The paper focuses on the analysis of the so-called tholos, a circular building widespread – but not exclusively – during the Halaf period. Taking into account most of the remains of tholoi present at many Halaf sites (31 in all), including data relating to the transitional periods (Proto-Halaf and Post-Halaf/HUT), in the first section a classification of types of tholos is proposed and their possible functions are discussed, with reference to previous work. The second section deals with some related socio-economic issues, considering settlement layout and the distinction between sites with long and short occupation, and small and larger villages. Particular attention is given to: family structure or pattern, that is the arrangement in extended or nuclear households; storage facilities, i.e. the adoption of communal or domestic storage practices; the type of mobility, namely the compatibility of the current interpretations with models of long-term and short-term mobility on one hand, or with certain models of ‘nomadism’ and pastoralism on the other. A final question concerns to what extent these aspects are related to differences in pottery production recognizable, in part, at local and regional scales – and therefore to the issue of ‘socio-cultural identity’.

Keywords

Halaf, Late Neolithic, Architecture, Society, House/Household, Family Pattern/Structure, Storage, Mobility, Pastoralism
1. Introduction

This paper presents a summary of the results of the analysis of more than 250 tholoi, widespread across Upper Mesopotamia, from Turkey to Iraq via Syria, and throughout the Halaf period, including the transitional stages, Proto-Halaf and Post-Halaf/Halaf-Ubaid Transitional. The analysis aims to build a typology on a more complete and systematic database than in previous works, and to identify and discuss the possible functions of these round buildings during the period and context considered.

It will therefore focus on some problems and (open) questions, mainly various relevant socio-economic aspects, as illuminated by the analysis of (domestic) architecture and settlement layout in the Halaf and Proto-Halaf contexts. The key issues are:

a) Family structure
b) Storage practices
c) Nature of mobility

Regarding these points, might different contexts and situations be seen in different sites and villages? Are these possible differences related in some way to differences in pottery production, regional variations, and to question of ‘identity’?

2. Chronological Framework

The Halaf period is traditionally divided into three phases: Early, Middle and Late Halaf. Excavations and research over time, especially beyond what had initially been considered the central core in Northern Iraq, led to the identification of a further phase preceding the Traditional Early Halaf, as well as transitional stages at the end and beginning of the Halaf (Proto-Halaf and HUT-Halaf-Ubaid Transitional). The period considered here, from the end of the seventh millennium BC to the second half of the sixth millennium, is therefore divided as shown in the table (tab. 1).

Naturally, this chronology is periodically subject to discussion, verification and revision: major issues are not limited to the transitional phases. It was thus decided to also include data from the transitional levels of the examined sites. Regarding the pottery, the Proto-Halaf levels see the appearance of what has come to be considered the typical Halaf Fine Painted Ware, but at relatively low percentages compared to other ceramic classes. One may therefore legitimately ask whether it is possible to speak of Halaf or not, and, if so, to what extent. However, much as the pottery analysis requires us – at least partially – to blur boundaries, so too the architecture analysis leads us to go beyond the traditional cultural boundaries.

3. Tholoi

In particular, one of the architectural forms considered characteristic of the Halaf tradition and examined here, the so-called tholos, is not exclusive to the Halaf period (and is not, in the Halaf context, the only architectural form). Similar circular buildings and round houses are already present in Pre- and

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1 Data come from the sites considered in Benitti 2008 (references can be found there for excavation reports, both for sites treated here and others): Yarim Tepe II and III, Tell Arpachiya, Kharabeh Shattani, Tell Hassan, Tepe Gawra, Tell Hassuna, Tell ’Aziz 1, Hajiluk 1, KhirbetDerak, Tell Der Hall, Kudish Saghir, Tell es-Sawwan, Bagum, Tell Sabi Abyad I, Tell Tawila, Tell Umm Qseir, Khirbet esh-Shenefer, Shams ed-Din, Chagar Bazar, Tell Aqab, Yunus, Tell Halula, Domuztepe, Fıstıklı Höyük, Çavt Tarlaw, Girkikacayyan, Kurban Höyük, Tell Turlu, Nevâlî Côrî, Kazane Höyük. Since then, little has changed (especially concerning the Halaf and Proto-Halaf tholoi – perhaps a little more is now known of Pre-Halaf times), other than the availability of new Tell Halaf excavation data, that was not yet published at that time.


3 Mallowan, Cruikshank Rose 1935; Perkins 1949.

4 E.g. Bernbeck, Nieuwenhuyse 2013; Campbell 2007; Campbell, Fletcher 2010; Cruells, Nieuwenhuyse 2004; Miyake 1998. For a more extensive and critical discussion by the current author about the history of studies and Halaf chronology in the Late Neolithic context: Benitti 2016, pp. 4-9, pp. 244-255.
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Proto-Halaf contexts during the seventh millennium (Sabi Abyad, Tell Halula, Tell Hassuna, Yarim Tepe I) and do not disappear completely even in the subsequent period. It therefore seemed interesting to include the data from the transitional levels and thus provide an extended overview in order to better assess the existence (or not) of differences.

As mentioned above, the Halaf architecture, and also the Proto-Halaf at more than one site, consists of rectangular and circular buildings, the so-called tholos (plural: tholoi). The former vary from large multi-cell structures, such as those in the Proto-Halaf level 6 (Burnt Village) of Sabi Abyad (fig. 1), to smaller and sometimes elongated ones, as at Yarim Tepe (fig. 1). These kinds of buildings, with some exceptions, are frequently considered unsuitable for habitation, due to the small size of the rooms.6

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5 Akkermans 2010; Benitti 2008 and references therein.

6 Cf. Benitti 2008; Frangipane 1996, 2007, 2013; Verhoeven 1999. A summary and discussion of the big rectangular buildings is not the aim of this paper. In addition to...
3.1. Typology

Tholoi too can be subdivided into different types (not mutually exclusive, except for the simplest type). The main distinction is between the simple tholos with only the circular room (fig. 1) and those with connected structures, the nature of which can vary. Amongst these, it is useful to stress the difference between antechambers and auxiliary structures, sometimes quite similar in shape and size but not placed in front of the tholos entrance and accessible only from the outside (figs. 2, 6, 8).

Unfortunately, it is not always possible to distinguish between them, since often the entrance cannot be detected, especially where there remain only stone foundations. For instance, among the tholoi of Arpachiyah, considered by many scholars to have antechambers, there is no trace of passages between the round and rectangular rooms. In this case it is, in fact, impossible to distinguish between the two types.\(^8\)

To these three main types (simple tholos, tholos with antechamber, tholos with auxiliary structure) one may add another three: tholos with annex, tholos with internal partitions (figs. 1, 10) and ‘agglutinated’ tholoi. The first are equipped with a small quadrangular compartment (or semi-circular or more irregular) accessible only from the circular room and are not very common (the only certain examples come from Yarim Tepe II). The tholoi with internal partitions can be connected to auxiliary structures or not, and are subdivided into compartments and rooms that are generally small and unsuitable for habitation in most cases. The agglutinated tholoi, which are leaning against each other, are also rare while tholoi that are adjacent to one another are more frequent, especially amongst the smaller tholoi.

Considering the distribution of tholoi according to their size (internal diameter) expressed in square metres, we can identify some peaks (fig. 3). The first is around 2 sq m, which corresponds to a small tholos, maybe a silo, with an inner diameter of about 1.6 m. Indeed, all the tholoi with area less than 7 sq m are quite small, with an internal diameter of less than 3 m. Further peaks are located at: 7 sq m, corresponding to an internal diameter of 3 m, 10-11 sq m (diameter of 3.5-3.7 m), 13 to 16 sq m (diameter of 4-4.5 m), and 20 sq m (diameter of about 5 m).

In the chart (fig. 4) the tholoi are grouped together in dimensional and functional classes with the related typology. From these charts we exclude all the tholoi without measurements, and we consider only the inner diameter. Not all the tholoi without apparent structures are necessarily simple, since several tholoi are only partially excavated, perhaps a half or a quarter of the total tholos area being uncovered. For these it cannot be said for sure whether they are connected to some other structure or not.

3.2. Functions

Architectural data from Proto-Halaf and Halaf sites are not particularly uncommon but, with some exceptions, it is difficult to know much about the internal settlement layout, due to a lack of extensive excavations or problems related to specific levels or building phases. There are several problems relating to the identification of the relations between tholoi and rectangular buildings, between buildings and open areas (of activity or not), and between the tholoi too. Moreover, it remains difficult to establish the possible functions, especially for the tholoi. However, taking into account the size, type, some ethnographic cases and various characteristics such as installations (e.g. benches, fireplaces and hearths, ovens), finds, building techniques and the context in each settlement, we can say something about the possible functions.9

For features, dimensions and measurements (wall thickness, entrances...), finds, building techniques, and all the data related to each tholos and linked structures, as well as for each typological and functional attribution: Benitti 2008, tab. 1-25 for a summary and quick consultation.

9 For features, dimensions and measurements (wall thickness, entrances...), finds, building techniques, and all the data related to each tholos and linked structures, as well as for each typological and functional attribution: Benitti 2008, tab. 1-25 for a summary and quick consultation.

10 From these charts we exclude all the tholoi without measurements, and we consider only the inner diameter.

11 This is one of the reasons for the absence of Type A/ Simple tholos in the chart. In other words, type A is simply equal to the total number of tholoi (first bar) minus the others.
Figure 4
Tholoi grouped by typological and functional/dimensional classes

Figure 5
Hypothetical primary and secondary use of a small tholos (A: Shams ed-Din) and small tholoi grouped together (B: Domuztepe) (after Carter, Campbell 2000, fig. 3; Carter, Campbell, Gauld 2003, fig. 7; Seeden 1982, fig. 77)
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Tholoi from 3 to 3.5 m in diameter at some sites seem to function as granaries, at others as dwellings, depending on the characteristics of each. Tholoi with a diameter of more than 3.5 m are the most suitable for habitation (fig. 6). This class includes most of the type with antechamber or auxiliary structures, with oven, hearth or fireplace, with installations such as benches inside or outside and so on. Some distinctions can be made for tholoi with a diameter of more than 5.5 m, not because they have special features but because their distribution is rather localized, mostly at Yarim Tepe III (Late Halaf), Arpachiyah (Middle Halaf) and Sabi Abyad level 6 (Proto-Halaf).

Sometimes it has been suggested that larger tholoi had special functions, such as a chief’s residence or some kind of community-related functions, not always defined in detail. Such suggestions have been based not only on the larger size itself, but also

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on a supposed association of size and type— that is, a link between the bigger tholoi and the ones with antechamber—as well as on a supposed trend of increasing size over time.\textsuperscript{16} The data collected and analyzed, however, do not clearly show either of these two trends. Putting together Proto-Halaf and Halaf I on one side and Halaf II on the other, the average size is essentially the same (about 10 sq m) in both periods. While special functions cannot be ruled out, it seems perhaps more prudent to consider possible dwellings as lying along a range of sizes. At some sites, the size distribution clusters towards the lower end of the range, at others towards the upper.

4. First question: nuclear or extended households?

These abstract data would be more useful in the specific context of each site and the internal settlement layout but, as has been noted above, it is not always so easy to have a general overview of the settlement. Here we address the first question about the model of nuclear or extended families and households. In 1972, and later revisited about 15 years ago, Flannery proposed the model of African compounds in the interpretation of the circular structures of the Natufian.\textsuperscript{17} The compound is made up of an extended family, generally polygamous, consisting of an average of about twenty people. Everyone has their own home, except for the youngest children, while the other structures (kitchens, granaries, stables) are in common. This model was rejected for the Natufian by Breniquet and Forest, who instead use it in the Halaf context (fig. 7).\textsuperscript{18} According to them, the circular buildings of the Natufian are more or less of the same size and inhabited by a nuclear family, while in the Halaf context, different sizes and functions of the tholoi would fit with the model of a compound. In this way, the various tholoi are parallel to the various rooms of a rectangular house, and the settlement would coincide with the compound and the family that lives in it.\textsuperscript{19}

Some years later, Ted Banning also rejected the model of a compound for the Natufian and PPNA contexts but on the basis of opposite arguments.\textsuperscript{20} According to him, the circular structures do not have the same sizes and, except for the smaller ones (no more than 3 sq m) which function as storage buildings, the others have sizes between 9 and 25 sq m, and would have been large enough to accommodate a nuclear family. Moreover, he states that the arrangement of circular structures does not support the model of a compound and that there are no examples showing the grouping of circular structures around a courtyard, as is often the case with compounds, nor evidence that each person had his or her own dwelling.

The general context is not so different from the Halaf, and the range of about 16 sq m (from 9 to 25 sq m) proposed by Banning for the Natufian and PPNA houses is virtually the same as can be seen in the possible Halaf dwellings. At the lower end of the range, dwellings have areas between 10 and 24 sq m; at the upper end, at the sites where there are larger dwellings, the sizes range from 20 to 35 sq m. The circular structures of the Natufian and PPNA, like the Halaf tholoi, are often considered too small for more than one person, an argument that also draws support on Naroll’s proposal of about 10 sq m (7 sq m according to LeBlanc) of ‘living space’ per person.\textsuperscript{21} It has been noted, however, that these numbers will contain statistical error and, above all, that the 10 sq m number results from considering all the buildings in a settlement, including storage facilities, stables and so on, overestimating the square metres per person and underestimating the number of possible occupants of a dwelling.\textsuperscript{22} Hypothesised numbers of inhabitants per structure can, of course, vary across researchers. For the Halaf period, Seeden, for instance, argues for 8 people liv-


\textsuperscript{17} Flannery 1972, 2002.


\textsuperscript{21} LeBlanc 1971; Naroll 1962.

\textsuperscript{22} Banning 2003, pp. 12-13; Kamp 2000, p. 86.
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Breniquet considers some tholoi with connected structures from Yarim Tepe II and, more generally, the tholoi with auxiliary structures from Middle Halaf onward, as dwellings suitable for more than one person. She relates this interpretation to the evolution of the tholos, consisting of an increase of size and the adoption of connected structures. It has been noted previously that this evolution is actually not so clear: tholoi with auxiliary structures

24 Verhoeven 1999, p. 211.
Figure 8
Tell Sabi Abyad – Tholos with antechamber (A) and Fstıklı Höyük – Levels IV-IIIA (B)
(after Akkermans [ed.] 1996, fig. 2.22; Bernbeck et al. 2003, fig. 2)

Figure 9
Khirbet esh-Shenef – Level 3
(after Akkermans, Wittmann 1993, fig. 5)
and antechambers are present from the Proto-Halaf onward (fig. 8), perhaps in smaller numbers but we must remember that several tholoi are only partially excavated, and it is difficult to know whether there were any connected structures or not. Therefore, the model that Breniquet proposed as holding from the Middle Halaf onward could, in fact, also fit earlier periods. Furthermore, the tholoi from Yarim Tepe, which Breniquet refers to, are not so large and the connected structures are divided into small cells not suitable for habitation. We cannot completely exclude the model of the compound, nor should we suggest a sort of ‘regression’ from the Halaf to the Natufian and PPNA periods. Rather, one might wonder if there may be different contexts at different sites and villages. At Fıstıklı Höyük, a small short-lived site, it has been noted that the arrangement of tholoi fits a situation in which there are independent residential units rather than a household made-up of several tholoi (fig. 8).27 Such a situation may also occur at sites with similar characteristics such as Kharabeh Shattani, Shams ed-Din or Tell Umm Qseir (figs. 11, 12). These are all small and short-lived sites, and seem to be less densely built-up than the larger and longer-lived ones, such as Yarim Tepe II or Sabi Abyad.28

However, the distinction is not so simple. Khirbet esh-Shenef is a small and short-lived site but the excavated area is quite densely built-up with adjoining houses (fig. 9). On the other hand, Yarim Tepe II and III have some levels with unbuilt areas and, if you consider the buildings to have been contemporary in use, the resulting image is quite different from what it may at first seem. In Yarim Tepe II levels VI and V (fig. 10), not all the structures belong to the same building phase and probably some buildings and some tholoi were under construction when others were already in a state of decay.29 As a result, the possible dwellings in use at the same time are not always so many, and their location and distances between them are not always so different from those at Fıstıklı Höyük. Even when the excavated area is sufficiently extensive to determine the placement of some bigger tholoi apparently around an open area or a courtyard, the entrances, where they can be detected, do not face onto the courtyard as the compound model would suggest, but rather face in different directions (including away from the courtyard itself).

5. Second question: domestic and/or communal storage?

Whether families consisted of nuclear or extended households, considering the placement of the buildings, the open activity areas and so on, a context appears in which the individual households seem to be tied together by close relations of cooperation, and the community as a whole seems to have precedence over the single household or family.30 At this point, there arises the second question, regarding storage facilities and the practices of communal and ‘public’ storage or domestic and ‘private’ storage. In the context of a compound and extended households, it is not a key question because the border between domestic and communal is less well-defined, especially in the small sites, inhabited by no more than one extended family. However, taking into account the nuclear household hypothesis or the possibility of different ways of life at different sites, the issue becomes one of some importance.

Some scholars, from Akkermans to Frangipane, especially on the basis of level 6 (and 3) of Sabi Abyad, stressed the importance of communal storage.31 Others, such as Kielt Costello, consider the rectangular buildings of Sabi Abyad and the sealings found inside, as an index of ownership or accountability at a ‘private’ and familial level – extended family in this case, in the context of a village community organized along the lines of Samarran society – and not at a communal level.32 Kielt Costello regards the

27 Bernbeck et al. 2003, pp. 69-70.
32 Kielt Costello 2002.
made up of several small cells, which can be considered as a kind of domestic storage. To sum up, we can assume the existence of different forms and practices of storage according to the needs and the context of each site, from communal storehouses to domestic storage associated with the home, to an intermediate form common to more than one house.

6. Third question: what kind of mobility?

The third point, linked to the previous ones and to the possible differences between short and long-lived sites, concerns mobility. Proto-Halaf and Halaf society and its way of life seem to be charac-

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36 Cf. also Frangipane 2013, p. 91.
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characterized by some degree of mobility. What kind of mobility? Short or long term? What are the reasons behind it? Some of the possible reasons proposed as related to mobility are the fissioning or segmentation of groups (a possible process by which communities reproduced themselves within the territory), cyclical agriculture and pastoralism. Such reasons may also explain the settlement pattern and ‘expansion’ during the Halaf II period. The settlement pattern of the Late Neolithic in Upper Mesopotamia, during the Proto-Halaf and Halaf periods but not only then, seems to be characterized by a mix of villages with longer occupation and shorter lived sites, maybe inhabited on a seasonal basis – it being difficult to distinguish seasonal encampments with little or no architecture. Proto-Halaf and Halaf settlements are often less than 1 ha and only a few are larger than 2 ha. Sabi Abyad is about 5 ha but is the result of progressive shifting of smaller villages, and this could also be the case for bigger sites (about 20 ha) as Domuztepe, Kazane Höyük, Samsat, Nisibeen, Mounbateh and Takyan Höyük.  

Figure 11
Kharabeh Shattani – Level 3 (A) and Shams ed-Din – Level 4 (B) (after Baird, Campbell, Watkins [eds.] 1995, fig. 10; Al-Radi, Seeden 1980, fig. 33)
Figure 12
Tell Umm Qseir – Level 1 (A) and mobility and settlement pattern around Fıstıklı Höyük (B)
(after Bernbeck et al. 2003, fig. 45; Tsuneki, Miyake [eds.] 1998, fig. 19)

Short occupation, with possible breaks in stratigraphy, shifting of settlements, small sites with limited architecture and sometimes an emphasis on hunting activity, have led researchers to consider some small and short-lived sites as seasonal (and specialised) camps related to activities such as herding and hunting. Possible breaks in stratigraphic sequences and in site occupation are not always simple to detect, especially in sites where we cannot exclude the shifting over time of functional and built-up area. This kind of shifting is present at many Halaf sites, also at long-lived sites as Yarim Tepe II, whose first traces of occupation are not so different from the stratigraphic sequences found at short-lived sites like Umm Qseir, Kharabeh Shattani and Shams ed-Din (figs. 11, 12). The model of long term mobility proposed for Fıstıklı Höyük, might explain these stratigraphic sequences (fig. 12). On the other hand, the case of Tell Umm Qseir shows that it is too simplistic to assume for all smaller sites


a seasonal occupation when, instead, from a careful and integrated analysis of paleobotanical and archaeozoological remains, Umm Qseir seems to have had a year-round occupation.\footnote{Perhaps the question remains open. Anyway, cf. Hole, Johnson 1987; McCorriston 1992; Tsuneki, Miyake (eds.) 1998; Zeder 1994.}

Regarding pastoralism: what are we talking about in Proto-Halaf and Halaf contexts? It is not always clear whether the model refers to a kind of specialized pastoralism that involves whole segments of the society or community, entire families and villages that maintain relations with the agricultural and sedentary villages; or to a type of pastoralism common in the ethnographic literature, that is, within the same village and the same family.\footnote{See references in note 37.} For instance, according to the interpretation of the Burnt Village of Sabi Abyad proposed by Akkermans and Duistermaat and followed and extended by Verhoeven, the community would have consisted of two groups, one of ‘nomadic’ pastoralists and the other one of sedentary people.\footnote{Akkermans, Duistermaat 1997; Verhoeven 1999.} The big rectangular storehouses and the sealings inside them would be explained by the need to preserve the goods of a large number of people who were not physically present in the village. The two groups would also explain, at least in part, the differences in architecture, with the tholoi related to sedentary residents and the rectangular buildings related to the ‘nomads’. The roles, however, would be interchangeable, with the groups of pastoralists becoming sedentary farmers after a short period of time and vice versa.

It is difficult to establish whether this model fits or does not fit with the Burnt Village or with Proto-Halaf and Halaf society as a whole.\footnote{Cf. discussion at the end of Akkermans, Duistermaat 1997.} Perhaps it would be simpler to imagine a situation in which the possibility of ‘strong’ specialisation into two groups is regarded as the alternative to a ‘weak(er)’ specialisation with interchangeable roles. That is, one could see either the existence of specialised groups or sufficient specialisation as reason enough to ‘structure’ the differences in the architecture and to make it necessary to maintain social relations (marriage, ritual, political, etc.) between the two groups.\footnote{“Structuring Structures” is the (sociological) definition used by Verhoeven 1999, p. 213.} Otherwise, if there was not such ‘strong’ specialisation, rather than the rotation of two distinct groups it seems more likely that there would have been the ethnographically known situation where, within the same family, there are transhumant herders and sedentary farmers. We will mention only one case of a well-known pastoral society (cattle in this case, not sheep and goats as in the Halaf): the Nuer studied by Sir Evans-Pritchard, which is exactly of this type.\footnote{Evans-Pritchard 1940.} The settlement pattern has some resemblance to that of the Halaf (and to that of many pastoral societies), with sedentary larger villages during the rainy season and more dispersed encampments during the rest of the year. Inside the family itself there are young males and adults who move around with the herds and females, children and older males who stay in the village to undertake farming and other activities.

7. Conclusions and a final point: a question of identity?

This paper has tried to ask questions rather than give answers. Further, it has tried to argue for the possibility of nuanced and not necessarily univocal answers to certain issues. It has been seen that closer study and comparison of certain local contexts, settlements and villages, could support the possible hypothesis of a family pattern based on the nuclear family without, on the other hand, excluding the extended household and compound model. It has also been seen that the existence and adoption, at least in part, of collective storehouses does not exclude the possible presence of other storage facilities and practices on a domestic level. It has been noted that the question of mobility and related issues in the Proto-Halaf and Halaf periods involves potentially complex issues of interpretation: settlement patterns and the mecha-
nisms by which communities reproduced themselves within the territory, social practices and subsistence strategies, stratigraphic sequences and use of space.\textsuperscript{49} Again, we focused mainly on the identification of possible differences between sites, without taking for granted univocal strong distinctions between small and large settlements, long- and short-lived ones, year-round and seasonal occupations.

There remains another question: Even within a context that, like the Halaf, is on the whole rather homogeneous there are possible distinctions that result from studies on pottery production, comparing data between local and regional scales.\textsuperscript{50} Dimensions include more or less slight differences in the appearance, adoption and diffusion of certain types or decorative modes, and hence also relative chronology. Not only are there differences between Proto-Halaf, Samarra and Hassuna, but also within the Halaf period too.

It is not the aim of this paper to treat the aspects related to pottery production and chronology. Nevertheless, what are the possible reasons behind these differences? Consider this example: the differences between the Halaf Ib assemblage typical of the Upper Tigris and Sinjar and the ‘Intermediate phase’ of the Syrian Jazira.\textsuperscript{51} In some levels belonging to the latter and more-or-less contemporaneous with Halaf Ib levels, one finds pieces of pottery both from the Halaf Ib assemblage and from the traditional Middle Halaf (Halaf IIa) assemblage (such as large cream bowls).\textsuperscript{52} Differences may be a question of identity or social practices or both. What kind of identity and social practices might these be: cultural and ethnic, related to social groups, different families, different sites and geographical areas, different skills and abilities in pottery production and decoration?

So, the last question is: what are the relationships (if any) between these supposed local or regional differences in pottery production and the three main points discussed above (family structure, storage and mobility)? Generally speaking, the question is that of Halaf ‘identity’ and Halaf as a ‘cultural – and maybe social – umbrella’.\textsuperscript{53} There are probably no easy and definitive answers, not even regarding how family structure determined house size and design. However, it is definitely worth continuing asking the questions!

\textsuperscript{49} However, these issues concern the whole Late Neolithic in Upper Mesopotamia.

\textsuperscript{50} E.g. Spataro, Fletcher 2010.


\textsuperscript{52} An analysis of these aspects and a more complete bibliography in Benitti 2016, in particular pp. 244-255.

\textsuperscript{53} Akkermans 2000, p. 51. See also Akkermans, Schwartz 2003.
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