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VISUAL IMAGES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHITECTURE: GENDER IN SPACE

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Meg for your pleasure. Have fun!

This paper has been much inspired by post-processualists in archaeology, and especially among them feminists who entertain a pluralism in their interpretation of the archaeological record, who celebrate the ambiguities involved in the construction of prehistory, and who embrace the engendering of archaeology as their figurehead. I am encouraged by some of the attempts at alternative ways of presenting archaeological practice through narratives, and images, to imagine that we can go much much further in this direction (Conkey, 1989; Handsman, 1990; Shanks, 1991; Spector, 1991; Tringham, 1991a; Tringham, 1991b). I am not sure that we have as yet been terribly successful in making an impact with these alternative ways of presenting (publishing) archaeology either to our colleagues in the profession or to the general public. Any lack of success probably has to do partially with the fear and restrictions that publishers have about widely distributing such marginal experimental (unnatural) examples of archaeological literature. The demand for a different kind of archaeological literature and image-creation is out there, no doubt of that. Are we brave enough (or we do have the time to spare from our scholarly mainstream expressions/presentations) to develop it? It is enough for me personally to know that when I work with these alternative images and texts I feel boundless energy and enthusiasm and satisfaction with the results of my labour, so that I am happy to participate in the experiment of developing the practice of alternative imaging/writing of plural engendered prehistories.

I am also inspired by two writers who have put into practice their ideas on the social role of images. Their ideas happen to coincide with mine about what is important in history, a multiscalar view, a humanized view, a view that is radial like memory but also linear like a narrative, a view that looks at the social action and dramas not only of the actors in the images but of the creators of the texts and images. Susan Sontag and John Berger, who form a mutual admiration society, both have inspiring skills as writers and as creators of photographic images, and have provided much of the inspiration for my paper (Berger, 1980; Sontag, 1977). Jean-Paul Bourdier provded my first

experience of looking at images in more critical reflexive way which enabled me also to see their potential power

Here are some quotations to begin with that started me off: "Reality has always been interpreted through the reports given by images; ... philosophers since Plato have tried to loosen our dependence on images by evoking the standard of an image-free way of approaching the real"(Sontag, 1977: 153) BUT "A capitalist society requires a culture based on images.....The production of images also furnishes a ruling ideology, social change is replaced by a change of images" (Sontag, 1977: 178). Plato denigrated images as transitory, minimally informative, immaterial, impotent co-presences of the real things which cast them.

Alan Sorrell, an artist who specializes in reconstructions of archaeological and historical architecture writes that "European visual art has always been primarily concerned with historical reconstruction, or rather, was so ....until the advent of the Impressionists, and that "the only reconstruction which are normally outside the realm of art are those relating to archaeology" (Sorrell, 1973: 177-8)

The paper is divided into three parts.

The first tells what kind of visual imagery is used in describing and interpreting archaeological architecture. Each is described from the standpoint of the traditional archaeological view of its purpose and the evaluation of each in traditional archaeological practice. This "traditional" standpoint is one which is non-reflexive, not self-critical, and in general supportive (if unconsciously so) of the established ideology of the male Western Capitalist ruling class.

The second part is what Whitney Davis would probably call a deconstruction of this standpoint and its use of visual imagery in the investigation and expression of archaeological architecture. In this part I look at the intended and unintended effect on the perceiver, whether this is another archaeologist or someone from "outside" the discipline - the "public". In this part, then I consider the actual power of the archaeologist as mediator between past and present through his/her control and manipulation of images of archaeological architecture.

The third part is a series of suggestions as to how this power can be diverted from a support of the established ideology of the male Western Capitalist ruling class to serve in the construction of an engendered prehistory. Here I consider some of the alternative presentations of images as explored by Berger, and a little by Shanks, in terms of a combination of imagery presented radially to jog the memory and imagery presented in linear fashion to narrate a story. It is a combination of images on the one hand about us pretending to be the social actors of prehistory negotiating their

way through space and place, and on the other hand about us reliving our experiences in the drama of the archaeological enterprise. This is visual imagery to help construct a prehistory which is essentially about people - men, women and children - in the arena of place (architecture) rather than architecture which happens to contain people. It is visual imagery that helps to construct a prehistory that is full of ambiguity and must therefore embrace comfortably a plurality of interpretations.

This is a challenging task to actually put such visual images into practice. At the end of the paper I shall give a taste from the various projects of this kind that I have been working on, including the use of computerised rendering of architectural reconstructions which are drawings that appear to be photographs. I consider the effect of adding other kinds of media: text and sound....These are projects which take as their starting point fieldwork in Southeast European Neolithic in whose drama I was a major social actor and leads into fantasy land or is it "virtual reality"?

Obviously this would make much too long a paper for my assigned 15 minutes, so that the actual presentation at the meetings will probably comprise mostly a heavily illustrated demonstration of the third part through images of the final set of examples from the construction of Southeast European prehistory.

These are just some preliminary notes on the different parts of the paper:

What kind of visual images of archaeological architecture are there?

Two-dimensional images of a two-dimensional concept: maps, aerial photographs, floor-plan drawings, floor-plan photos (baloon, tower), profile drawings, profile photos, "informed" reconstructed vertical view of building;

Two-dimensional images of three-dimensional concept: isometric and axonometric views of a) excavated architecture; b) "informed" reconstructed architecture; cut-out or covered or exposed; other views of reconstructed: bird's eye. photographs of archaeological remains of buildings and of sculpture (see below) reconstructions of these; computerised reconstructions rendered to look like photographs; animated to look like film.

Three-dimensional: sculpture: experimental replicas; to enter or not; with people or not; to touch? folk museum vs. heritage park; photographs of these (Audouze); model replicas and panoramas (museums); model of excavation; 2-d photographs of these

Each has a different intended purpose by the image creator (archaeologist, artist, photographer)

Drawings: The accepted strategies of graphic representation of architecture in "traditional" archaeology manifest the same characteristics of a dehumanized prehistory. In textbooks on archaeological illustration, the "right" or "appropriate" way of illustrating excavated buildings emphasizes accuracy (of scale, for example) and clarity in the presentation of empirical archaeological data (as much as possible is represented) in order to allow the possibility of using the illustrations–even reconstructions–as the basis of further research (Adkins & Adkins, 1989).

Most projections in archaeological reports are orthographic (2-dimensional). Of the metric projections, axonometric are preferred, since they can show exterior and interior spaces and because they emphasize the main source of empirical information, that is, the groundplan. All projections are interpretive, even those which seem to be a faithful record of what the archaeologist observed and recorded, but not all are called reconstructions.

However, drawing is thought to have a very different purpose from, for example, photographs. In a drawing, details which may seem to be insignificant in an "impartial" photograph can be brought into special focus, made clearer and emphasized. Important distinctions of texture and consistency can be symbolized in special conventions. "Drawing is a performance of systematic choices and judgements, individual marks on a surface which join to form a translation of their subject...We view the drawing, follow the marks as they remake their subject"(Shanks, 1991:185-186).

"Artists' visualizations" Under this heading are drawings usually involving reconstructions of the original building and/or its context in the lanscape and culture. The drawings/paintings follow the conventions of perspective art but are distinct from the "precision drawing" that archaeologists view as their "official" record of excavation and interpretation. For the professed purpose of these images, I use the words of Alan Sorrell (Sorrell, 1973), as well as my observations of illustrations in National Geographic, children's books (see next version of this paper). It is in this genre that much of the philosophical biases and beliefs of the illustrator (and presumably his/her archaeological client/consultant, if they are not the same person) becomes very clear. How and when is life (people) introduced? In terms of purpose - to inform others of the archaeologist's vision - artists' visualizations are similar to 3-D replicas.

Replicas: There are lots of archaeological replicas of buildings, many of them full-sized, built all over Europe and North America (Coles, 1973). They have an important purpose very much bound up with the ideologies of heritage movements, nationalism, tourism as well as education. They are

a powerful medium of imagery. more powerful in many ways than museum exhibits which generally accomodate scaled-down models only. Full-scale replicas are sometimes even peopled with "occupants", live or wax. On occasion, you as a tourist can participate in living in the experimental situation (Hansen's experiment in Denmark) - we're getting close to Virtual Reality.

Photographs: Offer pictorial atmosphere or act as a documentary witness (Shanks, 1991:184-186) Photographs appear to be an inadequate image of architecture but they are always included (expensive to reproduce), slides etc. for their authenticity: evidence that the archaeologist was really there and really did excavate that stuff. They have the reputation of not being the result of interpretation, so that they contain the possibility that there is still room for something to be observed; someone has the chane to see the data with different eyes and experience and themselves make a drawing and/or interpret it. BUT because of this the meaning of photos is much more ambiguous.

Berger distinguishes between photographs which belong to private experience (private record of what was excavated, people shots) and those which are used publicly.(selection of meaningful - for text -photographs: close-ups, landscape, aerial, overhead, perspective, rarely people - in fact the idea is *to keep people out*; scale is coin or standard measure, or trowel for light-hearted touch) (Berger, 1980). Manipulation of photo is in this selection. A photograph is presented in order to offer comparison to other more familiar experiences.

I expand on this in the later version.

Each medium of image-making has an intended or unintended effect, a power on the perceiver (non-archaeologist, archaeologist)

The process by which prehistoric buildings are reconstructed by archaeologists into the kinds of structures that architects, architectural historians, and anthropologists might be more used to visualizing in traditional architecture is a complex series of inferential steps. In practice, each of these steps - from observation of archaeological remains to their interpretation of roofed space - is fraught with its own challenge of validation (Smith, 1982). There is ambiguity at each step in the recording and interpretation of archaeological architecture and its graphic illustration . To ignore the ambiguity, as many archaeologists *do* in the visual presentation of their reconstructions, and to work within the illusion that this is a "proven fact" is to claim that one's interpretation *is* knowledge rather than a "mode of transmitting knowledge"(Bourdier, 1989):38.

Jean-Paul Bourdier has pointed out that "representation plays a central role" as the "mode of transmitting knowledge"(Bourdier, 1989):42-43. Through the medium of graphic representation

the archaeologist, like the architect and anthropologist, can also act as a mediator limiting and encouraging the reader to view, visualize and imagine the buildings of the past and their inhabitants.

The critical examination of the archaeologist as active mediator between the past and the present has only very recently been faced in archaeological literature. The power of graphic representation to reflect and mediate (transmit knowledge), however, is something that has virtually never been discussed in archaeology, even in its post-modern manifestation.[1]. When so much archaeological literature has been devoted to the methods of architectural reconstruction by graphic representation, it is surprising that so little of it has been devoted to "what has informed the drawing and what has inspired the drawing."(Bourdier, 1989):51.

It is by understanding and accepting this role of the archaeologist as mediator that we are able to identify the sources of ambiguity in the visual images presented of archaeological architecture. The archaeologist selects *what* to represent and what to emphasize (that is, *which* aspect of a building's construction, whether its outer appearance or its groundplan) and *how* to represent it. The archaeologist structures both his/her own and the reader's experience by the choice of combinations of graphic variables (e.g., 2-dimensional or 3-dimensional). These choices manifested in graphic representation reflect directly many things about the excavator/interpreter/(pre)historian, in addition to his/her basic knowledge about structures and building materials. They reflect the archaeologist's i) priority of question-answering, i.e. what is of interest to him/her, what kinds of questions does he/she think would be asked of this building and by whom (other archaeologists, architectural historians, museum visitors); ii) what he/she thinks of the power of archaeological data to validate ideas, i.e. what is a "legitimate"way of using speculation and imagination, when and when not is it appropriate; iii) his/her assumptions about the way space is lived in by people, whether passive or active arena, what do people do and how do they relate to each other; iv) his/her underlying assumptions/philosophy about the past, the role of the past in the present and future, and about the lives of men, women and children in the past.

Drawings: The power of an archaeologist to manipulate and mediate between past and present is expressed well by Bourdier's evaluation of the different drawing representation methods available. As mentioned above, the mainstream archaeologists favor axonometric projections in the

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[1]Even in Ian Hodder's studies, in which the traditional passive reflective role of material culture (including architecture) has been turned on its head into an "active" medium for and symbolic expression of social relations and actions, graphic representation has hardly been used; see, for example, Ian Hodder, *The Domestication of Europe*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991)

reconstruction of buildings Bourdier also favors axonometric projection over, for example, a perspective view, but for very different reasons than those of the archaeologists. In his opinion, the reader has a passive involvement when viewing perspective drawings that contrasts sharply with the challenge to both drawer and observer provided by the cutaway axonometric view (Bourdier, 1989):46-48. With the latter the drawer has the power to mitigate the overall crystal ball perception effect by determining where the drawer is positioned, by the distortion of real perspective and by the decision of what to hide and what to reveal. In this fashion the drawer invites "the reader to imagine the experience of walking through several spaces with their offered and hidden views...The active involvement of the reader is provoked not only by the unusual angle of view but also by the range of reading possibilities and itineraries suggested. The reader ....must choose and make up a personal reading path" (Bourdier, 1989):50.

Within this framework of the archaeologist as mediator, we can ask ourselves, as we shall later in this paper, how to explain the aridity of the reconstructions in the literature of archaeological architecture in terms of prehistoric lives. With one or two exceptions (Sorrell, 1973:177-181; Tringham, 1991a; Tringham, 1991b), there is no explicit discussion about whether to include people in the reconstruction, and if so how and where. When people *are* included in a drawing, they are added more as a demonstration of scale than for any humanizing effect (Roaf, 1982):40-47, figs, 30,32; also French IA house. Is it that people are irrelevant or undemonstrable in prehistory?

Graphic representation and reconstruction is traditionally aimed at showing what the building looked like when first built or at the height of its occupation. Its modification, wear and tear, partial abandonment and so on is usually avoided in these drawings, as are things, such as mud, grime, and people that would otherwise clutter the pristine material object and detract from the vital information of material remains! There is something of the anally retentive architectural draughtsman in every archaeologists who deals with architecture. But there are exceptions Gallo-Roman; (Petrequin & Petrequin, 1988).

A discussion here on the power of drawing versus that of photography according to Shanks (Shanks, 1991:185-186) who feels that a drawing is life and a photo is death. He favours drawing as the medium "whereby the archaeologist may explore the basic project that subjectivity gives form to the objective world; it is the 'how'rather than the 'what of the things we find. Drawing is one of the basic planes of experience of the past...Should we not work on this and experiment?" He asks "...is not the movement of hand and eye across its surface, the mediation of every mark by consciousness, intuitive or planned, the active construction of the artifact from the past, affirmation of life?".

Full-size replicas: This part will be expanded hopefully in time for the final version of this. I compare the immediacy of experience and impact of a replica with that of coming face to face with a frozen or bog-preserved body in which we can all but talk to the person .

Photographs: A lot of this section is inspired by Sontag and Berger, including the latter's distinction of photography as fulfilling the same purpose as **memory,** BUT unlike memory, photographs do not by themselves preserve **meaning**(Berger, 1980: 60); and Sontag's statement that a photograph, unlike other visual images, is not an imitation or an interpretation of its subject but a trace of it.. A discussion of Berger's and Sontag's deconstruction of the public (ideological) use of photography in an archaeological context (selection of what sites are remembered, what are forgotten - The camera records in order to forget., the selection of what is photogenic/spectacular, the selection of what building or part of a building needs to be recorded [surveillance]; the camera is the ideal arm of consciousness in its acquisitive mood). OK I'm mixing their quotes with my own thoughts here. But there is no doubt that photography is a powerful arm of Establishment ideology, and the lack of people in archaeological photographs indicates the acceptance and encouragement of a dehumanized prehistory.

Photographs by themselves do not preserve meaning, i.e. meaning is ambiguous, harder to manipulate (but Berger thinks therefore it is easier to manipulate). Manipulations of ambiguity is achieved by 1) photographs that are treated like drawings (see below) and 2) drawings that look like photographs.

A photograph of archaeological architecture is quite separated from its prehistoric context of function and meaning: the excavation is prepared specially for photography, it is cleaned like a patient before surgery; people are shooed away; the building remnant is manicured, parts of it are helped to stand out, others to disappear, so that it will be clear (unambiguous) what the public is looking at; it is an exposed/excavated remnant, brought back to life for an instant - click, captured on film - and then destroyed for ever. There is something, therefore, enormously poignant about the photograph of an excavated building. And then add the hovering actors - like surgeons around the operating table - the Archaeologists and their drama of exposing the structure, how to do it, what to record, what to draw, what to photograph, before destroying it. Very different from the photograph of an old building on the surface eg a megalithic tomb or Stonehenge or the Parthenon that has been part of the cultural landscape for millenia and will presumably continue to participate in it.

A discussion of the impact of photographs of full-size replicas Some books use these instead of drawn reconstructions (Audouze & Buchsenschutze, 1989) or they use scale models (Gimbutas, 1991) or they use architecture from apparent "ethnographic analogies" (Petrequin & Petrequin, 1988). Such photographs add an enormous visual impact compared to a line drawing. They seem to offer a photographic image and an evocation of familiar experience BUT they are not the same reality as a photograph of a prehistoric context (Sontag: which would we prefer: a Holbein-like portraait of Shakespeare or a photograph of him?), they lack the "authenticity" of the archaeological structure itself.

But there are no photographs of the prehistoric context of the building as whole. Even Stonehenge is a ruin. What would it be like if we could make a photograph of prehistory.....?

Drawings that look like photographs. The computerised rendition of photographic images based on drawn images? Is this the way that we can take photographs of the deep past? What will be their impact? I intend to find out by the creation of such images of the social context of Neolithic architecture from Europe.

Computerised renderings can appear to have the same characteristic of belonging to subject. They can have the illusion of being a trace of their subject (architecture). They can offer a memory, an experience, even if still via interpretation. It offers a more realistic experience than a drawing of what it was like to perceive and to live in prehistoric place. But I think that by itself it will not be enough.

To use this power/effect in the service of the construction of an engendered prehistory.

Social action is implicated (implied) or social action is expressed explicitly through multiple narratives. How to express "dialectic of interpretation" with visual images?

1) Important is a multiplicity of scales

2) Important is a multiplicity of media. Different memories; Different perceptions. Multiple memories of prehistoric actors. Filmed prehistoric soap operas. Combined with real photos of archaeologicsl remains and of archaeology dramas and nterpretations in drawings and narratives

A discussion of Berger's view of an alternative function for photography (Berger, 1980: 60):

1) Need to challenge the current systematic public use of photography. Need to focus on private purpose of photography: to continue in memory with meaningful context, so that it is alive (different from Shanks dead:alive). Public photos are torn from context and becomes a dead object and lends itself to arbitrary use. So photograph is a report to the rest of the world, but also record for those involved in the evenets photographed. I see this as linking with Shanks' Theatre of Excavation (Tilley, 1989).

2) Construct a meaningful context of private memory for a public (published) photograph by locating its place in an ongoing text of photographs and images, not lineally, but radially because this is how memory works . Make the photo stand out as a surprise without hiding what you are making it stand out from; give the impression as you re-create context, that one thing follows from another, but permit the spectator to experience NOW on many levels (scales). Few photographs can do this by themselves. You have to create the context for it: a narrated text and other photos and drawings about the time. "There is never a single approach to something remembered.The remembered is not like a terminus at the end of a line. Numerous approaches or stimuli converge upon it and lead to it......A radial system has to be constructed around the photograph so that it may be seen in terms which are simultaneously personal, political, economic, dramatic, everyday and historic" (Berger, 1980: 67)

The effect of added visual text: prose or poetry, narrative or authoritative statement of fact?

The effect of added sound: music, spoken text (prose or poetry, narrative or authoritative statement of fact). Adds the needed meaning to photography

Next step..... *Virtual Reality*

The examples: Divostin: multiscalar contexts

Opovo stories: narratives and memories: The excavation of Opovo; a woman's story; a man's story.

The paper ends with a powerful quote from Sontag about the nature of reality and illusion, which is what visual images of prehistory are all about. The powers of photography have made it "less and less plausible to reflect upon our experience according to the distinction between images and things, between copies and originals.....But the force of photographic images comes from their being material realities in their own right, potent means for turning the tables on reality - for turning it into a shadow. Images are more real than anyone could have supposed" (Sontag, 1977: 179-180).

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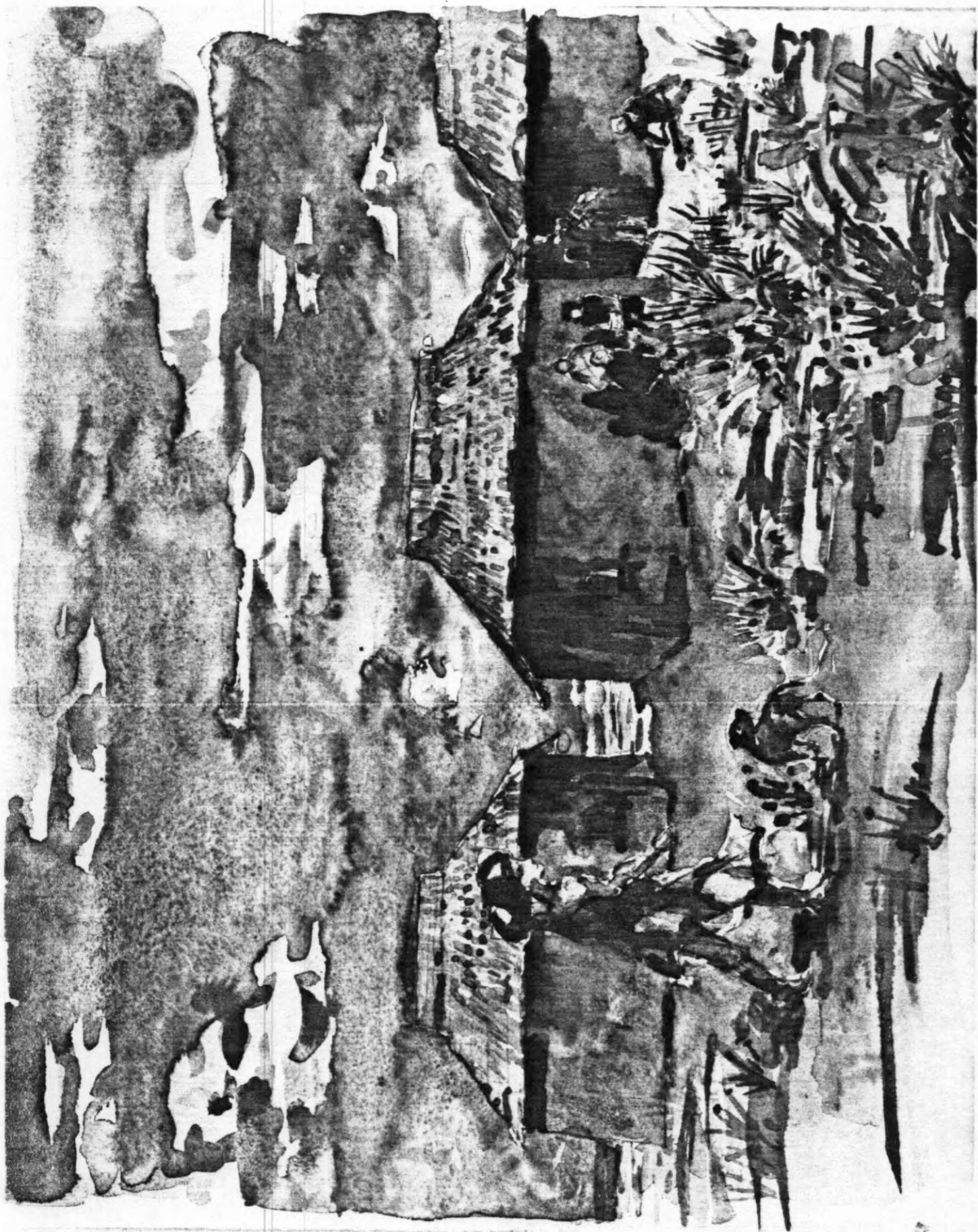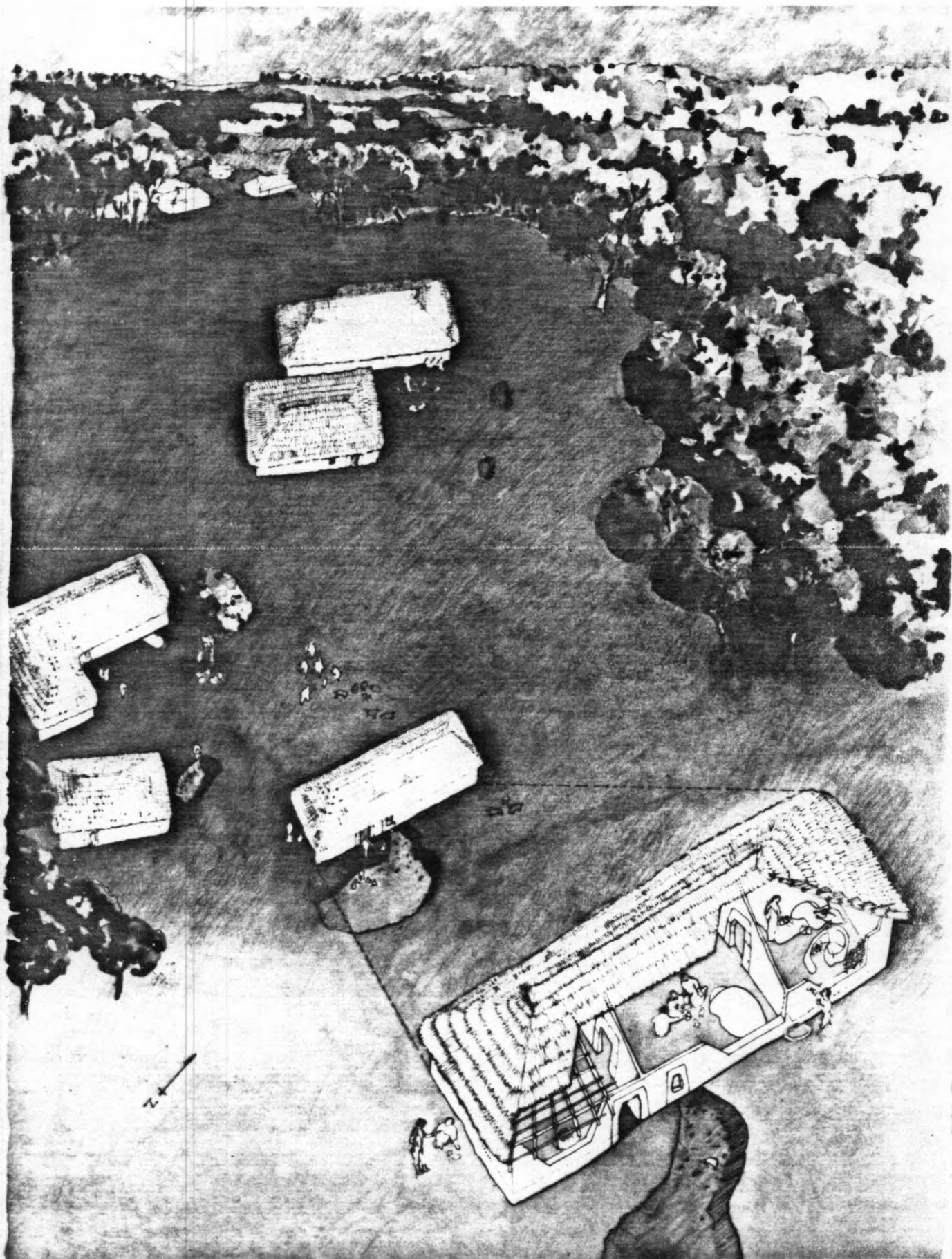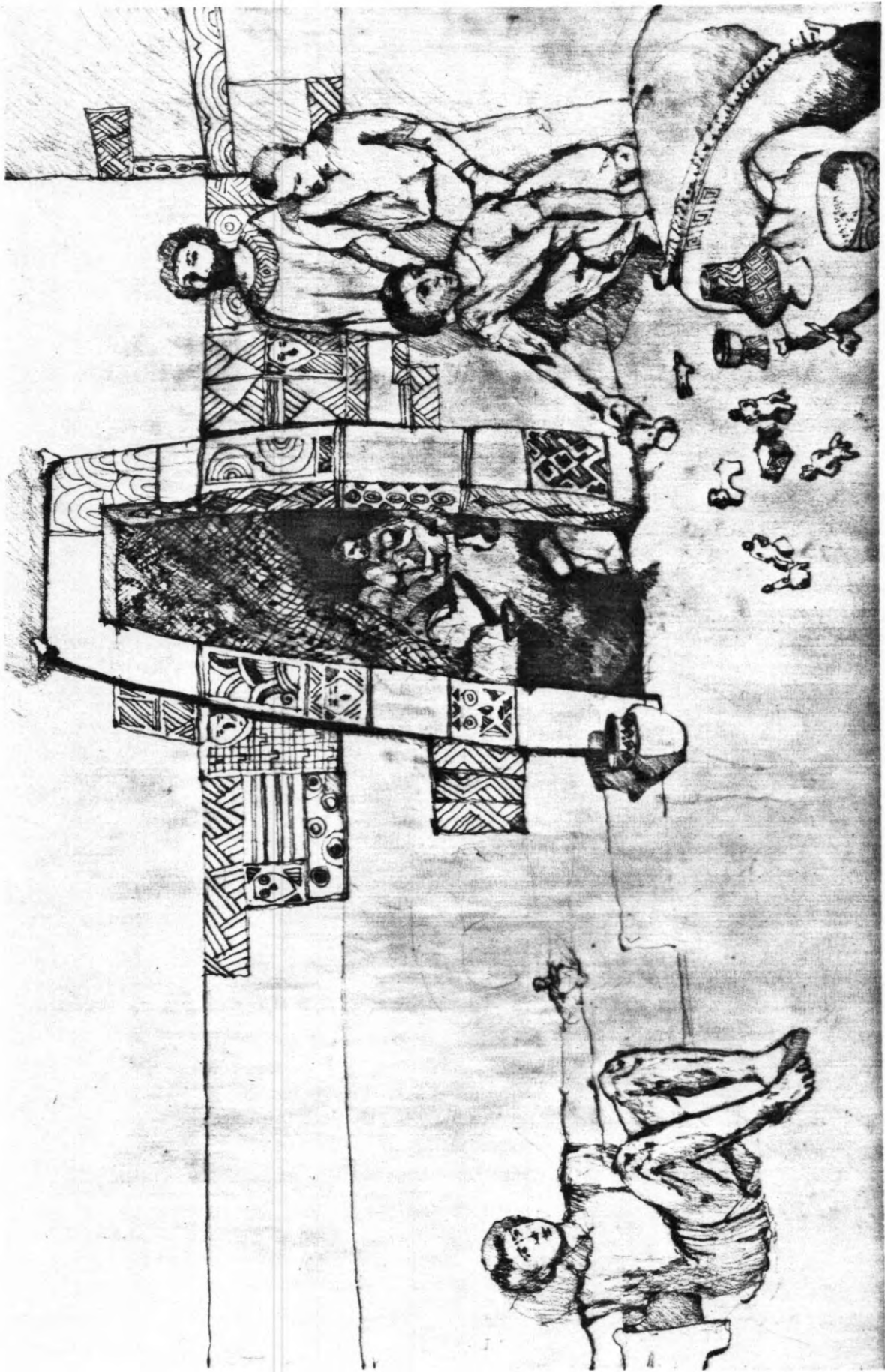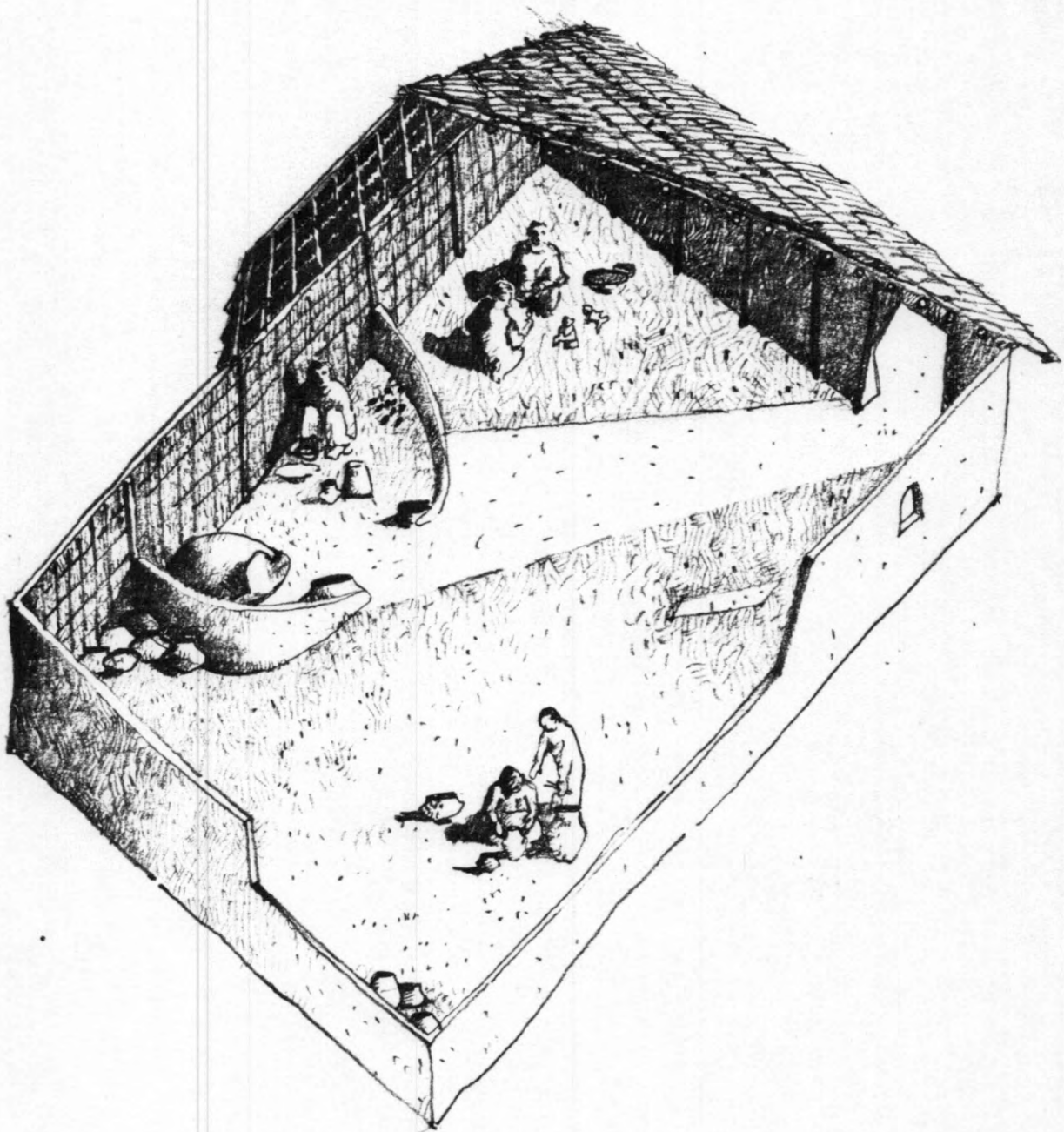
Figure 1. Neolithic site of Divostin, Yugoslavia. Floorplan of House 14 (after Bogdanovic, 1988, Plan VII)
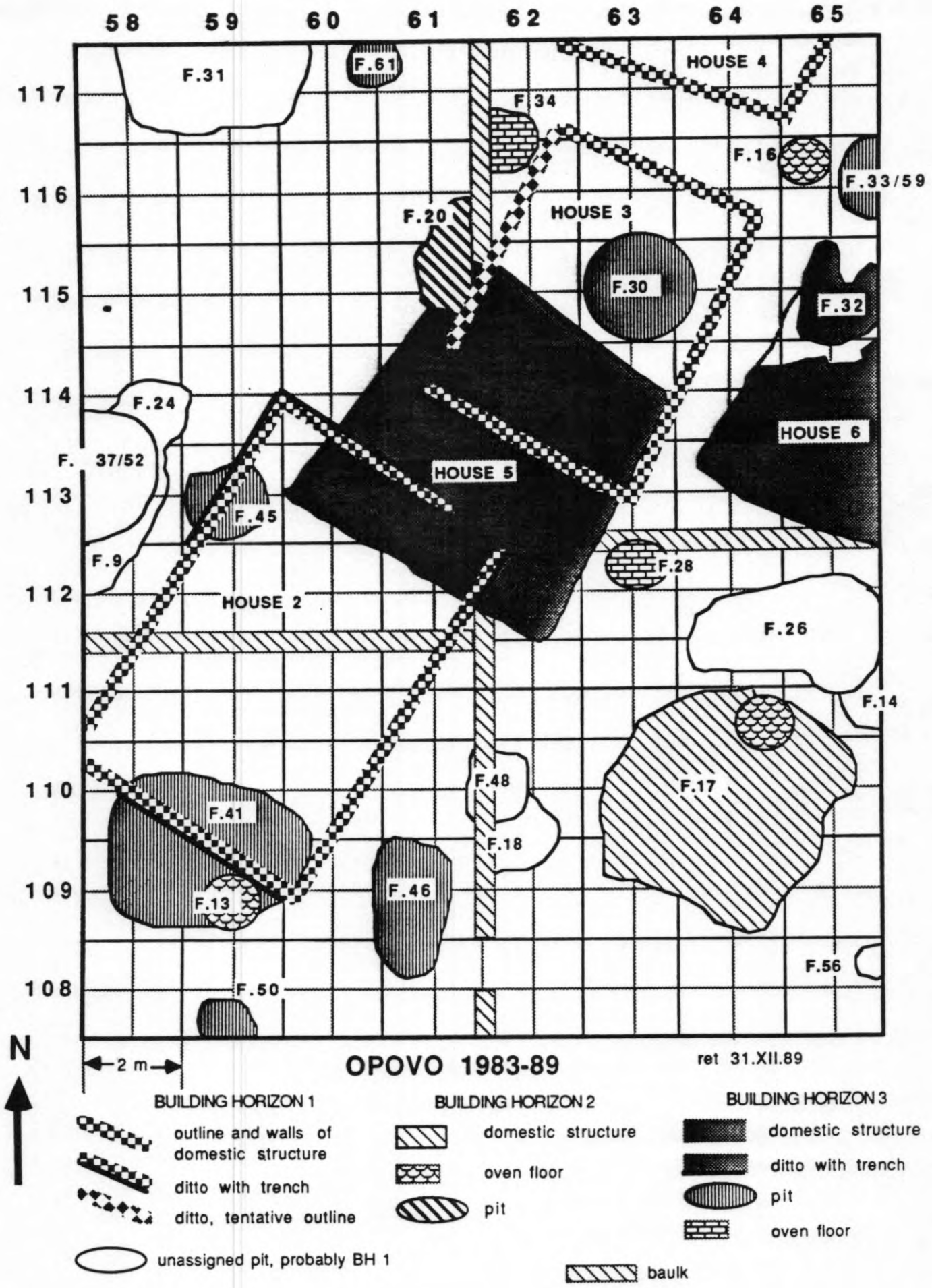
Figure 12. Schematic drawing of superimposed occupation horizons at the Neolithic site of Opovo, Yugoslavia.
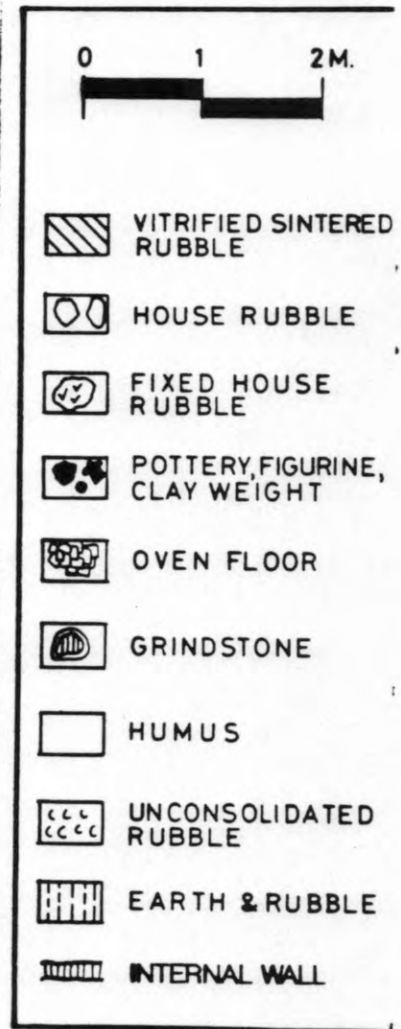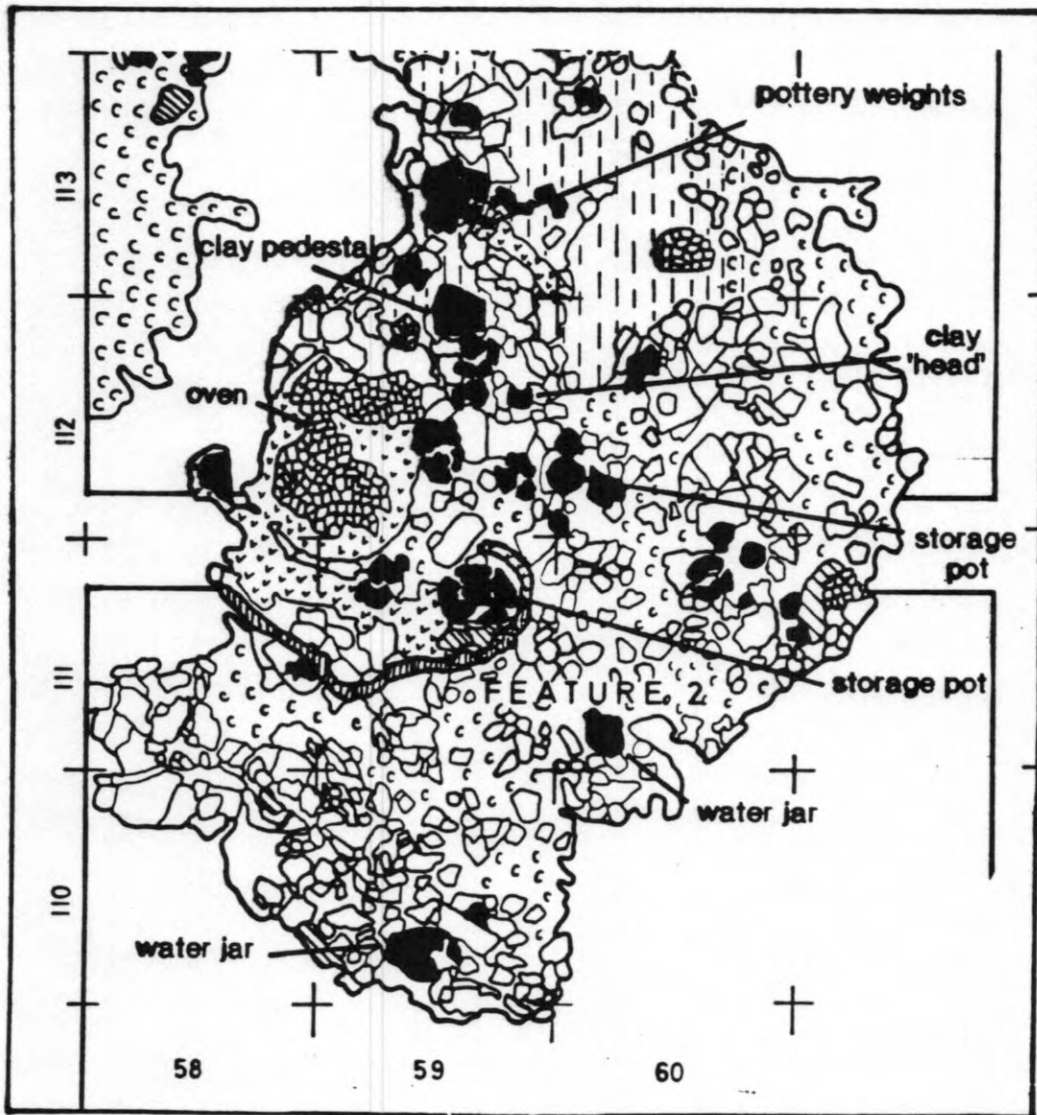
Figure 2. Neolithic site of Opovo, Yugoslavia. Floorplan of House 2 (after Tringham et al., 1985, fig. 5)
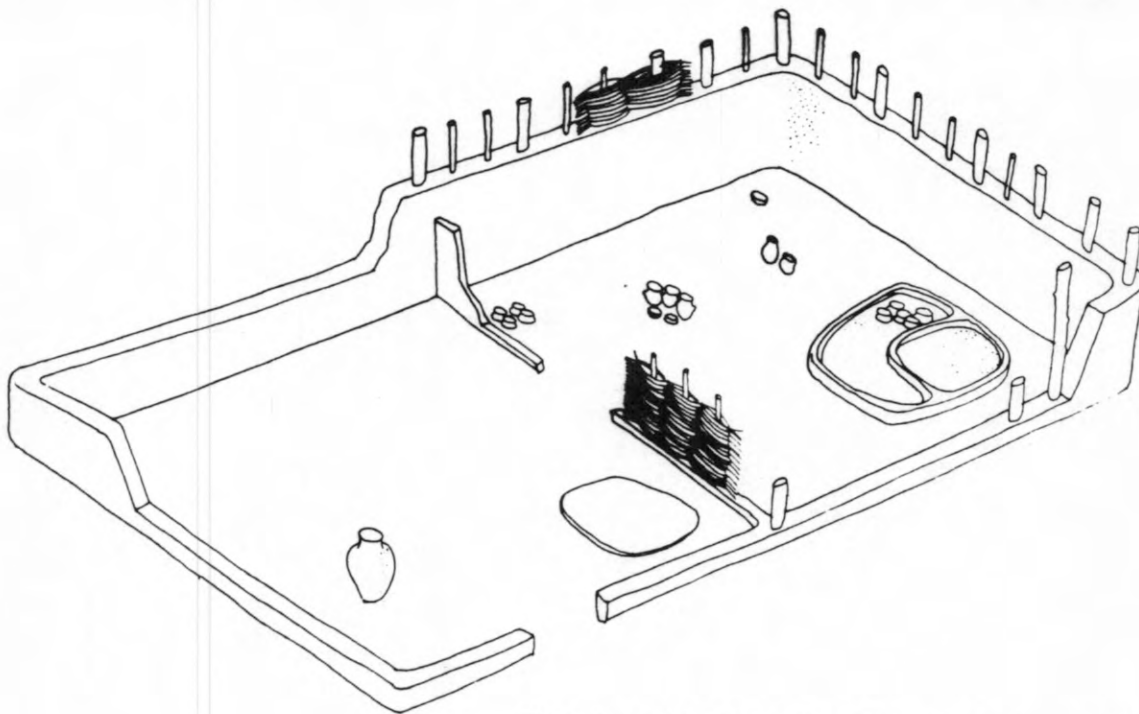
Figure 5.   Neolithic site of Divostin, Yugoslavia.

Reconstructed projection of House 17   (after Bogdanovic, 1988, fig. 5.28)
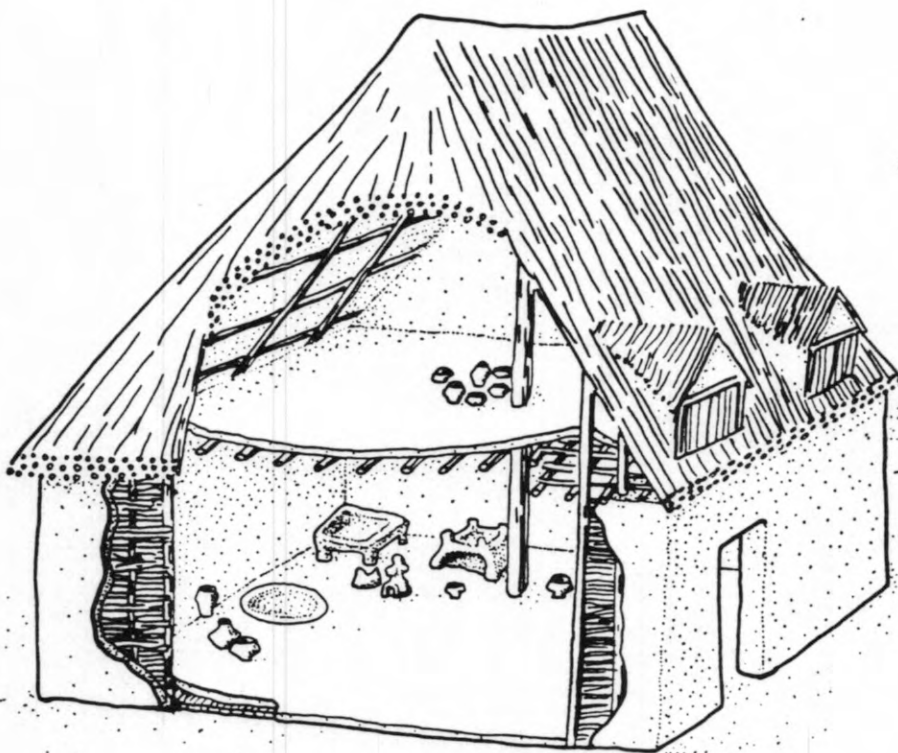

Figure 6.   Neolithic site of Opovo, Yugoslavia.

Reconstructed projection of House 5 (after Tringham, 1990, fig. 6)