

*Part 3*

ARCHITECTURES FOR THE LIVING



# UNLIKE COMMUNITIES: DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURAL DUALITY IN LATE PREHISTORY OF THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN

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**Abstract:** *The inequality among places of similar social nature implies disparity in configuration of social groups, at a concrete socio-historical situation. It is the case of the buildings for social practices of domestic groups. Nevertheless, if there are different architectural characteristics (technology, form, size), erroneous interpretations can be proposed, in reference to those of greater monumentality, attributing them, mechanically, an ideological nature (religious, symbolic, ceremonial) and/or a hierarchical political nature (palaces, administrative centres); besides, the existence of state and social classes only will be able to be shown by other evidences. But, firstly we need confirm their synchrony, and evaluate their domestic nature by recurrent activities (labour and consumption). An example will be presented of the Iberian Southeast.*

**Keywords:** *Domestic Spaces – Architecture – Family – Kinship – Iberian Southeast*

**Resumée:** *Au sein d'une situation socio-historique déterminée, l'inégalité entre des espaces sociaux de nature semblable implique une dissymétrie des rapports sociaux. Un exemple de ce type de processus nous est fourni par les bâtiments destinée aux pratiques sociales des groupes domestiques. D'une part, quand on remarque des différences dans les caractéristiques architecturales (technologie constructive, forme, taille), on risque d'attribuer mécaniquement une nature idéologique et/ou une nature politique aux bâtiments monumentaux; toutefois, l'existence de l'état, et des classes sociales ne pourra être démontrée que par d'autres évidences. Mais avant tout nous devons confirmer leur synchronie, et évaluer la nature domestique de ce type d'espaces sociaux (travail et consommation). L'exemple présenté fait référence au sud-est ibérien.*

**Mots clés:** *Espaces Domestiques – Architecture – Famille – Parenté – Sud-est Ibérien*

## ECONOMY AND POLITICS IN DOMESTIC UNITS

### The Production of Social Life

Production is a global reality for social reproduction, but its concretion is multiple, varying through time, history and space. The various spheres of production that we can define cannot be understood in isolation, since all are part of the same reality. Social materiality is made up of men, women and the objects they produce/ed through labour. Relationships between women, men and objects are social practices, social life (Castro *et al.* 1996). Their existence is made possible by production, through the work that socialises material things (Castro *et al.* 1998; 2002, 2003a). Since production is social and consumption is individual (Marx 1857-58:5-34), productive labour (and production politics) also exists in access to social production. Distribution will only exist in production conditions, because production is the sphere of creation of material conditions. This leads us to understand social production as being the result of the relationship between work and consumption-use.

All society (re)produces itself by means of basic production, the production of objects and the production of maintenance (Castro *et al.* 1998). Basic production is the biological production of sexual individuals, exclusively the work of women. Only overworking women can increase this production, not the division of

labour or improvement of means of labour. The production of objects provides final and transitive objects. The production of maintenance of objects increases the labour value of objects without changing their value of use, since incorporates more work without changing their original use. Social subjects' maintenance work provides the necessary care and attention to guarantee the life and conditions for socialization of women and men; it also contributes to offering added value to the vital reality of individuals.

### Labour, Consumption and Social Life

Social practices between agents and objects are established through work or consumption-use (enjoyment or suffering). Social practices always imply the labour of social subjects and/or use-consumption of social products (Castro *et al.* 1996; Castro *et al.* 2002, 2003b).

Any activity that implies the investment of time and energy in the execution of some activity for a social end (relational) is labour. Therefore, labour can be related to economic practices (production of subjects and objects) and to political-ideological practices. In any case, labour is oriented towards the (re)production of society, maintaining or seeking to transform it. The most direct results are social products (objects and subjects), obtained in their initial production or as the result of their maintenance. The presence or absence of sub-products

(refusals) indicates the different productive processes, along with their intensity and the management of sub-products generated.

Work gives social life to objects. If we put work and the other factors of the labour processes on the same level, we lose the perspective that is the work of social subjects; the only productive agent. Assuming the symmetry of these factors could lead us to value Capital as a productive agent, or to believe that the land already contains the product (Castro *et al.* 2002, 2003b).

Products either are medial or final. Final products are produced for individual consumption or social benefit. These objects can be consumed, when they are “destroyed” through the use for which they were produced in an individual and/or collective way for a long period. Products can also be medial objects if they are the basic matter or means of work, when the objective of their production is for them to be incorporated into new labour processes, whether in the obtaining of subjects or of objects, or in the maintenance tasks. In this group we find products destined for destruction-consumption during work, as well as by tools and fixed structures.

### **Labour Division, Exploitation and Reciprocity**

Social production generates the objective conditions for relationships between subjects and social objects and for the reality of work and consumption. The division of labour lays the bases for social relations, since it limits the environment of participation of various collectives in production, and because social subjects are recognised on the basis of their participation in specific tasks.

Nevertheless, the distribution of work does not in itself involve the existence of situations of exploitation between collectives. Only when appropriation (property) is imposed and leads to the asymmetry of access to products, are situations of exploitation established among collectives. And then, the division of labour is consolidated as a mechanism for reproducing exploitation. We cannot accept that the distribution of work involves social asymmetry and exploitation, since, given the sexual nature of our species and the specialization of the work involved in basic production, the consequence would be to accept the natural principle of exploitation among sexes. To approach the existing relationship between division of labour and exploitation, we must avoid the confusion between specialization and asymmetric distribution of work. Specialization can take place in conditions of symmetry in the quantity of work carried out and in the quantity of social benefits obtained. However, asymmetry in work implies that there are collectives that appropriate the work performed by others; therefore relationships of exploitation are established.

Exploitation lies in the individual appropriation of social product. Relationships of exploitation are established when a collective has the social mechanisms to guarantee

a material benefit that is not in harmony with the volume of work performed, with the consequence that material benefit proceeds from the work of another collective. That asymmetry between collectives, in terms of work performed and material benefit can be summarised in different ways (Castro *et al.* 2003b). Different forms of exploitation may be accompanied by mechanisms of domination and alienation, and have a direct expression in political and ideological forms. In comparison to situations of exploitation, societies with symmetrical relationships are those based on reciprocity and in the inexistence of coercive control over part of a group. Symmetry does not imply equality between the different parts of society, but rather a balance between the subjects.

A priority of every investigation is to differentiate between situations of reciprocity and situations of exploitation. In reciprocal social relationships there is no existence of exploitation and subjects participate in a similar way (based on their differences) in economic and/or political-ideological work. This reciprocity is not based on an equitable distribution of social benefits, but on a suitable compensation linked to the subjects’ needs and capabilities.

A highly adequate environment for the study of reciprocity or exploitation relationships, and their characteristics, is that of domestic groups. From here, we will tackle the questions relating to its definition and expression, and to how we can perform a social analysis that integrates the proposals formulated up to now.

### **Domestic Groups, Archaeology and the Fallacy of the Universality of the Family**

In definitions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the family was presented as “a basic social unit comprising people linked by marital and descent ties, with a common residence” (González 1993:322). Later, Levi-Strauss (1956:17) defined it as a social group that: 1) Have its origin in marriage. 2) Is formed by the husband, the wife and children born from marriage, although it is conceivable that other kin find their place near the nuclear group. 3) The members of the family are united by legal ties, by religious, economic or other types of rights and obligations, and by a precise network of sexual rights and prohibitions, plus a variable and diversified quantity of psychological feelings.

Archaeological interpretations respond often to socio-centric notions, presupposing universals or using selected and not archaeologically contrasted ethnographic analogies. One consequence is the abuse of a certain idea of universal family. The family norm in Christian ideologies has been the model of the nuclear family (monogamous, independent). In archaeological studies, this model is frequently projected in a universal way. Evidently, it is an essentialist position, lacking of all kinds of scientific evidence, but that we often find even in projections to the early development of the human species.

We understand the family to be one of the expressions of parental politics in certain historical situations. An expression of economic and political-ideological practices, that is neither univocal nor general, but that is extensively represented. We would agree that the concept of the family relates to a group of people linked by marriage (whatever form this might take), engaged in the procreation and care of children, and with a common residence, the domestic unit (Castro *et al.* 2003a: 94). Other social expressions can configure domestic groups, on the basis of the politics of kinship or another type of politics, and can also involve a common residence (the domestic unit) and/or be linked to the procreation and care of children. But we prefer to define these as other types of groups (matricentric groups, single parent groups, communes...). We would only speak about family when the basis of the politics of affiliation to children is marriage with a common residence, with the consequent situation of exogamy, in whatever form that may be (heterosexual or not; monogamous or not). As for the affiliation of children, we consider them to be inserted into a family when they are assigned to a marital unit, by consanguinity or by adoption.

With this definition, we can study past societies without the ballast of a universal idea of the family. Thus *family*: (a) Does not have a valid, universal form for the totality of societies, and (b) in a specific social formation there does not necessarily have to be a single family model, but there can be several coexisting forms. If we prejudge the universality of the family, “familism” values will easily be projected. And we can quickly fall into the trap of identifying all domestic groups or all groups with affiliation to children with a universal idea of marriage, forgetting and avoiding other possibilities of affiliation or configuration of procreative groups or domestic groups.

### Domestic Units and Domestic Groups

The social places of common residence of domestic groups are domestic units. In archaeological cases, we can identify domestic units on the basis of archaeological materiality. Domestic units are those structural units where a recurrence of activities is found (Castro *et al.* 1996; 2002). This recurrence can be found both in the architectural configuration and in the confluence of a series of specific activities. It is not possible to establish *a priori* a list of activities that can be found, since each social formation has its own specific expression.

Domestic groups have a fundamental social objective, the production of social subjects, and specifically their maintenance. Consequently, we can suggest that we will find one or other form of domestic group in every human society.

Obviously, in domestic units there are also activities linked to the production of objects, and above all consuming/using/enjoying production. Among these activities, the ones, that are recurrent in all domestic groups, are those that will be able to be considered

constituent of domestic practices in a society. But not every activity that is to be found in a domestic space will be part of domestic practices. If it is not recurrent, it will have to be linked to the extra-domestic sphere, since the extra-domestic activities of social subjects residing in a domestic space can include the presence of certain elements related to those activities.

Domestic groups should not be confused with kinship groups. The aggregates of relatives are defined in terms of classification systems, which politically institutionalise a series of units, a series of links and categories, determining, at the same time, guidelines of proximity-distance and of affiliation. The attachment of individuals to these classifications involves certain rights (of membership, of birth, of inheritance of certain properties) or certain relationship norms (for example, politics of definition of exogamy and, consequently, marriage politics). This all forms part of the political institutions of a society, although, undoubtedly, also affects productive work groups, evidently including the politics of basic production (of procreation). Additionally, we cannot establish any mechanical equivalence between a domestic group and a group maintaining social subjects. We can find forms of organizing the maintenance practices of individuals that involve several domestic units. In such cases, the subjects’ maintenance tasks will be governed by certain policies based on family duties other types of kinship unit—or circles of proximity (for example, cooperation between neighbours or even “social aid”).

Networks of social relationships and policies that determine the practices to the production of the maintenance of individuals, as occurs with other fields of economics, politics or ideology, transcend in specific social spaces. In archaeology, we can register the physical evidence of social places (physically structured by social work, as buildings or as some other type of physical conditioning), and we can link those social places with spatial social groups. But we should also study the social forms that configure practices that interrelate different social places, in order to find out about social life in a specific social formation.

### Everyday Life *versus* Domestic Life

The idea and reality of everyday life is often explicitly identified with domestic life. This supposition specifically affects women. It is assumed that domestic space is a field in which women are enclosed and become refugees. In that prison-refuge women develop routine tasks, connected with housework and care for the family. That idea obviously responds to a reality that we are able to track in recent historic situations. It greatly affects the wives and daughters of the bourgeoisie and the related social sectors of the middle urban class in recent centuries. There is an ideology and certain practices that convert wives and daughters into prisoners-refugees of domestic places, where their central role will be the creation (procreation) and care of the family.

We cannot accept the equation of female daily life = domestic space as a generalization. In recent centuries, rural and working urban women have taken part in extra-domestic work as much as, or even more intensely, than men. The “Industrial Revolution” at the beginning of modern-day capitalism was based on the organization of factories and assembly plants, where female work had and still has a scarcely recognised prominence. The reduction of female daily life to the domestic sphere is a present-day vision.

Therefore, we must avoid ambiguity in the conceptualization of daily life. We consider daily life to be the place where the times of social subjects recur. Daily life is the time when social practices are repetitively experienced, when activities are reiterated at standardised times. It is the time for the economic and/or political-ideological recurrence of the practices of social subjects. Each man, and each woman, participates in a recurrent way, and probably in a routine way, in different activities, whether in domestic and/or extra-domestic environments. We would be wrong to confuse recurrence in space, in the social place of domestic life, with recurrence in time. In the present, daily recurrence affects domestic environments, working environments and the environments of the consumption of goods. Customs, habits, undoubtedly the most conservative norms, are imposed in the routine experiences of social subjects. Criticism of daily life has already been made, since it is in that recurrent reality of men and women where we find the form of the prominent social and historical changes (Trotsky 1923; Debord 1961; Lefebvre 1962). Daily life is the concretion of material conditions and political-ideological impositions on social subjects; its continuity or transformation appears more relevant than persistence-change in other institutional or technical environments.

### Privacy of Domestic Spaces and its Misunderstandings

In certain social formulations, domestic units are assimilated with private spaces. Private and public are opposed, an opposition that is the equivalent to that between domestic and extra-domestic. This assimilation results from two misunderstandings: locating the space of freedom of the individual in a domestic space and maintaining the old patriarchal notion of domestic space as a place of “patrimony” (inheritance) and “matrimony” (marriage).

In the first misunderstanding, the idea of privacy is identified with intimacy. Each individual has his own space (property). This justifies an omnipotent legalised right. Nevertheless, this notion of private-intimate-own is only ideological, for it reinforces the self-recognition of individuals as independent entities, as subjects of a liberty that is only permitted in private and in the market. However, political-ideological constraints infiltrate with efficacy into domestic units.

In opposition, “public” spaces are identified with those places where the ideology of the free individual-consumer

finds bonds with privacy-intimacy. Because of this, the ideological notion of “public” spaces applies to all those common extra-domestic spaces, even if they are private property. The equivalence between extra-domestic and “public” leads us to identify all those places of specialised work as “public”. Perhaps that is why in recent years the “public” space par excellence has become the Shopping Centre, paradoxically a private-appropriate space—of multinationals and franchises. The notion of “non-place” (Augé 1992), relating to spaces of anonymity, lacking an identity reference, relational norms or historic meanings, has recently replaced the idea of “public”, faced with the banalization and commercialization of “leisure”. Whatever the sense might be behind “private-public” opposition, we find it an actualism that avoids the true private ownership of social places and which we would find hard to apply to social formations where capital is not dominant.

In the second misunderstanding, the notion of privacy linked to domestic space, recalls the sense of patriarchal private ownership. That is the ideological, political and economic appropriation that the patriarch performs on his house and family, in the Roman sense of the term: the patriarch’s ownership his “patrimony”, “matrimony”, “offspring” and servants. Here, the domestic place is opposed to “public”, since it is a space outside the *Res Publica*. Ideology and Law have accepted that patriarchal power, exercised over the wife or wives, sons and daughters and servants, is similar to that which the owner has over any private property, absolute power. Only recently the privacy of domestic spaces has been questioned, the state has been involved in behaviours “in intimacy” as a result of patriarchal use of violence against women and children.

Domestic units should not be assimilated to private spaces in a mechanical, presentist and/or patriarchal way. If seeking places that are privately appropriated, we will be able to find them inside and outside of domestic units. And as for domestic units, the recognition of domestic groups as collectives gives them a community nature, although we can find the politics of servants or patriarchy in them. If the idea of “public” is linked to accessibility for all the members of a community, we should make sure that this really is so before utilizing the term as an adjective. In conclusion, we prefer to avoid the use of the duality “private *versus* public” until we know the nature of the control-exploitation or symmetry-reciprocity relationships in each social space.

### SOUTHEAST IBERIA c. 3.200-2.300 cal BC

A case study is based on the gathering of available evidence of the Southeast Iberia c. 3.200-2300 cal BC, the so-called *Millares Horizons*. We offer the hypothesis made possible by the information available, since we need more accessible evidences to perform a more accurate analysis of domestic archaeological contexts (Castro *et al.*

1998; Castro and Escoriza 2004). Despite the large number of excavations, references for the internal distribution of the materials and of the structural descriptions of these spaces are highly scarce (Molina *et al.* 1986; Ramos *et al.* 1991).

Nevertheless, with the evidence we do have, we can search the recurrences that enable us to identify and analyze the domestic units in the *Millares Horizons*, so as to attempt to build sociological hypotheses about the organization of the domestic groups. Based on the long list of known settlements of the *Millares Horizons*, since the excavations of Siret at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Leisner and Leisner 1943), we have detected a series of guidelines that signify the starting point for our proposals.

Before revisiting the structural characteristics of the buildings, we can make a review of the elements that make it possible to visualise social activities in the settlements, which enable us to identify domestic groups on the basis of their recurrence and their relation to the production of social life (Castro *et al.* 1998; Castro and Escoriza 2004). And this review, sadly, is very brief. We only can indicate the presence of hearths, probably used for lighting, cooking and/or heating in buildings whose recurrent architecture may suggest that they were domestic units. Something exceptional is the location of storage pits in these spaces, although these are highly frequent in exterior spaces (in open settlements). Perhaps a domestic storage using baskets or ceramic vessels could respond to those cases, but few remains are clear and it is difficult to consider them as recurrent. Continuing with work on processing cereals, another important activity known to exist in domestic units was grinding, and here it is noted that stone-mills were found individually, inside curve plant buildings, next to the hearths, in Los Millares site, which may constitute a recurrent activity in domestic practices. Therefore, for now, only three activities (cooking, storage and grinding) could be proposed as recurrent social practices in the domestic groups of the *Millares Horizons*. Other economic activities (flint work, pottery, work with bones, weaving, metallurgy), although mentioned in association to units of a possible domestic nature, seem to represent exceptional activities, and not activities in the sphere of domestic practices.

An analysis of the architectural characteristics starts by emphasizing the differences between the construction of architectonic structures, between fortified villages and open settlements, so as to identify recurrences that make it possible to recognise domestic units. On the one hand, fortified villages tend to represent long-time occupations, with different phases implying changes in the architectonic structures. At the same time, it is not unusual for these settlements to appear, during early occupation, without fortifications and ramparts, although they could have defensive ditches. Meanwhile, open villages appear to have been occupied for less time and have a different architectonic technology that fortified ones.

We can indicate three types of architectural units, which offer a repetition of models and forms, and that suggest that they were domestic units (Castro and Escoriza 2004). First, there are buildings with curved walls, which present some variability with regard to the construction techniques used in the walls (stone, mud bricks). Second, we have “pit huts”, semi-excavated units with walls made of perishable materials, mainly located on open sites and pertaining to the first phase of settlements that would be fortified later. Finally, there are buildings with adjoining rooms with dividing walls, made of stone, and having angular forms. The first two models of possible domestic units are freestanding buildings without compartmentalization, while the third model implies a different organization in terms of the politics of the domestic groups and the organization of the space, given that they were compartmentalised units. The bibliography pays little attention to this latter model, despite its special architectural nature.

Partial conclusions can be made. There was major heterogeneity in the construction methods employed in the different settlements. The same variability is found in the spatial distribution of architectonic units. There are also diachronic transformations in the building techniques of the same settlement, such as the settlement of Los Millares (Arribas *et al.* 1987; Molina and Cámara 2005) or Terrera Ventura (Gusi and Olaria 1991). This evidence suggests the existence of synchronic unlike domestic groups, and modifications in the conception of domestic units over time.

The “pit hut” type of possible domestic unit can be described as having hut bottoms, which were partially dug into the ground. The roof of these structures was a cover made of vegetal elements that were held up by wooden posts. There is certain variability in their dimensions, about 4-5 m (La Torreta de Elda, Campico de Lébor, El Capitán, Baño de la Mora) (Jover *et al.* 2000-01; Val Caturla 1948; Ayala 1985; Siret 2001; Castro and Escoriza, 2004). We can normally find “pit huts” at the early stages of occupation of fortified settlements, before the construction of ramparts. But coexistence with other models is denoted by chronometric dates.

Buildings with curved walls are present in almost all settlements. They were constructed using stone base-board, with vegetal frames covered with clay, such as, for example, Los Millares (Arribas *et al.* 1987; Ramos 2004; Molina and Camara 2005), Almizaraque (Delibes *et al.* 1986) and Cabezo del Plomo (Muñoz 1986), or with mud bricks in Cerro de la Virgen (Kalb 1969; Schüle 1986). In some cases, these buildings seem to only have walls of clay, propped up by wooden posts (Terrera Ventura I, Almizaraque) (Gusi and Olaria 1991; Delibes *et al.* 1986). Related to this model is the fact that some of these buildings were incorporated into defensive walls, in fortified enclosures, or linked by walls that delimited the interior spaces of some settlements (Los Millares, El Malagon, Cabezo del Plomo) (Arribas *et al.* 1987; Ramos

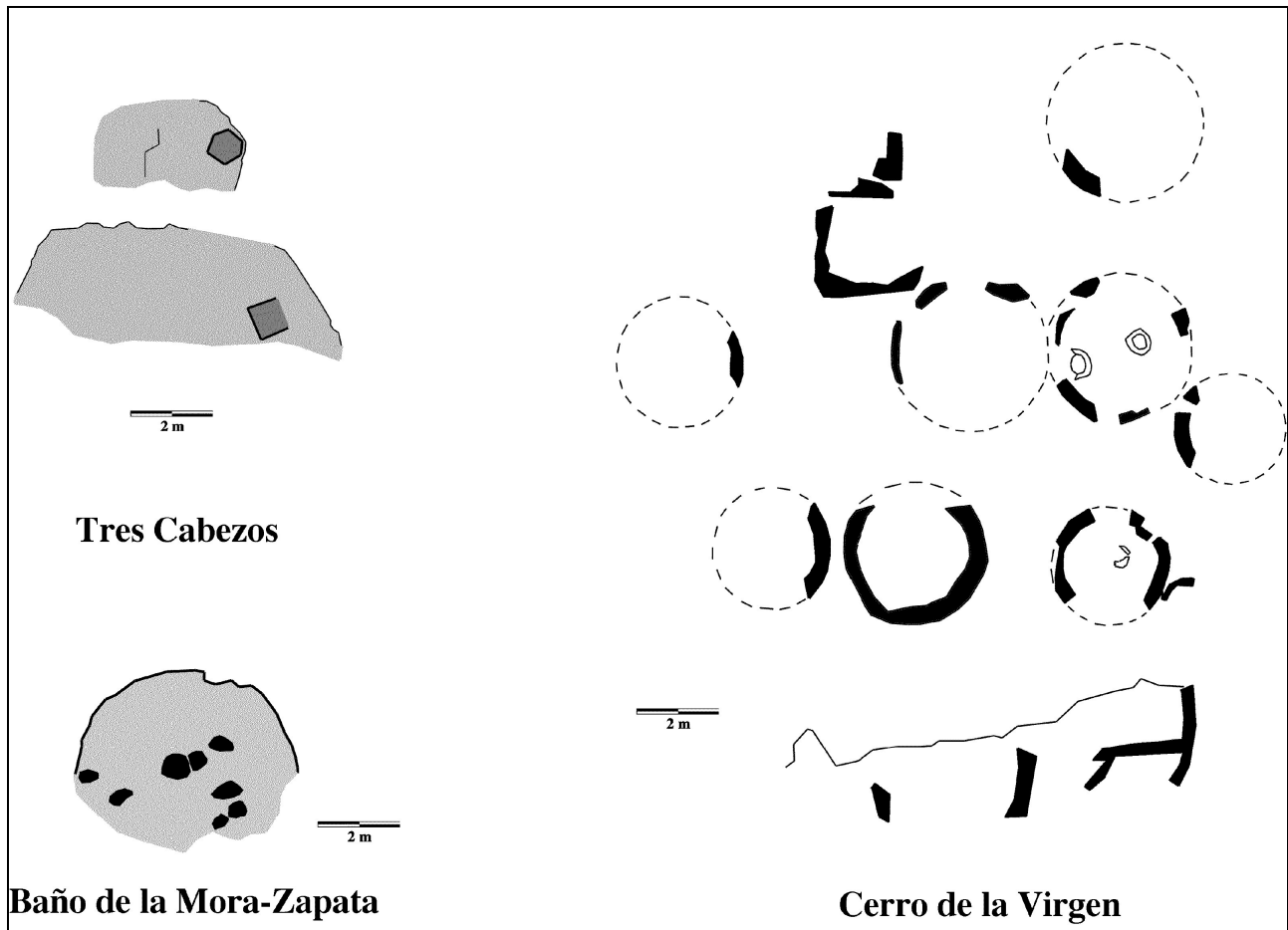


Fig. 14.1. Freestanding Buildings. "Pit Huts" and Oval Stonewalled Buildings

2004; De La Torre and Saez 1986; Moreno 1994; Muñoz 1986). When they were incorporated into defensive walls, the former houses become bastions, probably maintaining their domestic use. In fact, some bastions, built at same time as the defensive walls, also seem to have been used as dwellings, as suggested by the information that has shed more light on this topic (for Los Millares "Fortin 1") (Molina *et al.* 1986). The dimensions of these buildings suggest a rank of greater dimensions than the "pit huts" (width surpasses 7 meters).

Finally, the most limited building typology is the type of angular adjoining rooms, with dividing stonewalls. There are fewer of these buildings, in comparison with other models dealt with here. They are located in Parazuelos (Siret and Siret 1890), Terrera Ventura (Gusi and Olaria 1991) and in the settlement of Los Millares (Arribas *et al.* 1987). In the case of Los Millares, we observed trapezoidal buildings with dividing walls. Other angular buildings, seem unique structures (Castro and Escoriza 2004), such as the rectangular building in enclosure 3 in Los Millares, which have a difficult chronological adscription, Building Y, a metallurgical workroom in Los Millares (Arribas *et al.* 1987), Dwelling C of Campos (Siret and Siret 1890), or Building A-B in Terrera Ventura (Gusi and Olaria 1991).

From a revision of the different architectonic forms we find in *Millares Horizons*, we can proceed to some general conclusions. Firstly, we documented the existence of a duality of settlements with unlike architectural forms. There is also the opposition between architecture with stone baseboard, which tends to last longer and require less maintenance, although also implying a greater initial investment of labour; and architecture where only clay, vegetables and wood are used. The former are located in bigger, long-time settlements and in all fortified settlements. The latter are present in open settlements or in the first phases of settlements that later adopt stone architecture. Opposition between communities, in a sense that can be related to urban development (urban settlement *versus* rural settlements), is a hypothesis that has already been proposed (Castro *et al.* 2003c).

Secondly, we have the binomial between freestanding buildings, including "pit huts", and buildings with rectangular adjoining rooms with dividing walls. The former suggest the absence of a unitary plan for the domestic groups. We could describe this as independent activity of domestic groups. Only a few cases of enclosures with several huts (Cabezo del Plomo, El Malagon), such as the inclusion of some huts in ramparts of defensive enclosures (Los Millares), can indicate any





Fig. 14.2. Angular Adjoining Rooms

coordinated politics in the construction of domestic units. For the other form, we must observe that there is a different concept of architecture, one that is conceived as units that enclose several social spaces.

For the moment, this duality can be explained in chronological order, with the type of units with several angular rooms being most recent, but we are still lacking empirical evidence, although in the settlement of Los Millares the architectural stratigraphy indicates that these were the last buildings. If this hypothesis is correct, it may suggest a modification in to the organizational politics of the domestic groups, directed toward at larger units of greater dimensions, probably with new kinship politics, which is surely what is indicated by the domestic enclosures as the ones of El Malagón or Cabezo del Plomo. It is indispensable, therefore necessary to proceed by clarifying the social configuration of the domestic groups and on the base of which groups were added, and lead to more extensive units (polygamy or domestic servants could be a hypothesis to take in worth considering). Only when we will have evidences of all activities carried out in domestic spaces, and of palaeoanthropological studies of multiple burial sites

(megalithic graves, tholoi), we will be able to advance in the proceed by definition of these hypotheses.

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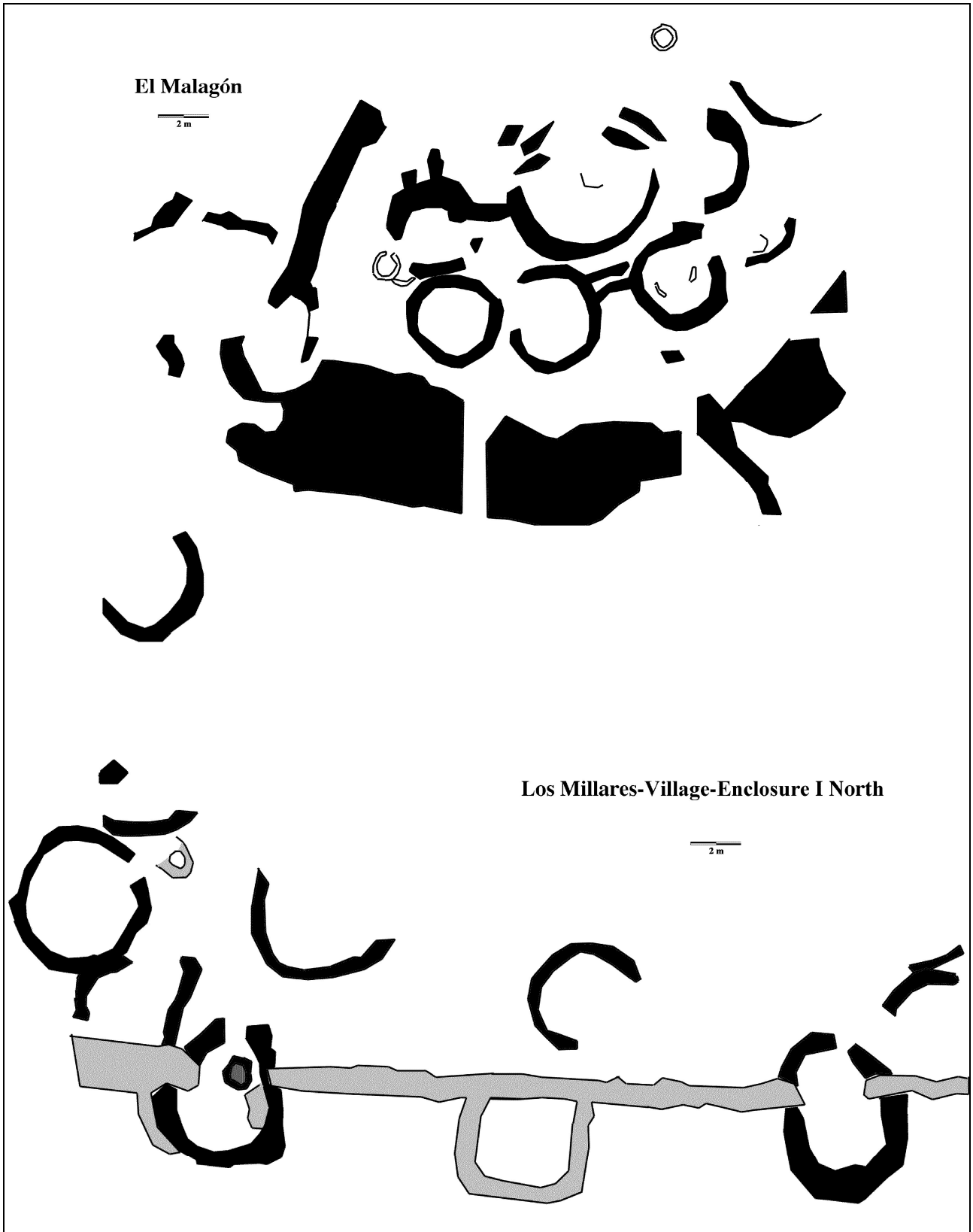


Fig. 14.3. Enclosures with Oval Buildings

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