of his ancestors renews fertility and resolves transgression, thus reinforcing and protecting the boundaries of the kingdom.

Despite European sensibilities, the symbolism of human sacrifice in Benin appears to obey the logic of archaic kingship as articulated by Clastres, de Heusch, Sahlins and others. Kinship society by its original political design imposes upon the leader a permanent debt, thus preventing him turning prestige into power. In state societies, the debt has been transferred to the people, who are obliged to render tribute. For such a drastic change to be possible, hiatus and violence must be at the heart of the political project. The king somehow frees himself from the burden of interdictions and refuses to assume the sacrifice. Kingship loses its magical character and draws its transcendence from a preconstituted religious system. As in Europe, the king is an agent of a supernatural deity and not a 'fetiche'. By contrast, African divine kings, so de Heusch argues, were on the side of nature and harnessed its forces to the betterment of all. European kings embedded in culture were, as Saint-Just described in his attack on French royalty in 1792, an 'eternal crime against nature'. Hence the French, by their regicide, destroyed culture and in the shape of Napoleon, earned retribution by his putting Europe to fire and the sword. Divine kingship is thus the mirror image of Western coercive power, regardless of the actions carried out in its name.

Despite historical glosses, structuralist analyses of power and the state are quite ahistorical and concerned only with the internal structure of a symbolic logic. De Heusch (1972), Adler (1982), Muller (1975, 1980), for instance, support Frazer and criticise Evans-Pritchard's interpretation for reducing symbolism to 'intrigues concrètes du social' (Muller 1975:163). De Heusch praises Muller, who has definitively shown 'la vacuité des thèses' proposed by functionalists and Marxists alike, who erroneously attempt to understand symbolic structures in terms of social organisation. Muller, in his study of the Rukuba, claims to demonstrate the existence of the principles of divine kingship in lineage society and the potential organisation of its power in opposition to, and as a higher instance of, kin groups. But symbolically this can never be as a result of internal

evolution but instead is legitimised through myths relating the intrusion of 'political chiefs' from outside who bring with them violence and governance through force. Hence we return to de Heusch's interpretation of central African myths, Sahlin's use of Dumezil in his account of the Fijian 'stranger king', and what is clearly a widespread aspect of premodern ideologies: the origin of force and violence outside of the moral constraints of kinship society.

The internal logic of symbolist accounts leads, therefore, to historical schemas in which the development from kinship principles into divine kingship is transformed into the state through an act of violence. A whole volume of *Symbols*, the journal of the Peabody Museum, was recently devoted to what constituted the breakout of Western rationality from archaic society, with luminaries such as Willey, Lamberg Karlovsky and Chang debating the differences of civilisational logics involved, and the European propensity for symbolic or actual violence in contrast to the mythopoesis of the Maya, China, and elsewhere (a quite absurdly personal obfuscation of their actual realities).

In the African context it is clear, however, that divine kingship was not an autonomous symbolic logic unrelated to larger social processes. Instead, in some of its most well known aspects it is very much a recent historical product that has undergone transformations and in its pure form, as described in most cases for the late nineteenth century when first encountered by European explorers in any detail, is effectively the result of hundreds of years of contact with European trade and incorporation into a capitalist-dominated world economy. Divine kingship, although modified by these larger social processes, emerged out of a local form of sacred power that was more overtly political in the European sense of the word. It was, in effect, therefore a pathological reaction not to European contact but, as we shall see in the case of Benin at least, to an initial period of heavy dependence on European trade and subsequent isolation from it and implosion into a self-reproducing polity that utilised its pre-eminence in mystical powers to extract tribute from surrounding polities which previously it held in more exacting relations of military and political domination. The concern with boundedness and containment and the obsession with keeping Europeans out was correctly founded in a perception of what would be the cause of its inevitable destruction, which no amount of human and animal sacrifices could in the end have prevented.

A short history of Benin

The Benin myth of origin, according to Edo belief, says that many centuries ago the kingdom was ruled by a dynasty of Ogiso, 'sky gods', who governed with the support of a council of powerful chiefs called uzama. The dynasty ended through misrule and the chiefs asked Ododua, divine ruler of the prestigious Yoruba kingdom of Ife, to send someone to govern them. His son Oranmiyan came to found a new dynasty, an event which has been dated by Bradbury, based on oral tradition, to the thirteenth or the fourteenth century (Egharevba 1968). Archaeologically there are close parallels between Ife and Benin at this time, including similar use of potsherd pavements suggesting formal architecture and city walls, the earliest of which can now be dated at Benin to before European contact (Connah 1975; Darling 1984; Garlake 1977).

The myth, however, illuminates a fundamental concept in Benin kingship, that a basic opposition exists between the Edo people and a monarchy of foreign origin. As the descendant of a deified Yoruba king, the Oba rules by divine right, while the chiefs rule as the authentic representatives of the original Edo people (Bradbury 1973:67). When the Oba came from Ife he was accompanied by Osa and Osuan, who demanded blood and human sacrifice. The town chiefs, as descendants of the original inhabitants, represent the Edo against exploitation and violence by the Oba, in particular that they cannot be used by him for human sacrifice. The contrast in principle is shown in a number of symbolic dualisms: the Oba is said to be capable of transforming into a leopard that is capable, as is he, of swift and violent action. The leopard condenses his magical power to emit hostile forces to consume his enemies. The most common variant of this theme are motifs of human heads with snakes issuing from the nostrils. An early terracotta pot from Ife and a fragment from Owo show the early origin of this theme in the twelfth to fifteenth centuries (Eyo and Willett 1980). The town chiefs, on the other hand, are associated with the elephant, a rival of the leopard, and utilise pangolin skin costumes for protection: their dress is made of red scales to emulate the pangolin skin and an Edo proverb describes the pangolin as the only animal that a leopard cannot eat because it rolls up and is invulnerable (Ben-Amos 1976).

The association of human sacrifice with Benin also exists prior to European contact. Connah's excavation of a thirteenth-century ritual pit in Benin city discovered the bodies of forty-one young women, some of them decapitated, that had been thrown in still clothed and with personal ornaments including bracelets, finger rings and beads (Connah 1975). However, this is not the usual sacrificial rite of striking the head to make blood flow and then decapitation. Scenes of sacrifice in this sense are not found in the art until later periods and appear to be different from the images of severed heads associated with the military expansion of the sixteenth century. In a 1603 illustration attributable to Pieter de Marees, severed human heads, as sacrifices or war trophies, were impaled on stakes in the ground. Schafer suggests that the brass heads of the Early Period may have been copies of severed heads of conquered enemies for the ritual use of the Oba, because of the non-Edo hairstyles of some of them and the fact that they were not functioning as supports for ivory tusks on ceremonial altars by then (Fagg 1970:18).

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a succession of Obas have been identified as warrior kings who actively led the Benin armies in the field and extended control over territory and monopoly over the slave and ivory trade along the Lower Niger river. Beginning in the late fifteenth century, Portuguese visitors established diplomatic and trade relations with the Benin court, a Benin chief was allowed to return to Lisbon to be educated and Portuguese mercenaries served in the Benin armies. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were the period of maximum military expansion of Benin, when the relation of kingship with military prowess was at its most developed. Several of the brass plaques of this period commemorate the victories of particular Obas and it has been plausibly suggested, although it is difficult to substantiate, that the early brass heads were part of a trophy cult in which the severed heads of famous enemies were copied in a material that would allow the victories of famous Obas to be commemorated for ever (Ben-Amos 1980:18). This was also the period when the Portuguese maintained monopoly trade with Benin slaves, pepper and ivory in return for manufactured cloth, copper manillas, beads and, in particular, cowries. The trade, under licence from the

Portuguese court, involved slaves and pepper from the 'Five Slave Rivers' being taken to the Gold Coast, some of which were exchanged for gold, and then a return to Portugal.

Finds of cowrie shells of East African origin, glass beads and bronze objects in pre-European contact contexts show that Benin was already receiving prestige goods to symbolise the diarchic nature of power. I would argue that the colours of bronze and brass are specifically associated with descent and blood in forming a sacrificial connection between the Oba and his ancestors. Brass is a material that does not rust and decay, while lesser palace chiefs could only use wooden carvings of animal heads on their ancestral shrines (Ben-Amos 1976). The colour symbolism of cloth and beads focused on the transformation of the violent power of the Oba into that of the leopard and his supernatural powers of divination. Town chiefs wore red, indicative of their original relation to the Edo ancestors, and their resistance to the power of the Oba was symbolised in their wearing the pangolin skin. Cowries and manillas were involved directly in the buying of slaves and the possible incorporation of female slaves, especially into households as concubines. Hence the diarchic symbolism, separating and yet indissolubly joining ritual and political functions, was replicated at all territorial levels within the kingdom and required increasing supplies of foreign prestige items (Ryder 1969).

While the military expansion of the warrior kings is well documented by Portuguese sources at this time, much less is known of their seventeenth-century successors, approximately nine kings starting with the son of the last great warrior king Ehengbuda and ending with the accession of Akenzua I in 1715. Most of the seventeenth-century rulers appear to have had very short reigns: one was deposed, another is said to have lost the royal coral beads in gambling, and several others were associated with rebellions. Ben-Amos describes interesting stories of two of them. In one, the Oba's only child was born a girl and only by the magic of her father was she transformed into a boy suitable for succession. In another, the Oba was possessed by Olokun, the god of water and fertility, and grew the special hairlocks of a priest of this cult. As she says, both of these stories concern the violation of kingship norms, either through ineligibility to rule or the horror of an Oba being possessed by a deity when he is already divine (Ben-Amos 1983:68). Succession to kingship also appears now to have rotated between families and encouraged violent conflict and civil wars. According to Ryder (1969:17) 'descriptions of the Benin system of government written in the 17th century by Dutch, Spanish and Italian observers show the supposedly all powerful Oba virtually confined to his palace and hedged round by his chiefs.' The increasing power of the chiefs led to a seven-year civil war, reported on by Capuchin missionaries in 1669 and the destruction to the city was still observable to the Dutch traveller van Nyandael in 1702. All of this took place in the context of the collapse of trade with Europe during the latter part of the seventeenth century (the B phase of Wallerstein's long cycle), which led to a sixty-year hiatus in regular access to European goods.

The revival of the kingship is usually associated in oral tradition with Ewuakpe, who faced and overcame a serious rebellion (the one observed by the Capuchins of Ben-Amos 1980). Abandoned by his people, Ewuakpe was finally able to make a pact with the more powerful chiefs regarding inheritance and succession. He was allowed to name his own successor if he revoked the law of *atoro* by which he traditionally received all the property of chiefs upon their deaths. His eighteenth-century successors Akenzua and Eresoyen are credited with restoring the kingship, but with a changed basis from the era

of the warrior kings. At the same time, the Dutch signed a trade agreement with Akenzua which ushered in an era of great prosperity. Ivory was particularly important: one account shows 25,000 pounds of ivory taken on a Dutch ship in 1719 (Ryder 1969:162). Enormous quantities of cowries and a variety of cloth including silk and damask were imported, as well as an enormous number of copper pots and pans. Akenzua and his successors, in restoring the kingship, brought about fundamental changes in its character. Unlike their predecessors in the sixteenth century, 'Akenzua and his successors confined themselves within the palace…and maintained their authority…by an increasing emphasis upon their ritual function as guardians of the nation's prosperity and security' (Ryder 1969:20).

One he was confined to the palace, the military functions of the Oba were delegated to the two main war chiefs, the *Ezomo*, a member of the *Uzama*, and the *Iyase*, the most senior town chief. Eresoyen, in particular, can be seen to have developed the mystical and ritual aspects of the Oba. He developed the cult of Osun, the magical power of herbs and medicines, and introduced the cult of Odudua for the protection of the kingdom. Establishing a connection between the mystical powers of protective medicines and divine kingship is a more general feature of the Yoruba kingdoms at this period. The evidence of Yoruba impact at this time on Benin art is undoubtedly associated with Eresoyen's strategy to link Benin to the ultimate sources of the royal dynasty. The interchanges in sculpture, brass masks, crowns and ritual cults are such as to suggest a wider link of this art and cult complex with dynastic ties in south-west Nigeria during this period (Ben-Amos 1983).

It is the Ododua cult that introduces into Benin the more terrifying aspects of human sacrifices. The festival of the cult is organised by two 'priestly' title-holders called Osa and Osuan, which in some traditions are said to be the descendants of cannibals who came to Benin in the fifteenth century. In past ceremonies they were said to have drunk blood from severed heads and devoured the flesh.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the testimony of various witnesses gives the impression that the scale and arbitrariness of human sacrifice had increased considerably. The Oba, prior to the British conquest in 1897, assured a visitor that 'he was sick of it all but he could not discontinue the customs of his ancestors'.

Most pre-nineteenth-century visitors to Benin imply that only men and male animals were sacrificed. In the second half of the nineteenth century, female sacrifice became more common, and decapitated bodies were being thrown over the city walls into the bush rather than into the sacrificial pits dedicated to the Oba's father. There is no evidence for the use of crucifixion trees for sacrifice before 1838. It would seem that they were particularly associated with the punishment of witches, which might suggest an increase in cleansing cults in the later nineteenth century. Human sacrifices for changing the weather and for guarding approaches into Benin are also not mentioned in earlier accounts. The increasingly rigorous exercise of ritual power to close and protect boundaries (bodily, physical and spatial) is also emphasised in the report that other rulers as far away as Dahomey begged ritual objects and medicines from Benin. The transformation of royal rituals and sacrifice during the nineteenth century coincides with the end of the slave trade and the development of 'middle-man' trading polities on the coast whose members accumulate wealth and retinues and emulate European lifestyles. Faced with erosion of its former political and economic hegemony, the 'traditional

hierarchy' of Benin implodes and attempts to close itself off from the 'whiteman's world' and to retreat into an elaboration of ritual violence and terror to maintain control over its population.

The iconography of Ododua, the cult introduced by the early eighteenth century to protect the Oba, is equally obsessed with terrifying images of cosmic disorder and the appearance of hostile creatures capable of supernatural powers of destruction. Such imagery is more widespread in the material culture. Crocodiles and cobras issue from human nostrils on the brass helmet masks of Ododua, a reference to the special qualities of magicians to vomit out hostile animals and send them to dispatch their enemies. Dominating the city was a sixty-foot tower which crowned the palace on top of which was a night bird symbolising the power of witchcraft, and a copper snake (a python) that descended to the ground linking earth and sky and the destructive potential of the latter over the former. The snake can also evoke protection and the descent of the greater god, Osanobua, on a chain at the creation of the world. The ambivalence of the forces for creation and destruction at the same time is again a play on the association of the Oba with the powers of witchcraft.

Several distinctive features of divine kingship in Benin can be traced back to the eighteenth century and to the introduction from outside of mystical powers for protecting the cosmic order and unleashing supernatural destruction. In the Edo history of Benin, as well as some sensitive academic versions (for example, Ben-Amos 1980), what may be distinguished are two periods when the nature of kingship was transformed through the introduction of forms of violence and terrifying power from the outside. In the early period, it is the warlike stranger from whom the Oba were descended, invited from Ife, who is associated with the violence of kingship and the beginning of Benin military conquests. Prior to his coming was the age of Ogiso, sky gods, who ruled benignly through the kingship structure of the Edo communities. In the Middle to Late Period it is the restricted and private sphere of the palace and the chiefs who regularly slaughter large numbers of slaves and war captives in order to maintain cosmic order. At the same time 'the Eresoyen concentrated the terrifying powers of Osun in the palace, he spread the peaceful, creative and unifying powers of the creator god throughout the kingdom at large' (Ben-Amos 1983:78). Hence the Edo people come to be defined as the embodiment of a harmonious, reciprocal and solidary kinship society which stands outside the violent rituals of the palace and protected by the town chiefs, who owe their legitimacy to being the authentic descendants of Edo ancestors. The Oba and the palace chiefs and ritual specialists are outsiders to whom a necessary dependence has been forged historically in the original act of inviting a divine Yoruba king to send his son to found a dynasty there. The acceptance of violence and death on a mass scale of unfortunates and the weak, to whom no responsibility is felt, is a part of this:

> Close to the king's palace, the spot where another death had taken place; we walked there and found a corpse lying stark naked upon its back. A few people were standing by looking with the utmost insouciance at a horrid spectacle.
>
> (Ling Roth 1903/1968:65)

Finally, it is the actions of Europeans that always mark downturns in the fortunes of Benin in local traditions. One of the last of the warrior kings, Esigie in the seventeenth century, is said to have killed Portuguese missionaries sent to him and to have given their crosses to his priests. An oral tradition depicts Esigie in his old age, cut off from Portuguese contact, asking for Europeans to come to Benin to see him because 'he saw a white man when he was born and he wanted to see white men again before he died' (Read and Dalton 1899:5). By the middle of the nineteenth century, Benin's economy based on ivory and slaves once again collapsed as its trade with Europe was eclipsed by other markets and sources of raw materials. Declining revenues weakened the power of the Oba and ruling families, and produced tensions over diminishing sources of wealth. British encroachment upon domains traditionally under tutelage to Benin further undermined the Oba's authority by challenging his sovereignty. The response was to close relations to the outside and impede access to Europeans wanting to travel into the hinterland. Internal power struggles undermined military and political control, and on more than one occasion an Oba had to quell rebellion by putting chiefs to death. This is also the period when chiefs are allowed to place wooden trophy heads on their own altar shrines, which previously was reserved to the Oba, a sign of needing to consolidate loyalty and support at a time of foreign encroachment.

The Edo people as 'commoners' now move out from the defensive walls of the city to form closed village societies that stress internal solidarity, generalised reciprocity and opposition to the colonial world of the British, identified as the world of exploitation and negative reciprocity. For the British, Benin in the earlier part of the twentieth century has the reputation of a closed world, not helped by unsavoury memories of the 'city of blood' that does not take part in the mainstream of development.

Conclusion

This chapter has two themes. Human sacrifice at royal funerals is a widely found feature but in West Africa it is closely bound to rituals of aversion to fend off disruption. In the case of Benin, the focus is particularly on blood and the transmission of magical substances of protection through human blood. But I have been concerned to show that no one specific meaning can be attached to this general point. Rather, there have been significant shifts in interpretation of the nature of protection given by sacrifice during the historical development of royal power. The original focus on human decapitation and royal burial is glimpsed in the seventeenth century, but by the eighteenth this had largely been subordinated to ancestral rituals around dead Obas that required large numbers of slaves or war captives as victims. During the nineteenth century, these rituals are further elaborated into protective rituals to close off the city, with an associated increase in cleansing rituals against witches and other 'criminals'.

Beyond the specific details of each historical transformation, however, there are the underlying themes of the significance of ritualised violence and human sacrifice for the legitimacy of royal power. The change in sacrifice from funeral to ancestral cult is associated in Benin mythology with the arrival of new cults that provided the Oba with mystical powers of such terrifying nature that they require his exclusion from public contact. Violence is therefore a function of closeness to ancestors and to the control of

powerful substances that are associated with them. It would be quite logical, therefore, that violent acts by an Oba should be expected as a sign of his potency. Equally, the sacrifice of war captives as a fruit of violence against others is literally part of the exchange made between a living Oba and dead ancestors. Success in one demands its reproduction through increased provision of the other and the logical spiral of increasing sacrifice to ensure military success and protection is completed. Maurice Bloch, in his discussion of Merina circumcision ritual, has stressed the emotional rightness that this must also encourage for sustaining the position of mediators between this life and the transcendental order (Bloch 1986). It makes very clear sense that the expansion of sacrifice should coincide with increased royal power. But increasing need for passive victims (scapegoats in Girard's sense) does not match the pattern of indiscriminate killing that marks the decade or so immediately prior to the British punitive expedition. In other words, the meaning of sacrifice has changed or is at least arbitrary in connotation precisely because it is anxiety, threat and sense of powerlessness that motivates particular rituals that are deemed to have protective functions. Hence the frequent allusion to sacrifice being carried out by chiefs rather than by the Oba and for a variety of divinatory and augury purposes rather than sustaining transcendental order.

This chapter does not go deeply enough into the Edo notions of matter and transformation of substances in order fully to develop particularly the link between blood and mystical power. I have instead left this as an unchanging aspect of the historical transformation, which was probably by no means the case. What motivates the potency of such substances and actions, I have maintained, was the nature of threat, the anxiety that apotropaic rituals in general are intended to allay. The crisis is really with the nature of order and a cosmological structure that asserts that power always lies outside, somewhere else. If the purposes of royal rituals and ancestors is to domesticate and the logic is appropriational, then anxiety resolution can be channelled only in the direction of exaggeration and aberration of traditional response.

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16
THE EMBODIMENT OF SACRED POWER IN THE CAMEROON GRASSFIELDS

Michael Rowlands

In this chapter, we address the question of contact as entanglement (to use Thomas's felicitous phrase, Thomas 1991) in the transformation of ideas of sacred power in West-Central Africa. Using a currently extremely unfashionable culture area concept we shall argue that a basic substratum of core ideas about sacred power has been modified but not eradicated during the period from precolonial European contact to postcolonial administrative rule in West-Central Africa.

A key argument will be that 'contact' between Europeans and Africans has been culturally mediated through bodily practices for hundreds of years. The slave trade literally required the depersonalising of African bodies to be sold in exchange for European prestige items that transformed the bodies of other Africans into embodiments of sacred power. The circulation of beads, cloth, cowrie shells, brass manillas, guns and gunpowder on the West African coast transformed and intensified a ritual focus on the 'sacred body' of elders and chiefs. Yet it would be too deterministic to argue that the aesthetic qualities of the objects themselves could have had such a transformative effect. Instead we argue that 'contact' itself was a culturally constituted set of practices embedded in preexisting notions of identity and the body that were common to and distinctive of a wide area of coastal Central and Western Africa (cf. Forde 1953; Vansina 1990). An orientalising argument of 'custom bound tradition' defining the acceptance or rejection of European goods is not our intention. Rather, we claim that the assimilation of material objects into local categories can be interpreted as forms of transaction specific to fields of objects, goods, services, relations and identities. Social change is an outcome of how they fit in with each other.

Embodiment and sacred power

There is now a widely held view that in all societies the body is both symbolically elaborated and a means by which people act in the world (Bourdieu 1977; Turner 1994). The notion of embodied knowledge goes beyond this by emphasising not the obvious point that the body represents the social order but that cultural practices focus on the body so that wider social concerns can be articulated (cf. Green 1996:486). The metaphorical nature of embodiment suggests that material objects act particularly well as a means of grasping the sense of more complex and vaguer social realities. The sick body as a metaphor for the ills of society or the experience of illness as a statement about cosmologies out of joint are frequently recognised ways in which the materiality of

practice embodies cultural knowledge of an otherwise diffuse meaning. Rather than bodies as symbols being 'good to think with', writers on Africa have stressed, in particular, how curing or healing the body mediates reworking the social fabric. Comaroff describes how the seeking of healing through participation in Zionist ritual in Botswana makes a statement about the achievement of political ideals (Comaroff 1985). Jackson describes mediation for the Kuranko as pathways existing between human bodies, society and the wilderness and how the key to well-being lay in the person's ability to control traffic along them Jackson 1989). Heritier provides a model of Samo identity in which the individual is made up of a number of components, material and spiritual, whose sources are objectified as divinity, the ancestors, the forest and affines. The individual is thus a 'feuillitage' of these components or 'une concrétisation ponctuelle' in which social relations as a field are expressed as embodied practice (Heritier 1977).

The absence of any boundary between person and thing was and, although heavily modified by Christianity and colonial education, still is a distinctive characteristic of Central African sociality. Power, located on the mid-point between cultural practice and cosmology, is experienced as technologies to ensure success and avoid misfortune, to accumulate wealth and control access to resources. In their views of Central Africa as a culture area both Vansina and MacGaffey identity a concept of power based on access to the super-natural through a range of specialists who act to dissolve the difference between active bodies and inert substances. The term 'medicine' is widely used generically to refer to substances with a transformative potential. Illness may be caused physiologically but the more incurable forms are thought to be due to causes external to the body. Illness may be the manifestation of possession by spirits or the result of witchcraft. Witches use medicines to cause harm while healers use them to cure and protect against malevolent acts. Medicines act to change the physical nature of the person/body by protecting and empowering or by draining away life force, by poisoning and weakening the body's defence. Diviners, healers, elders and witches have the power to use medicines through the intervention of spirits, ancestors or witchcraft substances that will influence whether their effects will be for good or evil. Body substances such as blood, semen, saliva, breath or breast milk combine with ingested medicines to make substances that will transform the body into a form that will attract external powers to possess it. Literally the body is a container that holds substances that attract or draw spirits and ancestors to possess it and empower the person. As elsewhere in Africa, the notion of the subject is not individualised, free from ontological relationships with others, but is defined by the manner of its insertion in the social body.

Different specialists vary in the powers they have to mediate between the imagined entities of an invisible, parallel world of spirits, ancestors and the corresponding institutions of the real. MacGaffey has described these specialists as religious commissions, referring to their role as mediators in four different spheres of social life. The four are: heads of descent groups who mediate with the ancestors of their groups; owners of the land and priests of nature spirits; healers who deal with particular afflictions of individuals; and witches whose selfish activities threaten public order (MacGaffey 1972). A widespread theme of cosmological thought in Central Africa and the coastal zone of West Africa is that specialists who mediate between daily cultural practice and spirit worlds are themselves dangerously ambiguous in their capacity for

good or evil and for violence. Chiefs as killers on behalf of the social order are allied with and may become witches if they use similar powers to kill for selfish rather than social purposes. Earth priests as the mediators of local nature spirits are more often associated with forces for protection, curing illness and the maintenance of fertility but may pollute the earth, causing barrenness and stillbirths. The notion that power is always dual and dialectical is not particularly surprising. Dumont's model of hierarchy as a sustained critique against the imposition of Western notions of stratification on precolonial and postcolonial societies remains intact regardless of the ethnographic problems of its application to caste in India (Dumont 1980). Power, in the Weberian derivative sense of the ability to impose one's will on others, is in our case not a resource nor is it to be located in a basic social relation on which more complex hierarchical relations can be built. To dissolve, instead, the categories of person and thing, inert material and active persons on which Western notions of agency and social control depend, is to question whether instrumentalist notions of 'power' are at all suitable for the interpretation of premodern societies.

Embodiment in the Grassfields

Nevertheless, using the commonly accepted language of political power, a polity in the Bamenda Grassfields of Cameroon at the end of the nineteenth century was a chiefdom comprising a number of clans under the leadership of a council of elders or ward heads, presided over by a *primus inter pares* variously called a *fon* or *mfe* (glossed here as chief or king). There were over 150 such chiefdoms, ranging in size from a few hundred to 60,000 people, which are now identified by their colonial names of the Bamoum, Bamileke and the Bamenda.

Warnier quotes the following metaphor to describe a notable in the Grass-fields:

> A notable *(chef de famille)* is a vital piggy-bank of sorts for the whole descent group: in him is contained the plenitude of blood received since the creation, through a chain of ancestors.
>
> (Warnier's translation of Tchouanga Tiegoum and Ngangoum 1993b:305)

Warnier argues that the body of the notable is a container for the reproductive substances of the clan or lineage that are transmitted to the next generation. Blood is also a metonym for the whole range of life-giving substances of breath, saliva, semen and blood. Similar ideas about the transmission of procreative substances are found throughout the forest zone of West-Central Africa, but what is peculiar to the Grassfields is the extent to which this is a feature of hierarchy. At succession to an elder's title, a son is chosen and his body transformed by the rite of installation into the piggy-bank for the whole descent group, so that he contains the life essence of the whole group, its blood and semen. Other sons have these substances and if married can have children, but it is believed they only share in the body substances of their elder. By enforcing a monopoly in the transmission of reproductive powers, large households could be built up through polygyny (elders would have 10–20 wives and fons more than a hundred); sons could be denied the right to

marry so that, while they might have sex, any children would be the offspring of the father.

The principle of Grassfields hierarchy is based on the idea that, while all men (and women) possess life-giving substances such as blood, milk, semen and saliva, only some of them are able to transmit them to future generations. Marriage and installation rites are directed to managing the bodies of successors to titles in order to activate their life-giving substances. An installation rite, for example, requires that the candidate be stripped and rubbed with camwood and palm oil and then be secluded for a period when he is fed certain medicines that activate his body substances. Members of his patrician and descent group and agnatic relations of his mother will bring and feed them to him. The key point is that Grassfields concepts of the person are partible, quite literally, in the sense that it is believed that at conception the foetus is created as a vessel out of the man's semen but during pregnancy life is brought to the foetus by a water spirit that enters the womb of a pregnant woman at night and activates the life substances in the foetus. After birth, if sexual intercourse begins too soon, it is believed that the semen of the father will circulate in the body of the mother and reaching her breasts, will spoil the milk. At death the father's ghost returns to part of the bush or forest associated with his patrilineage and the water spirit seeks a wet place to wait to be reborn (cf. Pradelles 1991:55). The Grassfields cosmology of bodily substances constituting the person as an outcome of success in attracting ancestral and natural spirits to inhabit human bodies can be easily incorporated as a variant of the West-Central African model described by Vansina (1990) and MacGaffey (1979).

Using a language of power tends to reify the process in the Grassfields by which control was exercised over the transmission and use of ancestrally defined bodily substances. A *fon* was and still is responsible for protecting the chiefdom by officiating at seasonal rituals that put protective medicines across the paths and road junctions leading into the kingdom to seal the land from malevolent forces. In the more centralised polities, like the kingdom of Bamoum, at the end of nineteenth century the substances flowing from the palace included semen and apotropaic medicines as well as camwood, saliva and breath. The constituent descent groups no longer retained their own stock of ancestrally derived reproductive substance but relied on the *fon* to provide them with these ritual substances. Tardits has demonstrated that at the time of the German conquest, the 600 lineages that made up the kingdom were linked to the king through real or putative filiation (Tardits 1980). Lineage heads were appointed by the *fon* or were recruited from among his sons and palace retainers. King Njoya was said to have had 350 children who survived infancy and, by giving out daughters to lineage heads and taking wives, he literally ensured that the king's semen impregnated the whole kingdom. At the other end of a typology of Grassfields polities, of which the Meta offer a good example, there were no bounded units (Dillon 1990). The typical settlement pattern was the open village, made up of unrelated segments of non-localised descent groups. There were no *fons*, no palaces or rituals of closure. In other words, there were no rites of encompassment in the Dumontian sense of hierarchy that would define the relations between descent group segments in terms of a higher value of ritual purity (Dumont 1980).

Bodies, masks and containers

A metaphorical association of bodies as containers begins to emerge as a basic idea of power in West-Central Africa. In English, pots have lips, necks, shoulders, bellies and bottoms and in West Africa pots are often referred to procreatively as having heads, wombs, bellies and rectums (Barley 1984:99). The Yoruba also think that a person is like a hollow vessel with exterior and interior aspects and is comparable to a pot, a mask or a statue in attracting and forming the residence of dead souls or nature spirits (Lawal 1977:52). For the Yoruba, Matory also describes heads as

> containers that potentially host a variety of beings who may change places at ritually induced moments…heads, stones, calabashes, mortars and pots form a circuit of images manipulated in the appropriation and delegation of power in contemporary possession rites.
>
> (Matory 1994:135)

In possession trances, the spirit of the deity inhabiting a person's body takes control; the individual temporarily becomes a body for someone else. MacGaffey draws parallels between the Luba of south-eastern Congo Republic and the Yoruba of south-west Nigeria in their beliefs that the bodies of men and women are uncivilised and should undergo processes of modification to make them more fit to become vessels to contain and transmit political power. Scarification, intricate hair coiffures and body modifications such as the ingestion of medicines at initiation and installation rites, the carving of wooden figures and the wearing of masks to make the body of the person carrying it a suitable receptacle for a spirit can all be seen as part of an aesthetic, imitated in sculpture, intended to attract spirits of the dead to stay and act benevolently towards the living. In the Grassfields it is often objects as containers that provide the metaphors to understand more difficult or abstract ideas about procreation, misfortune, illness, anger in speech, and blessing. This suggests that, like metaphor more generally, understanding takes place in terms of entire domains of experience and not in terms of isolated concepts (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

Grassfields material culture (also folklore, songs, jokes) is heavily dominated by an iconography of containers. Food is always prepared and served in packages made from plantain leaves, raffia wine is mixed and served from special pots, and the sauce used as a condiment to yam or maize base staples is eaten from a bowl made specially for the purpose. A specially carved wooden bowl is used to mix oil and camwood to make red paste that is smeared on people attending succession and marriage rituals. The independence of a household, lineage or clan head is defined by his possession of such a bowl to bless those who attend rituals in his compound. An elder drinks wine from a buffalo-horn or cup and, according to Dillon's account for the Meta, 'the hereditary buffalo-horn drinking cup of the lineage head was seen as a means of establishing continuity with the dead fathers of the patrilineage and of drawing upon their mystical powers in ritual context' (Dillon 1990:22–5). The cup is an important part of a ritual curse in which angry, loud speech is used against someone while pouring a libation over

the hearthstones in an elder's compound. When speaking with the cup in hand, the elder can only tell the truth, since the breath and saliva of all past elders are literally inscribed in the cup. Friends make business or trading pacts by drinking from such a cup, which means they share saliva which, if betrayed, causes an ignominious death from swollen feet or a swollen belly for the culprit. When sons are given permission to set up their own compounds, they are given wine from the father's cup in cupped hands as a blessing to drink, as are daughters when they leave his compound to join that of their husband's. The strong words of the elder used in a curse, if directed against his offspring, will activate the wine in their stomachs and cause either them or their descendants illness or death. The fact that a mother's father or brother can cause such havoc is a powerful sanction against the mistreatment of the wife by the future husband and his family.

Concrete experiences of the body and body substances are expressed in sets of metaphorical statements and drawn upon to understand more abstract ideas of succession, misfortune and healing. But, in a sense, experiences of the body are no more concrete than any of these other ideas. The human body is itself conceived as a container of powerful substances and a mean of attracting external spirits to reside in it. The installation ceremony of a Grassfields *fon* ('chief) literally involves the remodelling of a man's body into a container for the ritual substances and procreative forces on which depends the survival of the chiefdom. The long period of three weeks' seclusion involves not so much transmission of knowledge as the imbibing of medicines and other substances on which ritual potency depends. There are striking similarities with descriptions of affliction cults in Central Africa which equally emphasise healing as a consequence of the remoulding of a patient's body. As Devisch puts it:

> The patient moves from a state of being tied in, closed up, or emptied out, towards a remoulding of the body's shell and content, while simultaneously being gradually reinserted in the complex interweave of body, group and world.
>
> (Devisch 1993:38)

All notables participate in some aspect of a similar transformation of their bodies into containers for medicines to attract spiritual powers. Warnier has documented this in his analysis of the iconography of notables and kings in the Grassfields (Warnier 1993:312). Statues of *fons*, he argues, emphasise broad, prominent chests and the head, usually shown open-mouthed as if uttering a strong statement. The emphasis on speech as a powerful act is matched by the fact that the body of a *fon* may be represented as a container or with containers in his hands or at his feet (Plate 16.1). Given the emphasis in the cosmology on the containment of semen and life essence, Warnier argues that the visual metaphors of sexuality for both partners objectify a concern with containment, mixing and the exchange of transformable or transformed substances. The idea that semen feeds the foetus in pregnancy while milk feeds it after birth, and that the powers of the two substances should not mix, is supported by the fact that women's milk is seen as a powerful antidote to male violence. A drop of a woman's milk will calm the most powerful and violent (male) masquerade. A woman's cult called *anlu* is aroused when the exploitation of women by men occurs (offences such as selling farmland, rape or sexual assault) and its most powerful polluting act is to smear vaginal secretions on buildings in

the compounds of accused men, which, if not cleansed, will result in their illness and death.

The essential idea that can be detected in the art forms over a large area of the forest/savannah margin of West-Central Africa is that a mask, a carved figure, a pot, the human body or a range of other objects can act as an outer covering or a container to attract a vital spirit/ghost to reside within it for a human purpose. MacGaffey describes Kongo *nkisi* figures in similar terms as spirits encountered in the wild, attracted to reside with humans who are

Plate 16.1 Cup-bearer, Bafuen, Central Grassfields, Cameroon

Source: Harter 1986:274

instructed to have a statue carved so that it can reside in it (MacGaffey 1979). Without its medicines, a *nkisi* is a mere object deprived of the vitality that gives it purpose. Yoruba kings are transformed by the rituals of investiture into exceptional beings. The Oba is masked by a crown and beads that hang over his face and are filled with medicines that give him power over witches and malevolent spirits (Pemberton 1989). As with masquerades, the rites of installation have depersonalised the wearer in order to make both body and objects a suitable receptacle for a spirit.

A basic idea therefore emerges from a series of conceptual and practical oppositions that derive from a particular cosmology provided by a common tradition shared by the peoples of the forest and savannah margins of West and Central Africa. However, the idea is transformed repeatedly by hierarchical notions of ancestral cults dominated by particular dynasties and opposed by more acephalous social movements which, in the form of healing or anti-witchcraft cults, could attack and dissolve the basis of hierarchy. The inclusion of witches in this cosmology is essential to describe the ambiguous dialectic of good and evil based on the intentions behind the use of occult powers. The idea is that power, for good or evil comes from the outside, from the land of the dead, the world of nature spirits, and can motivate people into acts of either healing or witchcraft, depending on a whim. The fact that Europeans were regarded as part of this equation should therefore come as no surprise.

Hierarchy and cults of the dead

In a wide-ranging survey of cults of the dead, Mary Douglas discusses societies where the dead are revered, form ancestral cults and are capable of intervening in the lives of the living (Douglas, manuscript). She correlates the presence of ancestral cults with monopoly power vested in elders who build hierarchy through hereditary principles by integrating the living and the dead into a single cosmology. The more the living elders can impose their authority on the young, the more we should expect cults of dead ancestors benignly punishing or rewarding, managed by ‘priests’ and mediated by diviners or seers. The greater the degree of intergenerational conflict, she argues, the greater the unwillingness by the living to believe in the power of the dead. Religious revolt by the young takes the form of attacks on cults of the dead, on the bodies of elders and a refusal to acknowledge the power of ancestors. This apparently ‘modernising’ assault on conservative traditionalism can be found in many different settings. (An example is the destruction of ancestor cults in ancient Israel. In the Bible the very idea of a cult of the dead is repudiated, and consultation of the dead through divination or consulting seers is punished by stoning.) Situations exacerbating constant warfare and raiding, she goes on, will enhance the status of young men and encourage militaristic ideologies and the presence of spirit cults that convey powers to the living without the mediation of elders and ancestors.

The dynamism of spirit (healing) cults displacing or co-existing with ancestor cults is frequently found in West and Central Africa. In Cameroon, a contrast is often drawn between the hierarchical societies of the Grassfields where elders dominate and the

'egalitarian' forest societies where descent is a minimal principle of recruitment and spirit cults organise attachment to territory (Geschiere 1995). Robin Horton's description of the precolonial religious cults of the Niger delta equally stresses the historical development of ancestral cults supporting the dynastic ambitions of trading families accumulating wealth and power through contact with European trade. In the hinterland, away from such trading opportunities, cults for water spirits and spirit heroes were appealed to for help (Horton 1969). An important distinction in the contrast of these types of religious cult is the switch of emphasis from bodies to ritual objects as the containers of occult forces and substances used in the relief of affliction, in healing and the bestowal of good fortune.

Hierarchical notions in the central Grassfields separate benign aspects of ancestors and the bodies of living elders from the violence of the objects of masquerades. Myths of origin of Grassfields kingdoms invariably associate *fons* (chiefs) with origins from the outside, 'stranger-kings' that came and violently deposed an indigenous earth-priest figure, implying that the origin of chiefship was founded in an act of symbolic violence. Following a Sahlinstype mythopraxis argument, such myths appear to resolve the conflict between a pre-existing substratum of earth/nature spirit cults that became subordinated to the growing importance of descent groups, ancestors and chiefs. Thomas's argument for shamanic power in Polynesia also contrasts its opaque and hidden nature with the more visible (to European eyes) hierarchies of chiefs and kings (Thomas 1995). Arguing for a precolonial reality of more indeterminate and fluid modes of diffused power allows us to see how the impact of colonialism finally brushed aside such indeterminacy in the pursuit of a single, unified structure of authority that could be administered through indirect rule.

To counter this tendency to see hierarchy as the totality of precolonial Grassfields polities, we need to see how spirit cults operated in a less centralised system where elders and ancestors were absent or of limited power. Baeke begins her study of Wuli magico-religious thought by stressing that all African Bantu systems are devoted to taming and channelling the antisocial powers of witchcraft and magic (Baeke 1996). To do this, some rely more on ancestors, healers and diviners and others on healing cults and objects capable of controlling spiritual forces. Her point is that the selection of these various forces depends on historical circumstances, and the cults and masquerades of the chiefdoms of the central Grassfields are one of several alternatives available to attract spirits and the ghosts of dead elders to help the living combat the causes of death, illness and suffering (Baeke 1996). A wider 'culture area' comparison suggests, instead, that alternatives co-exist in the same social formation but with different counter-hegemonic tendencies.

The Wuli live in the north-eastern Grassfields along the border with Nigeria. They maintain no relations with their dead that resemble an ancestor cult and the corpses are buried collectively in a large underground vault and quickly forgotten. Two essential matters guide the funeral: discovering the cause of death and detecting the presence of the ghost of the deceased. The two are linked, in the sense that it is believed that witches cause death in order to possess a person's ghost so it can carry out a malevolent purpose on their behalf. At death, the Wuli carry out an autopsy in order to ascertain whether the person was the victim of witchcraft or was himself a witch who died as a result of successful anti-witchcraft magic. If the deceased was not a witch, then the rest of the family has to be protected from the life-threatening activities of the witch by a diviner. If

the deceased is diagnosed a witch (by examining the shape of the liver), then nothing further needs to be done and the body is pushed into the collective grave.

The Wuli fear the dead, who are the source of all evil since their ghosts, once captured by a witch, can be turned against the living. Adamantly turning their backs on cults of the dead, the Wuli believe instead in water spirits, capricious but generally benign supernatural beings found in lakes and rivers. Women take a bath in such rivers after menstruation, since it is believed the spirits in the water help open the way for the husband's sperm to enter the womb. Water spirits are said to have taught men all the techniques of carving, ironworking, trapping and fishing and to have taken men under water and shown them the healing properties of special medicinal plants. But the most important function of the water spirits is to help men protect themselves from witchcraft. Witches are humans that have been given life-destroying capacities by evil spirits in the bush and are detected at death by autopsy, which shows abnormalities in the heart or other organs. Life-destroying witches need an instance of public conflict or discord to create a breach in the social order where their malevolence can gain a foothold. So maintaining social order is paramount and men call on the water spirits to help them in the fight against witchcraft, which they do through the mediation of secret ritual objects.

Spirit cults are ranked by the mystical power of the ritual objects they possess to attract the water spirits, who can heal the sick and influence the ghosts of the dead to bring disease and death upon the witches. These objects may be a wooden or terracotta statuette, a mask, an iron bell or a calabash, but the most powerful cults are those that have appropriated the power of exotic objects (Plate 16.2). Blood from sacrificing a chicken attracts the water spirits to a container and, once attracted to live there, they will capture the spirits of the dead wandering in the vicinity. The most powerful spirits of the dead are those who when alive were members of a powerful secret society, so in this case it is the ghosts of men who previously had been the owners of 'great objects' that have the power to confront and kill witches. Ritual objects take their power from two different supernatural sources: on the one hand, the benign powers associated with the water spirits which are inherited through the matriline and, on the other, the ancestral ghosts of more malevolent intent that are transmitted through the patriline. When a son takes his father's place as a member of a secret society and the possessor of an important ritual object, it is said that he 'marries' this object, a reminder that in the myth of origin water spirits provided the first wife for a man.

In Wuli cosmology, we encounter many of the same elements as in the magico-religious thought of the chiefdoms of the central Grassfields. The principal difference lies in the transformation in the latter of mystical power from ritual objects into the bodies of living elders and the fact that the benign and healing aspects of the water spirits that inhabit the Wuli cult objects, and 'encompass' the malevolent aspects of ghosts of the bush, are a prominent feature of the ritual power of *fons* and lineage elders. Moreover, while the water spirits and the ghosts of the dead co-habit in Wuli cult objects both to ensure fertility and to inflict disease and death, these aspects are separated in the central Grassfields chiefdoms into the procreative functions of embodied power of elders and the cult objects of the masquerade societies. There are

Plate 16.2 Terracotta figurine and calabash used in Wuli shrine to attack witches

Source: Baeke 1996

seven different cult associations in Wuli, each with its own medicines, objects, music and dance capable of curing a specific illness or disease or that can be used to kill a witch. A pair of wooden figures, one male, one female, is the most important ritual object in the highest ranked of the associations; they are secret and cannot be seen by the uninitiated. Similar carved wooden figures, usually carved as the backs of stools, are part of the

installation ceremonies of *fons* in the central Grassfields. A set of terracotta figurines make up a second aggregate that in Wuli are specifically associated with the water spirits that ensure fecondity in women and with the capacity to absorb the dangerous winds and storms sent by harvest-destroying witches (Baeke 1996:72). The bulbous shape of a number of these terracotta figurines alludes to their capacity to cause swelling diseases in witches and thieves. Others possess zoomorphic heads which reflect the capacity of the owners to transform at night into wild animals and engage in supernatural battles with witches and thieves. Particular secret societies are specifically linked to protection rites that will attack witches causing an affliction in the village. Bells, wooden and fibre masks and calabashes are other objects owned by different societies and charged with the capacity to afflict and heal particular diseases, to initiate young boys and introduce them to the secrets of the lower ranked societies.

In the origin myths, calabashes, associated with water and the rainy season, are the oldest ritual objects. The fact that they are raw objects suggests an antipathy to fire which is essential for the manufacture of the terracotta and iron objects of the other cults. Calabashes are also transformed into horns which act as voice disguisers and are played to convey the secret voices of male initiates. Although the Wuli cults with calabashes and fibre masks are believed to be the oldest and indigenous, they are now considered the least powerful of the associations and it is believed they have to be accompanied by the others to have any chance of combating modern witchcraft. All the other societies are said to come from outside Wuli society and to have brought with them the skills of iron-working, the manufacture of terracotta figurines, pottery and the use of fire.

Cults and their ritual objects were widely exchanged in the past and one can find significant similarities in cult complexes over a large area (e.g. Zeitlyn 1994). The shrines reflect this in often being physically a clutter of objects of different origin, implying that it is the accumulation of cults over time that has given some of them particular regional importance. As new powerful cult complexes gain a reputation for success in combating witchcraft or curing illness, there was a scramble to acquire them and add them to an existing repertoire. Hence Europeans, with their new technologies demonstrating they were the most powerful witches of all, often found their missionising zeal enthusiastically, if embarrassingly, widely espoused in the Grassfields.

Wuli cult associations are also grouped by the relationship of ritual objects and their functions relating to seasons of the year. Calabashes and wood/fibre masks are linked to water and are used at the height of the rainy season during the initiation of young boys, who must eat raw, cold food at night and live outside the village (Baeke 1996:86). The music played on these occasions is rhythmic and is accompanied by words and dance that associate the performance with social harmony, ensuring fertility and human fecundity. On the other hand, cults using iron and terracotta, which are linked by fire to the foundry and the kiln, cannot be brought out if it rains and must perform instead in the dry season in order to be successful. The same musical instruments are used as in the wet season rituals, but the music is cacophonous, sharp and fearful, and intended to combat and frighten away malignant forces. The autochthonous origins of the calabash rituals, symbolically linked to the fecundity of water, the regenerative aspects of funeral rites and the initiation of boys invert the other rites that mythically associate the destructive properties of their own powers and of witches with a foreign origin.

The apparent contradiction between the theme of a primordial water spirit that ensures fecundity and the narratives recounting the origins of death and disease appears to hold no problems for the Wuli (Baeke 1996:87). The structure of Wuli thought associates certain objects and practices with water and fecundity and others with dryness and heat. Blacksmiths who make hoes as well as cutlasses mediate between the two in representing the symbolic violence of the hunt, yet also providing the hoes needed for women in agriculture. In Wuli society, authority and prestige are based on the control of ritual powers linked to spirit cults, their shrines and objects whose properties are balanced by their capacity to ensure fecundity and destroy the activities of witchcraft. Some elders still remember that, before the German colonial conquest, the Wuli had no chiefs but a decision-making council that brought together all the heads of the sanctuaries and their ritual objects. The same cannot be said for the central Grassfields chiefdoms, where *fons* are the heads of ancestor cults which carry out seasonal rituals and inter-chiefdom exchanges to ensure fertility and protect against malign forces mostly of external origin. The association of metaphors of water and procreation with the bodies of *fons* and patriclan elders still maintains a ritual separation from the palace secret societies that are charged with killing witches and thieves through their control of ritual objects and medicines that have the power to inflict or cure disease.

The longer-term question posed is: What were the circumstances that led to the accumulation and separation of ritual functions? While in the northern Grassfields separation allowed a synthesis of the two principles in cult objects, in the central chiefdoms a transformation occurred which embodies well-being in the physicality of living *fons* and elders. In many cases, the objects and music of the most important of these secret societies inhabit ‘houses’ in the palace to which a *fon* should never come but into whose activities he can inquire in order to be certain that no injustice occurs. This is the ideal, although the realities of colonial politics often meant a very different kind of collusion. But the precolonial pattern is clear: the role of calabashes and terracotta as containers of mystical forces in the northern Grassfields became identified with the bodies of descent group title-holders in the central chiefdoms, combined with a proper respect for ancestors. Answering the question why this transformation occurred depends on reconstructing the political and economic circumstances which led to differences in access to wealth through contact with Europeans.

Symbolic power and exchange value

For two to three hundred years European ‘prestige goods’ were imported into the hinterland of the Bight of Benin in exchange for slaves, ivory and palm oil products. Prior to European contact in the sixteenth century, populations in the Grassfields were already participating in coastal/inland trade of salt in exchange for ironwork and foodstuffs. The writings of an early Portuguese navigator, Pachero Pereira, describe the salt trade for Rio del Rey on the Niger delta in the early 1500s and, later in the seventeenth century, Barbot describes a ‘salt town’ at the mouth of the Cross River which Baikie confirms, stating that ‘salt from the lagoons, near Tshekeri (western Niger delta) is transported in considerable quantity into the interior’ (Baikie 1856:317 and 340–1). According to Dugast, the trade routes which linked Douala to the highlands via the Wouri

were known as the ‘salt roads’ and he reported numerous conflicts over their control (Dugast 1949:44 and 112). Iron was the major item that passed to the coast from the interior in exchange for salt prior to the European contact. A first mention of the trade in iron occurs in 1518. A hundred years later both Dapper and Barbot mention that large quantities of spears and cutlasses were in circulation against salt and that their quality was superior to European imports (Ardener 1968). Direct contacts between the Grassfields and the coast were stimulated by European demand for slaves and were well established by 1650, with Douala the earliest European entrepôt, followed in importance by Rio del Rey and Ambas Bay (Warnier 1985:152). Warnier argues for the establishment of the Douala sphere taking place between 1650 and 1750, while the Calabar trade sphere was a later formation of the nineteenth century, in particular between 1820 and 1830 (Warnier 1985:154–5, figure). The trade between the Grassfields and Calabar developed later, in particular from the early nineteenth century, with the expansion of the palm oil trade and the growth of indigenous plantations on the Cross River. If this general pattern over three hundred years of a movement from a Douala to a Calabar sphere of European-dominated trade is correct, then it also makes sense that it should have been the back-country of Douala in the Bamileke region of the southern Grassfields that saw the earliest circulation of European trade beads and manillas from the end of the seventeenth century, while the central Grassfields and parts of the northern Grassfields were incorporated into the Calabar trade only later during the nineteenth century.

The value attached to European prestige goods acquired in exchange for slaves, ivory and palm oil products was defined by the magical power they possessed to convince people of the necessity and inevitability of hierarchy. European trade goods of beads (used for decorating cult objects and the bodies of elders and *fons*), copper or brass manillas, cloth dyed blue-black, guns and gunpowder and cowrie shells were and are so much bric-à-brac and have no meaning in themselves except to the extent to which they fitted into and expanded local consciousness of an indigenous aesthetics of symbolic power. The colour blue-black, for example, is still associated with the possession of magical power to protect by inflicting disease and illness on witches, thieves and malevolent beings. The earliest European cloth in the Grassfields, dyed blue-black, was imported along with dane guns, sacks of salt and kegs of gunpowder. European cloth was used to make the borders, sleeves and lower panels surrounding locally produced blue cloth in a ceremonial gown. At the end of the nineteenth century only the senior title-holders of the Bamenda chiefdoms were allowed to wear the full dress, but scraps of the blue-black cloth were worn as loincloths or used as belts for cutlasses by men of lesser status. All carved wooden objects were decoratively burnt blue-black and the most prestigious imported beads had a chevron design of blue-black and red design. Blue-black pointille beads were sewn on to stools, containers, bags, weapons and any personal possession of a notable.

The circulation of European prestige goods, and the internal mechanisms that produced over 15,000 slaves a year from the Grassfields, were articulated by the symbolic value of three forms of embodiment: slaves, marriageable women and the ritual powers of the body substances of *fons* and notables. The majority of the slaves sold out of the Grassfields can be traced to domestic sources, in particular to the large numbers of celibate males who were excluded from social adulthood of polygynous marriage

(Warnier 1993). The *ta-ngkap* (literally, father of the money) who controlled the disposal of his daughters' daughters in marriage could, in certain circumstances, claim rights of disposal over daughters' sons as well. Marriage between equal marriage partners, on the other hand, was carried out through the payment of bridewealth objects that transferred rights *in uxorem et genetricem* to the husband and his patrilineage. Hence the inequality created by the control of the marriage system by patriclan heads also created the reservoir of young males and disconsolate siblings that could either be absorbed internally as labour or disposed of as slaves. Traditional views of the power of a *ta-ngkap* illustrate the authority they had to dispose of the young: 'My *ta-ngkap* owns me'; 'My *ta-ngkap* is more important to me than kinsman since it is a relationship that cannot stop'; 'Every Bangwa has a *ta-ngkap.* Nobody can own himself (Brain 1972:179). The ambiguity that people felt towards their marriage fathers can be seen in the remarks still made today that marriage and selling for money were the same thing in the past, and in the fear and avoidance of the marriage father by the sister's son. Elders, by controlling the circulation of the the reproductive capacities of both out-marrying daughters and their offspring and of in-marrying wives, could eventually bring everyone into their circle of debt relations.

If the value of women's bodies lay in their reproductive capacities, those of young men lay in their labour, to be used locally or sold out as slaves. Although no longer called slaves, demographically not a great deal changed during the early period of German rule, when about the same percentage of young men were sent by the chiefs to work on the coastal plantations in lieu of poll tax, or even now when Grassfields men form the highest proportion of wage labour on the coastal plantations. The circulation of the reproductive value of women against the labour value of men and the commoditisation of both through the circulation of European prestige goods was the source of wealth that became the monopoly of elders.

In the Grassfields of the nineteenth century, slaves, marriage partners, elders and ancestors were therefore part of the same equation, in the sense of symbolic power as that invisible power which can be exercised only with the complicity of everyone's partial understanding of the system (Bourdieu 1991:164). Bodies emptied of life-essence became slaves, bodies with the reproductive substances transmitted through the mother's patriline became wives, and men's bodies were transformed through initiation rites into the containers of patriclan and lineage substances of ancestral origin. In the central Grassfields chiefdoms this structure of symbolic power enforced a model of hierarchy that stood separate from, and yet encompassed, the secret societies that controlled the use of magical objects, musical instruments and medicines that both cured afflictions and inflicted them on malevolent enemies. There seems little doubt that the conditions necessary for this separation of hierarchy from symbolic violence and its transformation into embodied forms of symbolic power were the intrusion of an external demand for slaves. Never fully incorporated into these trading opportunities, the north-eastern Grassfields prolonged an ancient pattern of cults and associations of elders whose position was more explicitly collectively ritualised in opposition to the elaboration of ancestral cults, the control of bodies and the somatic possession of occult forces.

Conclusion

One of the aims of this chapter has been to show the value of a 'culture area' concept which, used flexibly, can bridge the abyss between particularism and over-generalisation. The idea that social worlds, disparate in language and material life, can share a common tradition concerning the nature of the forces that determine existence, does not necessarily lead to vague discussion. Over a wide area of West and Central Africa both persons and things are conceived as containers that attract spirits to inhabit them and be domesticated to serve the living as chiefs, mediums, diviners or witches. Bodies and objects are transformed into fetishes, masquerades and charms through medication and by the administering of substances thought to be attractive to ghosts and spirits. Men differ from women in their capacity to be attracted in this manner; the contrast is made, on the one hand, between the violence of men and masculine activities that involve physical acts in transformation of materials and things and, on the other, the procreative metaphors of women's functions. Bodies can be emptied, depersonalised and possessed by deities or spirits so they will carry out a particular purpose and will be provided with particular skills to do so. Words such as chiefs, priests, diviners, healers and witches are used to approximate to these differences in capacities and spirits served.

When re-inscribed in particular historical and political/economic settings, it is possible to predict the kinds of structures most likely to be favoured by access to new sources of wealth and means of imposing control over others. There is nothing particularly precolonial about this process, except the particular form it may have taken in the various pasts of various parts of such a large area of Africa. The importance of 'tradition' in contemporary West Africa is by no means an 'invented past' for current legitimation purposes. There exist strong continuities in political ideology which mean that modern politicians, businessmen and others are not exempt from attacks by witches, nor do the latter fail to recognise the real power of 'traditional rulers' or deny that success in a modern setting may eventually be translated by others as a sign of their personal possession of occult powers (Geschiere 1997). The growing consensus among contemporary scholars, that there exists a distinctive cultural integrity to West and Central Africa, suggests that the intuitive hunches of early diffusionist writers such as Bauman and Frobenius, and their first attempts to give these hunches some kind of coherent framework, were not so completely wide of the mark.

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m denotes map. f denotes figure.