Assembling Çatalhöyük

Edited by Ian Hodder and Arkadiusz Marciniak

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Cover image(s): *Left*: Ochre hand prints on the north wall of Building 77; *Middle*: Bucrania and horned bench associated with the northeast platform of Building 77 (both taken from Taylor pp. 127–50, this volume); *Right*: The incised panel above burial 327 in TP Area (taken from Marciniak et al., pp. 151–66, this volume).

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CHAPTER 8

Laying the Foundations
Creating Households at Neolithic Çatalhöyük

TRISTAN CARTER, SCOTT HADDOW, NERISSA RUSSELL, AMY BOGAARD AND CHRISTINA TSORAKI

INTRODUCTION

We have long appreciated that 'the house' was the primary medium through which society was constituted at Çatalhöyük, architectural embodiments of lineages, affines, and sodalities, the arena within which people learned 'how things should be' (Hodder & Cessford, 2004; Hodder & Pels, 2010). In teasing out the social significance of the house, we have largely focused on these structures' lives and the rituals surrounding their abandonment (Hodder, 2006: 227–31; Twiss et al., 2008; Russell et al., 2014a, 2014b). In this study we turn to the issue of their 'birth', considering not so much the pragmatics of architectural construction, but their social foundations. We argue that just as the end of these houses' lives was carefully stage-managed, their foundation was similarly marked by a suite of community-wide traditions, long established in the location of their performance, but also shifting over time with regard to their specific composition. The evidence suggests that these events might be viewed in terms of (1) ritual acts aimed at eliciting spirit-world/magical protection for the building and its inhabitants, (2) a particular form of feasting, and/or (3) gifting to the living to establish the social networks upon which the houses' long-term success was dependent. In discussing the evidential bases for our claims, we make no pretence that this is an exhaustive presentation of the data.

Chronologically we employ the new stratigraphic terminology outlined by Farid (2014), and the absolute chronology detailed by Bayliss et al. (2014). Within the East Mound sequences (South and North Areas), we then distinguish between the earlier and later Early Neolithic (EN), with specific reference to architectural horizons (as opposed to the exterior space deep soundings of South G-I). In this scheme the earlier EN for us roughly comprises South J-N and North G (first half of the 7th millennium cal BC), while the later EN is represented broadly by South O-T, and North H-J (approximately the first two, or two-and-a-half centuries of the second half of the 7th millennium cal BC [for its terminus dates see Marciniak et al., 2015]).

THE EARLIER EN: MAKING PROJECTILES, MAKING PEOPLE, MAKING HOUSES

While we have long appreciated the recurrent role obsidian points played in house abandonment deposits/rituals (not least their placement in post-retrieval pits [Carter et al., 2005: 250–1]), it is only relatively recently that we became aware of the strong association between projectiles and house foundation (Carter & Milić, 2013a: 503–04, 2013b: 451–5). During the earlier EN these foundational activities primarily comprise the modification and burial of large obsidian projectile preforms (Conolly, 2003; Carter, 2008). Stratigraphically, the sub-floor caching and the modification of unfinished points occurred during these buildings' construction phase, or earliest occupation (Table 1). The hoards vary in size from one to seventy-seven pieces, the objects made of obsidian from both of Çatalhöyük's primary sources, i.e. Göllü Dağ and Nenezi Dağ. That said, the bulk of these hoards' contents are in the form of Göllü Dağ biface preforms (Figure 1a), with only the latest examples containing long/thick blades of Nenezi Dağ obsidian which represent the blanks for spearhead manufacture (Figure 1b), a type of weapon that starts to replace the older biface form around the mid-7th millennium cal BC (Carter, 2008; Carter & Milić, 2013b: 420–5, figure 21.3). While their contents appear heterogeneous, these hoards have a structural integrity. First, these are all intramural, sub-floor deposits. Second, they are all located in the building's so-called 'dirty area' close to the hearth and ovens (indeed the flakes from biface thinning are a recurrent component of these artefact-rich strata). Third, their contents are dominated by preforms for the manufacture of projectiles.

Previously we had claimed that only certain buildings contained hoards, an uneven distribution pattern

Table 1. *Contextual information for a selection of obsidian hoards from the 1995–2008 seasons*

Building	Space	Level	Cut	Fill	Description	Phase	Period
9	167	South J	n.a.	4205.x1	Large flake	B9	Occupation
18	171	South J	4559	4558	Fill of scoop	B18.2	Occupation
23	178	South J	5111	5095	Fill of scoop	B23.2a	Early occupation
23	178	South J	4999	4986	Fill of scoop	B23.2c	Later occupation
23	178	South J	4996	4995	Fill of scoop	B23.2c	Later occupation
23	178	South J	n/a	4980	Cluster	B23.2c	Later occupation
23	178	South J	n/a	4989	Cluster	B23.2c	Later occupation
23	178	South J	n/a	4990	Cluster	B23.2c	Later occupation
23	178	South J	n/a	5005	Cluster	B23.2c	Later occupation
2	117	South ?K	n/a	4138	*In situ* hoard	B2.2(b)	Early occupation
2	117	South ?K	n/a	4209	*In situ* hoard	B2.2-5	Early occupation?
2	117	South ?K	n/a	4210	*In situ* hoard	B2.2-5	Early occupation?
2	117	South ?K	n/a	4134	Cluster	B2.2-5	Early occupation?
16	164	South K	n/a	4317	*In situ* hoard	B16.2	Second occupation
16	164	South K	n/a	4301	Cluster	B16.2	Third/fourth occupation
16	164	South K	n/a	4305	Cluster	B16.2	Third/fourth occupation
16	16	South K	n/a	4355.x1	Biface	B16.1?	Foundation?
17	170	South K	5045	5044	Fill of scoop	B17.B	Late occupation
4	151	South ?L	2357	2356	Fill of scoop	B4.3	Late occupation
6	163	South L	n/a	4276	*In situ* hoard	B6.1	Earliest occupation
6	163	South L	4293	4280	*In situ* hoard	B6.2	Early occupation?
50	231	South ?M	n/a	10819	Missed hoard	B50	???
92	208	South ?M	5835	5665	*In situ* hoard	B92	Early?
E.VII.19	109	South ?M	2808	2810	*In situ* hoard	Sp109.2	Earliest occupation
E.VII.19	109	South ?M	2809	2812	*In situ* hoard	Sp109.2	Earliest occupation
E.VII.7	113	South ?M	n/a	1836	*In situ* hoard	Sp113.2	Earliest occupation
E.VII.7	113	South ?M	2052	2038	*In situ* hoard	Sp113.2	Earliest occupation
E.VII.7	113	South ?M	2054	2039	*In situ* hoard	Sp113.2	Earliest occupation
1	71	North ?G	1460	1461	*In situ* hoard	B1.2B	Earliest occupation
3	201	North ?G	n/a	8446	*In situ* hoard	B3.1	Earliest occupation
60	278	North H	13109	13111	*In situ* hoard	B60.2a	Earliest occupation

Figure 1a. *Obsidian bifaces/biface preform hoard (4209) in B.9, Level South H.*
Photograph by Jason Quinlan.

suggestive of inter-household socio-economic distinctions (Carter, 2008: 345–6). A more recent reappraisal of the evidence now permits us to make a strong case that each of the earlier EN buildings did in fact originally have at least one of these obsidian caches, but in a number of cases their contents had been retrieved during the structure's lifetime. This evidence for hoard retrieval comprises small pits in the appropriate locations that while they no longer contained projectile preforms did generate significant quantities of micro-debris (residue from the bags that the bifaces were originally carried/buried in), and had concentrations of biface thinning flakes close by (e.g. cut 17484 in Building 49 [Eddisford, 2014: 318]). Thus in the earlier EN we either have structures with hoards that remained untouched (e.g. Buildings 1 and 92), those that were part-retrieved (e.g. Buildings 6 and 60), and finally examples where the caches had been completely emptied (e.g. Buildings 18, 22, and 49). While each house had its own hoard, it remains that some had more than others (Table 1), a process

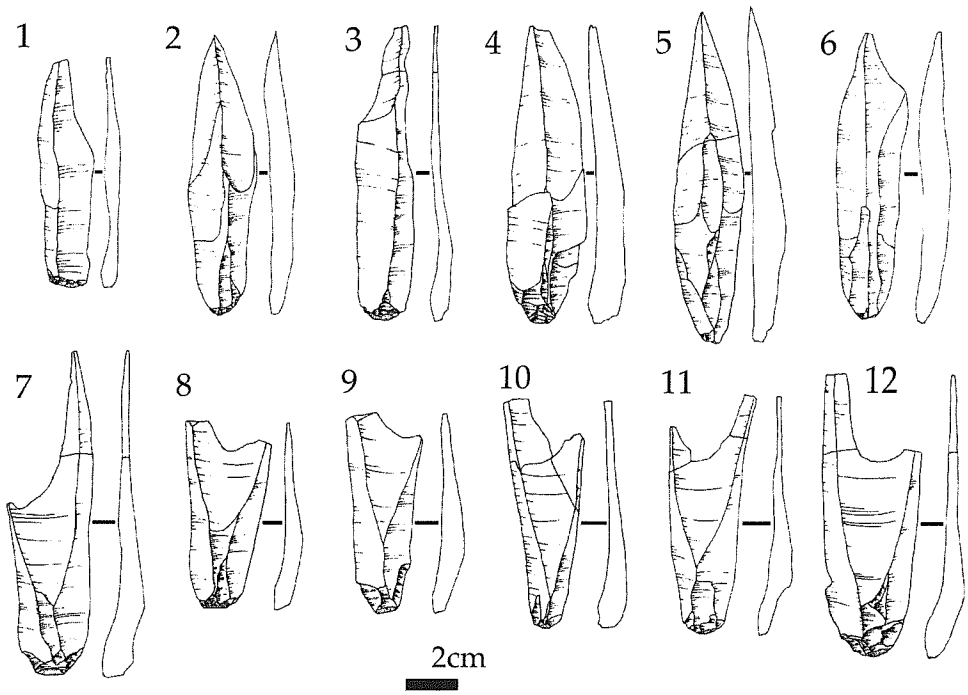

Figure 1b. *Obsidian blade/spearhead preform hoard (1461) from B. 1, North G*
Figure created for the Çatalhöyük Research Project by James Conolly.

of accumulation that we believe was aimed at ensuring a household's long-term success (see below).

The data generated in the 2000–2008 excavations at Çatalhöyük also radically changed how we understood the sequence of events in this hoarding phenomenon. Previously we argued that the biface preforms were first procured from specialist quarry-based workshops, then carried in sacks back to Çatalhöyük. On arrival at the site we believed that while some of the bifaces might have been gifted to other community members, the remainder (bulk?) would then be buried in the house. At some point during the building life, the hoard would have been retrieved in order to complete their modification into weaponry for the hunt. This vision of events changed after the excavation of Building 60. Here we found both a hoard, albeit only comprising six pieces at different levels in the pit's fill, i.e. the remnants of part-retrieved larger cache, together with nearby biface modification debris (House, 2014a: figure 20.27). The latter material included two thinning flakes that could be refitted to one of the buried bifaces (Figure 2). Significantly, while the thinning flakes were found included within the matrix of a Phase 1 construction period bench (Phase 1), the burial of the biface was dated to the subsequent occupation level (Phase 2). Ergo, the projectile preform had been worked *prior* to its burial (Carter & Milić, 2013b: 455, figure 21.18; House, 2014a: 462–5). We return to the meaning of this sequence of events below.

Alongside biface modification and burial, foundation traditions in the earlier EN also included the application of red paint on some of the new houses' earliest floors. This is attested in Building 40 (South ? M), while a 'ritual deposition of paint before the renovation of a house' was also noted by Mellaart in the 1960s' excavation (Farid, 2007: 317–8).

The Later EN: Potluck Gatherings and the Gifting of Dead Babies

Around the mid-7th millennium cal BC the tradition of burying biface preforms died out (Table 1), the latest known examples coming from Building 97 in the South Area (Level South O [Carter, 2012]), and Building 60 in the North Area (Level North H). At much the same time we also view the cessation of projectiles being buried in post-retrieval pits as the builders of Çatalhöyük moved away from using major structural posts. These changes in ritual and architecture form part of a much broader suite of changes at this time (Hodder, 2013: 20–25, 2014), arguably the result of population stress that led to the breakdown of established mechanisms for maintaining the health of a social group. Typically for Çatalhöyük, where we see change in practice, we also view continuity. Thus while we no longer have the *burial* of projectile preforms post-South O/North G, we do see the continued manufacture (modification) of such weaponry in the foundation and/or initial occupation phase, and in the same area of the house in association with fire

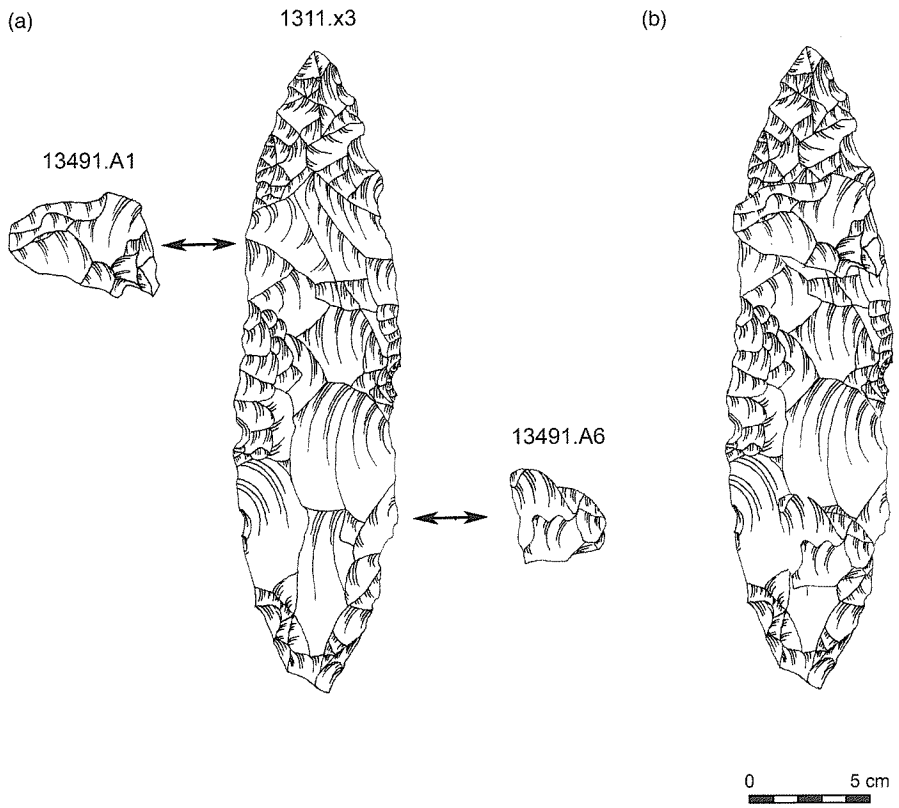

Figure 2. *Refitting thinning flakes and Göllü Dağ biface (13111.x3) from B. 60, Level North H.*
Figure created for the Çatalhöyük Research Project by Danica Mihailović and Marina Milić.

installations. For example projectile manufacture is attested in the earliest occupation phases of Building 75, and Building 56, two structures above (Carter & Milić, 2013b: 455, figure 21.26, 2013c: 2–3). The latter evidence comprised 2500 pieces of obsidian in the house's south-east corner, mainly in the form of tiny retouch flakes from shaping projectiles, plus the tips of two broken points (Figure 3). In both instances these acts of shaping and finishing the weapons likely occurred before the roof had even been put on the houses (Regan & Taylor, 2014: 160–2). We remain uncertain however, as to whether such acts occurred in every structure, as the type of micro-debris from shaping large Nenezi Dağ blades into spearheads (now the dominant projectile technology) is not as distinctive as the thinning flakes from the preceding Göllü Dağ biface tradition.

While the later EN (South N-T/ North H-J) witnessed the loss of obsidian hoarding in foundation traditions, there are a range of other practices that we see anew, some of which may have conceptually filled the void of hoards. These include child burials, fumigation and feasting events, together with the manufacture of axes, and ceramic vessels.

Sharon Moses (2008, 2012) has argued that children were over-represented in the Çatalhöyük burial record due to their recurrent use as sacrificial victims in the creation of sacred space. Neonate foundation burials were considered a common example of such practices; for instance, the only four neonate burials from Building 1 (burial population $n = 60$) came from the construction phase (Cessford, 2007: 415–9). While more recent work has shown that the total burial sample at Çatalhöyük is in fact entirely in keeping with mortality profiles from most pre-industrial non-affluent societies (Hillson et al., 2013: 358), it remains that there does seem to be an age-related structure to burials from construction contexts, albeit restricted to the later EN, namely South Q-S, and North G (Table 2). Indeed, while neonates comprise only 4 per cent of the 1995–2008 Çatalhöyük burial data set ($n = 74/1852$), they are the dominant age-class in house construction strata, at 45 per cent of the total (Boz & Hager, 2013: 417, 420, figures 19.4, 19.10; Patton & Hager, 2014: 226). Furthermore, not only are these very young children over-represented in foundation burials, they were also treated differently, with almost half of them (48 per cent) provided with grave goods, compared to the overall average of 22 per cent (Nakamura & Meskell, 2013: 441, 447). Conversely, young adults and adolescents are not well represented in these foundation interments. In turn, nearly all of the adults appear to be female, as perhaps most strikingly evidenced by the

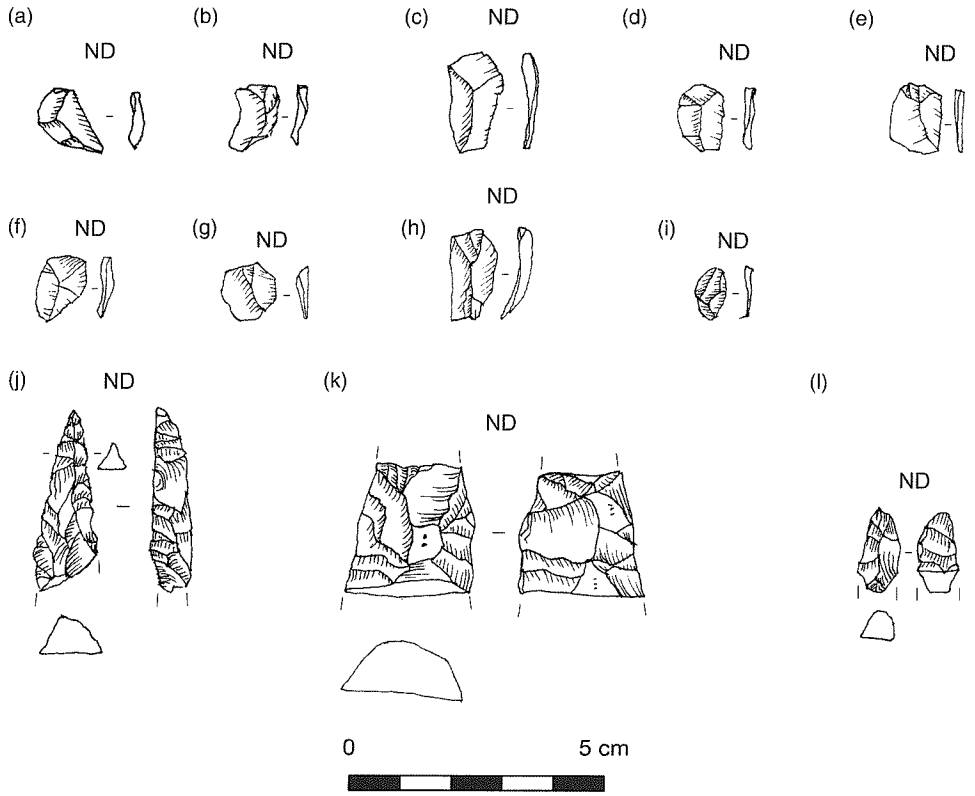

Figure 3a. *Thinning/retouch flakes and projectile fragments from point manufacture; Phase 1, B. 56, South R.*
Figure created for the Çatalhöyük Research Project by Marina Milić.

burial with the plastered skull from the foundation of Building 42 (Figure 4 [Boz & Hager, 2013: 420, 435, figure 19.17]). This is a particularly evocative 'assemblage' given that it includes the specially treated remains of an individual, a tradition of deep antiquity in the wider Near East, but exceptionally rare at Çatalhöyük (Hodder, 2006: 146–8). Throughout the EN at Çatalhöyük we view the retrieval of certain household items to be used in a later structure, conceivably the next building associated with that social group. In some cases this simply involved an object's removal at the end of the building's life, while in other instances someone had to dig into an in-filled structure to retrieve them. The foci of such recycling included wooden posts that were likely decorated in some (totemic?) fashion, the skulls and horns of wild animal installations, and human remains as with the case of seemingly random body parts of two people taken from Building 65 and buried in the structure directly atop, Building 56 (Boz & Hager, 2013: 434). Indeed there is clear evidence for the circulation of crania on the site, some within houses, and others likely between building sequences, the practice of body-part movement/exchange being far more common than we originally appreciated. This process of recirculation/repurposing of special items was an integral element of history-making and lineage continuity, whereby the foundation burial holding the plastered skull in Building 42 makes perfect sense within the social processes of EN Çatalhöyük, albeit an extraordinarily powerful example thereof.

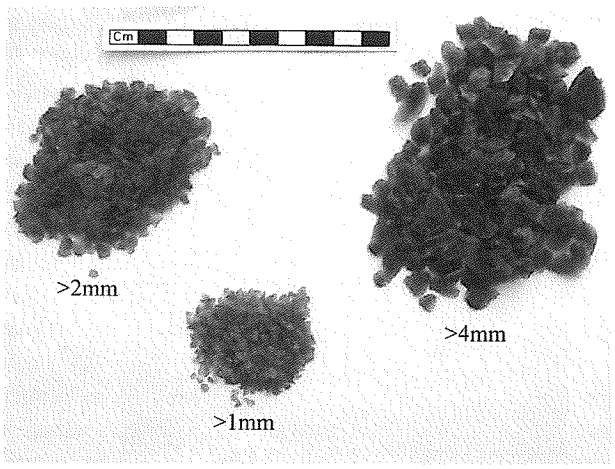

Figure 3b. *Thinning/retouch flakes and projectile fragments from point manufacture; Phase 1, B. 56, South R.*
Photograph by Marina Milić.

Alongside the recirculation of body parts, one might similarly view the adult female foundation burials in terms of social group reproduction if we can imagine that they were members of the prior households (the relationship between stratified house inhabitants does not appear to be biologically based [Pilloud & Larsen,

Table 2. *Foundation burials from Çatalhöyük by stratigraphic level*

Building	Level	Unit	Age	Notes
1	North ?G	2199	Neonate	
1	North ?G	2515	Neonate	
44	South S	11403	Neonate	Foundation burial for B.44 or closure deposit for B.56?
42	South R	10498	Infant	Infant burial thought to have been buried at roughly the same time as plastered skull woman
70	North I	10384	Neonate	
70	North I	10388	Neonate	
54	North I	11975	Neonate	Burial predates the construction of a bin
53	South Q	14300	Fetus	Foundation burial for later construction of a floor within a side room
56	South R	13395	Neonate	Neonate burial in SW corner of building
56	South Q	14005	Neonate	Neonate burial in SW corner of building
65	South Q	15793	Infant	Neonate/infant 'cemetery' in external space predating construction of B.65
65	South Q	15796	Neonate	Neonate/infant 'cemetery' in external space predating construction of B.65
65	South Q	15799	Neonate	Neonate/infant 'cemetery' in external space predating construction of B.65
65	South Q	16207	Neonate	Neonate/infant 'cemetery' in external space predating construction of B.65
65	South Q	16210	Neonate	Neonate/infant 'cemetery' in external space predating construction of B.65
65	South Q	16213	Neonate	Neonate/infant 'cemetery' in external space predating construction of B.65
65	South Q	16216	Neonate	Neonate/infant 'cemetery' in external space predating construction of B.65
65	South Q	16203/16204	Neonate	Twin neonate burial
65	South Q	14522	Neonate	'Placed deposit'—neonate femur found in construction layer along with figurine, worked stone, and animal bones

2011]). In conjunction with the neonates one might also be dealing with structural links between human, house reproduction, birth, fertility, and longevity. So who were these foundation burial characters? While the relative proportion of adult women represented in these foundation burials might be in keeping with the overall mortality rates, need it follow that each was an inhabitant of the preceding building? Are we dealing with individuals whose death precipitated the need to abandon the earlier house, and build anew? The death of an important, or paramount, group member—which at Çatalhöyük is likely to have comprised elders—is

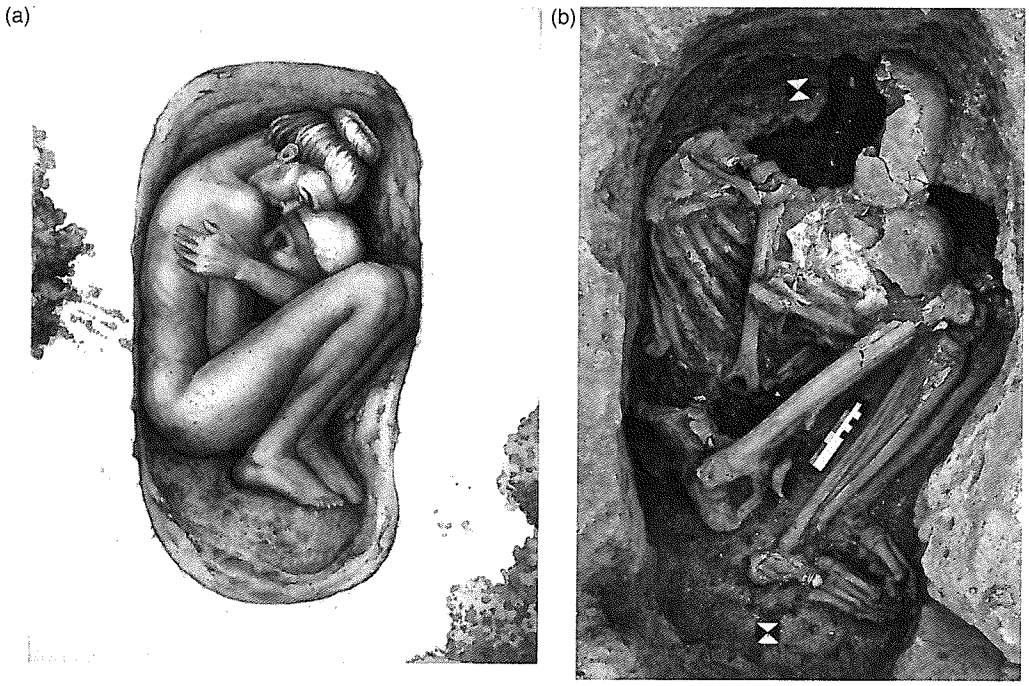

Figure 4. *(a) Reconstruction of a woman (11306) holding a plastered skull painted with ochre (11330); (b) the woman (11306) and plastered skull (11330)* in situ.
Figure and photograph by Kathryn Killackey and Jason Quinlan.

exactly the type of event that we feel would precipitate the abandonment of a house, and the reproduction of the social group in a new building (see Tringham, 2005).

What, however, of those buildings that were not constructed on a pre-existing house, as with Building 75 (South P) which was founded on open space (Regan & Taylor, 2014: 136). What was the relationship of the foundational young adult (male) and neonate burials to this house and its occupants? Had he lived in an ancestral building located elsewhere, or did this man have no close ties whatsoever to the group establishing Building 75? Was he procured specifically for the foundation rites from a completely different faction? The idea that one might have to solicit a dead body to found a house—rather than naturally having access to the deceased individual whose death triggered the new building's construction—arguably becomes more compelling when one considers the number of neonates involved. As noted above, there is a significant number of very young children represented in these foundation burials, quite disproportionate with regard to the total burial population. Here we return to the claims of Moses (2008, 2012) that children were sacrificed for such rituals. While we are wary of supporting this particular thesis, it remains that even with high infant mortality it seems unlikely that three women associated with the about-to-be-built house would have had still-births at much the same time. It is more conceivable that dead babies were procured via other means. We suggest that corpses and other human body parts were being stockpiled for such events; the often incomplete or disarticulated state of some of these skeletal remains strongly suggests some form of delayed burial. The baskets that a fifth of all neonate burials were found in (Boz & Hager, 2013: 421), might thus represent the containers within which they were kept ('sacred bundles'), post-mortem, and pre-exchange for foundational rites.

That heads/skulls and other body parts were being circulated and reused is well attested at the site. For example, in Building 52 (North G) an old man was buried—during the life of the house—with the partial skeletons of at least six subadults (one infant and five children [Knüsel et al., 2013]). While some of these repurposed human remains may have been exhumed from burials rather than from above-ground collections (particularly when dealing with adults), the foundation neonates suggest a different mode of procurement due to their integrity. Indeed, the different nature and treatment of these construction-phase burials becomes further apparent when one appreciates the fact that they are rarely disturbed, or exhumed, unlike interments from occupation phases. Whether our hypothetical 'body farm' stocks were maintained by specific social groups, or some supra-affine/sodality network we cannot say at present.

Turning to other data, we also recurrently find clusters of bone associated with construction phases, the remains of communal meals that marked a building's foundation. Notable is their composition, for they are focused on the consumption of sheep, rather than the cattle-oriented deposits that we usually associate with feasting at Çatalhöyük (Russell et al., 2013: 228–9). These faunal assemblages are also distinct in that they comprise very fresh, rapidly buried, and high integrity deposits. Moreover, while biased towards sheep consumption, they also include a lot of other varied dishes, including water fowl, fish, bird eggs, and turtles.

As well as the aforementioned manufacture of spearheads in these later EN foundation deposits (i.e. South N-T), we also have significant evidence for ground stone working. This is particularly well attested via a series of secondary deposits relating to construction-phase activities that were subsequently incorporated into the building's internal architecture, as with a mass of stone and bone (Figure 5) in the fill of southern platform (F.1314) of Building 44, South S (Regan & Taylor, 2014: 168–9, figure 5.56). The deposit comprised grinding slabs—including unfinished examples—axes, and polishers (Figure 6), plus pottery, obsidian, charred plant materials (including wild mustard seeds), and a wolf-paw (Wright, 2013: 399–400, figures 20.13–20.14; Regan & Taylor, 2014: 168–9, figure 5.52; Russell et al., 2014a, 2014b: 228–9). The same foundation stratum also produced a neonate burial (Regan & Taylor, 2014: 169).

A nigh-identical 'bones and stones' deposit was found in much the same place—under the southern platform—in Building 65 (South Q), i.e. two structures directly under Building 44 (the intervening Building 56 had evidence for projectile manufacture and two neonate burials in its foundation phase

Figure 5. *Collection of material placed within the foundation of B.44, subsequently becoming the southwest platform.* Photograph by Jason Quinlan.

Figure 6. *Group of ground stone, worked bone, and obsidian (12807).* Photograph by Jason Quinlan.

[Regan & Taylor, 2014: 160]). The lithics included an unfinished quern, an axe preform, a polishing tool with possible plaster residue, plus five obsidian blades (Wright, 2013: 397–8, figures 20.10, 20.15; Regan & Taylor, 2014: 153, figure 5.33). The bones are mostly lightly processed, meaty portions of sheep and goat, with smaller amounts of larger animals. There are also some non-meaty items: part of another articulated wolf-paw, a complete fox tibia, an equid first phalanx, and four astragali (two cattle, one boar, one goat). Astragali and equid phalanges occur in larger collections elsewhere on the site, deposits often viewed as special in nature, notably in the side room of Building 65 in its abandonment phase (Russell et al., 2014a, 2014b: 207, 228–9, table 11.3). The structure's foundation phase also included two neonate burials in much the same area (Regan & Taylor, 2014: 145–6, figure 5.22).

While most of these 'stone and bone' platform-fill foundation assemblages date to the later EN, there is one slightly earlier example from around the mid-7th millennium cal BC from Building 49, North G (Eddisford, 2014: 314, 323–4, figures 14.15–14.19), with querns, hand stones, a pigment-stained palette, and yet more axe preforms (Wright, 2013: 406). There was also a notable concentration of chipped stone, dominated by thinning flakes from obsidian biface production, and two actual biface preforms (Carter & Milić, 2013b: 454–5, figure 21.25, 2013c: 7, figure 21.50). The assemblage further included a red deer antler tine used as a pressure-flaker, lightly processed food waste from sheep/goat and other mammals, part of a human skull, a cache of eight small clay animal figurines, a concentration of egg-shell, plus many bird and fish remains, including turtle. Once again we view the deposition of unfinished and fully functional tools that were deliberately broken, and/or abandoned. The same phase also included two infant burials (Eddisford, 2014: 317).

Finally, there are also external 'fire-spots' that we believe were associated with building construction in the later EN. These comprise small patches of burnt organic material representing single-event fires (Figure 7). Pragmatically, one might view some of these fires as relating to work-parties, who would have required heat, light and/or smoke to drive off mosquitoes as they built the house. That said, one notes the compositional distinction between these small short-term fires and the longer-life intramural hearths and ovens, with the former associated primarily with dung burning, the latter deposits involving a mixture of food plants and fuel (Bogaard et al., 2014). Thus we have burning events that are different not only in location, but also their scale, duration, and the scents associated with them; the use of such a recipe was arguably intentional to associate a distinct smell with foundation rites and practices. Other activities performed in these yards—apparently associated with early construction phases—include plant processing,

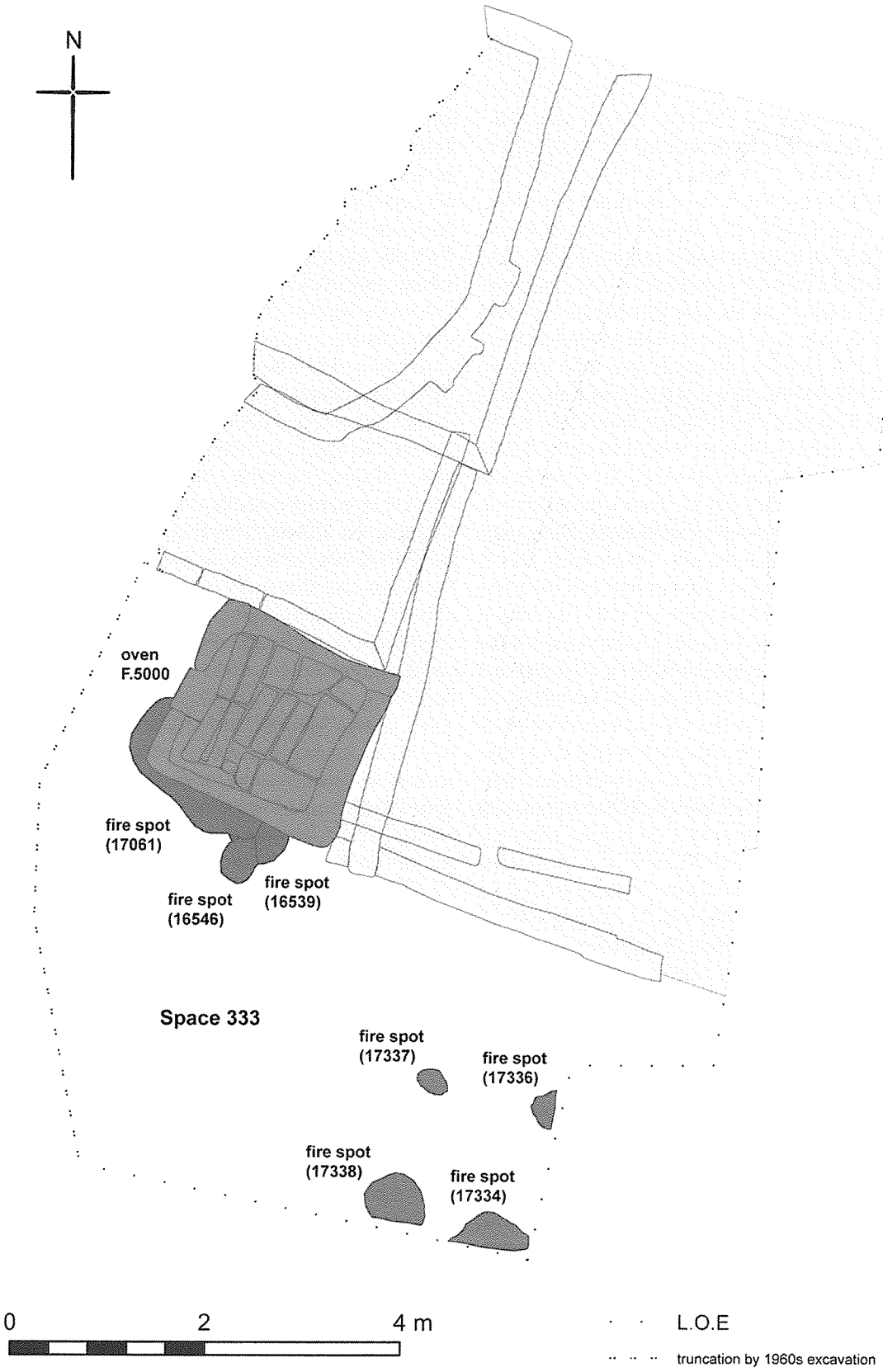

Figure 7. *Plan of Space 333, Level South P.*
Figure created for the Çatalhöyük Research Project by Camilla Mazzucato, Cordelia Hall and David Mackie.

and pot-firing (Shillito & Matthews, 2012: 41–43; Bogaard et al., 2014).

Discussion

Various activities can thus be associated with the foundation of a Çatalhöyük house. Some of these, such as the fire spots, food waste, and reed phytoliths could be viewed in largely pragmatic terms, i.e. the tools and materials to construct the house and feed the workers. In contrast there are other objects whose nature, form, or location, suggests their role as ritual equipment, such as the body parts of wolf, fox, and red deer, the fragmentary human remains, clay figurines, pieces of crystal, or pigment-stained stone. Items of red deer antler are another example, as with the aforementioned pressure-flaker from Building 49, being a recurrent component of special placed deposits —including foundational contexts—suggesting that it had a magical association/power in specific rites (Nakamura, 2010: 319–20, table 11.12). Çatalhöyük has produced a number of these assemblages whose composition ('magical combinations') and placement suggest their role in ritual acts, perhaps apotropaic in orientation. These are particularly associated with moments of change in a building's life (which in turn likely link to human events such as birth/death/marriage), most often their foundation and abandonment (Nakamura, 2010: tables 11.1–11.2), as for the example the astragali and wolf-paw mentioned above from Building 65, or the rare flint projectile placed on the earliest surface of Building 47 (House, 2014b: 311). Dangerous (sharp) items are a particular feature of these assemblages, with horns, mandibles, teeth, claws, plus points of bone and obsidian. Projectiles are long associated with house protection in the ethnohistoric record (e.g. Blinkenberg, 1911), while in the Old Testament (Psalm CXXVII) arrows are deployed as a simile 'representative of the protection which the man receives from the efforts of his sons', while also symbolizing male sexual potency (Estes, 1991: 306–07), which returns us to our prior statements concerning structural links between human::house reproduction. In sum, we are tempted to view the inclusion of such interesting ('characterful' [Carter & Milić, 2013b: 451–76]) items in the foundation deposits as the residues of sympathetic magic, offering protection to the new house and the ground it was laid upon (cf. Nakamura & Pels, 2014).

Foundation burials can be viewed in a similar apotropaic light (see also Borić & Stefanović, 2004: 542–3), with their bias towards neonates and adult women suggesting that here, too, we are dealing with carefully structured ritual practices, rather than just the 'background noise' of a high-mortality society. The use of infant burials in ritual house foundation deposits is not restricted to Çatalhöyük, the practice also claimed to have been performed at the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B site of 'Ain Ghazal in Jordan (Rollefson et al., 1992: 463). At a broader scale, the association of infant burials with houses is recurrent throughout the Neolithic eastern Mediterranean and into the Balkans (see Borić and Stefanović, 2004: 540, for references), as it is in the Greek and Roman world (e.g. Kurtz & Boardman, 1971; Moore, 2009; Mays & Eyers, 2011), while there are numerous cross-cultural examples for a connection between new-borns and houses (Bloch, 1995; Rivière, 1995; Waterson, 2000; Gillespie, 2002 *inter alia*). While in many cultures and ideologies the neonate might represent 'the nadir of religious efficacy', at Çatalhöyük their recurrent burial in foundation contexts might be viewed in terms of their power to animate a building (Patton & Hager, 2014: 246). Their significance might arguably stem from the analogous liminality of neonates and the strata into which they were buried. These construction-phase deposits represent the very threshold of a building's coming-into-being, while dead newborns have recurrently been conceptualized as not being fully of this world (e.g. Scott, 1991; Gottlieb, 1998; Moore, 2009). Given the replacement of obsidian hoards with baby burials, one might ultimately see the establishment of a new house shifting from a reliance on a store of valuables to protect the structure, to a situation where they were drawing more on the supernatural.

With some structures having as many as four neonates interred in their foundations, what does this tell us about the social networks that coalesced at these buildings? While the community's high infant mortality rate means that we do not necessarily have to follow Moses' suggestion that children were ritually sacrificed to provide the numbers, it does remain somewhat unlikely that the primary residents of these buildings would have had quite so many stillborn at the same time (stockpiling is the more likely explanation—we also have no skeletal evidence of trauma on these neonates that would indicate murder—although they could have been killed in a way that left no trace on the bones—e.g. poison, suffocation). If, as it has been suggested that, some of the more elaborate structures were central ancestral buildings for extended household members (Hodder & Pels, 2010), then one can envisage a network of kin, trading partners, and other sodalities being drawn upon at the important moment of founding a new house to provide a neonate as a necessary component of the foundation rites. Alternatively a dead child could have been gifted by another social group as a means of initiating connections with a preferred, well-established household.

This establishment of multiple social relations would have been fundamental to ensuring the long-term success of a new house (see papers in Joyce & Gillespie, 2000, following Lévi-Strauss, 1982). While the manufacture of tools, weapons, and vessels might have part-served to furnish the new abode, we believe that these goods were being produced by those associated with the new building primarily for the purpose of gifting to initiate and underwrite the social relations necessary for the household's long-term survival. Indeed, we have now come to realize that the obsidian bifaces of the earlier EN were made almost exclusively for exchange, and that rather than representing preforms that would later be worked into functional weapons, they are better viewed as a form of 'primitive valuable', i.e. good manufactured with the explicit intention of being gifted within a recognized system of social obligations (Mauss, 1990; see also Hampton, 1999). Simply stated, we almost only ever see this type of projectile in hoard contexts; the other points of the period that we find in middens, post-holes, and room-fill, *inter alia*, are of different form and blank type. The mass of thinning flakes we find in foundational and earliest occupation contexts thus relate to the final shaping of non-utilitarian weaponry, items that may have been hafted as standards, or kept in bundles for later exchanges.

As part of laying the social foundations for a new house, one can also expect the primary characters involved to have proved themselves in other fashions. We might imagine one prerequisite being the expedition to Cappadocia to procure the rough bifaces at the Göllü Dağ source workshop (Cauvin & Balkan-Atlı, 1996: 252), the month-long dangerous trip serving as a *rite de passage* as much as it provided them with the 'start-up capital' to found the house (Cessford & Carter, 2005: 311–2). On returning to the nascent structure, a show may have been made of finely shaping the bifaces before they were gifted to those in attendance, thus establishing a long-term relationship of obligation to the new structures' inhabitants, debts that could be called on in times of need, be that the rebuilding of a subsiding house wall, or the arrangement of a wedding feast. A statement would also be made by retaining a proportion of these bifaces—arguably some of the finest examples—for burial within the house itself, as evidenced by the Building 60 hoard where the bifaces were only buried after they had been part-modified in the house-shell (Carter & Milić, 2013b: 455, figure 21.18). The significance of holding back some of these valued goods can be apprehended with reference to the work of Weiner (1992) and Godelier (1999) on gifting practices in small-scale Melanesian societies (analyses that further developed the classic study of Mauss (1990)). Weiner has shown that in societies with 'an economy and a moral code dominated by gift-giving', there is a paradoxically great emphasis on keeping certain goods (Weiner, 1992). Thus in the process of gifting, be that of material culture, knowledge, or rites, there is a necessary withholding of a proportion of the same, often that considered more fine, rare, or valuable (Godelier, 1999: 32–36). The earlier EN obsidian hoards might thus be seen as a small (but socially significant) proportion of the material originally brought into the building from an expedition to the quarry, the rest having been put into circulation among the community through gift-giving (Carter, 2008).

We wonder if those buildings where we find intact hoards represent successful households, i.e. the gifts exchanged at the foundation served to secure a network of kin and sodality members who could be called on throughout the life of the house. An example of this would be the important 'history house' Building 1, whose large number of burials suggested its centrality to a network of related structures (Hodder & Pels, 2010: 178), with its untouched foundation period cache of unfinished Nenezi Dağ spearheads (Figure 1b). Conversely, might those part-disturbed, or emptied hoards be an index of struggling, or failed households, i.e. that at a certain point in the life of the house the primary members' gifts had all been reciprocated, and they no longer had the safety net of their social network to support them in times of death, misfortune, or other moments of need. At such times it would have been necessary to tap into their remnant capital by retrieving their buried bifaces to reinitiate their social alliances.

Ultimately, the practice of hoarding and gifting bifaces died out somewhere around the mid-7th millennium cal BC, arguably the result of competing mechanisms of social distinction and alliance formation coming into play, such as accessing distant goods and practices from eastern Anatolia (Arbuckle, 2013: 1811–2; Carter et al., 2008), and the reconfiguration of an array of other traditions, from tool making, to house construction, to cooking (Hodder, 2014). With the gradual collapse of one value regime —that embodied by the gifting of Göllü Dağ bifaces —new forms of meaningful goods were introduced into the long-established arena of house construction social gatherings. Perhaps most conspicuous among the new media employed to initiate, maintain, and express social relations were the bodies of neonates, with baby (foundation) inhumations appearing at much the same time as the people of Çatalhöyük stopped burying obsidian (if sacrifice were involved, this, too, can be conceptualized as gifting [Firth, 1963; Baal, 1976; Mauss, 1990: 20]). From this period on, however, the gifting may have been aimed at different recipients, shifting from kith and kin alliances in the earlier EN, to obtaining divine help and

protection from deities, spirits, and ancestors, together with more intensive, and competitive forms of feasting to create indebtedness among the living (Russell et al., 2014a, 2014b).

While hoarding projectiles may have no longer formed part of the rituals surrounding house construction, the performative acts of shaping, handling, and gifting weaponry did so, albeit in the later EN now involving points that were not only of different form (Nenezi Dağ spearheads), but also genuinely intended for the hunt, rather than 'merely' symbolic iterations of the earlier EN (as attested by examples with impact damage in abandonment deposits [Carter & Milić, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c: 475, figure 21.31]). Other goods were also being made as part of the activities surrounding building construction, such as pots and various ground stone objects, items that were also part-, if not primarily-intended for underpinning the network of relations required to make the house succeed. Stone axes seem to have been a particularly important good whose entrance into the realm of gifting partnerships may have primarily occurred during these house foundation rituals, as attested by the axe/axe preforms from the construction phases of Buildings 40, 44, and 65 mentioned above (Figure 6). As with the spearheads, the axes would have been perfectly suited to the 'maintenance of complex social relations', on the basis of their (relatively) rare raw materials, long lives, and distinctive forms and colours (Helms, 1988; Gero, 1989: 103; see also Gell, 1992; Hoskins, 2006; Wright, 2013: 383–6). We have extensive ethnographic evidence for this kind of use of stone axes (Malinowski, 1934; Vial, 1940; Hampton, 1999, *inter alia*).

These acts of manufacturing and gifting were also undertaken in a richer sensorial context during the later EN, with fumigation rites, magical incantations, and a distinctly individualized form of feasting that further attests to the nature of social action embodied in these house construction gatherings. While the hosts may have provided the slaughtered sheep for the communal pot, these feasts also included a variety of dishes that would have been brought by those coming together to contribute babies for the foundation blessings, and give their work-time to the new building. Some would have been reciprocating from prior house-building events that they had endowed, others would have been seeking to enter into new social alliances, while some may have been petitioned by the hosts, as characters of good fortune, skills, and wealth, the feast thus acting as more of a potluck than a potlatch. As each attendee received a gift from the hosts, be that a finely crafted projectile, axe, ceramic vessel, or 'simply' their portion of the feast, they became obligated to the household, social relations that were key to the success of the social group establishing the new house.

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