

JAN BOUZEK

STUDIES OF HOMERIC GREECE

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Studies of Homeric Greece

Jan Bouzek

Reviewers:

Luboš Jiráň (Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences)

Václav Marek (Institute of Greek and Latin Studies, Charles University)

Designed Jan Šerých

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PREFACE

The earlier predecessors which formed the roots of this field of study were first the old dissertation of Bernhard Schweitzer (1918), whose final synthetic book appeared only after his death (1969) and his polemics with Anna Roes (Roes 1933) who brought important contributions to understanding of the symbols from prehistoric Europe over Greece to Iran, E. Sprockhof's *Nordische Bronzezeit und frühes Griechentum* (1954) was also subject of his lecture in Prague during my student years in Prague and the paper by my Humboldt father W. Kimmig (Kimmig 1964) followed similar path, besides H. Müller-Karpe (1962 and his studies on early Rome and Kerameikos). For penetrating into the world of European symbols H. Kossack's *Symbolgut* (1954) was indispensable and even if we later disagreed in some details, he was many times useful partner in discussions, notable in the eastern relations of Central Europe, Caucasus and Siberia. I hardly met Vladimír Miložičić, but his brief AA paper on northern relations of EIA Greece (Miložičić 1949) was excellent sketch of this field of study and laid foundations for much what I also follow in this book. In the field of Hungarian LBA I benefited much from the friendship of Amalia Mozsolics; János-György Szilágyi helped to educate me in etruscology. Fritz Schachermeyer (1976–1983) had good nose even if his argumentation was not always on expected level, and discussions with him were useful; my dear friend Sigrid Deger-Jalkotzy transmitted me some of them together with her own inspiring ideas. In Greece discussions with M. Verdelis and M. Andronikos helped me much already during my first stays in Greece.

My *Homerisches Griechenland* published in 1969 arose from my first study stays in Greece as a guest of Swedish and German institutes and from my Humboldt scholarship with Prof. Wolfgang Kimmig at Tübingen in 1967–68, when I also tried to prepare my later books on relations between Greece and Central Europe, the first draft of which was presented already to the Paris congress of Classical archaeology in 1963. Of Britain I had steady support from my close friends Sinclair Hood, Nicolas Coldstream, Anthony Harding and fruitful exchange of ideas with Anthony Snodgrass and many others, in France I owe much to Jean-Pierre Vernant, Venceslas Kruta, Pierre Devambez, Pierre Amandry, in Germany to W.-D. Heilmeyer, K. and I. Kilian

and K. Kübler. Including the east into this picture enabled me a number of conferences in former Soviet Union, Russia and Georgia, and one semester stay in Moscow in 1976. I also benefited from the survey by O. Dickinson, who holds himself for pupil of Vincent Desborough, whose books on last Mycenaean and on Protogeometric Greece (1964, 1972) were narrative syntheses, also respecting historical sources and mythological traditions of heroic past. Of the Balkan countries I benefited much from my mentors of previous generation, my contemporaries and younger colleagues, in Bulgaria esp. Ivan Venedikov, M. Domaradzki and L. Domaradzka, in Romania to Petru Alexandrescu and Valeriu Sîrbu, in ex-Yugoslavia to Z. and Ks. Vinski, M. and D. Garašanin, R. Vasić, Z. Marić, in Greece to L. Marangou, N. Kourou, A. Mazarakis, M. Andronikos, and A. Michailidou. For understanding the Scandinavian rock art and symbolism I would like to thank to John Colis and F. Kaul, for broader information about context to my careful editor Paul Åström. I am especially indebted to the Mellon foundation and to W. D. Coulson fund or the hospitality in the American School at Athens in 1995, to the German Archaeological Institute and the French School in 2000–2012, and finally to Alexander Mazarakis Ainian for the hospitality at Volos in 2015. The original version of the title of the volume included a subtitle “and koine of EIA Geometric styles revisited”, but the author understands that the shorter title suggested by the publisher sounds better.

I would like to express my gratitude to many persons, who supported me during the long years when trying to study various aspects of this field. In the final phase I thank to the reviewers, Luboš Jiráň and Václav Marek, for their useful comments, to the director of the Karolinum publishing house Petr Valo, Jan Hejzl, Jana Zíková and Stanislava Kučová, who kindly took over the care of the index. Without her support, the book would not appear.

The author would like to dedicate this volume to the memory of Nicolas Coldstream, teacher and friend.

INTRODUCTION

After A. Snodgrass (2000) and N. Coldstream (2003) published second editions of their Dark Age books, the first only with new foreword, and the second rewritten with many improvements, I was asked by several colleagues whether I would not follow them with my old book on Homeric Greece (Bouzek 1969a). First I answered that most of what I wanted to say was put into my second book with Paul Åström (Bouzek 1997a, GAE), but later on the field grew bigger, a large number of new excavations, finds and studies appeared, and new previously neglected aspects of the Dark Age emerged in the ongoing discussions (cf. esp. Stampolides ed. 2004; Mazarakis Ainian ed. 2011, 2016, etc.). The last impetus was the kind invitation to the Dark Age conference at Volos in 2015 by the leading specialist in this field Prof. Alexander Mazarakis Ainian, who was a splendid host. Meeting with many specialists there largely improved my knowledge of the new discoveries and studies.¹

On the other hand I was involved in some more general projects in my country, notably in studies of civilisations and also looking after parallel situations of crises and collapses. For closer collaboration I was also kindly invited by my Icelandic friend Johann Arnason into the field of what they call with Carl Jaspers the emergence of the Axial Age. My studies on much humbler level on the transition from Bronze to Iron Age tried to show that the transition from pre-philosophical to philosophical mind in the categories of Auguste Conte and the structuralism, or from mythos to logos by the Classicists, as *Geburt des Geistes* by Bruno Snell, was a longer process.

First I tried to follow the idea to rewrite my old Homeric Greece with additions, but the more reasonable solution seemed to bring brief overviews of the present state of knowledge (these are the first chapters in each of the first four parts) and attach some comments from dispersed reviews with a selection of up-to-dated earlier papers on detailed aspects of this field, dispersed in various conference volumes, and—often exotic—periodicals, in the frame of revisiting the fields covering roughly the four volumes of mine devoted to Late Bronze—Early Iron Age in Greece and Europe:

1 ARISTOI. Regional Studies towards a new perception of the Early Greek World, Volos, June 18–21, 2015, publ. 2016. The volume is a kind of complementary survey to the more general discussion in my book.

- Homerisches Griechenland, Prague 1969 (abbr. HG)
- The Aegean, Anatolia and Europe in the second millennium BC, Åström 1985 (abbr. AAE)
- Greece, Anatolia and Europe in the Early Iron Age, Åström 1997 (abbr. GAE)
- Graeco-Macedonian Bronzes, Prague 1972 (abbr. GMB)

In my ripe age I hardly could rewrite all, but have to concentrate on more modest goal: to edit dispersed notes while completing the main line of narrative—to attach second thoughts, corrections and additions to various aspects of the subject of this book for those, who will follow my path in the same or related field of study, in a kind of discussion with other new synthetic monographs.

The surveys by O. Dickinson (2006), G. D. Middleton (2010), M. Thomatos (2000) and many other younger colleagues deserve discussion, much new brought the second editions of J. N. Coldstream's, *Geometric Greece* (2003) and *Greek Geometric Pottery* (2008), with supplementary chapters, A. Snodgrass' book *Dark Age Greece* (2000) and also his more recent volumes brought new ideas. I. S. Lemos on Protogeometric pottery (2002) compiled much new evidence on settlements, burials and pottery. Several books by I. Morris and J. Whitley show specific approaches to the subject. The book by A. Mazarakis Ainian on *Ομηρος και αρχαιολογία* (Athens 2000) only appeared in Greek, while his two conference volumes (2013, 2016) and number of other studies on Crete, islands and mainland with the Peloponnese much broadened the evidence and were published the field of study interest enlarged, with several more general books for broader public were published (Cline 2014; Wallace 2010; cf. Tsipopoulou 2005).

In the first four parts of this book the first chapter(s) give(s) a kind of revisited summary of the discussed period, followed by revisited comments and special studies. Brief references to my previous books are put in the brackets into the text; they either refer to more detailed discussions in the old books, or express critics where the progress of knowledge changed the possible interpretation. Special place is devoted to iconography and also to usually neglected metallic finds, as being of interest also to the prehistorians.

Part 5 is devoted to Homer and to explanation of rather unorthodox dating of his lifespan (or at least of Proto-Homer) into the 10th century, with some features corresponding to the lifespan of the Lefkandi hero. Part 6 on the Phoenicians is based on three revisited papers on the Black Sea and Central Europe, while the more general part is based on my lecture in the Oriental Institute in Beirut in 2006. Their role was of primary importance not only in the field of the glass and alphabet, but in the capacity of risky private venture as well.

Part 7 deals with the Macedonian bronzes, the topic of the present author, whose relations to the East, North, Italy and Greece are discussed together with their neighbours. Part 8 sums up the evidence of the *koine* of geometric styles between northern China and the Atlantic coast, part 9 the northern links and relations of Greek religion. Part 10 summarizes the conclusions on the two levels of questions posited: one on the usual field of archaeology and history, and the second on the path from mythos to logos, emergence of Axial Age, change of identity.

Historia magistra vitae. The past experience may offer hints to us: how to develop the means and capacity to find the way out from the menacing collapse nowadays: by rising the mental capacity of thinking, finely educated area of feelings, emotions, to be able to overcome the fear, despair and hate, and to develop strong will to accomplish what has to be done.

PART 1: BRONZE AGE

1.1 “THE FIRST GOLDEN AGE OF EUROPE”

The series of conferences held in the frame of the Council of Europe campaign *The Bronze Age—The First Golden Age of Europe*,¹ of which only several have been published,² may offer good examples of the present situation in Bronze Age studies, where two main camps have been formed, between which the understanding has become difficult. The usual picture is like fairy tales with heroic knights in armour with swords, and beautiful ladies with heavy ornaments, all on them shining in yellow bronze resembling gold.

METHODS, APPROACHES

The Bronze Age in Europe has been traditionally studied mainly from bronze objects and pottery uncovered in the cemeteries, and only later settlement sites are becoming better known. Moreover, the traditional “fundamentalist” approach stressed questions of the typology of the objects, of their relative chronology and of local differences, while other questions of social and cultural life, of settlement sites and patterns, were much less in the focus of interest. This situation, despite of its positive results, left many important questions unanswered.

On the other hand, the approaches of New, Processual and Post-Processual archaeologists, as well as other attempts to solve the problems, in which alternative strategies have been suggested, often lacked sufficiently deep knowledge of the archaeological objects themselves and therefore provoked objections from the traditional connoisseurs.

1 Lecture and review 2000, presented orally, but unpublished. Cf. Bouzek 1988a, 2004.

2 The Verona conference on chronology appeared as a supplementum of *Acta Archaeologica* 67 in Copenhagen (Randsborg, ed. 1996). The last Berlin conference under redaction of B. Hänsel (1998) entitled *Mensch und Umwelt in der Bronzezeit Europas—Man and Environment in Bronze Age Europe*. The subject found its reflection also in the UISPP 1996 Forlì congress (sessions concerning the Bronze Age, published in its Acts). One has been published in the series of the Museum of National Antiquities in Stockholm by Carin Orrling. The other colloquia, like London, Athens-Lagonisi, Lisbon, Besançon, etc. remained unpublished.

Moreover, Aegean Bronze and Early Iron Age studies, stemmed from Classical archaeology of age lit by written history, were also split in an analogous way and too alien to Central European stream to establish mutual understanding.³

The present crisis reflects a situation in which the traditional methods cannot take us much more forward above the level reached by the previous generation. This is especially so for areas which have already been much explored (though this approach can still fill up some *lacunae* even in well-known areas). On the other hand, other approaches, including deduction from patterns of parallel societies and changes known both archaeologically and historically, or from living ethnographic societies, which can still be studied as contemporary to us, are not yet quite ripe to fulfil this task. But a crisis, a disease, may well open the way to its healing: the present situation should not be seen as a problem only, but rather as a challenge giving us the chance to enlarge and deepen our knowledge by trying harder and asking the right questions.⁴

Most of the discussions during the colloquia of the campaign have shown that only an approach from different angles, using different methods, could in their complexity bring us forward in the knowledge of European prehistory. One of the questions raised in the discussions was a confrontation of “autonomist” and “diffusionist” approaches, and considering the relevant situations from these two points of view has confirmed that both approaches may have the right to compete in most crucial questions. Equally the two interpretative streams, one deriving its possible models from “living” ethnography, and the other from the Near Eastern and Classical societies, also known from written sources, may be fruitful, though a caution has to be recommended not to go too far in using shortcut parallels. The Bronze Age stood between the Neolithic period, of which more ethnographic parallels exist until recent times, and the Iron Age, largely known—besides archaeological excavations—from literary sources.

Even the old societies were complex ones, with complicated social structures, with mutual interrelations and contacts between individual areas. Some of these contacts contributed to a *koine* of similar technologies and artistic styles, which show us also the old European continent of that time as certain cultural entity and identity.

Similar, sometimes even identical phenomena existed over most parts of Europe, thus shaping one of its first identities.

3 Cf. e.g. Alcock – Osborne 1988; Blake – Knapp, eds. 2005; Courbin 1988; Mee 2011; Morris, ed. 1994; Osborne 2009; Snodgrass 1987.

4 A survey Z. Vašíček 1994.

BRONZE AGE MIND

The history of religion and many modern studies of the so-called primitive societies have taught us that their understanding of the world was different, but in many ways not inferior to our approach. I would recommend that a similar approach should also be applied to prehistory. The word *ideology* usually means something artificially produced and false. Ancient ways of thinking used by Bronze Age societies reflected the realities surrounding ancient men and women from different angles and with different means than we use to approach them now. But their picture of the world was not considered by the Bronze Age people an *ideology* in our sense. It was the reality in which the ancient peoples lived. It enabled them to conduct their lives in harmony with nature, with their environment and also among themselves, within their society: a goal which we now try hard to achieve, often with modest results as yet.

In any case, archaeology only gives a fragmentary and thus a distorted picture of mutual relations between individual cultures, so, as far as possible, we have also to use other means to reconstruct the general scene.

A few sherds of pottery or other objects found far away from their production centre offer useful information and in all probability they represent a more common feature. In his book *Piecing together the past* (London 1956) V. G. Childe describes an archaeological source as follows:⁵ Mr. Childe went to the woods, he consumed his tin of sardines and buried the empty container under a tree. Later, an archaeologist comes, discovers the tin and knows that Mr. Childe (or somebody like him) was there. Under normal conditions, however, we would need some ten thousands of Childes to have any chance to find one tin. We are normally happy to have our sherds, but their absence cannot be used as a decisive argument against the historical tradition or any other evidence: only too often have a few happy finds destroyed elaborate hypotheses based on the absence of finds.

Organic objects, like wood, basketry, etc. are only rarely preserved, under especially favourable conditions (as in the Egyptian desert, in the frozen soil of Upper Altai, or in wet sites in prehistoric Europe and in Samos' Heraeum), but traces of their influence can be seen in other classes of objects, like pottery and bronze items. We can thus use this evidence for reconstruction of the missing aspects of the archaeological culture. There are also general laws based on a reasonable degree of probability (not absolute necessity) describing changes and interactions between different societies. We have discussed these elsewhere (Bouzek 1988a, 1994a), as other scholars have done (cf. esp. Sherrat 1992), and the interpretations put forward should respect these

5 For Childe's opinions on archaeological theory, cf. now esp. B. McNairn 1980.

laws, and not be based on “feelings” or false presumptions of what should be expected as “safe” arguments in any given case.

Our ecological crisis should teach us that no real results could be reached by examining two phenomena only as *cause* and *effect*. What might work in a laboratory never works in an identical way in real life. Single phenomena can only be studied in isolation in the first stage of examination, which must be followed by examination of their relation to other phenomena in time and space, and also of their place in a higher order. All phenomena acquire real meaning only in the context of other features. There are always chains of causes and effects and other kinds of interrelations, among them those, which respect a higher totality, of which single phenomena are but members. Here our position is holistic, so that we are convinced that a basic change in the human mind lies behind all artistic products and can again be studied through its reflection in them.

Human history is also an interaction between man and his natural environment, and changes in this interaction, due to climatic fluctuations and changes and damage caused by human activities, are also part of our story: men had to react to all of them to survive. One also has to study the phenomena themselves, and be critical when considering opinions on them expressed by others.

If arguments for the existence of a phenomenon are proved wrong, renewed study of the phenomenon is necessary—its existence may still be correct. Equally erroneous is the argument that if a phenomenon cannot be proved with certainty to exist (1), it has no right to be considered as existent (2) and its existence should therefore be denied (3). This attitude means that we close doors through which our knowledge may one day be enlarged.

We have to steer our ship between the Scylla of telephone catalogues of objects or phenomena (data bases, which may be useful, but can never represent the final aim of a real study) and the Charybdis of free play with hypotheses, where everything may be possible, since no proofs are required for different views. Only after skilled manoeuvring between the two and taking from both what is still sound, can we try to overcome—as far as our capacities allow—both dangers.

We have to use models, but we should also bear in mind that parameters not included in the model bring unexpected possibilities into any real sequence of events. That all individual cases are determined by one general law is no longer respected in modern science, which knows many laws of only statistical validity. To paraphrase Aristotelian philosophy, induction can bring us to a certain level of probable knowledge, but above this level it is unable to give general results, while deduction can encircle the space in which the probable solution can be sought, but does not determine the individual case.

All documents must be placed where they belong, and the general subject approached from as many angles as possible: this would exclude hypotheses derived only from one-sided observations. It must, however, be stressed that the improbable may also happen.

We should not keep to schematic models or schemes: our way of thought must be moving freely over our hypotheses, which should be no more than the scaffolding helping us to reconstruct the building, scaffolding which will be taken away once our part of the building is finished. It must also be stressed that alternative explanations should always be mentioned. Some stones from our building may fall out, and the building may again take a different shape. We still have a long way to go to acquire a more thorough knowledge of the subject discussed here, but we may express the hope that some contribution to solving some problems may be found, if Klio, the Muse of history and perhaps of archaeology as well, is with us.⁶

The Bronze Age laid backgrounds of our present Europe: the story of princess Europa, kidnapped by Zeus and receiving gifts enabling safe rule, belongs here.

1.2 MYCENAEAN MODELS AND EUROPEAN PARALLELS

Minoan seals and signet rings show divinities and priestesses worshipping sacred trees, boulders, gardens and altars, dances: phenomena paralleled in most religions known to us, but some of those more specific ones suggest similar traits common to the Aegean and temperate Europe as well (AAE 43–56; Marinatos 1993; Hrubý 1958; Bouzek 1994).

In prehistoric Europe altars similar to the Aegean ones are known in clay, sometimes burned. The sanctuary from Uherský Brod, where bulls were sacrificed and their figurines also offered, reminds much of the rituals in the Bronze Age Aegean (**fig. 1**), the so-called Little Altar of Minoan-Mycenaean iconography has parallels in clay and in small bronze objects, mainly pendants (AAE 71–76). The necklace with acorns (or penises?) from the Shaft Graves has close parallel in pendant from the early MBA site at Vrcovice (**pl. B 1.3**) in South Bohemia (Hlášek et alii 2015; Pl. 21:8), where also a copy of early pithos has been found (**pl. B 1.1**). The earrings with spiral terminals from the Shaft Graves probably belonged, as already Arthur Evans thought, to princesses from far north married to Mycenaean princes; their North Balkan origin is at least very probable (AAE 53–55). Jewellery was transmitted by

6 The volume 4 (The Bronze Age, 1913) of the *Prehistory of Bohemia* brings useful discussion by L. Jiřáň. Cf. Harding, A. – Fokkes H., eds. 2013, *The Oxford Handbook of European Bronze Age*, Oxford; Kristiansen 1998; Kristiansen – Larsson 2005; Bergebrant – Sabatini, eds. 2013; Beneš 1964.

intermarriages, the princesses married to foreign rulers were ambassadors caring for their people, as we know e.g. from the story of Ester. Baltic amber was used in Mycenaean jewellery and even in Egypt (Beck – Bouzek, eds. 1993; AAE 54–58); faience and glass beads worn in many parts of moderate belt of Europe (AAE 58–60). Roundels with spiral decoration of gold and of bone, the latter with spirals drawn by compasses (**figs. 2–4**), reflect the items from the Shaft Graves of Mycenae, and even the Tumulus culture pottery took inspiration from Middle Helladic / Early Mycenaean shapes (**fig. 7**), while **fig. 6** summarizes the distribution of Mycenaean and related finds north of the Aegean, inspiring European weapons and tools (AAE 64–68, Bouzek 2011b, 40–43). Aegean Linear script was not unknown in other parts of Europe, as shown by finds from the Balkans and from other parts of Central Europe (cf. AAE, 48–91; HG 16–20; Vladár – Bartoněk 1977).⁷

What is, however, equally interesting for the study of relations between prehistoric Europe and the Aegean civilisations is the metrical system of weights.⁸

A survey of the situation of recording quantities of metals in the Aegean and in the Near East have been recently thoroughly studied by A. Michailidou, ed. (2001ab) and in the conference volume edited by Ch. Pare (2000).

WEIGHT UNITS

In all these areas, metal was costly and was measured and weighed carefully. This concerned all metals known during the Bronze Age—bronze, gold and silver. Large amounts of metal were in state or public possession usually (royal, temples, holders of higher administrative positions) but less valuable amounts belonging to private people (and sometimes larger with the tradesmen) were also subjects of inheriting, selling and other transformations of ownership. Generally, there is a close resemblance between the situation in the Near East and in the Aegean in the distribution system of metals (cf. also Gillis et alii, eds. 1996). In prehistoric Europe, the system also worked as a kind of exchange-redistribution pattern, accepted on large territories and enabling access to metal even to small village units in all Bronze Age European “cultures”.

Weights of bronze, lead or of stone were of various shapes and also of different materials in different parts of the Mediterranean and of temperate Europe (cf. esp. the series from the Uluburun shipwreck, Pulak 2000, and those from Kea, Petruso 1992, with Pare 1999; Ruiz Gálvez 2000), and with the Italian weights (Cardarelli et alii 2001; Peroni 2001; Bossi 2001; Cattani 2001;

7 Cf. also Bernstorff, Gebhard 1999, and Gebhard – Rieder 2002; Bouzek 2008; Briard 1987.

8 Revisited summary of paper presented to the Eogan Festschrift.

Maggiani 2001). Small balances are known not from the Eastern Mediterranean only, but from several parts of Central Europe as well (esp. Pare 1999, with examples illustrated). Shapes of weights were not identical even in the Near East and in the Aegean, and they were of different materials. A group of stone weights is known from Bronze Age Italy (**fig. 12**), while most of weights known from Central and Western Europe are of bronze (**fig. 8**). Balances are known from all parts of the world compared here, scale-beams even from prehistoric Europe (**fig. 11**). While the ideas behind weighing and weight units were common property, the shapes of weights show local varieties.

The Aegean weight units have been studied for many years and are generally well known (cf. esp. Michailidou, ed. 2001ab; Ruiz Gálvez 2000). For small weight units in the Aegean, there are two main calculations. Petruso (1978ab) came to 61.5 g and Parise to 65.27 g (Ruiz Gálvez 2000). The main Aegean sub-unit was probably 6.7 g (between 6.5 and 6.8 g); the system was binary.

J. Eiwanger (1989, 449) came in his analysis to two possible weights for the talent in prehistoric Europe. One was calculated from the hoard of Fényháza in Hungary (31 439.7 g), and another from the Eberswalde hoard (31,437.3 g). Both are reasonably similar to the Aegean talent, and the differences between these two are very small. The standard measures are especially typical for gold hoards. He takes the small unit known from many parts of Europe as 55.21 g. For the bronze objects he sees the standard unit ca. 12 and 17 g (o. c. p.). The calculations of Bronze Age weight units in large parts of Europe show that these areas used the Mycenaean weight units for weighing metals. Malmer (1992) had also 26.6 g as a quarter unit, 107.07 as the basic unit. Ch. Pare (1999) calculates with 12.2 g, what is 1/5 of the Mycenaean unit of 61 g. 24.4 g is 1/20 of 4.888 g. For Br D the usual units were 6.9 g and 31 g, for the final Bronze Age the unit as far as known was ca. 27 g. R. Peroni calculates the main weight unit as ca. 26 g, a second as 62–63 g; there existed also their multiplications and fractions. Even if there are small differences in present calculations (ancient people did not measure as exactly as our modern machines), there is an apparent relation between the Bronze Age Aegean, Italic and European systems. Cardarelli et alii (2001) came to an unit ca. 52–53 g, well comparable with the 26 g unit.

The collapse of the Mycenaean civilization around 1200 brought changes into the generally accepted system, and the shekel (7.9 g) became the main international weight unit (Ruiz Gálvez 2000). Multiple units known are: 36–37 g = 5 shekels; 79 g = 10 shekels; 160 g = 20 shekels; 296 = 35 shekels; 320 g = 40 shekels.

ELITES

Two conferences published by the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum at Mayence “Eliten in der Bronzezeit, 1999” brought in two volumes parallel analyses of the elites systems of Bronze Age in the Aegean and in temperate Europe. This colloquium helped to remind us of many resemblances in the systems of Bronze Age societies in both compared parts of the ancient world. All areas with *élites* of similar character apparently had some compatible systems of administration, diplomatic interrelations, distribution and redistribution of metals. Even if on a more primitive level in temperate Europe, the general traits of the Central European elites “administration” resembled that of the Minoan and Mycenaean palace economy.

These social systems and the general way of life of these elites (kings-priests and their sub-leaders, priests etc.) were compatible to each other to a certain degree, understandable in their basic traits to the political and economic partners even in distant areas. The common system of values in social life facilitated a large-scale “trade” with metals, the most important raw materials for any part of the Bronze Age world (cf. Eogan 1990, 1997).

It is also very probable that this spread of a system of ideas and beliefs included a connection between metals, planets and their divinities: copper was connected with Astarte and Aphrodite-Venus, tin with the predecessors of Zeus-Jupiter in the ancient world. Gold jewellery was connected with the Sun. All literary sources of the ancient Near East and Egypt document that the religious and secular domains were not separated, smelting metals was connected with some rituals and sacrifices, and the spread of metallurgy should thus be connected with a sophisticated system of thoughts and beliefs which formed the content of mind of ancient Europeans and of their Near Eastern relatives as well (cf. also Hansen 1999). Two new finds deserve a special mention:

One of them is the disc from Nebra (Gillis - Risberg - Gleirscher 2007), another the amber beads with marks similar to Aegean Linear scripts from Bernstorff, Ldkr. Freising in Bavaria (Gebhard 1999, Gebhard - Rieder 2002). Other important contribution to this subject represents the book by Vladimír Podborský on the religion of early Europeans (2006). The question of religious parallels and relations in this field seems to be now in the focus of interest (Whittaker, ed. 2008; Baray 2008; cf. Hiller 1984).

The religious ideas of the Central European people arrived to Greece across the Adriatic mainly during the Late Bronze Age. It concerns the hoards (Bouzek 1985 and A. Mozsolics 1985-2001), amber, its use with solar wheel, and gold discs with spirals. The items well known from the West Bohemian Tumulus culture have close analogies in South Italy and also in the Delos and Tiryns treasures (cf. **fig. 5**), European weapons, tools (**fig. 6**) and even