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The Patio and the Rise of Domesticity

*about the origin and
the spatial organization of the household*

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Introduction

At the Beginning there was the Patio

“In our own time we have seen domination spread over the social landscape to a point where it is beyond all human control.”

- Murray Bookchin -

1.
“WordReference,” *WordReference Random House Learner’s Dictionary of American English*
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Domesticity describes “the state of being domestic”¹ and illustrates the will to settle and to find stability. When talking about domestic space we usually refer to people’s homes and the family life that takes place within its walls. The invention of the house as an architectural apparatus is directly linked to such feelings of comfort and, indeed, it is a result of humans seeking protection from hostile territories. The house is a place where we separate the familiar from the unfamiliar and give ritual form to life. Its origins date back to primitive times. With the rise of domestication and the transition from nomadic to sedentary life, the need to settle and to build more permanent structures became a necessity. As the constructed form of the house evolved and societies became more complex, the idea of a separation between “private“ (inside) and “public“ (outside) spheres became an important issue, which was materially translated in the organization of the household.

In the household, this dichotomy of inside/outside is perfectly encapsulated in the figure of the patio, whose spatial configuration allows the enclosure and seclusion of outdoor activities within the interiorized domestic sphere. The patio is a room without a roof, an in-between realm framing and staging the social structure of the house. It is therefore no surprise that the household and the patio appear at the same time in history. As such, this thesis will argue that the patio

can be used as an archetype from which to extrapolate the meaning of the household and from which to understand the invention and rise of domesticity. When describing our homes we often refer to them as domestic. We have naturalized this word and in doing so, lost track of the historical nuances of its meaning. This thesis will therefore focus on unpacking the layers buried inside the concept of domestic and domesticity.

In their text *Familiar Horror: Toward a Critique of Domestic Space*, Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shéhérazade Guidici explain that the word domestic derives from the Latin word domus meaning “house”, which originates in the Greek verb demo meaning “to build and to arrange”. Despite such neutral origins, upon closer inspection, one quickly finds that domus is also the root of words indicating forms of power relations, like dominus, which means “master of the house,” and its telling derivatives domination, dominion and domestication. Essentially, the etymology already indicates the fundamental way in which the institution of the household composes a system of power relations that are at the origin of the inequalities that we know and encounter in today’s society.²

Today’s concept of domestic space, based on liberal bourgeois values of family, privacy, and private property rights, has its most direct ancestor in the Renaissance palazzo apartment.³ Its etymological origin, the Italian appartamento means literally “a separated place,” from appartare “to separate.” Its architecture illustrates this meaning with an enfilade of individual chambers staging a gradient of secludedness. From this point onwards, the house became an apparatus of social control held in great interest by reformers, rulers and architects. The promotion of private ownership as a legal framework in which domestic space is defined became the main interest of the capitalist state to control the family. It did so by naturalizing domestic labor and the reproduction of life as a private - hence depoliticized - business of the family, sustained by the woman-housewife⁴ and dominated by the pater familias. For this thesis however, I want to look at the very beginning of the household by studying the old historical roots of domesticity.

In her text *Partitioning Space*, Susan Kent explains that, “the organization of the built environment and use of space is a metaphor for the organization of a culture [...]”⁵. Therefore the plan, “is a physical outcome of a specific action, or in other words, an index”⁶. Following this idea, the plan becomes the main structuring tool of this thesis - I trace the typological evolution of the patio in order to reveal how the idea of the domestic realm came to life, spatially, symbolical-

2. Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shéhérazade Guidici, “Familiar Horror: Towards a Critique of Domestic Space,” *Log* 38, 2016.

3. Concept explained by Pier Vittorio Aureli, in the lecture “Production Reproduction” - “*The Nomos of the City: A Political History of Urban Form*” (fall semester 2018-2019). See also: „When approaching a domestic project, the biggest problem for Renaissance architect was one of subdivision, separation, and distribution.“ Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shéhérazade Guidici, “*Familiar Horror*”

4. Maria Mies explains that: “[...] under capitalism the concept of labor is generally used with a male or patriarchal bias, because under capitalism, women are typically defined as housewives, that means as non-workers.“ See: Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour*, Third World Books (London ; Atlantic Highlands, 1986).

5. Susan Kent, “*Partitioning Space: Cross-Cultural Factors Influencing Domestic Spatial Segmentation*,” *Environment and Behavior* 23, no. 4 (July 1991): 438–73.

6. During his lecture „From circle to rectangle“ Pier Vittorio Aureli explains that the index is an outcome of a specific action - Pier Vittorio Aureli, “*The Nomos of the City: A Political History of Urban Form*” (fall semester 2018-2019). 9.20.2018

ly and socially. This analysis will be framed from pre-historic Middle Eastern cultures until the establishment of the Roman Domus, here understood as the culmination of the rise of domestic culture in Antiquity.

The chapters are structured in a linear way, corresponding to the historical sequence of eight household archetypes seen both in isolation and in the context of their respective cities or proto-urban settlement. Each archetype consists of a real-life house that is nevertheless thought to contain universal features, patterns and expressions of a historical culture, a collective form of life. The first example described is the patio ancestor, explaining the passage from nomadic to sedentary life, before the invention of the household. The second chapter illustrates a shift in paradigm, due to the arrival of the patio, towards the household, where one community organizes around a hierarchical logic, and the other relinquishes it resulting in a dead-end scenario. The third part introduces the household showing the development of domesticity through the architectural filter of the patio. This thesis is concluded by understanding the political importance of the household policies, by speculating about the meaning of the patio through the topics of accumulation, production and reproduction.

Glossary

Accumulation

Accumulation describes “the act or process of collecting together”⁷, which can be of non-physical nature, like collecting memories, or of physical state by the means of collecting objects. Accumulation can also be understood in economical terms as “the continuous growth of capital by retention of interest or earnings”⁸.

In the context of this thesis accumulation should be understood as the gathering of things (be it of material or immaterial nature) to congregate wealth and produce surplus value.

7. Ian Brookes, ed., *Collins English Dictionary*, 12. ed (Glasgow: Collins, 2014).

8. *Collins Concise English Dictionary*. (London: Collins, 2008).

9. “WordReference,” *WordReference Random House Learner’s Dictionary of American English* © 2018, n.d.

10. “WordReference,” *WordReference Random House Learner’s Dictionary of American English* © 2018, n.d.

11. “WordReference,” *WordReference Random House Learner’s Dictionary of American English* © 2018, n.d.

12. Silvia Federici refers to reproduction as the ‘*labor of love*’ and describes it as the labor we are supposed to do for free, out of love towards our family

Production

As production we understand the work we do in exchange for a wage or, more directly, “the act of producing”⁹ value, that is, things from which one can derive profit. Hannah Arendt, in her book *The Human Condition*, uses the word ‘work’ to refer to production as a physical act that produces objects, outlasting the life of a human being. In antiquity, work was considered worthy when it was easily distinguishable from the act of survival.

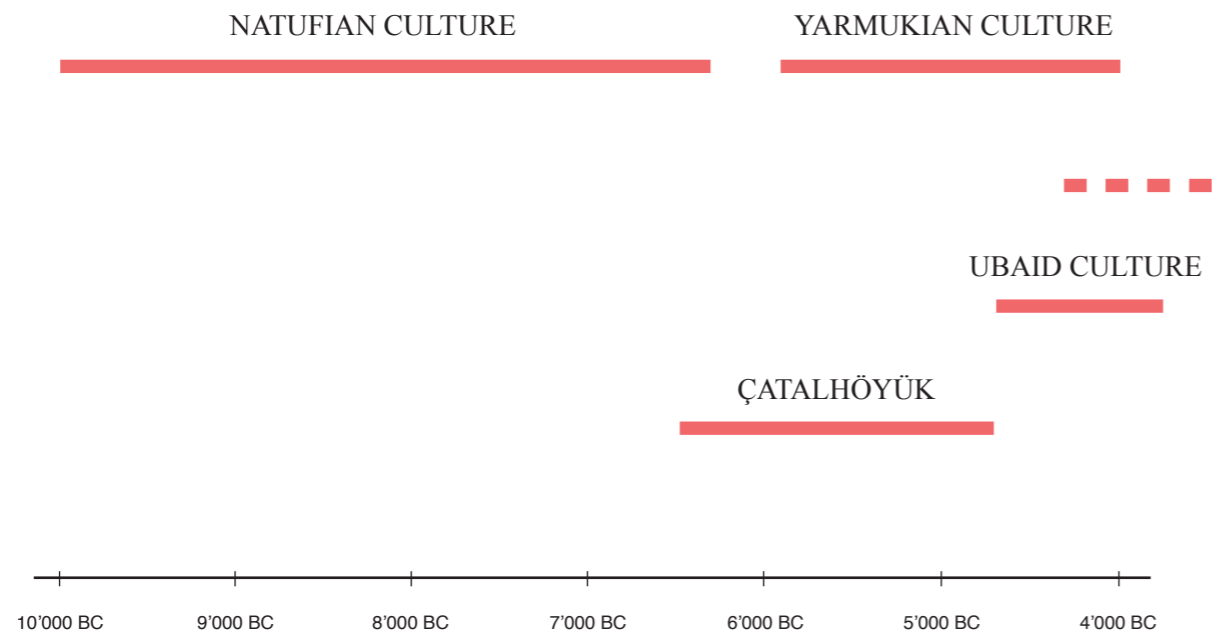
In the context of this thesis, production is to be understood as a compound of all the actions that generate income and create exchangeable values, usually performed by men.

Reproduction

Reproduction can simply be described as “the act or the process of reproducing”¹⁰. It describes the work we do in order to be productive, like cooking, cleaning the house or doing the dishes. Reproduction is the background condition of possibility of production. But it also describes “the process by which living things generate or produce new or young living things,”¹¹ like giving birth and nurturing infants. Hanna Arendt describes this type of work as ‘labor’. It is seen as non-productive because it does not generate profit. Reproduction is also referred to as the “labour of love.”¹²

Reproduction in this thesis’ context, is being understood as the work that is necessary for the survival and the physical reproduction of humans, generating the foundation of all other activities.

TIMELINE
cultures and civilizations

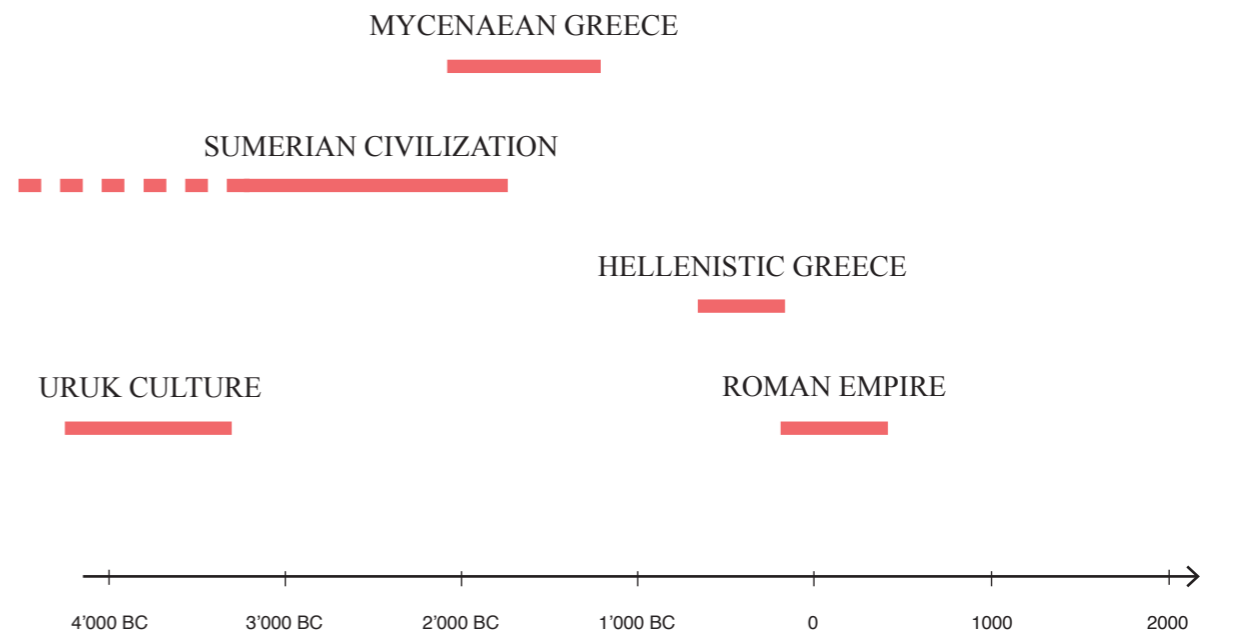


Epipaleolithic

Neolithic

Calcolithic

Agricultural/Neolithic Revolution



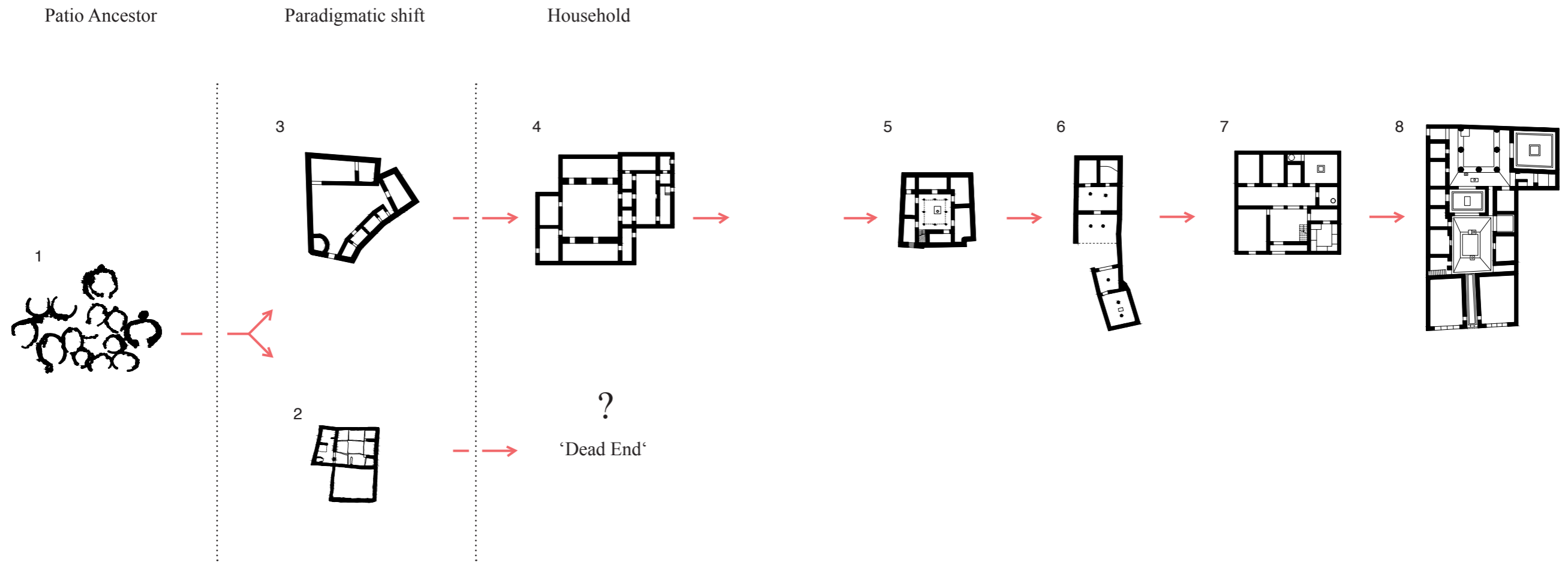
Bronze Age

Iron Age

Classical Antiquity

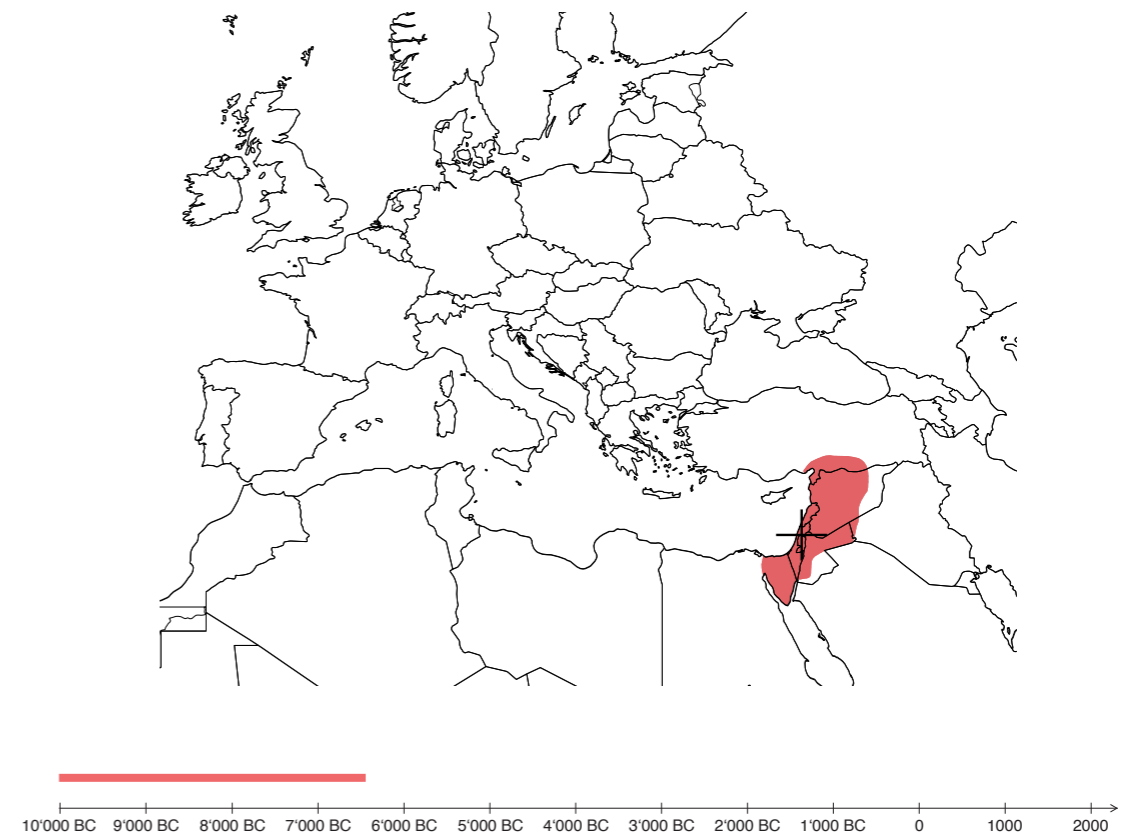
Modernity

Urban Revolution



Patio Ancestor

1. Natufian culture, Nahal Oren



Natufian culture, Nahal Oren

Hamlet & Huts

In the Near East, the construction of first permanent structures dates back to early Neolithic times, when a gradual transition from nomadic to sedentary life changed the environment strongly. This slow process of settling allowed the systematic gathering and planting of seeds, which is today understood as the early forms of agricultural practice. Since the cultivation of land depended on the local resources, nomadism became problematic, and therefore provoked the development of a sedentary lifestyle.¹³

Natufians are considered to be semi-sedentary, still depending on gather and hunter activities, but by gradually selecting and cultivating the land, the desire to dwell more permanently pushed them to slowly give up nomadism. By burying people where they settled, the Natufians appropriated the land and turned the now permanent house into a “temple for the ritualization of life.”¹⁴ As there is less reliance on food supply, life is no longer an act of mere survival, but a ritual where the house, as said by Richard Bradley, becomes ‘the theater of the everyday’.

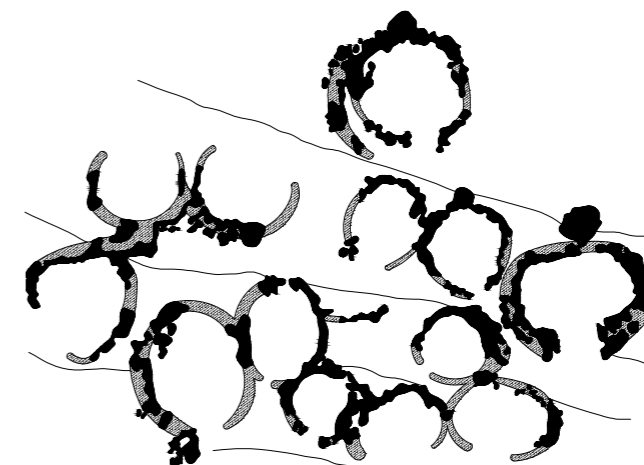
The Natufian hamlet in Nahal Oren included around 15-20 members. The houses are circular huts, built on a slope, using the topography as a structure to place the stone foundation. On the site of Nahal Oren there is no sign of inside partitioning even though a tendency towards minimal separation at the end of the Natufian period is observed. The huts are placed around a communal hearth framing an outside space, creating a first sense of “nomos”¹⁵. The circular structures are inhabited by a single person or maybe a couple, illustrating the fact that Natufians are a tribal community, based on kinship and do not identify themselves as part of a “family”. The huts are single room

13. Mario Liverani and Soraia Tatabai, *The Ancient Near East: History, Society and Economy*, 2014

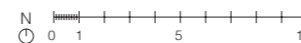
14. Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shérérazade Guidici, “Familiar Horror: Towards a Critique of Domestic Space,” *Log* 38, 2016.

15. Nomos from ancient Greek “nómos” meaning “law”. In his lecture “From circle to rectangle” Pier Vittorio Aureli refers to Carl Schmitt and his Book “The Nomos of the earth” demonstrating that Nomos means organization by explaining that human coexistence is only possible if there is a minimum of order and orientation. Aureli, “The Nomos of the City.” 20.09.2018

Plan - Natufian hamlet
Nahal Oren



hypothetical
reconstruction of the huts



constructions, making it clear that the Natufians were not permanently inhabiting this space, but still moving from time to time. The productive and reproductive activities are shared in the community showing little sign of and hierarchy and division of labor¹⁶. In his book *“The City in History”* Lewis Mumford explains that: ”If there is any division of labor, it is of the most rudimental kind, determined more by age and strength than vocational aptitude.”¹⁷ Therefore the economic roles of different people are complementary, depending on each other in a reciprocal manner. At this time in history there is no private storage and therefore no need for accumulation, everything produced was as well consumed, making the producer also the consumer of his or her own work. The Natufian culture lived a life based on self-governance where communities were defined by kinship resembling an egalitarian system. The hamlet in Nahal Oren can be considered a “proto-patio“ where an open space is framed without enclosing it completely. It is precisely its openness that allows the coexistence of man and nature. As this I do not refer to their homes as a household but a placed regulated by mutual agreements.

From this point on, sedentary life becomes the norm, allowing the cultivation of land and the production of surplus value. It is precisely this transition, called the Neolithic Revolution¹⁸ that changes the house strongly, going from circular to rectangular. However we will see that this transition generates two different movements, one towards the household (Sha’ar Hagolan) and the other one to a dwelling type, I refer to as a shelter (Çatalhöyük).

16
The division of labor has always existed throughout history. By referring to the division of labor, it means the intensified specialization of labor in an oppressive way. This concept is best explained by Maria Mies stating: »[...]we have to make clear that we mean this asymmetric, hierarchical and exploitative relationship, and not a simple division of tasks between equal partner. » See: Mies, *“Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale.”* Page 46

17
Lewis Mumford, *“The City in History:“* Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects.

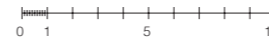
18
Gordon Child calls this period the Neolithic Revolution, illustrating the transition from nomadic to sedentary life, linking this phenomena to the cultivation of land and the domestication of animals See: Childe Gordon, *“The Urban Revolution,”*



left: Plan - Natufian Hut Nahal Oren

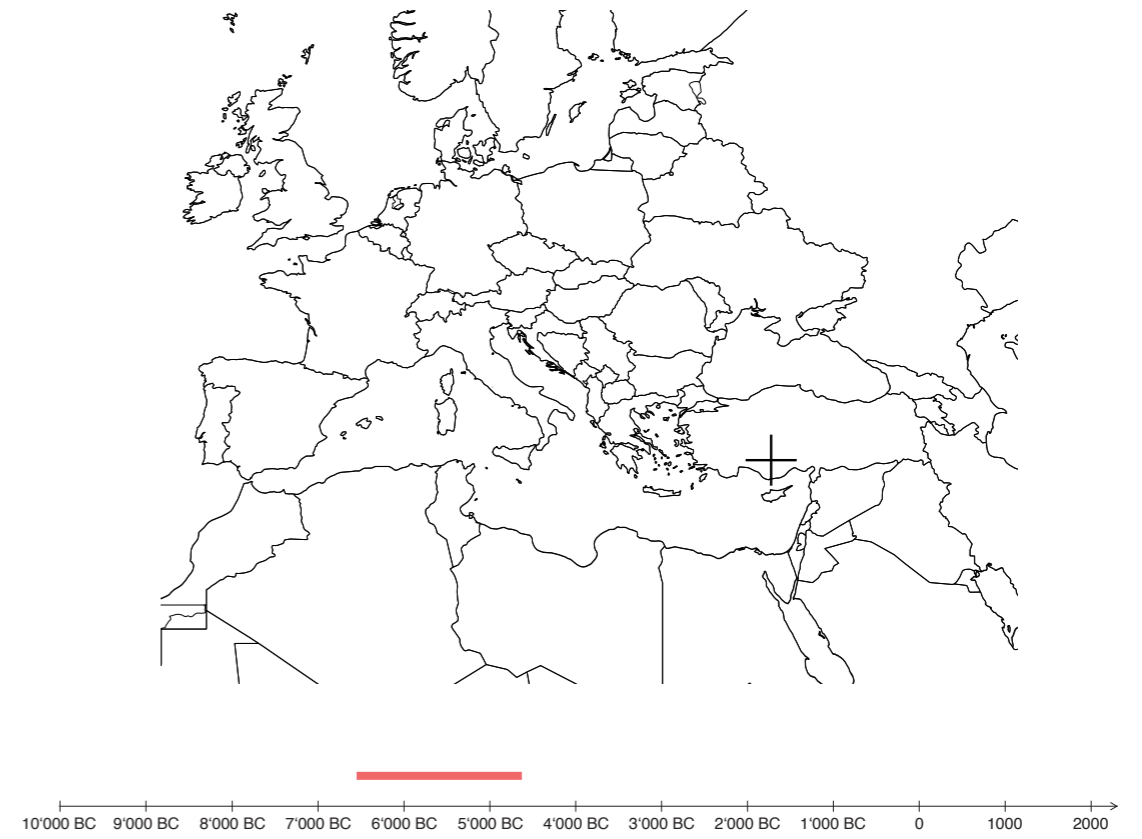
middle: Plan - Natufian Hut Hatoula

right: Plan - Natufian Hut Netiv Hagdud



Paradigmatic shift

2. Çatalhöyük



Çatalhöyük

Communal shelter

In the history of settlement Çatalhöyük, situated in southern Anatolia, can be considered an exception, showing an unusual behavior and pattern in its dwelling typology. Being of a rather big size for its period, archeologist estimate the population to be around 5'000-7'000 inhabitants with a number varying up to 10'000 inhabitants.¹⁹ The economy of Çatalhöyük was not only based on agriculture and livestock but also on a larger range of other resources like stone craftsmanship and pottery.²⁰ Catalhöyük is entirely composed of domestic buildings, with no obvious signs of public constructions like temples or palaces, illustrating the relinquishment of centralization and hierarchy. It is at this moment in history where the circular huts are slowly being replaced by rectangular structure, allowing the house to be easier organized without losing space.

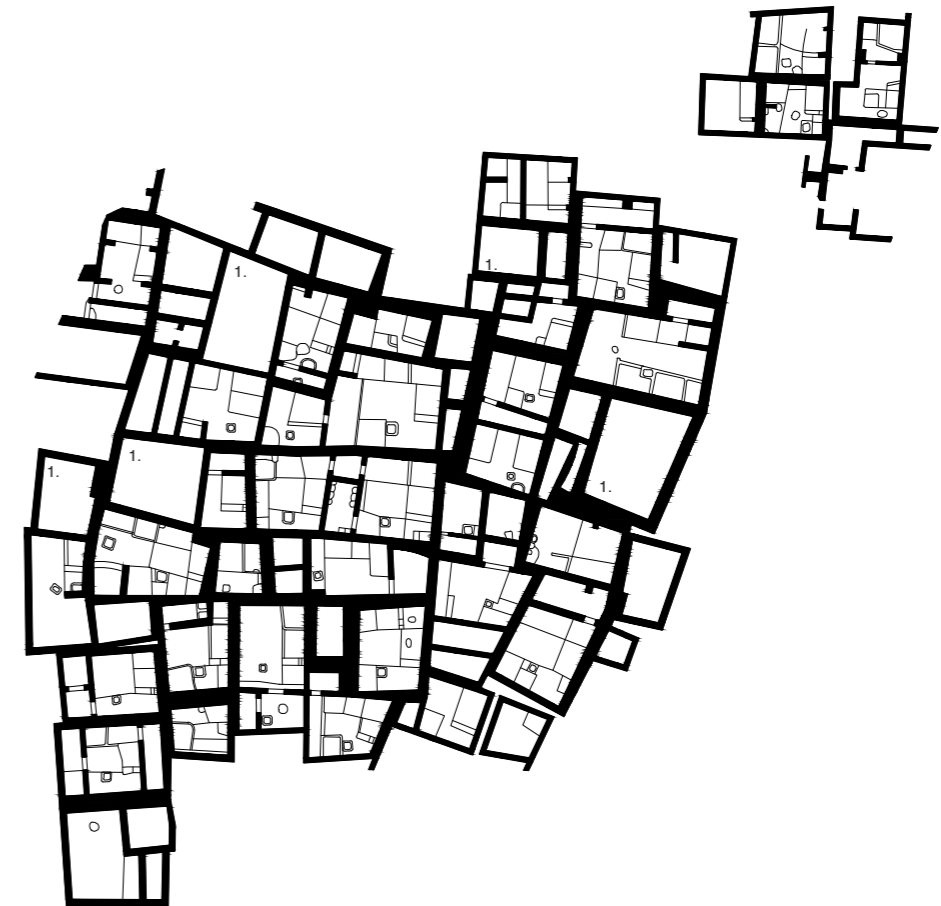
Extending like terraces over the hill, the village is structured around some courtyards, with houses arranged one next to the other preventing streets to be formed. This settlement pattern allows the defense of the village and the houses. As there are no streets, the roof becomes the main place of exchange, where storages, stoves, and work places are located and shared by the community. The roof is the actual public space of production with no private character, and thus becomes the main facade of the village. Due to the absence of streets the dwellings are being accessed from the roof by a ladder descending into the shelters.

The dwellings are single room structures of rectangular plan, without internal partitions. Separations are created through platforms, representing the beds of the occupants, under which they buried the dead, making the house not only a home but also a sanctuary where

19
James Mellaart, Çatal Hüyük:
"Stadt Aus Der Steinzeit".

20
Liverani and Tabatabai, "The
Ancient Near East. History,
Society and Economy".

Plan - settlement
Çatalhöyük



1. Patio
N
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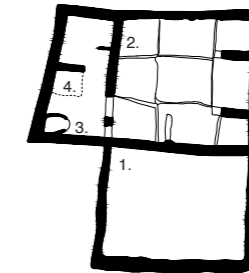
certain rituals are being performed. The platforms are surrounding a central square, used as a working space, similar to the ones on the top of the roof. The walls of the house were actively decorated, usually of religious significance. As there is no centralization of religious activities, cultic rituals are pushed to the level of the home, making the existence of communal priests unnecessary.²¹ The division of sacral and profane is celebrated in each dwelling, through the existence of the secular hearth and the holy platforms. Due to the fact that the dead were buried under the bed, demonstrates the importance of ritual performed only by the members of the family, illustrating its private character. Due to the number of platforms, we can imagine that the size of the families was rather big, as in the house illustrated in this work we count 8 platforms, showing a possibility of the existence of extended families, not necessarily only related by blood. We also observe a hearth in the house, emphasizing that not all the domestic activities were performed on the roof in public, but some in the shelter.

We can imagine that the structure of the city imposed a heavy burden on people, certainly elderly, and presented difficulties in the transport of construction materials, trash, animals and basic needs like water and food. Due to this intricate access it is no wonder that this type of settlement pattern can be considered a dead-end in the evolution of settlements.

However the patio plays an important role in Çatalhöyük. As there is no direct access from the shelters, the patio becomes part of the public area, creating an extension of the inhabited roofs. Hence, it does not create segregation but engages in confrontation and co-existence. Similar reflections can be made for the dwellings, showing that they favor cohabitation instead of separation, by structuring the living space according to platforms and not walls. We do not see a room dedicated to storage in the house explaining the existence of public storages on the roofs. Archeologists have described Çatalhöyük as an egalitarian society, regulated by mutual agreements where the members of the community share domestic activities and wealth. This can also be linked to the relinquishment of communal priest. As we will see later, temple institutions are used to create power, justifying religion as an excuse to collect and store surplus value. I would not consider the homes of Çatalhöyük as a household, but rather a shelter, that allows protection and refuge from the outside, which are not regulated by a higher organization that superimposes power or hierarchy on the people inhabiting it.

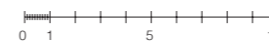
21

Liverani in his book "*The Ancient Near East*" explains that: "Cultic activities were pushed on a family level, by each family in their own household or in the house of its 'patriarch'. Thus these sanctuaries are not the result of a centralized or specialized (and hierarchically organized) cultic system."

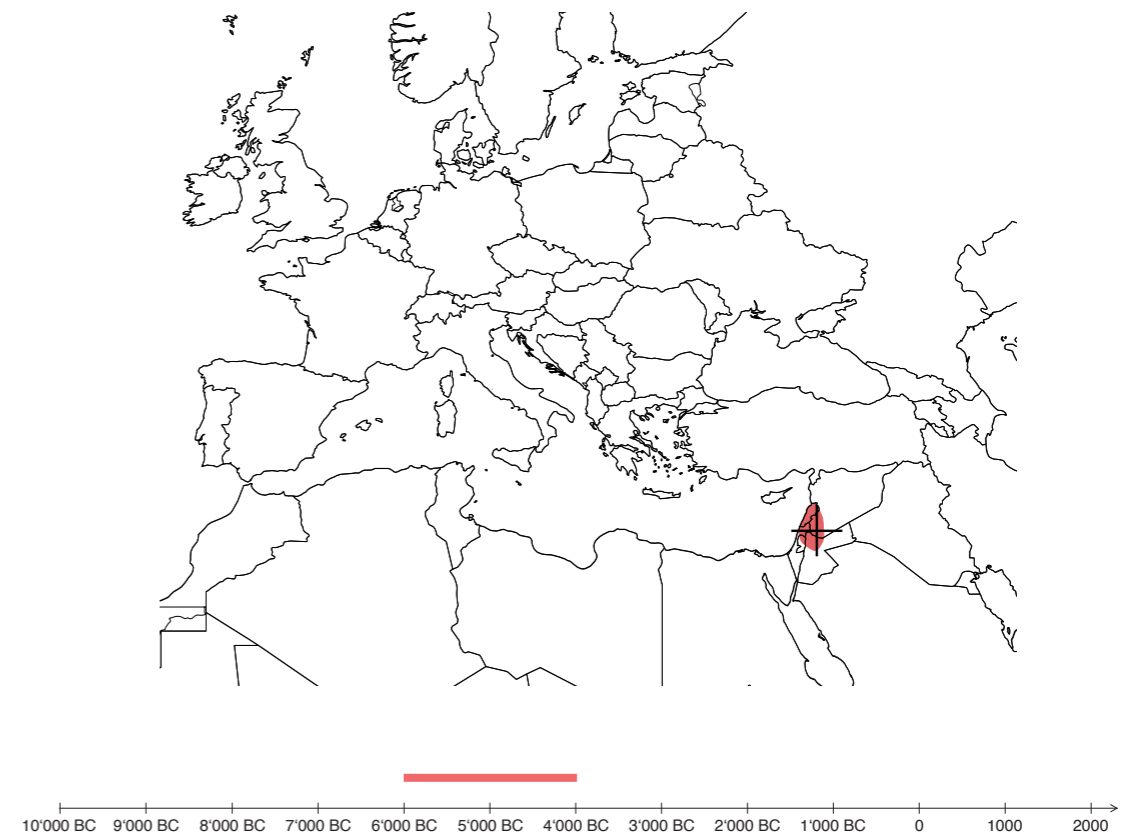


Plan - Shelter
Çatalhöyük

- 1. Patio
- 2. Platforms
- 3. Hearth
- 4. Entrance to the house through the roof



3. Yarmukian culture, Sha'ar Hagolan



Yarmukian culture, Sha'ar Hagolan

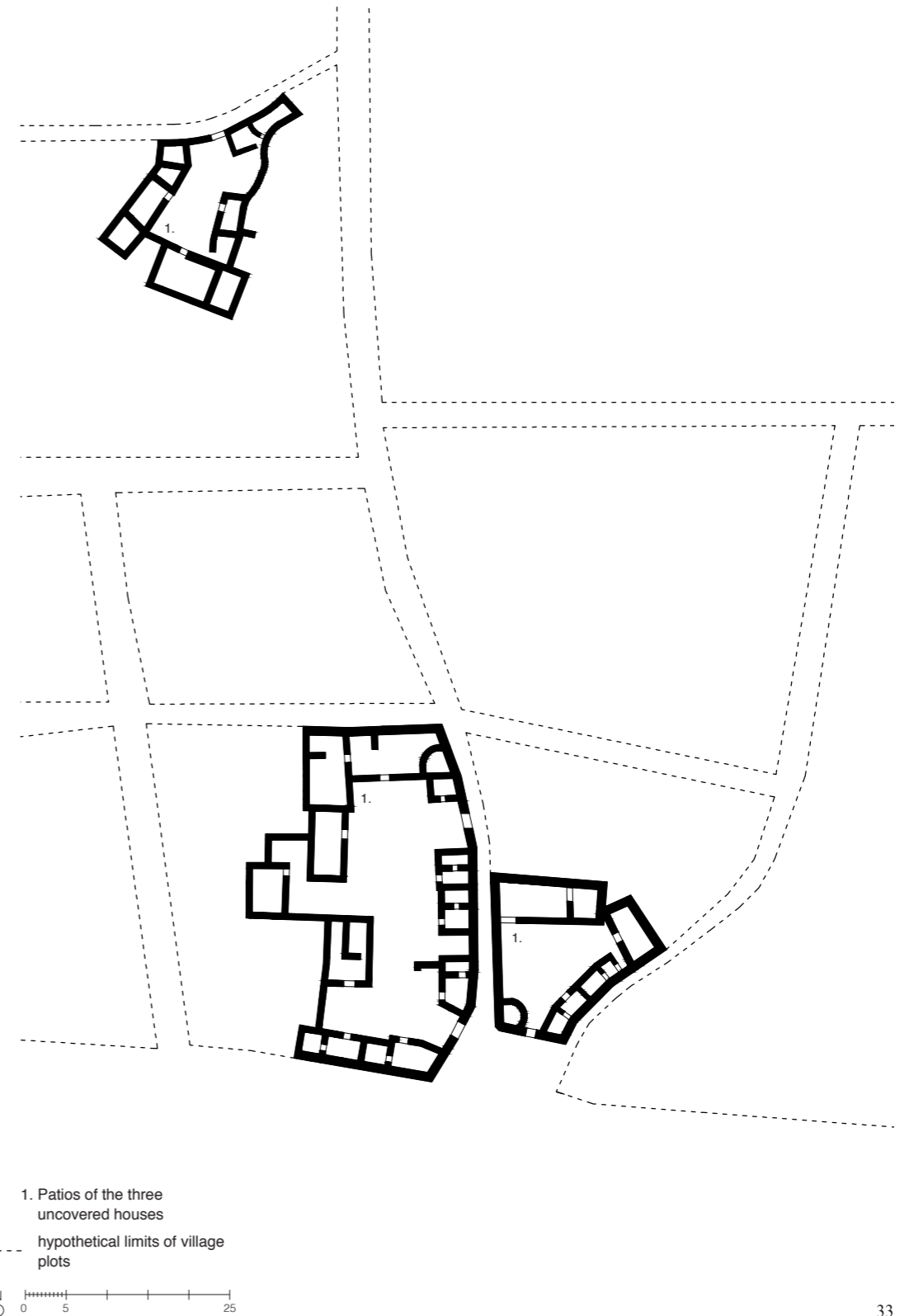
Household cluster

The origin of the institutionalized household can be traced back to late Neolithic times, when the production of surplus forces the house to undergo a process of subdivision. At the same time we observe the formation of villages, demonstrating a high level of cohabitation and social organization. This process can be understood at the site of Sha'ar Hagolan, inhabited by the Yarmukian culture, whose name derives from the nearby river. The settlement is structured around a system of streets showing signs of village planning and therefore a first idea of communal organization. Even though Çatalhöyük and Sha'ar Hagolan are established around the same time, their village patterns are strongly different, resulting in two contrasting societies based on opposite values. This shift is not only visible in the village structure but can also be explained through the house plan.

With the rise of extensive agriculture in the seventh millennium BC, constituting of the cultivation of grains and the farming of sheep, goats and cattle, came the production of surplus. This surplus has to be stored for the future, forcing the house to be subdivided. Subdivision becomes important because it allows the separation of the economical entity of the household from the living spaces. While there were some shared storages and special structures like shrines, communal centers like temples were missing, suggesting that surplus was not in the control of the community, but a private business of the household. The earliest communal sanctuaries only appeared towards the end of this period.

In Sha'ar Hagolan, the architecture of the household has been translated in the patio, where a series of small rooms cluster around a central space, enclosing the household from the exterior. The patio

**Plan - Yarmukian village
Sha'ar Hagolan**



now becomes a spatial feature organizing the interior of the house, compared to Çatalhöyük where the patio is used by the community and does not interfere in the organization of the shelter. The houses in Sha'ar Hagolan however are, under more control, limiting the access for non-kin members. By enclosing the hearth in the patio, activities necessary for the reproduction of life that were usually performed outside, are now privatized in the inside of the domestic sphere. The patio becomes the unifying datum of the new social unit, illustrating the transition from nuclear to extended family. The extended family is an economical construct allowing to accumulate labor force and therefore to increase surplus value.²² The entrance to the building leads straight in the patio from which all the small rooms, inhabited by singles or couples, can be accessed, turning the patio in a place of circulation and surveillance. A substantially larger room is occupying a central place in the household overlooking the patio and the entrance. This room is accompanied by a storage giving its member a certain economic advantage, creating hierarchy among the household members. Being placed in the central axis of the entrance, it seems as if the room dominates the patio and controls the activities performed in the household. Due to the introverted form of the house we can imagine competitions between households, explaining the passage to extended families. The house becomes an economic entity that has to be protected from its enemies, the other households.

The patio marks the transition from the house to the household, from the nuclear family to the extended family, illustrating the home as an economic entity. Food production and other domestic activities now privatized, are shared by the family but still “without full-time labor specialization.”²³ Hierarchy is established on the level of the domestic space, where power is realized around the process of accumulation, on which the household depends on for its own reproduction. Moreover this process is leading towards a tendency of seclusion and privatization of certain belongings, domestic activities and surplus by enclosing them in the patio.

The houses in Çatalhöyük and Sha'ar Hagolan illustrate a shift in paradigm. First of all we see that by the act of subdividing the house, hierarchies are made visible due to the fact that wealth is not distributed equally, as in the case of Sha'ar Hagolan, but in the hands of one member giving him a certain advantage over the other inhabitants. It is precisely the relinquishment of subdivision and certainly of religious institutions that make Çatalhöyük an extraordinary exception in history. From now on, societies follow the idea of Sha'ar Hagolan, where power relations can be explained by looking at the spatial organization of the household and the urban context.

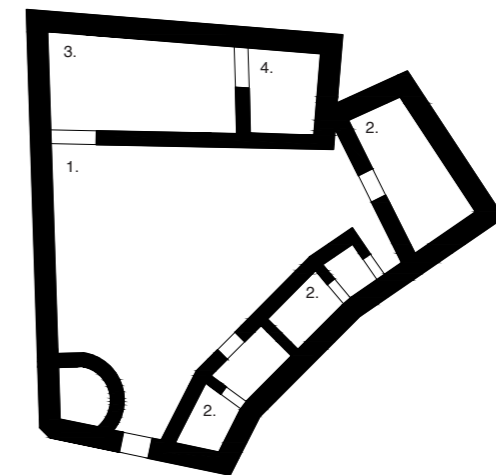
22

In his text *“The Origin of the Village Revisited: From Nuclear to Extended Family”* Kent Flannery explains that: “One can think of several reasons why extended households might emerge. The most obvious is economic: in some subsistence system, the nuclear family is simply not a viable economic unit.” See: Liverani and Tabatabai, *“The Ancient Near East. History, Society and Economy”*.

23

Liverani and Tabatabai, *“The Ancient Near East. History, Society and Economy”* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014)

Plan - Yarmukian house Sha'ar Hagolan

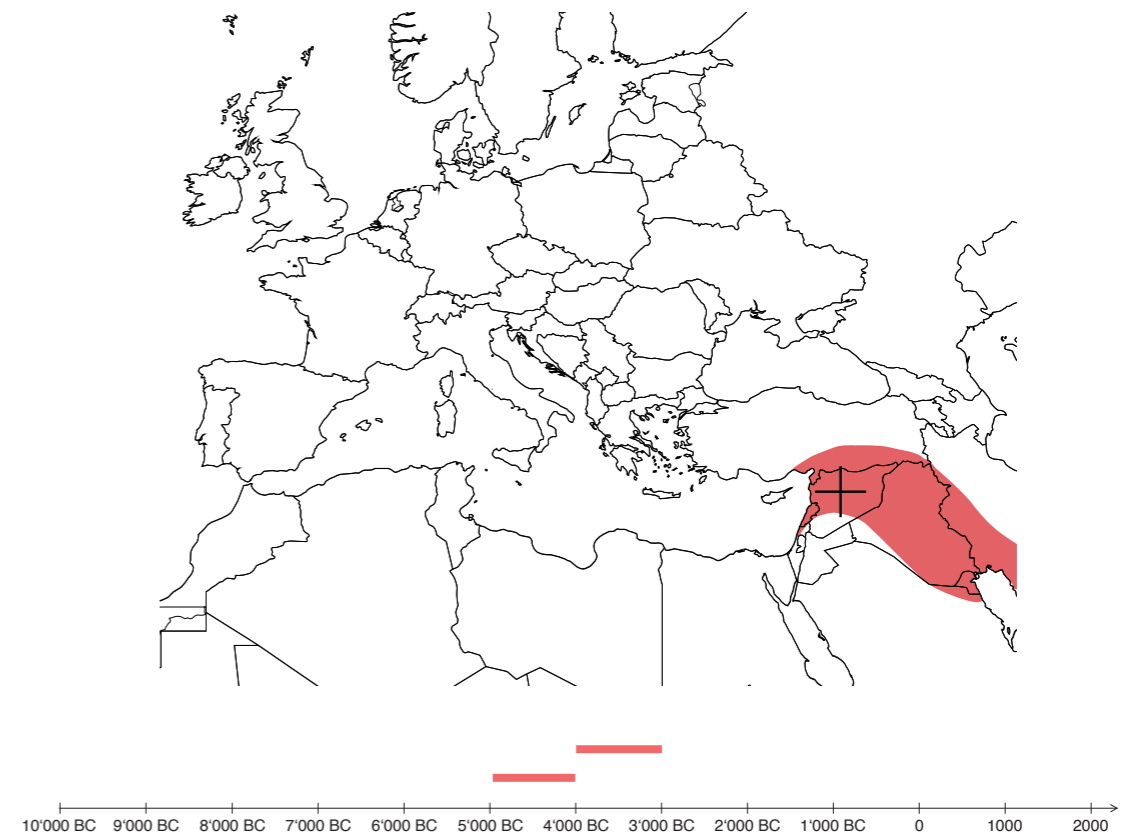


- 1. Patio
- 2. Rooms housing a family
- 3. Room of the head of the house
- 4. Storage



Household

4. Ubaid & Uruk culture, Habuba Kabira



Ubaid & Uruk culture, Habuba Kabira

Tripartite House

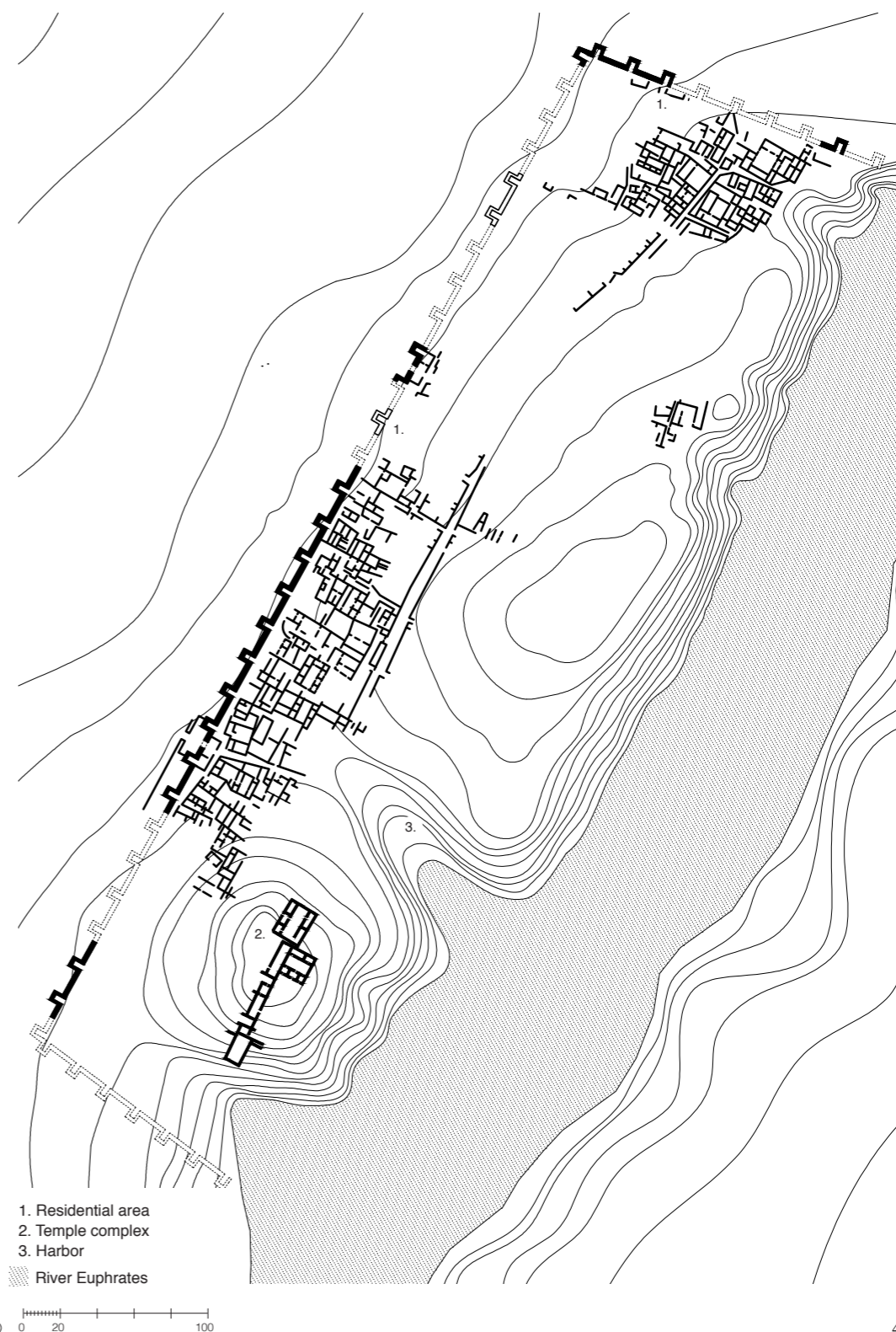
During the fifth millennium BC the Ubaid culture spread around Mesopotamia from southern Iran to eastern Anatolia. At this point, houses in small towns are freestanding structures but as villages start to grow slowly, settlements are taking up more complex patterns. Agriculture and animal husbandry are widely practiced during the Ubaid period but as communities orient their activities towards resources available locally, they start to trade goods between different centers, expanding their surplus. During the Ubaid period we see an appearance of temple houses that also represent storages, ruled by priest administrators, on which urban residents depended in case of scarcity.

This period coincides with the widespread of a new typology referred to as the tripartite plan, not only used for religious building but also for the houses, showing that the house is nothing else than a place of ritual, where life is structured according to the previous. David Wengrow in his article "*The Changing Face of Clay: continuity and change in the transition from village to urban life in the Near East*" uses the tripartite house as an 'extended metaphor for society'. The central element of the house is where the ritual of hospitality is performed, separating two poles, "the female space for food processing, weaving, and nurturing infants and the male space for storing goods and administrating the house."²⁴ This process of fission was only possible by redefining the value of work and women by establishing an economic realm different from that of reproduction. Architecture becomes an actor of social exclusivity, whereas the tripartite plan reflects upon the different economic functions between men and women by providing "discrete realms for the performance of activities perceived as socially incommensurate."²⁵ The sexual division of labor

24
Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shérérazade Guidici, "*Familiar Horror: Towards a Critique of Domestic Space*".

25
David Wengrow, "*The Changing Face of Clay: Continuity and Change in the Transition from Village to Urban Life in the Near East*".

**Plan: Town during Uruk period
Habuba Kabira**



that we still know today is being established at precisely this moment.

During the Uruk period, being the successor of the Ubaid period, a rapidly growing population is the reason for the transition from villages to city like structures, materializing the need for organization and order. Some larger settlements are walled, marking the idea of centralized authority, like in the case of Habuba Kabira whose urban development is characterized by a dense residential area. As the town becomes a focal point of manufacture, the proto-city invest into long distance trading providing a flow of goods, managed by the temple complex placed in the south of Habuba Kabira on the top of a small hill. The temple complex represents not only the religious building but also the central political and economical structure of the community. We can see that the temple complex is organized around the same tripartite plan as the house, illustrating that at the beginning the temple was nothing else than a house, but became eventually larger through the accumulation of surplus.

The houses at Habuba Kabira are composed of two elements, the tripartite house and a patio, which is surrounded by two large rooms. Tradition shows that these rooms, usually the largest one of the house, are reception rooms to host guests and are accompanied by thick walls to impress the visitors entering the house. The house is therefore a place of social interaction, whereas the main goal is to show off the wealth of the household, creating a type of political game where hierarchies are being established, not only in the house itself but also between members of the community.²⁶ Situated as far as possible from the main entrance, these elongated rooms are shield from the noise of the street and separated from the private area of the house. The house is composed of two entrances, one for non-kin members giving access to the reception rooms and another one allowing direct entry to the tripartite house, the place where the household members live and where rooms are divided by gender, as explained prior. Architecture is being used to manipulate the circulation, as we now have two entrances, controlling the movement of the inhabitants as well as the visitors.²⁷

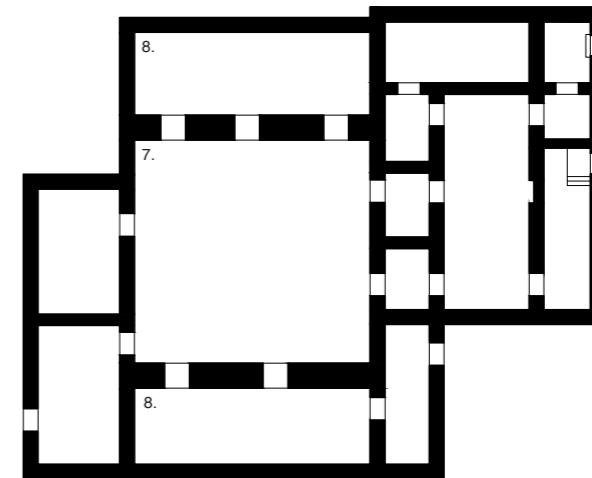
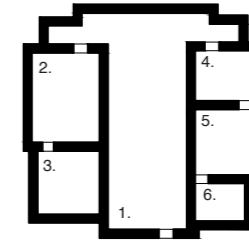
The tripartite house, as suggested by David Wengrow, is an archetypical form representing a new hierarchical logic. The patio articulates the functions of the house, separating the socio political part from the economical part of the household. "As such, it foreshadows the representational role of the house as a place of mastery and hospitality while hiding and diminishing its reproductive functions."²⁸ The household becomes an institutionalized space, structured around a vector of force, specializing labor according to gender, where women are secluded from the public eye in the same way surplus is being accumulated and stored, to safeguard the wealth of the household.

26
Liverani and Tabatabai, "The Ancient Near East".

27
Eva Strommenger, "Habuba Kabira: Eine Stadt Vor 5000 Jahren: Ausgrabungen Der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft Am Euphrat in Habuba Kabira".

28
Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shérérazade Guidici, "Familiar Horror: Towards a Critique of Domestic Space". 2016

top: Hypothetical plan model of a tripartite house Late Ubaid period
bottom: Plan of a tripartite house Habuba Kabira



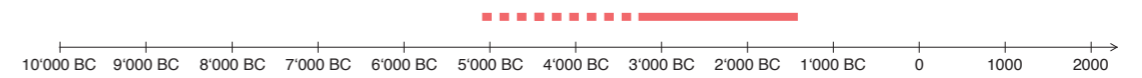
- male spaces:
1. Hearth
2. Storage
3. Administration
female spaces:
4. Food processing
5. Pottery and Weaving
6. Nurturing infants
7. Patio
8. Reception room



5. Sumerian civilization, Ur



| >



Sumerian civilization, Ur Tarbaşu & É

The Sumer are considered to be the first civilization, occupying mainly lower Mesopotamia, and are known for having constructed the earliest cities during the third millennium BC, a period referred to as the Urban Revolution.²⁹ By that time most of the people have abandoned villages and moved into walled cities. Out of this established a complex network of city-states, with large urban centers surrounded by agricultural land and small villages, over which the king ruled. The main temple was dedicated to the ruler and the city god. But the temples were not only a place of worship and the king not only an incarnated god, but “some were also landlords and major players in the economic life of the city-state.”³⁰ These large temple complexes were the political social and economical center of the city and therefore employed large workforces.³¹ Parallel to the establishment of large-scale monumental buildings, which in the first time in history differ from housing typologies, there is a social development of elites. Society is organized around specialized workers and craftsman, now producing not directly for their household but for the temple and the state.

The city of Ur flourished during the third millennium BC where it rises from a city-state to the capital of the first empire. It is surrounded by a city wall, placing in its middle two harbors used for the transport of construction materials and underlining the importance of trading in the economy of Ur. A large canal runs through the city distributing its content to the residential areas, providing the individual households with water. The ziggurat and the temple complex stand in the north, raised from the level of the city, dominating the town below it.

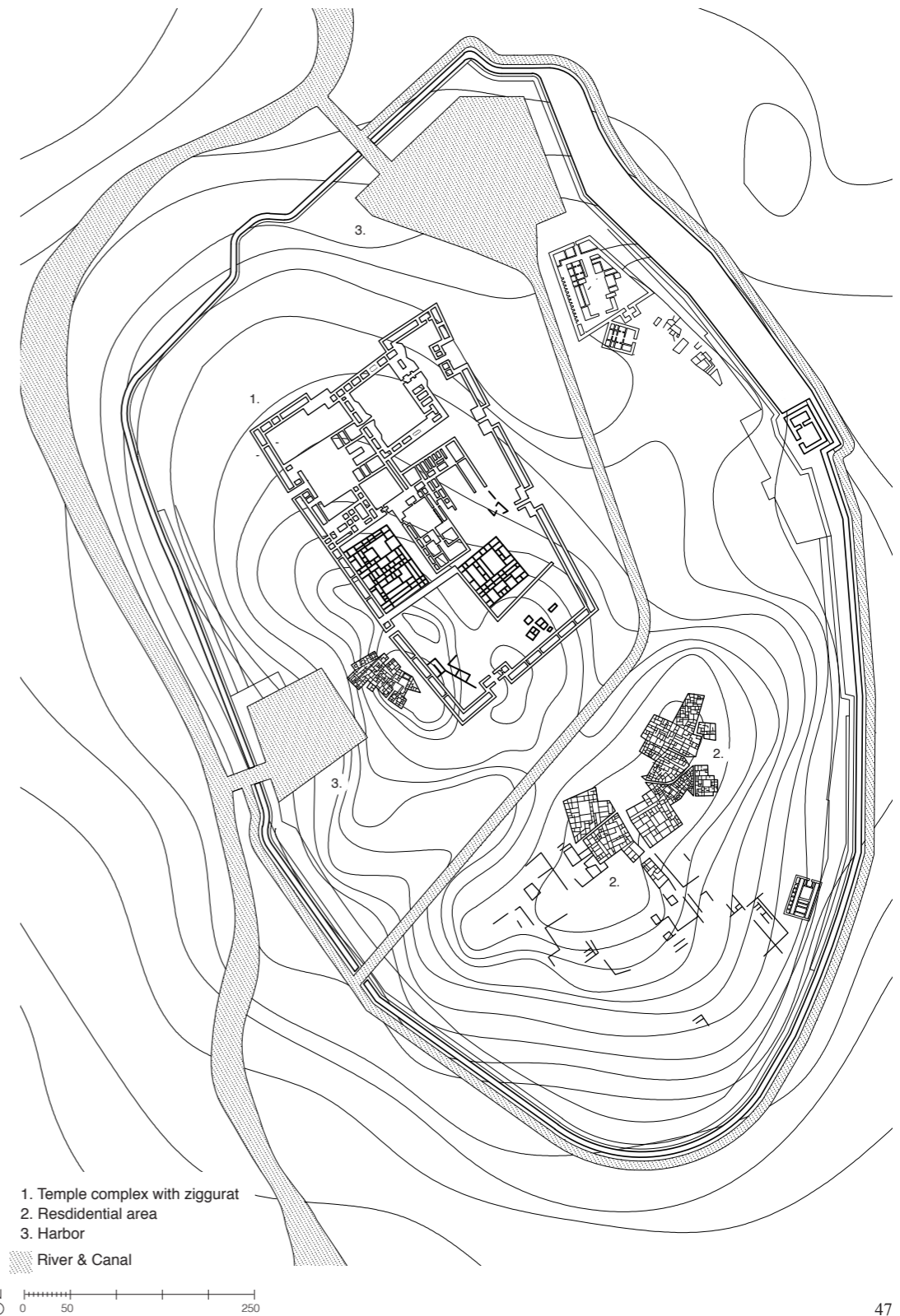
The residential area of Ur shows little planning, with streets

²⁹ the Urban Revolution describes the process by which small agriculture villages are being transformed into larg, socially complex urban cities. See: Childe Gordon, “*The Urban Revolution.*”

³⁰ Childe Gordon, “*The Urban Revolution.*”

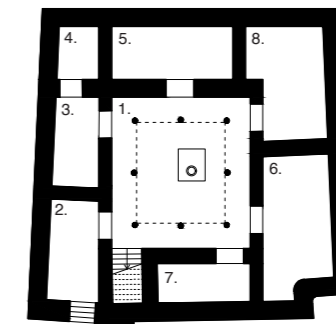
³¹ „Susan Pollock, *Ancient Mesopotamia.*“

Plan - City
Ur



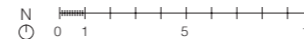
wandering around houses converging into small squares, giving access to the slightly elevated houses called É. The typologies vary in size but can generally be divided into rectangular structures. The primary feature of all the houses is the *tarbšau*, the Akkadian word for patio, around which the house is organized reflecting the need for privacy in the crowded urban landscape of Ur. The houses look inward as all the rooms open up towards the patio, turning it into a place of circulation but also a place that is being controlled. The patio represents also the main place of subsistence, providing the house with air and light as well as water that is collected in the impluvium that is placed in its center. From the street, a small door opens up towards an entrance hall, blocking the view in the inside of the house, where one washes his feet before entering the patio. The entrance never allowed straight access to the patio, secluding the household from the city, turning it into a nucleus. As every city celebrates a different good (in the case of Ur the moon god) most of the houses have a small chapel, always preceded by the reception room, acting as a buffer. On the opposite side we find the kitchen accompanied by a washroom and a storage room. There is little hierarchy between the rooms, being all of similar sizes and accessed through the patio. We can imagine that this typology is a result of the very dense city structure, where walls are shared and windows a rarity, putting more emphases on the patio as the main place of subsistence because of its access to air, light and water, transforming it into the main space of the household.

The new urban centers represent the complexity of the relationships in society, where the state promotes centralization and accumulation on a large scale. As productive work is not domestic business anymore, but performed in the city for the king, the size of the dwellings decreases turning them into a personal nucleus. Far away from the hectic life of the city, the houses create their proper microcosms due to its introverted scheme, putting the patio in its center.

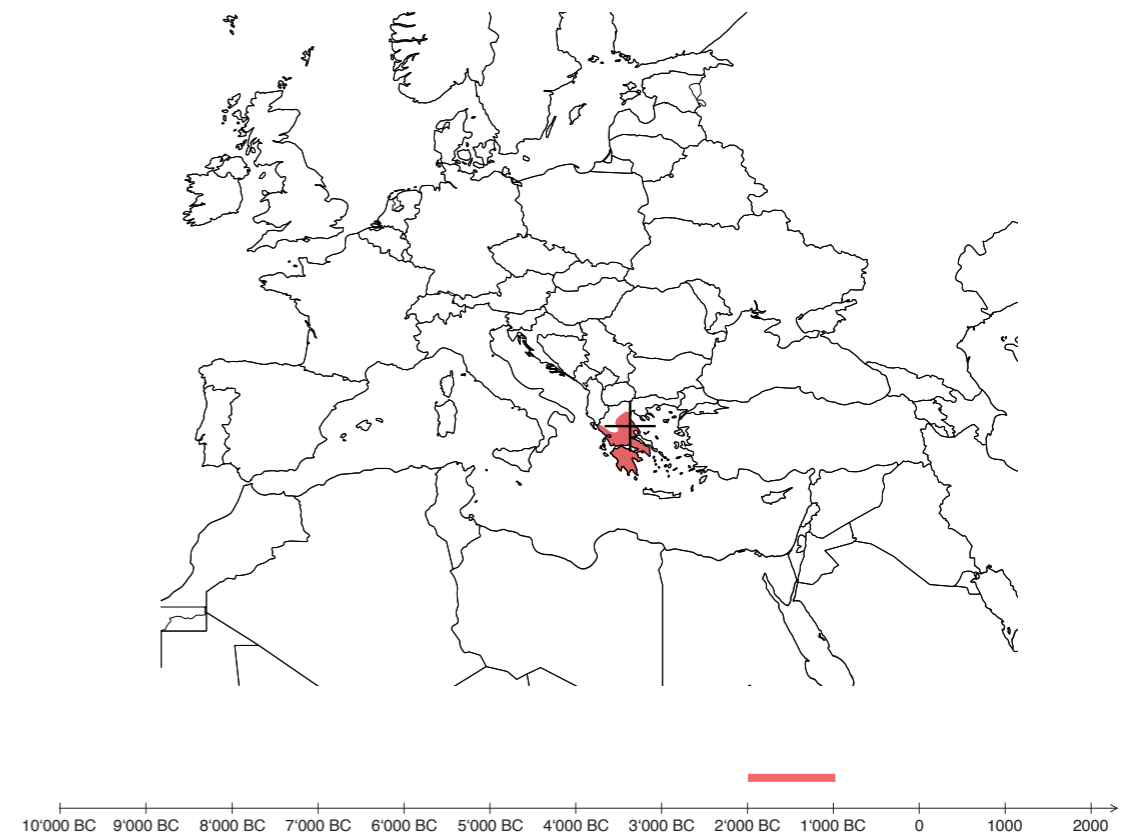


Plan - Sumerian house É
Ur

1. Patio - Tarbašu
2. Entrance
3. Reception room
4. Chapel
5. Storage
6. Kitchen
7. Washing room
8. Living room



6. Mycenaean Greece, Zagora



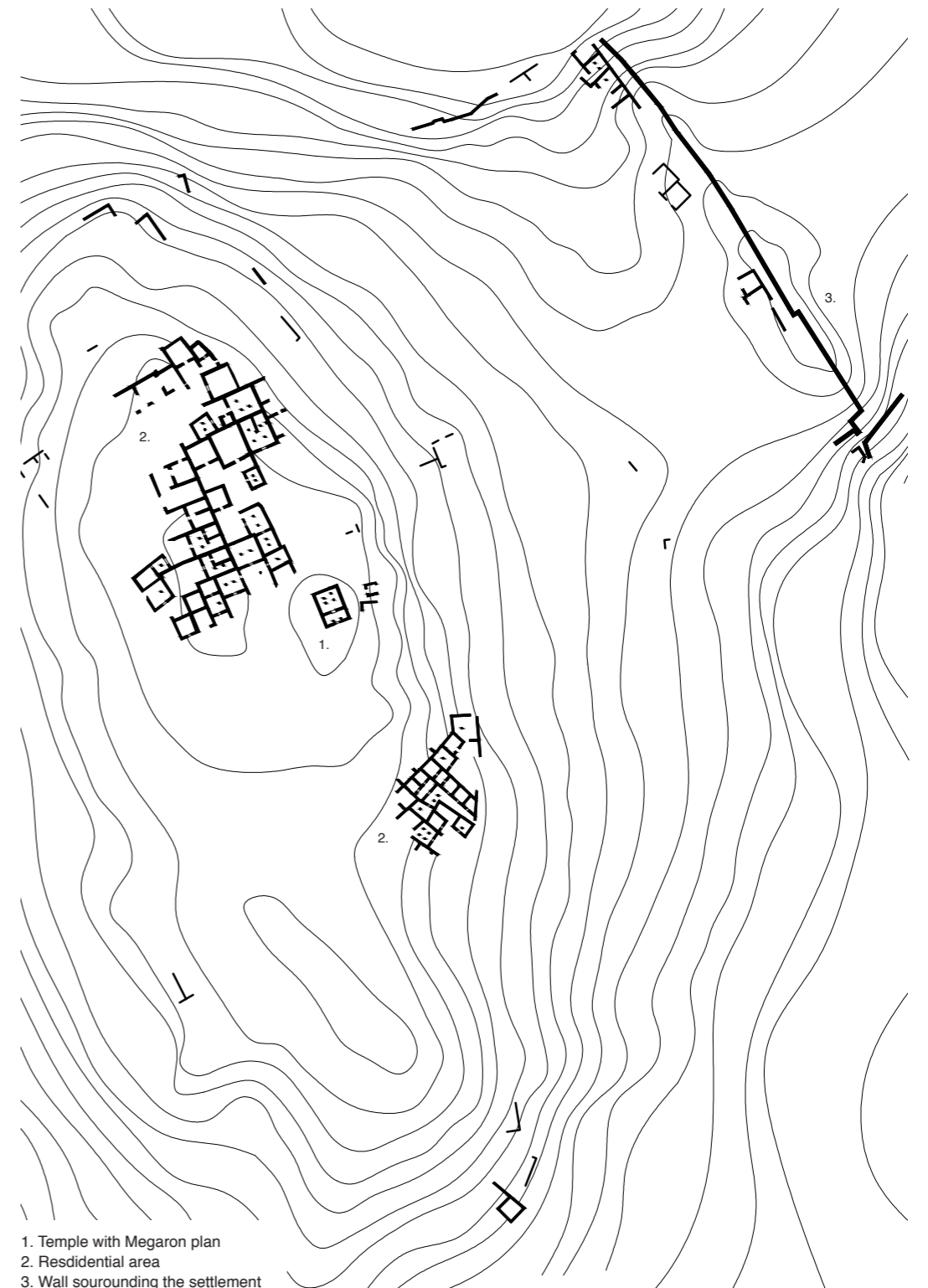
Mycenaean Greece, Zagora

Vestibule & Megaron

Considered to be the first advanced civilization of mainland Greece, the Mycenaean culture depended on big distance trading and local agriculture, being ruled by a warrior elite developing an economical system based on hierarchy. Zagora represents a typical Greek town of this period characterized by a rather loose settlement structure, built on top of a hill creating terrace like conditions, placing in its middle a temple representing the house of good. The Greek early Iron Age was a time of transformation, when relatively small settlement types emerged into networks of city-states. It is during this period that the houses of Zagora undergo a radical change due to a growing population, identifying two stages, illustrating the transformation towards a typical courtyard-centered Greek house.

The so-called megaron typology, an elongated building type preceded by a vestibule creating a transition space between the interior and the exterior, serves both as a ceremonial temple as well as a habitation. The central axis linking the megaron with the entrance gives the house a monumental symbolic character. This single room house was multifunctional, combining living room, reception area, cooking space and storage, however we can imagine that some domestic activities still took place outside.

As the City of Zagora evolves, the house endures a process of subdivision, indicating increasing complexity in social relations, transforming its linear typology into an introverted courtyard structure. The old megaron is internally subdivided into smaller spaces at the back, used as a storage and perhaps a second living room, and a larger hall in the front serving as the kitchen space with a central hearth. The new living room is moved to the extension, placed at the

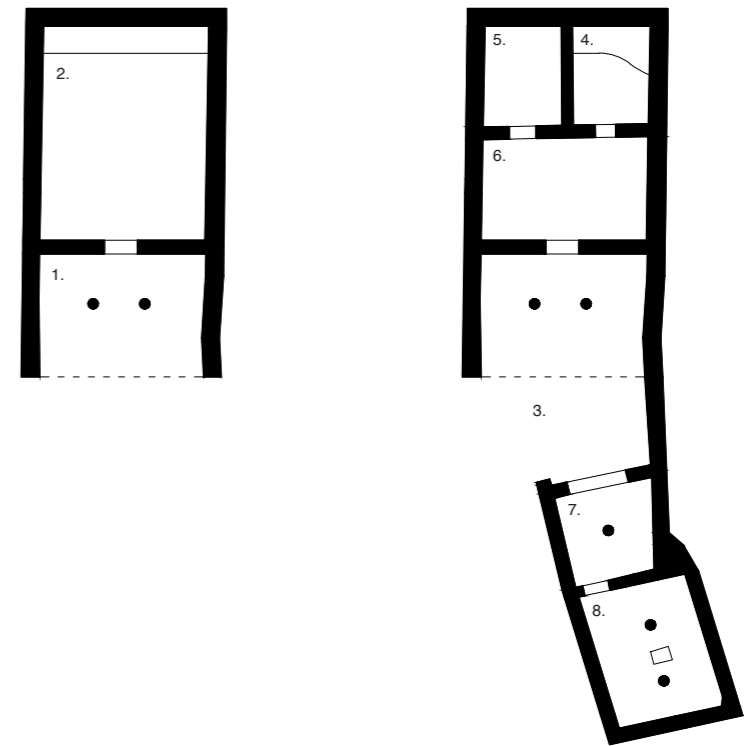


**Plan - Mycenaean settlement
Zagora**

opposite end of the house, and was accompanied by a reception room, dedicated to the male head of the house to accommodate neighbors and friends. The formation of the patio, as an architectural device, is used to control circulation and access to the house but also allows the separation of reproductive functions from the activities considered productive.

The courtyard houses of Mycenaean Greece, as suggested by Alexandra Coucouzeli in her article *“From Megaron to Oikos at Zagora”*, can be identified as the predecessor of the classical oikos. Suggesting that social pressures are directly shaping the house into a private nucleus, as the spatial organization of the house deliberately segregates male activities like hospitality from female reproductive labor, necessary for the maintenance of the household. This new won concern for privacy, making the house less accessible from the outside is the beginning of regulated contact between women and non-kin male, made possible through the formation of the patio.³²

32
Coucouzeli explains that:
“These basic similarities in spatial organization suggest that similar social pressures were acting to shape the house as a private environment – a high property of the Classical oikos – and to separate the sexes in their various activities and, more specifically, to segregate the women of the household from non-kin male guests entering the house : an important principle underlying the spatial organization of the Classical oikos.” See: Coucouzeli, Alexandra. *“From Megaron to Oikos at Zagora.” British School at Athens Studies 15*

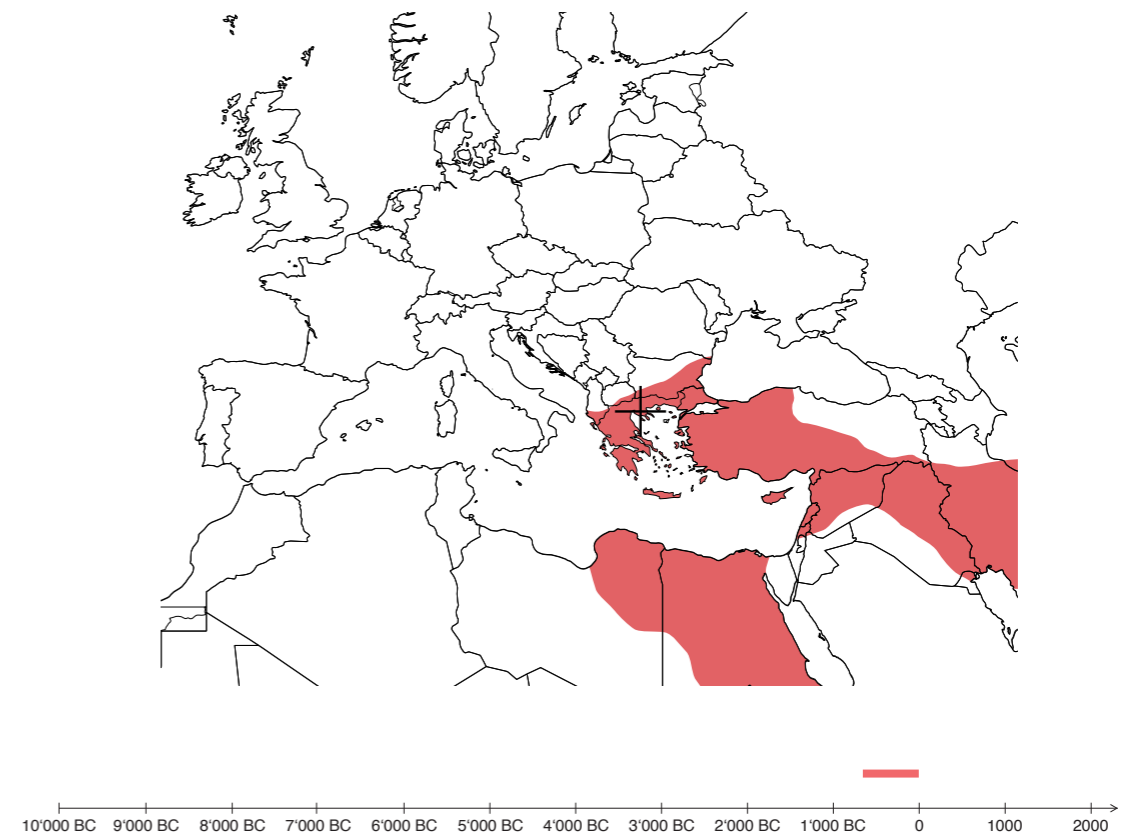


left: Plan - Megaron house phase I Zagora
right: Plan - Megaron house phase II Zagora

- 1. Vestibule (porche)
- 2. Single-room house
- 3. Patio
- 4. Kitchen
- 5. Storage
- 6. Second living room
- 7. Reception room
- 8. Main living room



7. Hellenistic Greece, Olynthus



Hellenistic Greece, Olynthus

Aule & Oikos

Many concepts of cities, still known today have been established during the Hellenistic period and shaped the way we understand and appropriate the urban landscape. The idea that the city is made of public and private spaces derives from the Greek polis, enforcing the separation between the domestic sphere and the city by devoting the space of the house to reproduction and the agora to political life.³³ Citizenship has been introduced at this point in history, authorizing only male natives of the city to be considered citizen, giving them the right to own private property.³⁴ As a citizen, the Greek spent a lot of time discussing business and politics in the Agora, they needed someone else to engage in the reproductive activities of the household, justifying slavery as a way to maintain the functioning of the household.

Olynthus is built on top of a hill according to a standardized system dividing the land into squares, referred to as gridiron, a system that spreads over the topography structuring the urban landscape. In the north we observe the prior mentioned gridiron system, being the foundation for the residential area, separated by a little valley from the south hill. It is where we can see the citadel with the Greek temple as the house of god, watching over the city. The classical Greek house, known as the oikos, seen not only as “a social unit but also an architectural entity”³⁵, constitutes the basic building block of the polis. The houses in Olynthus were essentially all identical in plan, manifesting the Greek idea of isonomia, the equality before the law.

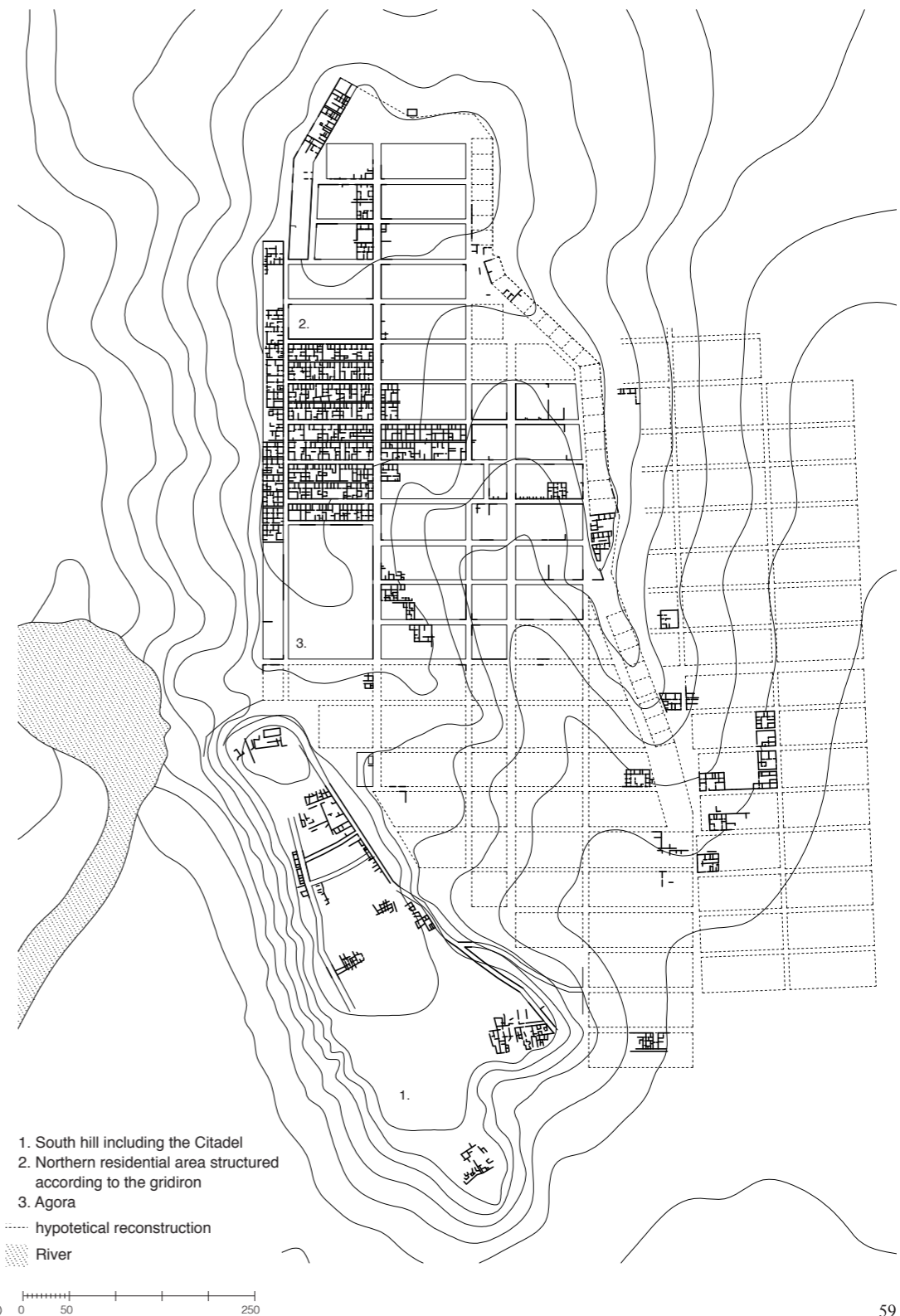
The oikos in Olynthus is divided into two functional parts: the oecus, the infrastructural entity of the household including the kitchen, dedicated to female reproductive activities, and the andron, a

33
Concept explained by Aureli during his lecture named “From Polis to Oikos” Pier Vittorio Aureli, “*The Nomos of the City*,” EPFL 2018-2019

34
“In the ancient Greek polis, both citizenship and the right to own domestic premises were based on ethnicity and gender: only men native to the city-state in which they lived could be considered citizens, which in turn gave them the right to own property.” See: Aureli and Guidici, “*Familiar Horror*.” 2016

35
Coucuzeli, Alexandra. “From Megaron to Oikos at Zagora.” *British School at Athens Studies* 15.

Plan - Greek City Olynthus



space accessible only to the male owner, used for hospitality, representation and dining through which the owner creates social relationships. The andron is placed close to the entrance as far as possible from the rest of the house, and is accompanied by an antechamber acting as a buffer. As only male born in the city could become citizen the property depends on the descendants of the house. The homeowner's main interest was the "safeguarding of the household as an integral economic property"³⁶, by preventing the contact between male members of the polis and female members of the household. A transitional space called the pastas completely isolates the oecus from the socio-economical part of the oikos, separating women from the visibility of the city.

As the classical Greek house is structured around different types of relationships - "the despotic relationship between master and slave, the conjugal relationship between husband and wife, and the parental relationship between parent and child"³⁷ - the oikos is referred to as a place of oikonomia or household management³⁸. The core of the prior being the patio, called aule, is the main element organizing the household, providing working and living spaces and therefore represents the heart of the oikonomia. In the middle of the patio, was often a basin for rainwater or a cistern providing the household with water. Underlying its introverted scheme, the aule is a place of control, hiding the activities essential for subsistence in the inside of the oikos far away from the political activities related to the polis.

There is no doubt that the oikos was inseparable from the polis, "and that the integrity of the former was the precondition of the strength of the latter."³⁹ The city depended on the well functioning of the house and therefore the state was very supportive of those building new houses by paying certain expenses and giving explicit instructions on how to build them. The classical Greek oikos is thus a paradox, being on one side a "closed and self-sufficient systems, while at the same time embedded in and interacting symbiotically with the surrounding community"⁴⁰, celebrating the individual freedom of certain by segregating the others from public life. Activities related to reproduction are the foundations of life itself and therefore of production and political action. The oikos encloses women in the spaces dedicated to reproduction to exclude them from the public eye even though without them life would not exist. Thus, it becomes clear that politics and public life are inseparable from the privatized life of reproduction. The patio becomes the main spatial feature of the house, illustrating the place of subsistence where women interact with nature but at the same time, the patio creates a buffer space separating economics and reproduction. It illustrates the separation of labor by gender in a radical way, leaving women with almost no space for personal freedom.

36
Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shérérazade Guidici, "Familiar Horror: Towards a Critique of Domestic Space". 2016

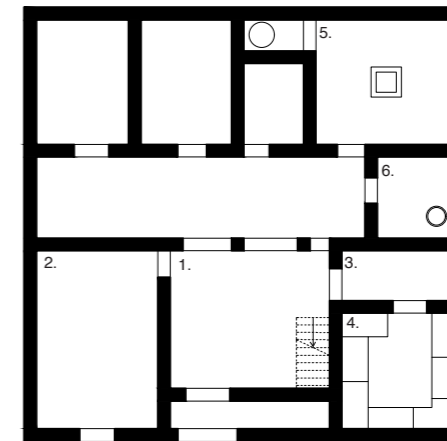
37
Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shérérazade Guidici, "Familiar Horror: Towards a Critique of Domestic Space". 2016

38
Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shérérazade Guidici, "Familiar Horror: Towards a Critique of Domestic Space". 2016

39
Coucouseli, Alexandra. "From Megaron to Oikos at Zagora." *British School at Athens Studies* 15.

40
A. Ault Bradley, "Oikos Kalos: The Environmental Logic of the Greek Urban House Forms," in *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean: Cultural and Environmental Responses*, by Angelo Andrea Di Castro, Colin A. Hope, and Bruce E. Parr, *Bulletin Antieke Beschaving*. Supplement, 2015.

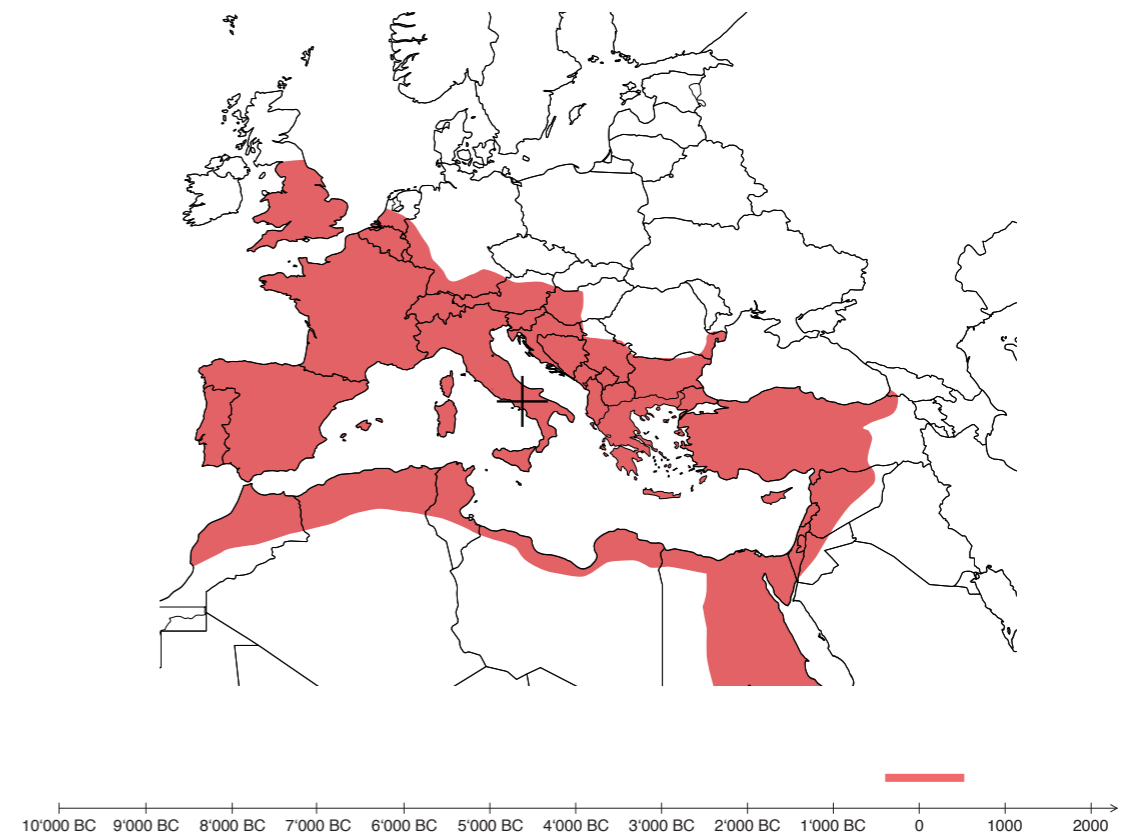
Plan - Oikos Olynthus



- 1. Patio - Aule
 - 2. Store
- andron:*
- 3. Anteroom
 - 4. Andron
- oecus:*
- 5. Kitchen
 - 6. Storage



8. Roman Empire, Pompeii



Roman Empire, Pompeii

Atrium & Domus

The Roman Empire had different emperors throughout its history, colonizing territories around the Mediterranean Sea from Europe to North Africa and the Near East. Roman cities organized around the *cardo* and the *decumanus*, allowing the control of the territory on a larger scale. As cities grew very dense, land property was an important issue, creating immense pressure on the citizens to possess as much land as possible, allowing them to create economical and social advantages over other citizens. The city of Pompeii, buried under ashes after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD, is composed of *Insulas* (housing blocks), illustrating the inequalities in land property, portrayed by the various sizes of the houses.⁴¹

The *domus* represents the center of the lives of Roman citizens, dissolving the separation between public and private space by becoming an extension of the larger cosmos of the city, where public interactions are welcomed and celebrated. The *domus* and the *oikos* are in this sense two opposites, one celebrating seclusion and the other one coexistence. Being constantly judged by the wider context of the public eye, the *domus* did not simply serve as an architectural space for reproductive activities, but certainly embodied the ideology of the family as an estate ruled by the *pater familias*. Looking at the Latin etymology, *familia* derives from *famulus* meaning slave or servant⁴², thus referring to the family as a congregation of members constituting the household, under the rule of the *dominus*. Therefore family should not solely be understood as being of biological nature but rather as “an economic and juridical construct, whose goal is to ensure both reproduction of the population and the general order of society.”⁴³

The Architecture of the Roman *domus*, as the materialization of the ideology of domesticity, is organized around a central axis

41
Shelley Hales, *The Roman House and Social Identity*. 2003

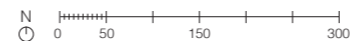
42
“WordReference,” *WordReference Random House Learner’s Dictionary of American English*
© 2018, n.d.

43
Hales, *The Roman House and Social Identity*.

Plan - Roman City Pompeii



- 1. Forum
- 2. Residential area with the city blocks
- 3. Amphitheater
- hypothetical reconstruction



emphasizing the connection of the public street with the inside of the house, creating a series of thresholds upon which the power of the pater familias is being enforced. The door of the domus was always open to the public giving the atrium a forum like symbolic force. It is also where the head of the household greeted his subalterns in the morning, by performing a ritual called salute. Occupying a visually dominant position and being slightly lifted from the ground, the tablinum celebrates the authority and power of the pater familias. It is where the head of the household spent most of his day watching over the house and engaging in economic and political business by inviting friends and clients. A small corridor gives access to the peristylum, being of more private nature serving as a little garden or an outdoor dining space, exposing the most important feature of the roman house - the fountain. The peristylum was always accompanied by the triclinicum, usually the biggest room of the house, whose space was dedicated for dinner and furnished with benches. As Romans did not put much emphasis on cooking, food being generally provided by the tabernas, the kitchen and the storage were mostly very small and pushed away from the central axis illustrating their minor importance. Due to the constant social pressure Romans valued privacy a lot and used the cubiclums to distance themselves from the public view, as a space for private activities like working, sleeping and reading. The Atrium is the main feature of the house and was therefore also the most decorated. The domus usually did not have a big storage room, due to the fact that surplus was stored in pottery vessels all over the house, certainly in the atrium to illustrate the wealth of the house to the public.

The domus and the oikos could not be more different. The oikos is the nucleus where the patio becomes a place completely shut from the exterior. Whereas the domus, radiates outwards from the atrium towards the exterior, through a series of thresholds that emphasis the power of the pater familias.

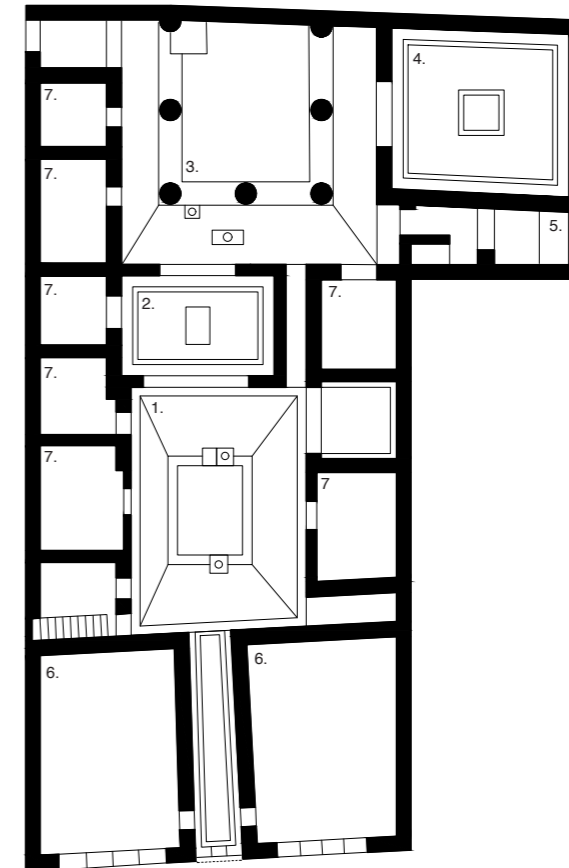
Roman society is of asymmetrical nature where the social status plays an important aspect in the architecture of the household. The architecture of the domus can be understood “as an exoskeleton through which the inhabitants encounter society”⁴⁴, where as the house is a physical construction of the families identity embodied in the pater familias, materializing the political and economic conditions under which power is realized. Therefore domestic space is not only a place of familiarity but also a “sphere driven by economic conditions that radically compromise the possibility of individual and collective autonomy.”⁴⁵

We have seen that through history the patio had different function but always played an important role in structuring the household, spatializing power relations and other social phenomena.

44
Hales, *The Roman House and Social Identity*.

45
Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shérèrazade Guidici, “*Familiar Horror: Towards a Critique of Domestic Space*”. 2016

**Plan - Roman Domus
House of The Tragic Poet
Pompeii**



- 1. Patio - Atrium
- 2. Tablinium
- 3. Peristyle
- 4. Triclinicum
- 5. Kitchen
- 6. Tabernas
- 7. Cubiculum



Conclusion

The Personal is Political⁴⁶

“Women are not one particular group of human beings among others; they are those who in every time and an every society, have produced life on this planet and on whose work, therefore, all other activities depend.”

- Maria Mies -

Architecture has been a means of organizing societies throughout history, a technology for settling individuals in specific sites, at precise moments, following specific forms. As such, it has spatialized systems of hierarchy and encouraged subaltern relationships to be formed, through more or less intentional practices of spatial segmentation. Architecture has historically been employed as an apparatus for naturalizing some of the most frightening power relations in our societies, making them a part of both our psychic mechanisms and our collective unconscious, the personal and the cultural. Architecture and certainly the patio are thus an index of political actions. It accustoms society, by physically translating structures of power into environments that we experience everyday with our bodies, and hence tend to perceive as natural, ahistorical, depoliticized. “The personal is political” is an effort to open up the discussion of the domestic struggles to the public, illustrating that society is caught in a multifaceted tangle of socio-political conflicts, which permeate the smallest units of our built environment. Private-domestic life is reduced to biology, not only out of cultural ignorance and bias, but because of fundamental material benefits that patriarchy (and later capitalism) has been keen to accumulate and appropriate from the artificial naturalization of domestication.

46

“The personal is political” is a slogan used by feminists in the late 1960s. It underlines the fact that the private struggles are a result of larger social and political entities and criticizes mainly the nuclear family as a social body, transforming all women into housewives.

Accumulation

In hunter-gatherer communities the ideology of storing food and saving it for later did not exist, meaning that everything produced and caught was soon or immediately consumed, making the producer also the consumer of his/her own work.

Progressively, humans started to systematically plant seeds and cultivate the land, through the utilization of hoe culture and herd animals. This so-called Agricultural Revolution⁴⁷ was enacted by tribal communities who settled increasingly in order to observe the natural processes. This eventually resulted in a surplus production that had to be stored safely somewhere. This was a key transition moment, as elucidated by Lewis Mumford: “With storage came continuity as well as a surplus to draw on in lean seasons. The safe setting aside of unconsumed seeds for next years sowing was the first step towards capital accumulation.”⁴⁸

In architectural terms, this transition moment is easily noted. The accumulated wealth was stored in the house, in a newly invented specialized room that is both secured and secluded from the outside — the patio. The basic moment of accumulation is the appropriation of the natural world. The patio encloses an open space, and thus symbolizes and enacts the appropriation of land as “private” property. Then, by enclosing the activities of production within the patio, the household becomes an economic entity, accumulating not only material things (natural resources), but also labor force and, more specifically, women’s labor and their reproductive bodies. The patio limits the movement of women due to the invention and the introduction of machinery. As explained by Wengrow: “The channeling of female labor into more intensive, antisocial work environments and the introduction of machinery which constrained movement and expression occurred as part of a general drive towards specialization, standardization and increased output in the economy of the Near East.”⁴⁹ Accumulation functions precisely through this fundamental act of dispossession and expropriation of freedom.⁵⁰ This is the hidden secret behind the concept of “domestic.”

As the prehistoric village turned into a center for manufacture and interregional trading, surplus had to be stored and managed by a centralized local administration. Those administrative buildings developed out of houses representing temples – the room for treasures, managed by the so-called household-priests. The members of the community depended on those communal temples in times of scarcity, when their own household could not assure for the future. The temple

47
Term used by Gordon Childe to explain the transition from gather-hunter societies to mainly sedentary cultures depending on local agriculture. See: Gordon, “*The Urban Revolution*.”

48
Mumford Lewis, “*The City in History*.”

49
Wengrow David, “*The Changing Face of Clay*.”

50
Nancy Fraser in her article “Behind Marx’s Hidden Abode” quotes: “accumulation proceeds via exploitation” See: Nancy Fraser, “*Behind Marx’s Hidden Abode*,” *New Left Review*, 2014. Page 60

51
Several historical sources suggest that the plough was an analogy to the male reproductive organ. Maria Mies explains that: “The penis is the tool, the plough, the thing with which man works upon women. [...] But these analogies of penis and plough, seed and semen, field and women are not only linguistic expressions of an instrumental object-relation of men to nature and women, they also indicate that this object-relation is already characterized by dominance. Women are already defined as part of the physical conditions of (male) production.” See: Mies, “*Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale*.” Page 57

52
Murray Bookchin and Janet Biehl, “The Murray Bookchin Reader.” (London ; Washington: Cassell, 1997).

53
Fraser, Nancy “*Behind Marx’s Hidden Abode*.”

54
Fraser, Nancy “*Behind Marx’s Hidden Abode*.”

55
Mumford Lewis, “*The City in History*.”

is therefore nothing else than the community’s storage room ruled by the ultimate father-figure, God.

With the affirmation of the city as a dominant form of urbanization, which Gordon Childe refers to as the Urban Revolution, comes the intensification of agriculture as a result of new large-scale irrigation systems and the invention of the plough⁵¹. Where women once performed hoe culture, massive infrastructures were now managing the territory, mobilizing huge amounts of manpower. This radical shift in scale was also linked to the development of long-distance trading and the construction of roads, canals and harbors, turning the cities into artifacts of administration, ruled and controlled by an elite class. This control was established through the regularization of taxes, leaving the peasants with little other than their labor power to sell. In the words of Murray Bookchin: “The ancient temple corporation, actually a religious legitimation of tribal collectivity and public control of land, seems to have been the most likely source of the Near Eastern state.”⁵² Religion, therefore, was a way to justify the collection of surplus by dispossessing the people of their ability to self-regulate. The surplus and treasuries received through taxes, corvée labor and offerings were used to build massive temple complexes to store and represent the value and power of the King, the state’s father.

Through this analysis we understand that “accumulation proceeds via exploitation.”⁵³ In her article “*Behind Marx’s Hidden Abode*” Nancy Fraser explains that behind exploitation lies society’s appropriation of nature — by using it as “both as a source of inputs to production, and as a sink to absorb the latter’s waste”⁵⁴ — and women — using their “nature” for the reproduction of life. In this context, the patio becomes an analogy of exploitation of nature and women, enclosing biological reproductive work in a cultural surrounding.

As cities became wealthier and larger, humans became their own worst enemies. Like an economical parasite, war became a political game, ending in either accumulation or total destruction. Lewis Mumford explains: “As soon as war had become one of the reasons for the city’s own wealth and power made it a natural target. The presence of thriving cities gave collective aggression a visible object that had never beckoned before: the city itself, with its growing accumulation of tools and mechanical equipment, its hoards of gold, silver, and jewels, heaped in palace and temple, its well filled granaries and storehouses not least, perhaps, its surplus women.”⁵⁵ The wall becomes the most important architectural feature of the city, enclosing its economic wealth, the same way the patio encloses the subsistence necessary for daily life inside its walls.

Even today's debates on the separation of church and state date back to this primordial link between the two institutions. As Murray Bookchin notes, "[...]despite the increasing secularization of the state, notably in Greece and Rome, it never completely lost its religious trapping and its function as the custodian of the collectivistic community [...] The traditional head of state, be he a lord or a king, always remained the father of his people, weather by divine right or as a divinity in his own right."⁵⁶ The state was built upon patriarchal hierarchies, whereby the king was described as the father of his people. This ideology reflected back onto the smaller unit of the house, represented by the pater familias, whose main goal was to safeguard the house in its economical integrity. An ideology that is not so remote, if one considers, for example, the resuscitation of the "family wage" during Franklin Roosevelt's 1930's New Deal, a policy that assumed the husband was the family's primary wage-earner and the wife ran the home.

We have seen that accumulation proceeds by expropriation, and that the patio is a place of exploitation par excellence. But I would like to conclude with a counter-reading. If the patio is a place where women, children, slaves and nature are instrumentalized for profit, is it possible to re-frame this space as a locus of emancipation? Can a secluded enclosure become a place of openness and solidarity?

Production / Reproduction

Looking back at the roots of the exploitive relationship that established the division of labor, we have seen that the members of early communities differentiated activities according to age and gender but maintained egalitarian roles: "In early organic societies these roles do not seem to have been structured along hierarchical lines; nor do they seem to have involved the domination of human by human."⁵⁷ Therefor we understand that the division of labor has not always been translated as hierarchy.

The interaction between human beings and nature is the precondition of all life. In order for humans to be productive, they need to interact with nature in a reciprocal manner. In this "exchange of matter"⁵⁸, humans (who are themselves part of the natural world) see themselves confronted with their own bodily nature. Women experience their own body as being productive and can thus appropriate

56
Bookchin and Biehl, "The Murray Bookchin Reader."

57
Bookchin and Biehl, "The Murray Bookchin Reader."

58
Exchange of matter (Stoffwechsel) is a word used by Marx (Capital, Vol. I : 179) to explain the exchange between human beings and nature, that constitutes the foundation of labor process through "the appropriation of natural substances for human requirements." See: Mies, "Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale."

59
Mies Maria, "Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale."

60
Mies Maria, "Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale."

61
"Even among existing hunters and gatherers, women provided up to 80 per cent of the daily food, whereas men contribute only a small portion by hunting." (Lee and de Vore, 1976, quoted by Fisher, 1979 : 48) See: Mies Maria, "Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale."

62
Mumford Lewis, "The City in History."

their own nature, through childbearing and feeding. Men, who cannot experience their whole body as productive, have to use their hands and head as an extension to create tools in order to be productive, leading us to the fact that, "without tools man is no Man."⁵⁹ Hence work becomes superior to labor. In her book "Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the international division of labour", Maria Mies mentions that "[...] women appropriated their own nature, their own capacity to give birth and to produce milk in the same way as men appropriated their own bodily nature, in the sense that their hands and head etc., acquire skills through work and reflection to make and handle tools. In this sense, the activity of women in bearing and rearing children has to be understood as work."⁶⁰

Beyond the fact that women's bodies are productive in themselves, they are also the first ones to establish a productive relationship with surrounding nature, by not only consuming what grows in nature but by making things grow. The Agricultural Revolution is attributed to women, who engaged in planting the first seeds and invented the first tools necessary for the production of food. It was therefore female labor, which made the production of surplus possible.⁶¹ Women were also the producers of the first jars, pots and pottery vessels that allowed the storing of food and attained central position in the community by the simple fact that they provided daily subsistence. The patio can thus be considered "natural" in the sense that it encloses the most important things necessary for survival of human beings but it also encloses reproductive activities, which are (by man) defined as nature. Providing the house with light and air, the patio becomes a place where women can reconnect with nature through her own bodily nature, turning it into the most fundamental space of the household, upon which all other activities depend.

On the contrary to its natural traits, the patio also illustrates a place of production and technology. It is where women engage in pottery by producing containers, vessels and clay pots. Lewis Mumford illustrates the technological importance of the production of those jars and pots produced by women by saying that: "It was in permanent containers that Neolithic inventions outshone all earlier cultures: so well that we are still using many of their methods today."⁶² The production of the containers allowed women to create an economic realm apart from that of men. It is by producing the containers and vessels necessary for life that she empowers herself, by creating her own art. Containers are a representation of female labor and her actions towards the reproduction of life through technology. The curves of the vessels as explained by Wengrow: "are emphasizing those aspects of

the female body associated with reproduction.”⁶³ The patio becomes a place of technology allowing women to emancipate through the creation of pottery representing the female body and her power to reproduce.

Under women’s dominance, the patio is first of all a shell, a place of shelter for the family and children. Women are the creators of the first social relationships. In this precise context Maria Mies explains: “Women’s object-relation to nature was not only a productive one, it was also, right from the beginning, social production. In contrast to men, who could gather and hunt only for themselves, women had to share their products at least with their small children. This means their specific object-relation to nature, [...] made them also the inventors of the first social relations, the relations between mother and children.”⁶⁴ The patio symbolizes security, protection, and enclosure but is first of all a “nest for the care and nurture of the young.”⁶⁵ The patio as well as the containers (which are a female invention) are nothing else than wombs, enclosing and protecting what is most precious in life by making nature grow.

Women are not owner of nature or of their body, but are in a constant interaction, creating a reciprocal relationship, depending on cooperation.⁶⁶ This coexistence is made possible in the patio where nature, women and animal cohabite, turning closeness into openness by making it the ultimate place of coexistence. This new place of openness is represented by the Natufian hut, the shelters in Çatalhöyük and the Roman atrium. It is precisely through their extroverted scheme, that these typologies allow women to cooperate with nature, to emancipate and to unity in one place.

Patio

The patio represents a place of extreme opposites:

inside – outside
private – public
enclosure – openness
expropriation – emancipation
non-human – human
unnatural – natural
masculine – feminine

63
Wengrow David, “*The Changing Face of Clay.*”

64
Mies Maria, “*Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale.*”

65
Mumford Lewis, “*The City in History.*”

66
Maria Mies explains that women are not owner of their own bodies or of earth, but they co-operate with their bodies and with earth. “man on the other hand “mediate through arms constituting a relationship of dominance.” See : Mies Maria, “*Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale.*” p.56 /62

The patio is the locus of domesticity, best materialized by the Roman domus. The atrium is not only controlled by the pater familias, who is the embodiment of patriarchy, but also by the public through a series of thresholds that allow the inversion of the introverted image of the patio. Women are secluded and enclosed in the walls of the patio but it is despite the fact of being expropriated by the predatory mode of appropriation that they can emancipate through the technology of containers. Those containers are exposed in the atrium, where surplus is stored in the pottery produced by women, illustrating their importance in the reproduction of the household. The containers are a representation of the female body, explaining why the patio is a place of femininity. By enclosing and giving shelter it protects what is most important in the survival of humans but also makes life grow. Women reunite in the patio with nature even though they are being expropriated because of their nature. The atrium represents the idea of private property. And by opening it up to the public eye, the patio becomes part of bigger socio-economic policies. Following Nancy Fraser, one could read the patio as the “background condition of possibility” that makes this political structure possible. It is by the simple act of framing that architecture reveals how the unnatural has been naturalized.

It is with the patio that it all began...

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fig.2
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1. Natufian culture, Nahal Oren

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4. Ubaid / Uruk culture, Habuba Kabira

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fig.2

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7. Hellenistic Greece, Olynthus

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