Many aspects of the use and significance of space that are considered vital to the study of traditional architecture, such as gender relations in domestic space, have been minimized in the treatments of architectural remains in archaeology. This paper examines the rationale for restricting the facts of prehistoric architecture to building techniques and stylistic variability. It then attempts to overcome these limitations by an experimental interpretation of prehistoric architectural remains from Neolithic villages in Yugoslavia that addresses the social actions of men and women in domestic space. The experiment involves a different standpoint on the construction of knowledge about prehistory, the creative use of graphic representation, and a critical examination of the archaeologist as mediator between past and present.

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The prehistory and ancient history of architecture have been written on the basis of "facts" provided by archaeologists. Domestic architectural remains have been preserved in the archaeological record for many thousands of years. Their spatial distribution and stratigraphic sequence comprise, for many archaeologists, the main focus of their excavations and the most important aspect of the archaeological record. Those historians of architecture who have been interested in traditional architecture and who have used this prehistoric archaeological data have written histories that are arid, uncreative and dehumanized in comparison to histories of later architecture and in comparison to the analysis of modern traditional architecture. They have limited their histories, for example, to tracing the origins of building technology or to providing evidence for the origins and diffusion of certain archetypal floor plan forms.
Many of these limitations have been forced by the nature of the archaeological studies themselves, especially those that deal with the prehistoric period, in which the architectural remains are bereft of any supporting historical archival data. It is true that the poor preservation of most archaeological architecture is a severe limiting factor. The ground plan, foundation works, and, possibly, the lower part of the superstructure are generally all that remain of a building on an archaeological site. These must form the basis for any reconstructions of the missing upper parts of the superstructure (including the roof).

I shall point out in this paper, however, that such limited use of the architectural remains is not an inevitable fate to which those who use prehistoric data must resign themselves, but rather a construct of archaeologists. The process by which archaeologists reconstruct prehistoric buildings into the kinds of structures that architects, architectural historians and anthropologists are used to visualizing in traditional contexts is a complex series of inferential steps. In practice, each of these steps is fraught with its own challenge of validation and the overriding problem of ambiguity. To ignore the ambiguity and to work within the illusion that the reconstruction is a “proven fact” is to claim that one’s interpretation is knowledge rather than a “mode of transmitting knowledge.”

My aim in this paper is to encourage the critical examination of the sources of ambiguity in the recording and interpretation of archaeological buildings. It will dare to provoke the reader into facing the ambiguities of archaeological data and actively participating in the process of envisaging past life. This will be done by presenting reconstructions of archaeological buildings in which some information is hidden, in which the viewer is invited to use his or her imagination, and in which the viewer is invited to play with hypothetical alternative interpretations. Expanding on my previous work, I shall offer a more creative and humanistic way of looking at archaeological architecture than that available in the reigning dehumanized, normatized view.

A DEHUMANIZED AND NORMATIZED VIEW OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHITECTURE

The dominant interests of traditional archaeology have focused on technological development, social evolution, and ecological adaptation. By “traditional” I refer to the work of American and European archaeologists, practicing both New (Modern) and not-so New Archaeology. In one way or another studies by these researchers (whether they are concerned with architecture or not) proceed by extrapolation, the assumption of a normatized behavior for a whole population on the basis of a well studied, but restricted sample. Architectural discussions in traditional archaeology have focused on building materials, construction techniques, and labor (in terms of man power needed in construction); on the adaptation of house construction to different ecological conditions; on activities within the building; on the form and style of the building in terms of its ground plan and two dimensional division of space; and on the structure and grammar of spatial distances between buildings and between different elements within buildings. If the people who inhabited or used a building appear at all in discussions of it, it is normally to make statements about demographic variability, that is, about the number of people who resided in the enclosed space based on its square footage and the use of general correlations between family structure and use of space.

Another characteristic of most traditional studies is their treatment of buildings as finished artifacts. Recently, however, some studies have begun to take into account variables that might affect the preservation (or lack thereof) of architecture on archaeological sites and the implication this variability might have for the archaeological record. The idea here is that a building like a person has a life history during which its form and utilization can be modified, and eventually, the nature of these changes will affect the appearance of the building in its archaeological persona.

Some recent studies have therefore theorized that expectations could be proposed and tested using available empirical archaeological data as to what would happen to a building during its use life: from its planning, construction, occupation and maintenance, through its decay, abandonment, destruction and eventual replacement. The aim of such enter prises is to be able to design “middle range research” that will provide a rigorous framework within the rules of scientific methodology for testing the validity of hypotheses about human behavior by observing archaeological (in this case, architectural) remains. Test expectations about the modification of buildings have come from such sources as ethnographic (in particular ethnarchaeological) observations and actual experimentation with traditional building materials.

Surprisingly, however, these recent considerations of buildings as artifacts which have gone through various stages of life, finally encompassing dirt, decay and abandonment, have not led to a great change in the way architectural architecture is interpreted and reconstructed textually or graphically. Neither has it led to an increase in the depiction of people in reconstructions. In this sense, archaeological architecture remains as dehumanized as ever. It is worth examining how and why this has happened.
THE EPistemOLOGICAL BASIS FOR SCIENTIFIC VALIDATION OF RECONSTRUCTIONS OF PREHISTORIC ARCHITECTURE

Three interrelated conditions exist which contribute to the continued passive and arid nature of the graphic and textual representation of archaeological architecture, and which will have to be changed before the writing of prehistory can be humanized: (1) the requirement of attributing the archaeological record to past behavior; (2) the dominance of interest in macro scale questions; and (3) the consideration of material culture (architecture) as a passive reflection of behavior.

According to the methodology of logical, positivist science (a dominant way of creating knowledge in Western society), it is the ability to assign the archaeological record directly or indirectly to behavior that enables the empirical testing of hypotheses about past human social and economic behavior. This theoretical and methodological framework is based on the supposition that material culture is a passive reflection of society’s behavior. According to this view, any action by which social behavior has modified a material (i.e., architecture) can potentially be reconstructed given an analysis that is careful enough to extract the right information from the material.

The other side of this coin, however, is that any action that did not modify the archaeological record, or which cannot be identified as having modified it, cannot be reconstructed and is therefore not testable. Thus, many aspects of the use and significance of space that anthropologists and architects consider vital to the study of traditional architecture have consistently been ignored or minimized in the archaeological treatment of architectural remains. Among these aspects are social relations, especially those based on gender and age, and the social action of individuals within space. The rationale for the exclusion of these areas from study is that it is impossible to demonstrate conclusions about them with any scientific validity, since they are reflected only very indirectly in the material culture. In other words, the archaeological data cannot be attributed to these actions, categories or relationships.

Attempts to attribute architectural units in the archaeological record to specific social units, such as the “family” or “household,” or “male” or “female” spaces, have been countered by ethnographic or ethnoarchaeological cautionary tales that warn researchers of the dangers of such an approach. The result has been that topics such as prehistoric people and their variability at a micro scale (within the family or the household, or between men, women and children) have been regarded as untestable and have consequently been marginalized.

As can be seen from the list of topics covered by studies of archaeological architecture, “what has dominated the interest and energies of archaeologists in the (re)construction of prehistoric life has been what goes on beyond the household, the corporate production of surplus goods, exchange and alliances on a regional and interregional scale, the struggle of humans to control the environment, the hierarchies and dominance structures between settlements.” This has been the case even though most archaeological excavations of settlements retrieve data which is most pertinent to the study of households and the products of domestic labor (housework). At the macro scale, however, an archaeologist is more able to accept generalized assumptions about household action, despite the fact that these have been severely criticized as underestimations of the richness and variability of the social context of domestic action. “Meanwhile prehistory which continues to use them is left hanging in a cloudy nowhere land of faceless, genderless categories.”

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHITECTURE: THE ARCHAEOLOGIST AS MEDIATOR

The accepted strategies of graphic representation of architecture in traditional archaeology manifest the same characteristics of dehumanization mentioned at the beginning of the previous section. 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 (i.e., as much as possible is to be represented) in order to allow the possibility of using the illustrations even reconstructions as the basis of further research. Most projections in archaeological reports are orthographic (two dimensional). As for three dimensional representations, axonometric projections are preferred because they can show exterior and interior spaces, and because they emphasize the main source of empirical information, that is, the ground plan.

Jean Paul Bourdier has, however, pointed out in the context of comments on the nature of postmodernism in the study of traditional architecture that “representation plays a central role” as the “mode of transmitting knowledge.” Expanding on this theme, I would say that the archaeologist, like the architect and anthropologist, can also act as a mediator, limiting or encouraging the reader to view, visualize and imagine the buildings of the past and their inhabitants. He or she can accomplish this through the medium of graphic representation.

It is by understanding and accepting this role as mediator that archaeologists may identify the sources of ambiguity present in the graphic illustrations that they use to record and interpret archaeological architecture. The primary condition
here is that it is the archaeologist who selects what is to be represented and emphasized about a building’s construction, whether concerning its exterior appearance or ground plan, and it is he or she who also determines how this will be represented. Thus, the archaeologist structures both his/her and the reader’s experience of the building by choosing between graphic variables (e.g., between a two dimensional or a three dimensional representation).  

Choices made in the process of graphic representation reflect much about the excavator/interpreter/(pre)historian in addition to his/her basic knowledge about structures and building materials. For example, they reflect the priority he/she gives to different questions: for example, what interests him/her, what kinds of questions he/she thinks others would ask about a building, and who he/she thinks would ask these questions (other archaeologists, architectural historians, museum visitors). They reflect what he/she thinks of the power of archaeological data to validate ideas: for example, when he/she thinks it is appropriate and “legitimate” to use speculation and imagination, and when it is not. They reflect his/her assumptions about the way space is lived in by people: whether space is a passive or active arena, and to what extent the things people do there relate to how they interact with one another. And they reflect his/her underlying assumptions/philosophy about the past: about the role of the past in the present and future and about the lives of men, women and children in the past.

Critical examination of the archaeologist as an active mediator between the past and the present has only very recently become an issue 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 postmodern manifestation. When so much archaeological literature has been devoted to the methods of architectural reconstruction by graphic representation, it is surprising that so little of this has been devoted to “what has informed the drawing and what has inspired the drawing.”

The power of an archaeologist to manipulate and mediate between past and present is expressed well by Bourdier’s evaluation of the different representational methods available. As mentioned above, mainstream archaeologists favor axonometric projections in the reconstruction of buildings. Bourdier also favors axonometric projection over, for example, perspective views but for very different reasons. In Bourdier’s opinion, perspective drawings encourage passive involvement by the viewer, which contrasts sharply with the challenge to both drawer and observer provided by the cutaway axonometric view. With the latter, the drawer has the power to mitigate the overall crystal ball effect by determining where the drawer is positioned, how distortions from constructed perspective will be handled, and what will be hidden and what revealed. 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.”

Within this framework of archaeologist as mediator, one must further ask how the aridity of present methods of showing prehistoric lives can be explained in the reconstructions of prehistoric structures. With one or two exceptions, there has been no discussion in archaeological literature of whether or not to include people in a reconstruction and if so, how and where to do so. When people are included in a drawing, they are generally added more for scale than for humanizing effect. Is it that people are irrelevant or indemonstrable in prehistory?

Graphic representation and reconstruction are 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 are usually avoided, as are things such as mud, grime, or people that might clutter up the pristine material object and detract from the vital information of material remains!

A HUMANIZED/ENGENDERED STUDY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHITECTURE

If one does not wish to assume that buildings in the past were built and occupied by faceless “units of social co-operation” which carried out housework comprising a universal pattern of devalued at home social action, and if one does not wish to assume that the roles and relations of men and women in domestic space have been more or less uniform over time, then where does one start? If one does not assume that the built environment looked the same to prehistoric eyes as it does to ours, should one attempt to visualize it through their eyes; and if so, how should one proceed? For prehistorians, at least, not even the historical context is a given entity; it must be created. If household activity, gender relations, and perception of space are also not given, then where does one start in the construction of a humanized prehistory? How can the study of archaeological architecture be humanized, and would such a “humanization” make a difference?

A similar question was recently asked with reference to the “engendering” of prehistory in general and to the “engen
The graphic representation of humanized/engendered social action in its architectural context is a more complex process than simply “adding men, women and children.” What in a dehumanized presentation of archaeological architecture would involve only a straightforward presentation of the building materials, reconstructed in a simple series of floor plans, elevations, and possible metric and perspective projections (Figs. 1-9), becomes in a humanized prehistory a highly complex series of graphic images to illustrate the perception of space by both archaeologist and prehistoric actor (Figs. 8-10).

The images are made complex by several elements. For example, an individual’s perception of space will change during his/her lifetime according to changes in his/her age and power to negotiate, and according to changes in the overall context of social action. Moreover, according to Allan Pred’s “Theory of Place,” not only do occupants of a building perceive its spaces differently during the course of their lives, but the building itself is a dynamic space with a use life and history. At any one time, Pred says, a “place” should incorporate the historical trajectories of not only the animate actors who meet there, but also its own identity as an inanimate arena of the social action. For this reason, an archaeologist may choose to represent the building at the moment of its construction, at some mid point of its occupancy when it is still relatively new, as it approaches the end of its life and dilapidation sets in, or after it has been abandoned and/or destroyed.

Moreover, the use of a multitude of views, with spaces hidden and revealed, allows the introduction of an additionally complicating element to this representational process, the active participation of the viewer in the construction of prehistory, as opposed to his/her status as a passive recipient of “knowledge.” Within such a framework, nothing can be taken for granted as to the content or method of graphic interpretation. There must be critical awareness of prehistory on the part of the constructor as well as critical awareness by the viewer of whether (and why) the archaeologist has chosen to make certain aspects of the past invisible.

For example, one can return to the question of why people have been left out of reconstructions of architectural history in traditional archaeology. The overt explanation is that people cannot be “proven” by means of the empirical evidence. But one might also suggest that, as mediator between past and present, the archaeologist him/herself reflects many as summations that may be held (albeit subconsciously) in the contemporary Western mind. One of these is that the rich variability of human relations in the domestic sphere is irrelevant to the course of human history. In this way, what men and women do in relation to domestic space...
negotiations for power, about housework, and where to put
the garbage will not affect the way in which cultural rules
are formed and transformed. It is further assumed that al
though the domestic sphere may be the source of most of our
knowledge about prehistory and early history, it is only in the
supra domestic world of public buildings that important
political action took place, the domestic sphere being merely
the passive background to the latter.

A few archaeologists have begun to explore ways in which
some of these assumptions and sources of ambiguity about
prehistoric architecture can be brought to the foreground and
treated as a starting point for a more humanized prehistory.

OPOVO, YUGOSLAVIA: A CASE STUDY OF
HUMANIZED PREHISTORY

To demonstrate the potential value in the consideration of
variability at a micro scale, two villages are considered here
whose remains are part of the archaeological record excavated
at the Neolithic sites of Divostin and Opovo in northeast
Yugoslavia. These are two contrasting sites, in that Divostin
represents a large village in the fertile, wooded, hilly area
south of the Danube River, whereas Opovo is a small hamlet
in the less hospitable (for farmers) marshlands north of the
Danube. Both villages belong to the later part of the Late
Neolithic/Early Eneolithic Vinca culture (ca. 4400-4000 B.C.).
We surmise (with a bit of poetic license), moreover, that they
were occupied contemporaneously.

These settlements, like all those of the Late Neolithic/Early
Eneolithic of Southeast Europe, are characterized by the burned
remains of dwellings that were built on a framework of upright
wooden posts dug into the ground and had walls of planks,
logs or wattling covered on one or both surfaces by a thick layer
of clay daub. Their floors comprised a thick layer of clay which
was frequently spread over a substructure of horizontal logs or
planks. On the archaeological sites, the whole structure appears
as a bright orange or red mass of burned, collapsed clay rubble
in which the shadows of the wooden framework are impressed
(Fig. 7). Postholes are visible beneath the floors, and the fact
that there are from one to three rows of internal posts indicates
a gabled roof. The traditional floor plan indicates a rectangular
detached house, ca. 6 meters wide, varying in length from
6 to 20 meters (Figs. 1, 3).

The architectural remains are well preserved because of fire,
but they date firmly to the prehistoric period and are fully
subject to all the problems of validation and the challenges of
reconstruction discussed earlier. Most importantly in this re
gard, the archaeological remains are separated by many thou
sands of years from any written sources, and it would be unwise
to extrapolate backwards through the millennia from descrip
tions of continental European architecture in the records of
Classical Rome or Greece, or even in the Medieval period.

The "traditional" architectural reconstruction of Vinca culture
houses, as expressed graphically in the archaeological litera
ture by simple elevations and isometric projections, focuses,
as might be expected, on how the houses were constructed and

FIG. 2. (ABOVE) Neolithic site of Opovo, Yugoslavia. Floor plan of House 2.

FIG. 3. (RIGHT) Neolithic site of Divostin, Yugoslavia. Reconstructed elevation of House 17 (after Bogdanovic, 1988, fig. 5.28)
subdivided, and what artifacts and furnishings were found inside them (FIGS. 1, 5). Variability in construction focuses on the foundations (diameter, depth and distribution of posts, presence/absence of bedding trenches, clay foundation layer, timber sub floor, clay covering of the floor, and the length of floor area). The superstructure of the houses has been less subject to analysis until recently since the empirical data is harder to find. But it generally involves topics such as the use of different forms and size of timber elements for the frame (split logs, planks, wattling, etc.) and the type of daub mixtures used (i.e. for inner and/or outer surfaces, from varying mixtures dung, chaff, sand, etc.). Discussion of the roof of prehistoric houses has been especially active when a clear pattern of postholes is present, as with the Neolithic Linear Pottery culture houses of Central Europe, but this condition is rarely present in the Neolithic houses of Southeast Europe.

The traditional reconstruction and interpretation of Vinca culture architecture has been enhanced by detailed research we carried out at Opovo during 1983-89. This provided information on variability of materials, labor requirements and expenditure in this type of building, external and internal elaboration of buildings, general spatial arrangement, expected use life of materials, attempts to prolong the use life of structures, re-use of materials, and the nature of the final destruction and abandonment of the site. This comprises part of the design of middle range research at Opovo to investigate how various social processes might have been reflected in buildings at different stages of their useful lives (FIG. 6).

The site of Opovo presented some striking contrasts with what archaeologists had come to expect as the pattern of Late Neolithic Vinca culture along the Danube River and in the fertile agricultural valleys and hills to its south, as exemplified by Divostin. The houses at Opovo are at the low end of the length range for Vinca culture houses. Our overall impression was that the houses at Opovo were also less well prepared and less long lived than the majority of Vinca culture houses, and that the households represented in them were shorter lived and/or less well established than those in large villages such as Selevac, Gomolava, Divostin and Vinca in the primary agricultural regions of Southeast Europe at this time. This impression was strengthened by associated features such as the relative lack of storage facilities and vessels and the high percentage of wild animals among the faunal remains.

Traditionally, archaeologists would have had no problem explaining these differences by the fact that the “domestic” structures and the behavior of the occupants of the houses at Opovo represented an adaptive response to the special ecological conditions of this area, which is marshier and less
The crux of the problem is whether the individual rooms housed separate social subdivisions of the household, or whether each household was made up of a small nuclear unit with a complement of functionally specific rooms (kitchen, storeroom, cow room, etc.). The dwellings at Opovo were unusual in having no internal divisions into rooms. In one house (FIG. 3) there was a low partition wall separating the oven and food preparation area from the rest of the dwelling. Another showed evidence of a second story. But internal, full height walls were absent.

Hunter Anderson has correlated the internal compartmentalization of rectangular space with the complexity of the dominance structure and the organization of activities and meanings within a building. Following this hypothesis, one can conclude that the short, one roomed Opovo buildings, with their lack of compartmentalization, may have been occupied by households whose activities and complexity were very different from those who occupied the large, multi roomed houses to the south. The following section will try to pry beneath this impersonal analysis to follow up the vast implications for social relations and social action embedded in this contrast in compartmentalization.

**DIALECTICS OF INTERPRETATION: A GRAPHIC ESSAY**

In our experiment at humanizing the graphic representation of archaeological architecture, we have attempted to express some aspects of living in prehistoric domestic space whose construction is based in the empirical details of the archaeological data. The excavation and analysis of the architectural materials carried out at Divostin and Opovo and other Vinca culture sites provide material parameters as to how the houses were built, furnished and destroyed that go beyond superficial appearance and association.

Our experiment is based on the premise that the same empirical data can be interpreted in various ways textually and graphically by different archaeologists holding different ideas, philosophies and priorities about what needs to be shown. These varying interpretations and images are not in competition as to which is more “accurate.” Instead, the very plurality of their presentation, if each is done with enough critical self awareness, ensures a healthy dialectic of interpretation. Alison Wylie suggests that archaeological data is not “infinitely plastic.” Evidence will constrain the free flow of the imagination, leading to certain constructions of the past that are more plausible than others. Thus, to ignore the material parameters of architectural variability mentioned above would be to remove all plausibility from our humanized imaginings.
But we need more than the excavated material record the floor plan of the house, the ovens, the ceramics, the figurines, the household debris. As aids to our creative imagination we have used comparative observations on space from ethnography and history for inspiration. The result is graphic visualization that sometimes goes well beyond the boundaries of traditionally acceptable "scientific postulation."

In the original study I began at Opovo in 1983 in contrast to that which is beginning to be practiced now the information on architectural variability would have been as summed to provide a passive reflection of the actions and behavior of prehistoric households. The end product of the study would have been a comparison of the architectural and associated artifactual materials to test conclusions about the variable actions of households according to various scenarios. The ultimate aim of the research would have been to attribute certain architectural features and spatial patterns of associated materials to units of economic and social cooperation (i.e., households). This would have provided a first and scientifically legitimate step in identifying and eventually reconstructing the transformation of households in prehistoric Opovo. Now, however, this same information is being regarded as providing us (the archaeologists) and them (the prehistoric men and women) with the material context of those actions and relations and tensions. It is being used as a starting point to construct a different kind of prehistory, one written at different scales of analysis and theorizing.

My entry into this endeavor in this paper comprises of two houses: House 14 from Divostin (FIGS. 1, 8, 9) and House 2 from Opovo (FIGS. 2, 7, 10, 11). I have outlined in the previous section their material parameters, what they have in common, and what contrasts they present. I have viewed the two houses at a macro scale of the Vinca culture and its context of the prehistory of Southeast Europe. I have also described Opovo as an example of a village settled in marshlands within the plausible hypothesis of “budding off” from the large villages of the Danube valley and beyond in the laterera of the Vinca culture. Now, I imagine what would happen if I followed through this hypothesis by theorizing/imaging at the micro scale of a single household, using the parameters of a single house and visualizing through the eyes of a single participant in this process. Would this contribute to the expression of the social drama of prehistory?

I present in these illustrations a moment of engendered prehistory, a moment of social action. I will try to demonstrate that this allows and encourages us to go much further in our understanding of architectural variability in terms of the dominance relations and tensions between males and females, between siblings, between neighbors, and between age groups as they move within and between the spaces that constitute what we call the built environment.

Let us assume in our graphic representations that the domestic spaces (inside and outside the dwellings) in prehistory were arenas for social action and, moreover, that the tensions between men and women were expressed through the medium of the material world. Spatial divisions physical boundaries such as walls or symbolic markers would delineate the access to different parts of house. I invite the reader to assume further that men and women in Vinca culture houses did not feel equally “comfortable” in all parts of their domestic space. There is no proof that these conditions existed in the reality of the past, but I believe they are useful starting points.

We have drawn the view of different spaces as we imagine they were perceived by different members of the household (FIGS. 8—10). I have borrowed heavily from Bourdieu’s analysis of “light” and “dark” areas of houses in designing these illustrations.

We invite you to fly through an axonometric view of the dwelling, House 14 at Divostin (a large village in the fertile low hills south of the Danube) to view the arena of social action (FIG. 8). As an archaeologist, you are acting as the medium through which others must view these spaces. You seem to be able to see everything at once, as through a crystal ball. But your perception is limited to a view that is external to the social actors and action.

Now we invite you to come down from your God(dess) like space, to view different spaces in the house as we imagine they were really perceived by different members of the household. In one illustration (FIG. 9A) we imagine the “public” room of the house, as viewed by an entertainee sitting there. The room seems bathed in light, and in his immediate view he can see a display of artifacts characterized by elaboration full of overt symbolism: female figurines, fine pottery, an elaborate decorated oven, painted walls, and so on. These are objects that archaeologists are quick to assume have “great symbolic significance,” but we suggest that they comprise an overt display that is designed to provide meaning about the house and its household for the outside world. Dimly, through a curtain the entertainee sees a dark inaccessible area of the house. He does not want to speculate what kind of social action goes on there.

We then (in our imagination) enter the eyes of the woman who spends much of her time in this dark mysterious room (FIG.
INTENSIFICATION OF PRODUCTION

HYPOTHESES ON HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL RELATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH ARCHITECTURE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

FORMULATION AND TESTING OF EMPIRICAL (MIDDLE-RANGE) HYPOTHESES ON PREHISTORIC ARCHITECTURE

Themes that underly the endeavor are located outside the circle

Linking arguments to general theories
Quantitative evaluation and recording of archaeological data on architecture
Identification of prehistoric behavior
Observations and experimentation

FIG. 6. “Middle-range research” design to study archaeological architectural remains.
The room is the farthest in the house from the entrance, and we imagine it to be more "private" and quite inaccessible to most people outside the inner circle of the household (especially adult males). At present it is filled with other women and children. In contrast to the "public" room, none of its objects, nor any of its furniture or walls, is decorated or otherwise elaborated. Every object, however, is filled with an associated story and with a heavy ritual significance vital for the continued social reproduction of the household. What for an outside observer (including an archaeologist) is a simple undecorated oven takes on great significance as the source of all the energy of birth, death, fortune and misfortune for the woman who sits next to it.19

In fact, these assumptions could have been turned on their head, but I have chosen here to follow the idea of the need for overt symbolism to deal with bounding the closed household from other households in this period of European prehistory.60

By showing the wider view of the house in the context of its landscape (FIG. 8-A), we remind ourselves that the social arena of domestic space is not restricted to the dwelling itself, but includes the areas immediately outside, including the garbage pits,61 and the fields, woods and marshes beyond. As we again lift ourselves off the ground, we look at the village of Divostin as a whole (FIG. 8 B), knowing that each of the many buildings whose outer shell we see houses a similar arena of social action. We imagine, for example, that the dark room of Divostin House 14 has been entered by many women from other households as they pool their labor and carry out their network of communication.

In our landscape view of Divostin the clear natural subdivision of space by hills and valleys is obvious to us, even as modern archaeologists. As the seemingly more homogeneous marshland space of Opovo (FIG. 10) comes into view, however, we remind ourselves that our (archaeologists') perception misses much of the complexities with which the prehistoric inhabitants must have perceived and divided up the landscape. But the perspective view of Opovo nevertheless helps us in our musings about the bud off scenario for Opovo. What happened when "the strong ties of alliance" were put into action? What did a woman sent from that room in House 14 at Divostin to seal an alliance with the "marginal" settlement of Opovo have to do, or choose to do?
Thus we switch scales once again and view a perspective drawing of the houses of Opovo, with their lack of partitioning of space. The view is through the eyes of one of the few occupants of the village, a young girl who just a few moments ago we saw in the darkened room at Divostin. Here, she has come to her betrothed to take up her new position as his junior wife. She will spend most of her adult life in this small hamlet in the marshes until she is released by his death and her last act in the hamlet, the burning of his house. In an axonometric drawing (FIG. II) we view the interior as an archaeologist, but as one informed and inspired by imagination, models, and archaeological context.

As we enter the eyes of the new occupant, she is still in shock at the unknowns and unexpecteds of her new spatial context. She is surprised by the small size of the houses, by the fact that there is no place for storing things and compartmentalizing activities. If her main working arena in Divostin was a dark room, then here the light that pervades the whole house appears as a great surprise and not necessarily a pleasant one, for here every action in the house is visible to everyone else. We surmise that in a small village like Opovo the opportunities for pooling of labor and information were much more limited, especially for women. We imagine that women in Opovo would have worked alone or in very small groups. Little is familiar in the houses for the subject whose eyes we have entered, but some things remain the same, such as the form and proportions of the oven which we have already

FIG. 7. (OPPOSITE PAGE) Burned house daub from the Neolithic site of Opovo, Yugoslavia (photo: M. Trninic).

FIG. 8. (BELOW) Neolithic site of Divostin, Yugoslavia Reconstructed views of a landscape: A) the prehistoric village in the hills; B) reconstruction view of the village; C) axonometric projection of House 14 (drawing: C. Chang).
surmised plays an important role in all domestic social actions in these villages. We can imagine other shocks: the quiet at Opovo after the noise of a big village; the loneliness and isolation; the mosquitoes...

**A BROADENED VIEW**

By carrying out this exercise in visualizing engendered space at Divostin and Opovo, I have not produced any "true" facts or pictures of prehistoric social actions in its architectural context. I have followed through an interpretation of the significant change in the archaeological pattern of settlements described at Opovo at the end of the Neolithic in Southeast Europe - that is, the dispersal of settlement onto agriculturally marginal lands. I suggest that this change had considerable implications for labor access and resource procurement for a household as a whole. An interest in gender relations and social action at a micro scale further enabled me to broaden these implications to include a rapid decrease in the pooling of labor between households and extra-kin support, especially for the female members of households. And I have also followed through the social and symbolic implications of the contrast in the internal subdividing of a house between Opovo and Divostin.

In carrying out my experiment, however, I have dramatically expanded the scope in which the architectural context of prehistory (house, artifacts, furniture) can be used to construct a prehistory: many histories. Artifacts, such as an undecorated hearth have become more potentially significant, rather than being forgotten in the depths of an archaeological report. The significance of a figurine has acquired multiple possibilities, rather than being limited to one true interpreta
tion. The invisible arena of the most dramatic social action has taken on a more visible and important role. And a house, or a site, has become important in its own historical trajectory, rather than being seen only as a sample from which the whole is to be extrapolated.

An archaeologist has a choice of scale in which to consider the archaeological record. Usually we choose the scale of a normalized conglomerate of perceptions imagined for a group of people during a prolonged block of time. I have been arguing that it is important to consider the scale of the social action of individual actors frozen at particular moments of their history. Whichever scale is selected, the archaeologist must be self consciously aware of his/her choice and treat it as a topic for discussion rather than as something to be concealed or mystified. There is no doubt that the spatial and chronological scales of context that I chose for this exercise could have been subjected to a more creative treatment than that which we have presented. For example, within the house we could have presented many different perceptions of the social actors. But the built environment will be perceived differently if one looks through the eyes of different prehistoric actors who are of different age, gender, power, and life history. An individual’s perception of space will change during his/her lifetime according to his/her change in age and power to negotiate and according to changes in the overall context of social action.

It takes a great deal of effort and imaginative power to consider human beings in the past who engaged in social acts for many years and for many hours of each day with many other people, who each had a history, and whose acts were carried out within the context of this history, of their gender, and of their age (generation). But we cannot deny that these social actors were an essential aspect of the archaeological architecture which we excavate and reconstruct. When historians and ethnographers consider social action, they consider a wealth of information on individual social action and life history that archaeologists have no access to. But it seems to me that
for archaeologists who wish to theorize at a micro scale and contribute a prehistory of engendered social action, the kind of dialectical interplay between material remains, comparative historical or ethnographic observation, and imagined social actors and actions attempted here is a legitimate method of expression. It is an incorporation of text and image play into scientific enterprise.
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