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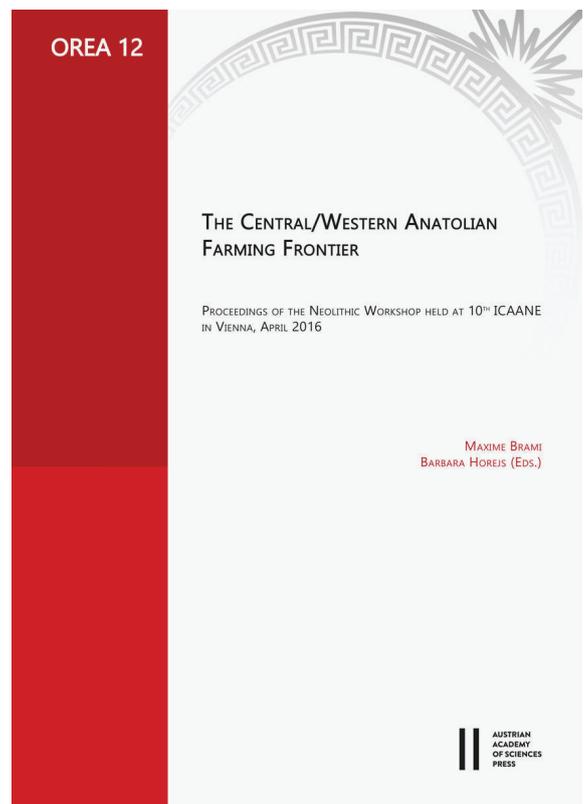
Review of Maxime Brami and Barbara Horejs (eds.), 2019. *The Central/ Western Anatolian farming frontier. Proceedings of the Neolithic Workshop held at the 10th ICAANE in Vienna, April 2016*. Oriental and European Archaeology 12. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press. ISBN: 978-3-7001-8415-7. € 149,-.

The reviewed volume is dedicated to the spread of the Neolithic innovation-cluster. Modern research often refers to these innovations as Neolithic package(s), *i.e.* a bundle of components that may change during its spread. Among the novelties of the Neolithic are new technologies (*e.g.* house-building, weaving, ceramics, axes, ground stone, kiln building, copper working), economic strategies (*e.g.* agriculture, animal husbandry, craft specialisation), social habits/ ideologies (*e.g.* figurines, communal building) and lifestyles (*e.g.* sedentism or villages). Most of these elements have long traditions in hunter/ gatherer-societies, but their recombination has a dramatic effect: Wherever it is adopted the Neolithic results in a way of life that differs drastically from that of hunter/ gatherers and also leaves societies little choice of stepping back.

While the diffusion of the Neolithization from the Fertile Crescent to the neighbouring regions is among the most important shifts in human history and can barely be underestimated, the spread of the Neolithic is still poorly understood in many key areas. Due to the fragmentary record in the majority of regions, the basic question debated even today is the arrival of the Neolithic way of life and on a larger scale the reconstruction of the diffusion of the Neolithic technologies.

Major breaks within a relatively fast diffusion can still be seen in the North European Plain, the Carpathian Basin, the southern Levant and Western/ Central Anatolia. The volume reviewed here, edited by Maxime Baily and Barbara Horejs (in the following “editors”), presents new data from the last region. The papers presented were part of the International Conference of the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (ICAANE) in Vienna in April 2016. As such its publication in 2019 in the series Oriental and European Archaeology published by the OREA (Institute for Oriental and European Archaeology, Vienna) is a welcome addition to future discussions. The book is a mixture of case-studies and super-regional perspectives. (The summary of one of the editors that “archaeological perspectives dominate with one exception (T. Carter)” (30) is rather surprisingly, since Tristan Carter’s paper is certainly also pure archaeology). Part of the papers were presented in Vienna, while others were added subsequently. All papers were anonymously peer-reviewed and in a second step accepted by the Publication Committee of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. This as well as the price raise the expectancy for a highly polished and elaborate volume.

The book begins with the foreword by the series editor, who is also one of the editors of the volume,



Barbara Horejs (“Preface by the Series Editor”, 9-10), who presents a short overview of the articles. Stephen Shennan presents another introduction, which is slightly longer, but offers the same information as the previous one (“Introduction”, 11-13), it ends with a large map presented on two pages on which a selection of sites is shown. The map ranges from the Aegean to Mesopotamia and includes all sites mentioned in the text as well as the “farming frontier” that is mentioned in the title. The sites themselves do not follow any system except for their naming in one of the articles in the book. A third and final introduction is finally given by Maxime N. Brami, the other editor of the book (“Anatolia: From the Origin of Agriculture ... to the Spread of Neolithic Economies”, 17-43). It tackles the classical work of Ammerman/ Cavalli-Sforza (1971) and presents the main topic of the book in more detail than the previous two introductions, namely then “when”, “how,” and “who” of the introduction of farming into Central/ Western Anatolia: When did it happen, how did it happen, and who was responsible. Part of the paper is spent by noting that similar or same names and phases may refer to different chronological periods and economic stages, which is true for most of Eurasia. The style is reminiscent of an oral presentation, and the broadly painted panorama of what is ahead can be, out of necessity, neither deep nor detailed. With reference to Trevor Watkins’ the Neolithic is designated as a ‘portable and artificial ecosystem’ (25), and the author wonders whether more than one Neolithic package moved from the core area. There are some points worth considering, such as the proposal of focussing on the settlement intensity or the emphasis of the existence of multiple packages. Yet the unpacking and re-packing of

the latter should be further considered with reference to the topic of the volume. The paper does present a thorough review of current research, but many of the problems referred to result from the consequent top-down approach and the lack of discussion of contexts and site-specific data. Brami considers, for instance, whether imports of Neolithic artefacts make a site Neolithic or not, as well as, the exact position of the titular farming frontier, and the question of whether sedentism preceded agriculture is also not new.

In the second part Brami lifts the discourse to a super-regional level, where models of Neolithization are discussed, among them the usual suspects, like climate change (8.2 ka event), but also new ideas from European prehistory as the necessity that some farming societies had to be on the move. The chapter ends with another short overview of the papers rather abruptly and concludes with an extensive bibliography. This leads to the main part of the book wherein different papers are presented.

Ofer Bar-Yosef makes the start and asks the question “When and Why Holocene Levantine Farmers moved Westwards?” (46-68). After a clarification of his study area, his narrative begins in the Upper Palaeolithic, 21,000 BC, (48) with the earliest evidence of crop domestication. Bar-Yosef’s approach classifies different periods of the Neolithization within neoevolutionary stages. For him, the PPNA is a “chiefdom” and thereby a crucial moment, “which was the start of the Neolithic Revolution” and the PPNB represents an additional evolutionary development (48). Bar-Yosef stresses the important impulses given to the Neolithization process from the southern Levant and elaborately discusses current climate deterministic models. The last parts of his paper are especially interesting as they finish with the arrival of farmers in Central Anatolia. Bar-Yosef stresses that a complete socio-economic system is transferred and evolves into Big Man societies.

Douglas Baird’s paper (“A Phantom Frontier and the Wild West? A View from the Neolithic of Central Anatolia”, 69-83) is partly a summary of several papers co-authored by D. Baird, one of them unpublished, which are repeatedly cited without specific pages. This part would have profited from better editing, as in its current form it is difficult to assert the author’s claims. This, in turn makes his thought-provoking key messages difficult to follow (74-76). The rest of the paper deals with other sites. Baird proposes local roots in the Central Anatolian Neolithic based on “solid evidence of a later Aceramic Neolithic” at Hacilar (77). Founded on this line of thought, it is no surprise that the “agricultural frontier” in the title of this book is in Baird’s own words a “phantom frontier” (77).

The next contribution is written by Tristan Carter (“The Significance of an Insular Aegean Mesolithic to Processes of Neolithisation”, 85-101). The highly interesting paper offers a well-illustrated overview of Mesolithic maritime networks and discusses their impact on the spread of information and the Neolithic way of life. While the paper was thoroughly enjoyed

by the reviewer, the connection to the topic of the reviewed volume as well as its place within a longer argument is not well defined. The paper presents evidence for an information substructure that preceded the Neolithization. Yet, it is not clear how this affected the neolithization process in general and especially in Western and Central Anatolia, even if other papers (e.g. Özbal/ Gerritsen and Çilingiroğlu in this volume) come to similar conclusions. Eva Rosenstock’s article (“Dot by Dot: Phase-mapping the Central/ Western Anatolian Farming Threshold”, 104-126) compares maps of the Neolithization and points out how the lack of detailed maps presenting exact sites and classifying the quality of information has led to misconceptions and misunderstandings. Rosenstock also presents a very useful table of sites in which she qualifies dates for known sites in Anatolia (118-121). The next paper (“Çatalhöyük and the Emergence of the Late Neolithic Network in the Western Part of the Anatolian Peninsula”, 127-142) is written by Arcadius Marciniak and focusses on the famous site in the title. After the presentation of excavation data, the author describes what he calls “economic and social foundations” of the Late Neolithic at Çatalhöyük (132f.): New breeding and herding strategies for cattle are named foremost among these, as well as over time a successively shrinking catchment area for wood extraction. On the social side of the arguments, Marciniak sees a shift from communal organisation to kin-based organisation, or, to be more precise, the emergence of the “self-sufficient household”. This is brought forward as the explanation for more intensive animal and plant exploitation, among them milking, which would have resulted in the “exploration of new ecological niches” and the alteration of the environment of the settlement. Craft specialisation would have finally emerged within this new world. This new socio-economic bundle would then spread to the west. Marciniak’s well-presented narrative of what he calls the “second Neolithic transition” (138) ends with Çatalhöyük, thereby stressing the importance of its imagery and its central role for the reinvention and further spread of the Neolithic.

Mehmet Özdoğan’s contribution follows next (“An Alternative Look at the Neolithisation Process of Western Anatolia: From an Old Periphery to a New Core”, 143-158). He points out the difficulty of finding and excavating Mesolithic sites that are essential for understanding many problems of the discourse (145). The paper’s main thesis is based on two arguments, namely the frequent establishment of Neolithic sites on virgin soil, and further the nonexistence of any technological relation with Mesolithic lithic assemblages (146). Özdoğan presents a model of large-scale expansion from the Fertile Crescent into southern central Anatolia and Cyprus before 7,200 BC and then in a second step to the west into Western Anatolia, the coastal parts of Greece and southern Thrace as well as Crete. Thereafter Özdoğan discusses the mode of this expansion and brings forward maritime travels,

going back to Childe's initial idea that the Anatolian highland with its cold winters would be unsuitable for the expansion of the Neolithic. In the case of the Eastern Mediterranean, such links can be traced via direct connections visible in contemporary Neolithic packages, but for the Anatolian plateau similar evidence is still missing (149). He concludes with a map highlighting ten zones (A1-3, B1-2, C1-2, D, E and F) and suggests that the move of two Neolithic packages, which during their spread created new cores for further diffusion, can help to explain the chronological differences between these zones. His conclusion is careful and proposes that future research should focus on the different pottery traditions (monochrome vs. painted) and their association with lithic traditions.

Barbara Horejs presents new data from Çukuriçi Höyük ("Migrating and Creating Social Memories: On the Arrival and Adaptation of the Neolithic in Aegean Anatolia", 159-180). It is contextualised within the Aegean and Western Anatolia. Horejs frequently draws attention to "longue durée connectivity" (e.g. 159, 161, 166, 169) culminating in a model in which five elements, namely "adapting innovations/ starting new traditions", "transferred and transformed narratives", "shaping local identities", "migrating people/ migrating memories" and "longue durée impact", are singled out to shape a "set of memories. Skills, ideas, beliefs, practices, world-views" (169, Fig. 7). The model suffers from the imprecise use of terminology often resulting in redundancies (e.g. "innovations and technologies" 171; "know-how, experience and knowledge", 169), and the lack of reflection upon the underlying theoretical background as it was devised by Maurice Halbwachs (1925, 1985), who is paradoxically not cited even though a whole paragraph and a long footnote is used to elaborate the concept of "Creating Social Memories" (170). It is, nevertheless, a somewhat original contribution to describe what Horejs calls the "contradictory accumulation of different skills, ideas, beliefs, practices, technologies and world-views" (171).

Rana Özbal and Fokke Gerritsen discuss a long-term Six-Stage Model for the spread of Neolithic culture into northwestern Anatolia ("Farmer-Forager Interactions in the Neolithisation of Northwest Anatolia: Reassessing the Evidence", 181-210). The idea is vividly conveyed by long-distance travels of Epipalaeolithic and Mesolithic groups, from which, according to the authors, it can be concluded that "networks of interaction between Central and Northwest Anatolia may have long predated the spread of agriculture" (184; Stage 1 "Epipalaeolithic and/ or Mesolithic Groups in Northwest Anatolia"). Based on plausible evidence, they can show that at the end of their Stage 2 ("Aceramic Neolithic sites in Northwest Anatolia"), residences of small groups precede the larger-scale migration that followed. This borderland scouting stopped at Thrace, but whether the reasons are ecological or cultural remains unclear for the moment. In Stage 3 ("Pioneering Pre-Fikirtepe Neolithic

Communities") they can segregate single elements that will be essential for the further spread of the Neolithic into the Balkans and Central Europe. Stage 4 is dedicated to the Fikirtepe culture ("Established Neolithic Communities in Northwest Anatolia: The Fikirtepe phase") and offers a detailed look at architecture, settlement organisation, subsistence and burials. Stages 5 ("Continuity and Change in the Early Chalcolithic Period") and 6 ("Middle Chalcolithic Period and Beyond") are relatively short and lead into a different discourse that is beyond the scope of this volume. The paper ends with a consideration of models of farmer-forager interaction mainly from the European discourse and rightly points out the need for more data in the Stages 1-2.

Çiler Çilingiroğlu gives an overview on house building plans in the late 7th/ early 6th millennia BC ("Circular, Oval and Rectilinear: A Note on Building Plan Variability at Neolithic Sites in Central-West Anatolia", 211-222). The paper is clearly structured, and a handy overview is given in Table 1. After a careful discussion Çilingiroğlu challenges the idea that round buildings are the result of Cypriote or Levantine impulses and instead manages to accentuate local origins going back to the Epipalaeolithic (218).

Kostas Kotsakis ("Neolithic goes West: Concepts and Models on the Neolithisation of the Aegean", 223-240) presents a criticism of what he calls "formal models" (225). This reviewer had issues following Kotsakis in his rampant argument; while Kotsakis rightly claims that formal models have difficulties of describing human culture, this criticism is mostly based on the implicit equation of human culture with archaeological culture and thus simplifying the discourse for the sake of criticism. Other parts of this paper result in astute remarks on the lack of agency and the general passive nature of recipients.

Jean Guilaine finishes the volume with a paper translated by one of the editors ("The Neolithisation of Europe: An Arrhythmic Process", 241-250). He presents a short, general overview of the spread of the Neolithic to the West. Lags within this diffusion are the result of eight factors: A. Demography: loss of momentum [...]; B. Procurement networks: decline in the exchange of materials maintaining [...] a cultural superstructure [...]; C. Native resistance: opposition of local Mesolithic cultures [...]; D. Environment: change in environment [...]; E. Climatic conditions: climatic crises or mini-crisis [...]; F. Identity: deliberate choice by the migrants to break with ancestral practices [...]; G. Ideology: gradual loss in historical 'memory' of migrant groups [...]; and H. Society: settlement dislocation linked to [...] crises [...]. Guilaine admits that this list is not exhaustive and continues to browse over the major 'halts' of the Neolithisation in Central/ Western Anatolia, the southern Levant/ Egypt, Western Greece/ the Western Mediterranean, the Middle Danube/ Central Europe and the North European Plain. Thereafter, the book finishes with a useful index (251-257).

The volume presents a good variety of papers, slightly overbalanced in the number of introductions. It would have profited from more editorial polish. The role of some papers within the book does not become clear and they feel disjointed. General overviews are prevalent in the volume, but do not reflect on each other; readers will have to decide for themselves how the models, arguments and counter-arguments presented by Brami, Bar-Yosef, Özdoğan, Kotsakis and Guilaine mirror the new data provided in the case studies (or conflict with them). There is well-founded criticism scattered in the volume and the data provided, for instance, by Rosenstock, Özbal and Gerritsen and Çilingiroğlu will necessitate rethinking the greater narratives. The same is true for the case studies from the sites of Barcın (Özbal/ Gerritsen), Boncuklu (Baird), Çatalhöyük (Marciniak) and Çukuriçi (Horejs), which provide good summaries of current research projects that would have benefitted from more intensive inclusion in the debates. These difficulties are, of course, inherent in all conference volumes, and there are also options to circumvent them, like summary chapters, cross-references between the papers or editorial interludes. Only the papers of the editors make use of a few cross-references to other papers.

The lack of contextualising information makes the volume hard to digest even for those archaeologists who have specialised in the topic and region. This might also have clarified some very strongly presented opinions and seemingly very clear positions in the volume. D. Baird's strong argument, for instance, would offer a great lever for one of the summaries. At least Kotsakis' severe criticism of one of the other contributors of this volume (namely Mehmet Özdoğan) would also have been an excellent opportunity for further discussion in this volume. Furthermore, it would be worthwhile to point out (and debate) the drastically different notions various authors have on Neolithic societies. Ofer Bar-Yosef's neo-evolutionary analogy of the PPNA with chiefdoms, for instance, conflicts with several papers that seem to assume less centralised and less stratified societies. This reviewer would also like to stress the parallels concerning subsistence (including plants used as food), technology, sedentism and even art with Upper Palaeolithic complex hunter-gatherers. Ethnographic stages have been criticized for arbitrarily selecting periods within histories of indigenous peoples and claiming them to be universal to human social evolution (*cf.* for instance also Jung's (2011) elaborate criticism of "Big Man societies", which have been constructed as a theoretical *Bindeglied*). Consequently, the dynamics and specifics of these people are ignored in favour of presenting them as surviving relics from a bygone age (*cf.* Wolf 2010). While the PPNA does feature a great number of spectacular finds, it is still a hunter-gatherer society as it is known from other places and other times, for instance in the Magdalenian and Gravettian. The main difference is that the following PPNB is unique to the Fertile Crescent.

Future contributors will have to discuss the data and come to further conclusions. The reviewed volume does offer good starting points for future work, for instance in the respective papers by both editors. It would be interesting to further elaborate on how the "contradictory" (as Horejs calls them) admixture of local elements and innovations affected the farming frontier and the further diffusion of Neolithic innovations. Is this what Özdoğan calls the formation of new centres? It would also be intriguing to have Brami reconsider his overview and contrast it with the different positions in this volume when considering the Neolithic as a "portable and artificial ecosystem" (25)?

The volume shines with a solid hard cover, very good (but few) colour pictures, and a DIN EN ISO 9706 certification for permanent archiving. This impression is slightly diminished by the sparse number of figures in several papers and minor formal shortcomings, including incomplete sentences (*e.g.* "...farming villages of the # basin such as Göbekli Tepe...", 49); spelling mistakes (161, Footnote 10 "...in the same plateau of the Calibration Curve"); a tendency in some papers to refer to specific information from longer papers without referencing the pages (*e.g.* 69-75, Footnotes 3-11, 13-14, 17-19, 23-37, 39-41 *etc.*); missing pages in literal quotations (*e.g.* 224, Footnote 7); putting important information that belongs into the main text into footnotes (*e.g.* 168, Footnotes 42-44); missing references on research by other people (*e.g.* "wave of advance model", 224, should refer to Ammermann and Cavalli-Sforza 1971, and "In this 'thick description' of Neolithic life...", 234, should at least refer to Geertz 1973); or incorrect cross-references ("Rana Özbal *et al.*" instead of Özbal and Gerritsen on pages 159; 159, Footnote 5; 160, Footnote 6). Errors in the respective bibliographies are pleasantly rare; to name a few that were met during random sample of the papers, references are in one paper put into the footnotes otherwise into a separate bibliography (12-13, Footnotes 2-4); there are online resources that were checked last time in 2016 (126); Özdoğan 2014 is not listed, but referred to within a bibliography (174); referenced literature is missing in the bibliographies (*e.g.* "Brandl in preparation", 163, Footnote 29); and there are a handful of spelling mistakes ("Sørensen" instead of Sørensen, 178) and formal errors ("Olsen, Bjørnar" instead of B. Olsen, 238).

Despite these points of criticism, the volume is an important step in the ongoing discussion on the spread of the Neolithic from its origins to the West and will doubtlessly stimulate further discussion. It will be a welcome addition for specialists and research libraries, and I would like to thank editors and contributors for their work.

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