

(Western) Mediterranean and central Europe  
in the Urnfield period

=

Late Bronze Age (here) – Early Iron Age (there)

=

1300/1200 – 750/700/600 aC

POPELNICOVÁ POLE

URNFIELDS

CHAMPS D'URNES

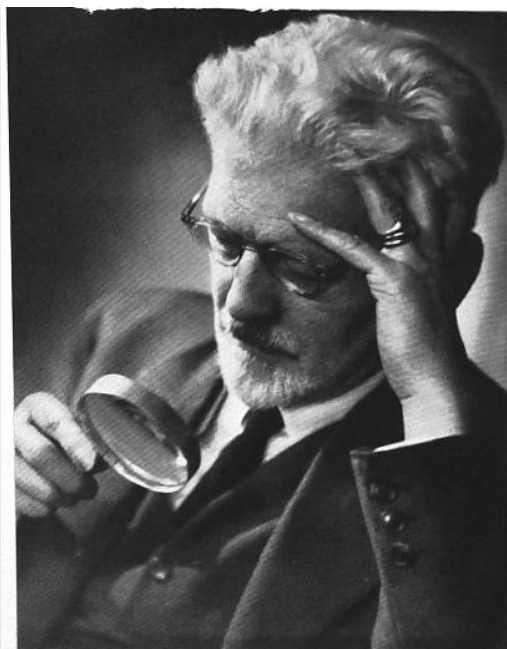
URNENFELDER

CAMPI DELLE URNE

...



Oskar Montelius  
(1843-1921)



Gero von Merhard  
(1886-1959)



Hermann  
Müller-Karpe  
(1925-2013)



Jan Bouzek  
(1935-2020)



Kristian Kristiansen  
(1948)

-(Late) Bronze Age as a period particularly favoured for study of interaction between CE and Mdtrrn  
-transalpine interaction a principal research topic of some of the greatest figures in the history of the field  
-some of these figures excessively over-optimistic about these contacts

## Late (Recent) Bronze Age

1300(-1100)-800 aC

### Urnfield cultures

-a complex of archaeological groups

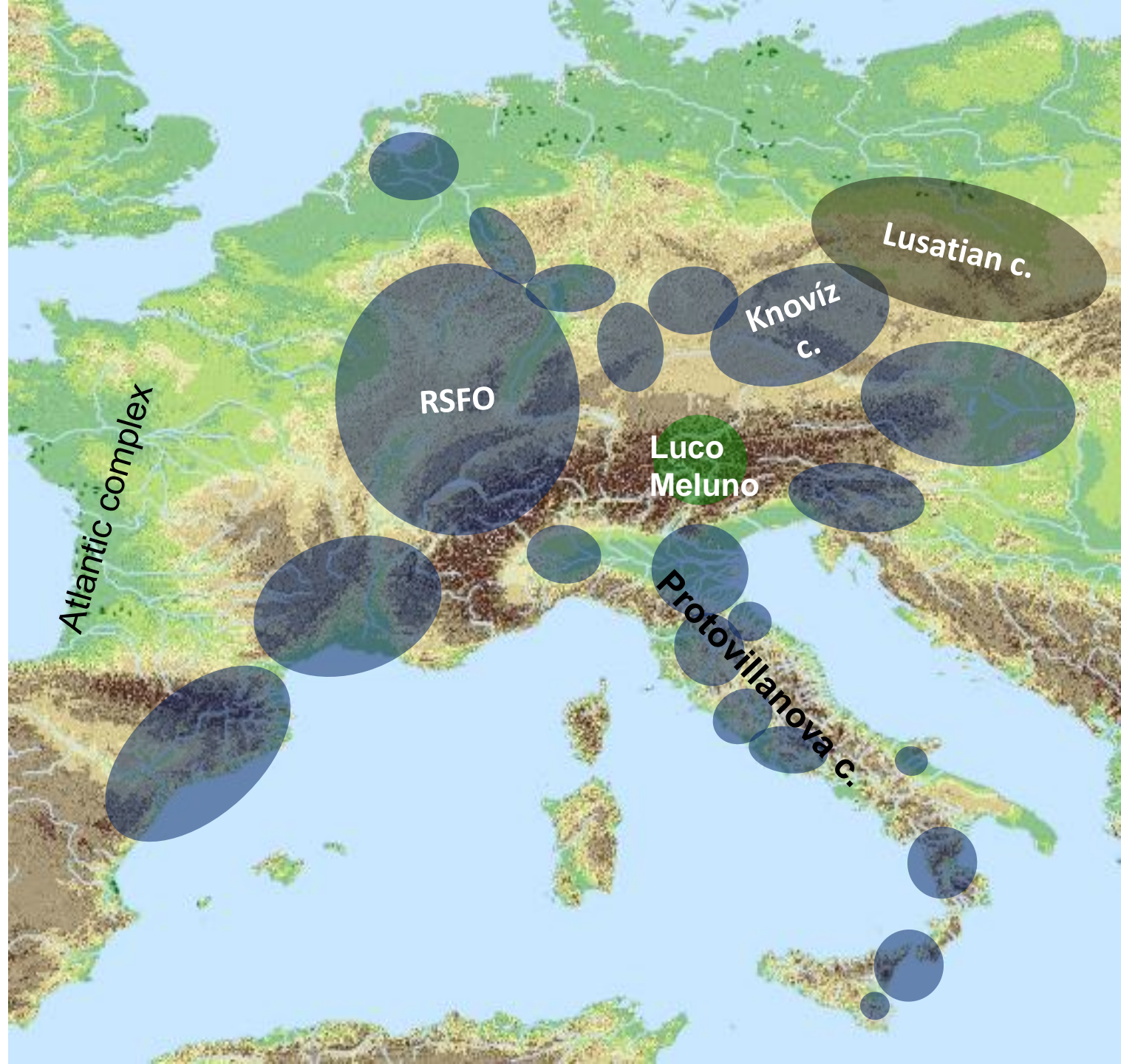
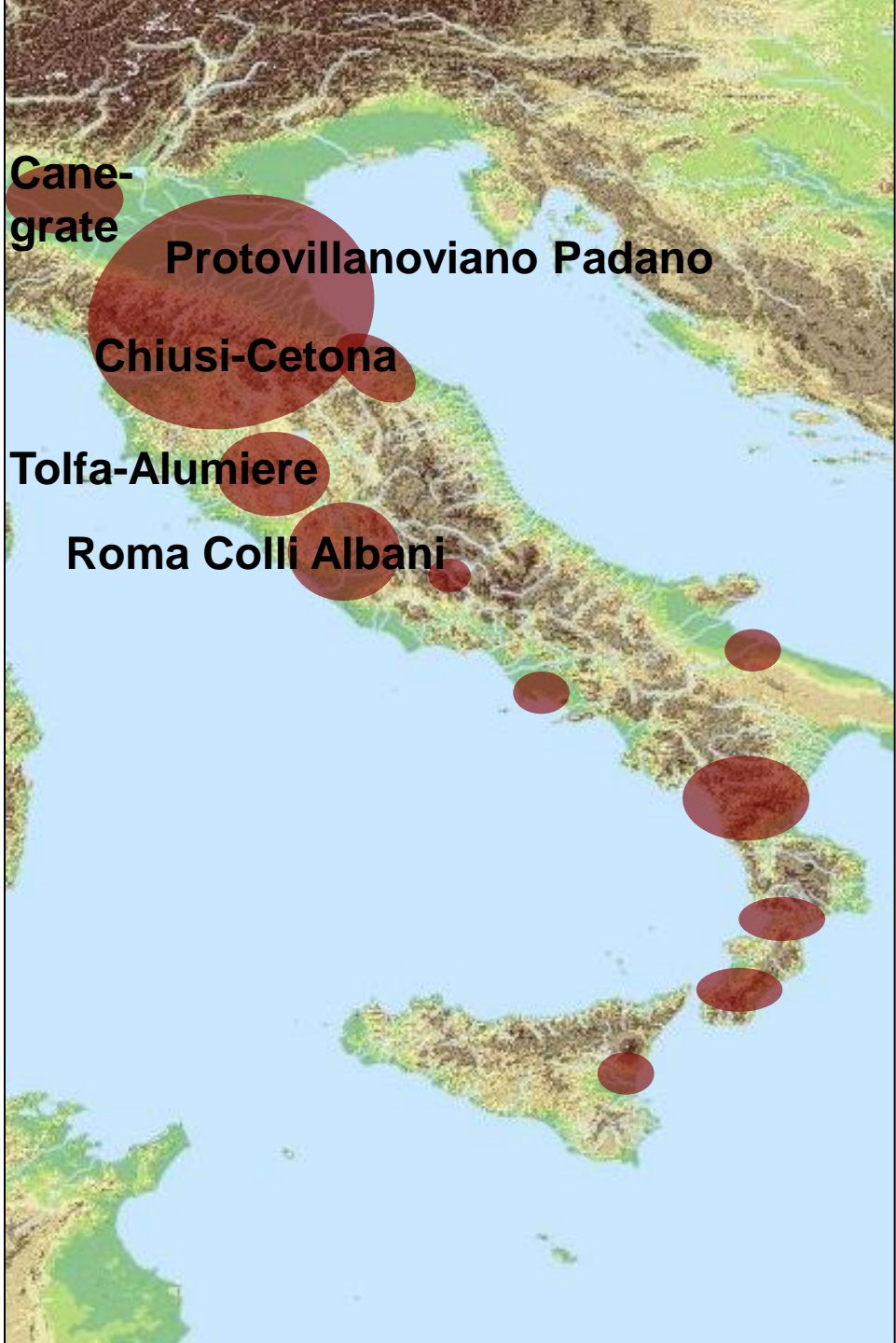
-covering larger part of Europe

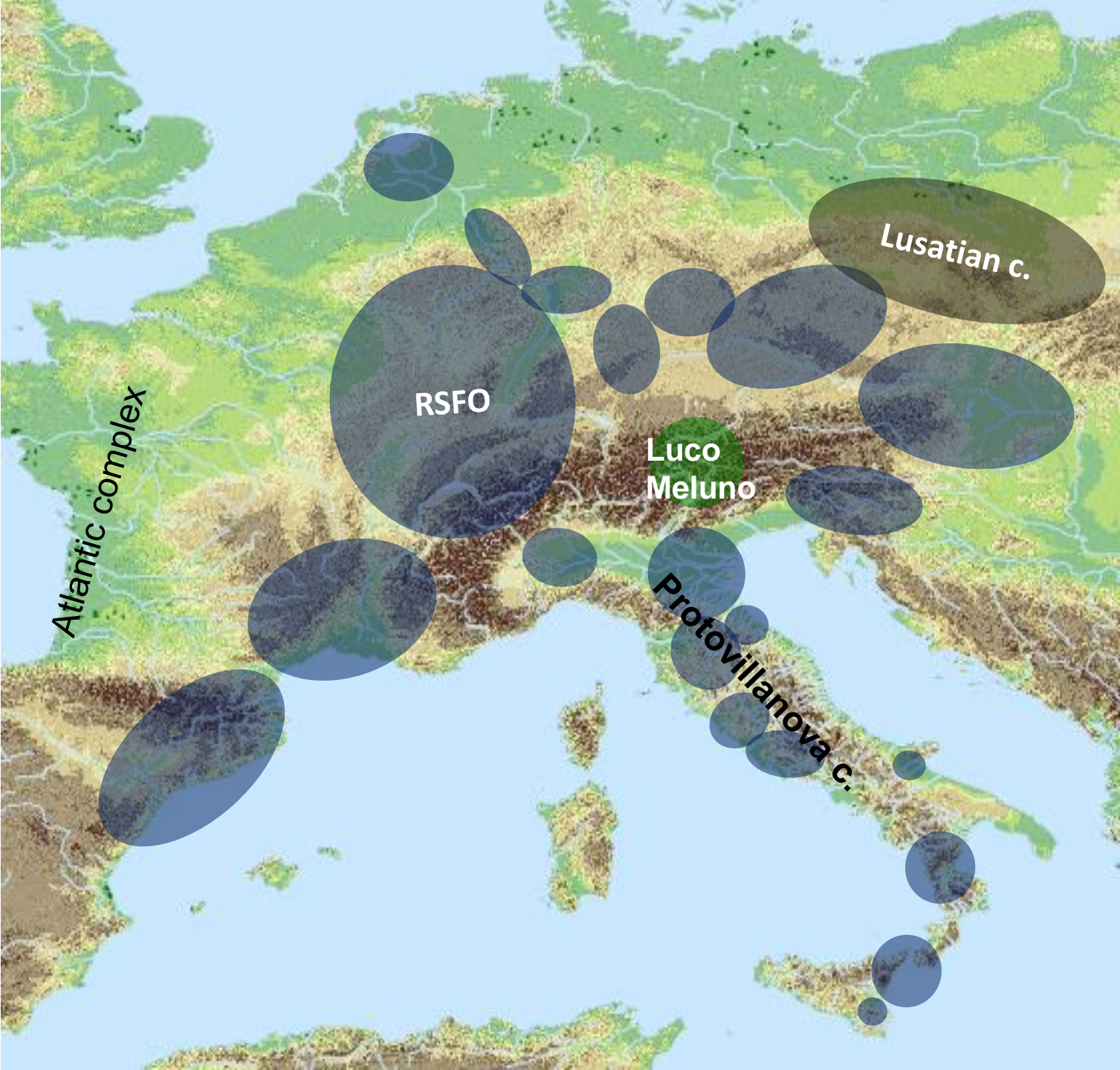
-sharing some ritual and material features

-....differing in others

-in most areas it evolved into Early Iron Age cultures







1300  
1200  
1100  
1000  
900  
750  
600

**Sub-apennine c.** Proto-villanoviano Villanova c.

**Terramare** Proto-villanoviano Este c, Villanova c.

Canegrate Golasecca c.

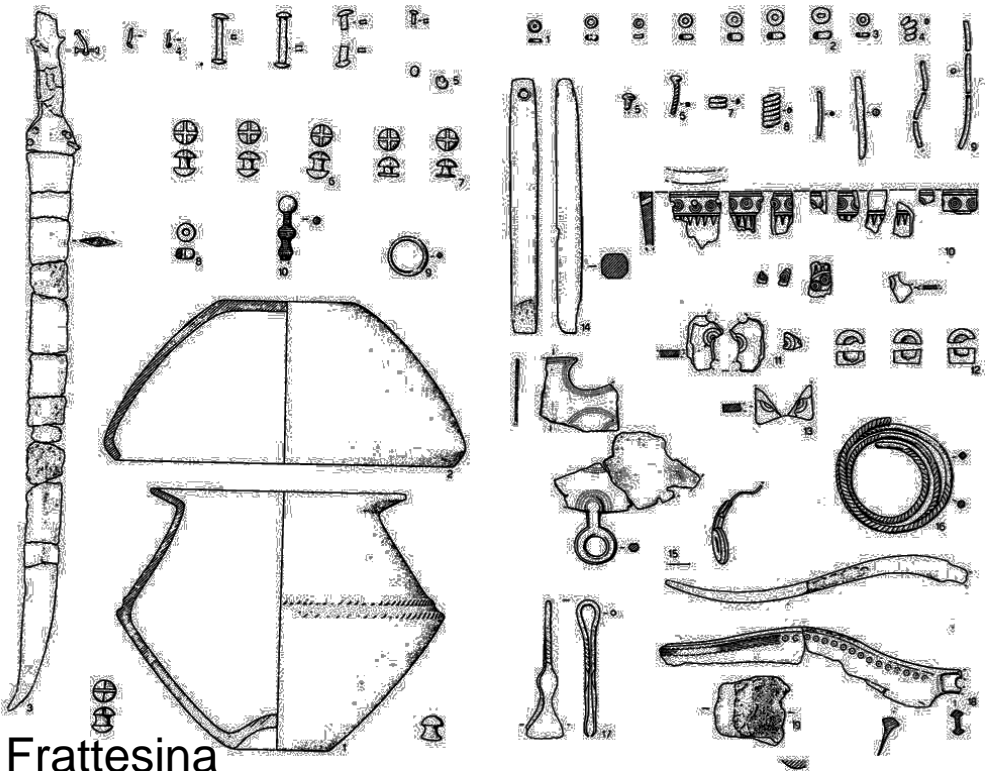
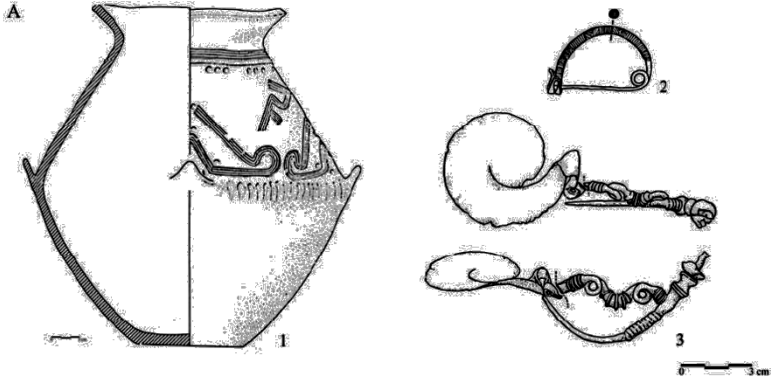
Lusatian c. Silesia – Platěnice c.

**Tumuli c.** Knovíz c. Štítary c. Bylany c.

Br C Br D Ha A1 Ha A2 Ha B1 Ha B3 Ha C Ha D

1300  
1200  
1100  
1000  
900  
750  
600

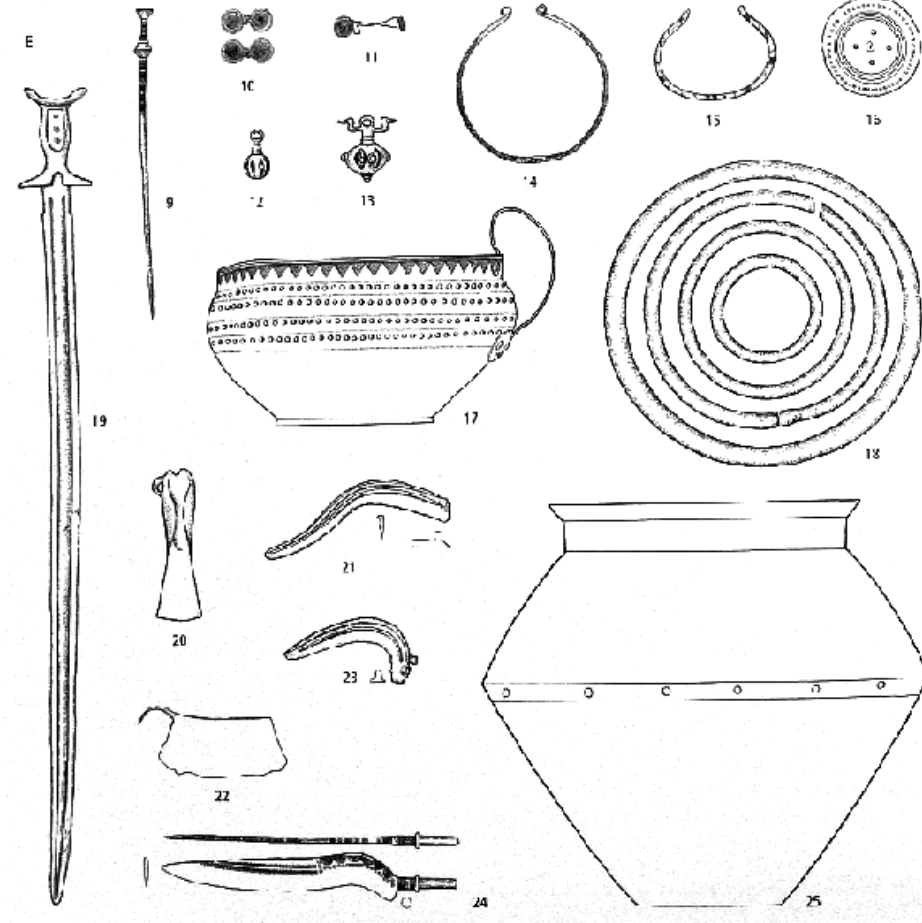
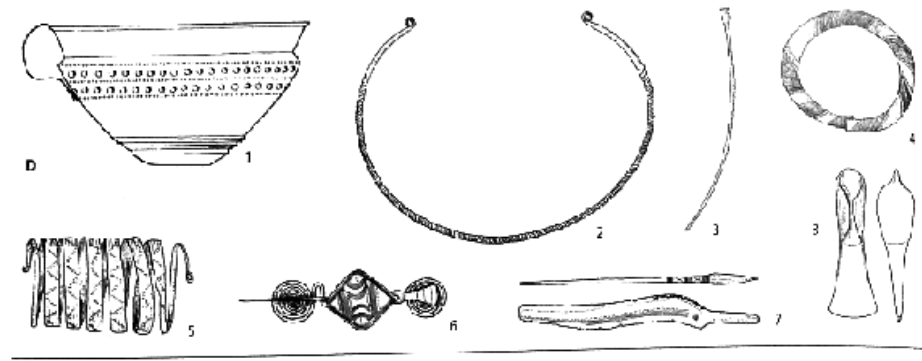
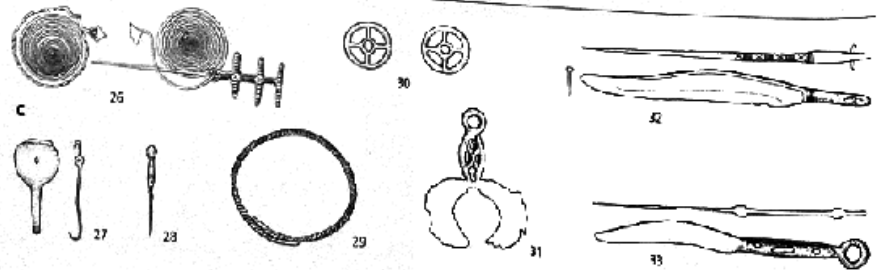
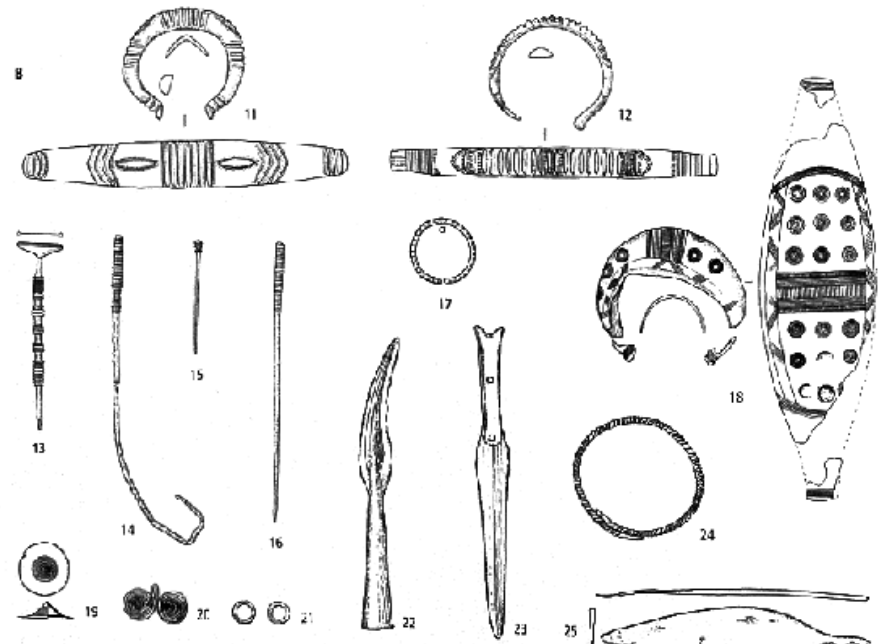
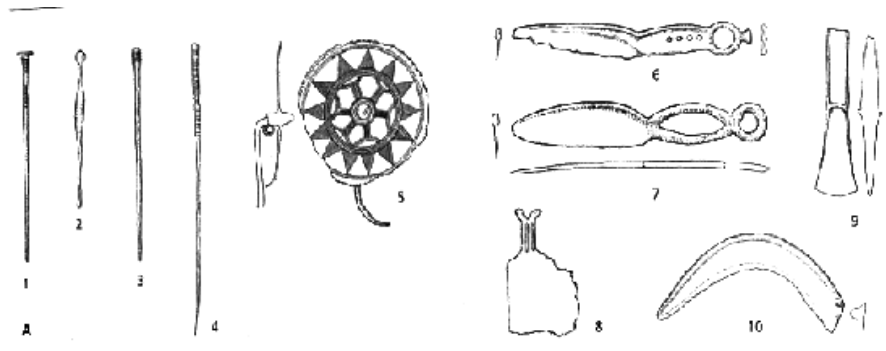
**Middle Bronze Age** **Late Bronze Age** **Early Iron Age**



Frattesina

- cremation in an urn
- none or minimal gravegoods directly in the urn
- only few burials per cemetery
  
- exceptional burials under tumuli and rich gravegoods ←
  
- countless local varieties of burials

# hoards

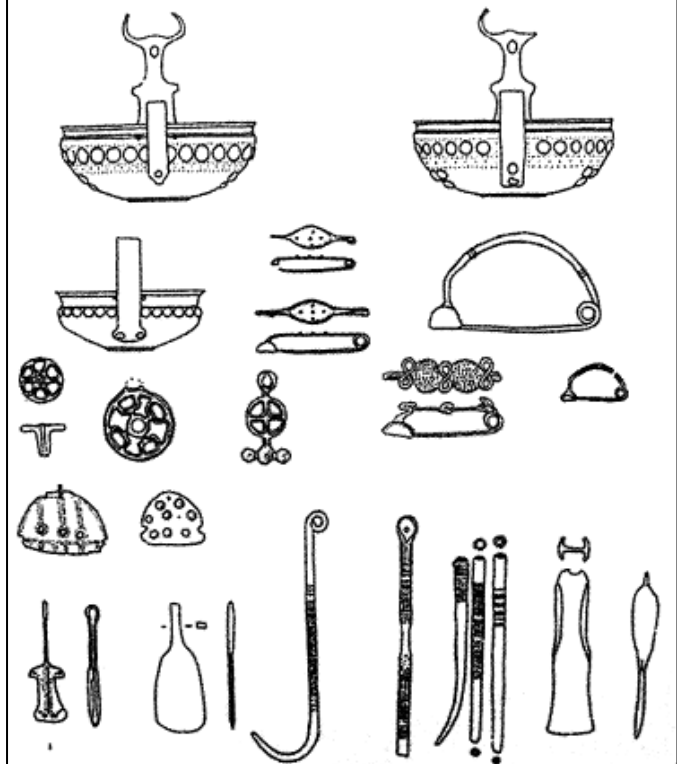


-objects hoarded in Bohemia  
→

# hoards

-a phenomenon shared between both sides of the Alps in terms of the practice itself and of the types of hoarded objects

Tolfa-Allumiere, il ripostiglio di Coste del Marano



← two examples of hoards from Italy →



Carrara







Shared iconography = Shared beliefs?

-from Scandinavia through Central Europe, Mediterranean and the Balkans

-recurrent and systematic use of identical symbolism and its identical stylisation

-ships, birds, wheels, horses  
=> shared solar cult ?

Trundholm, DK



Acholshausen, DE



Este, It



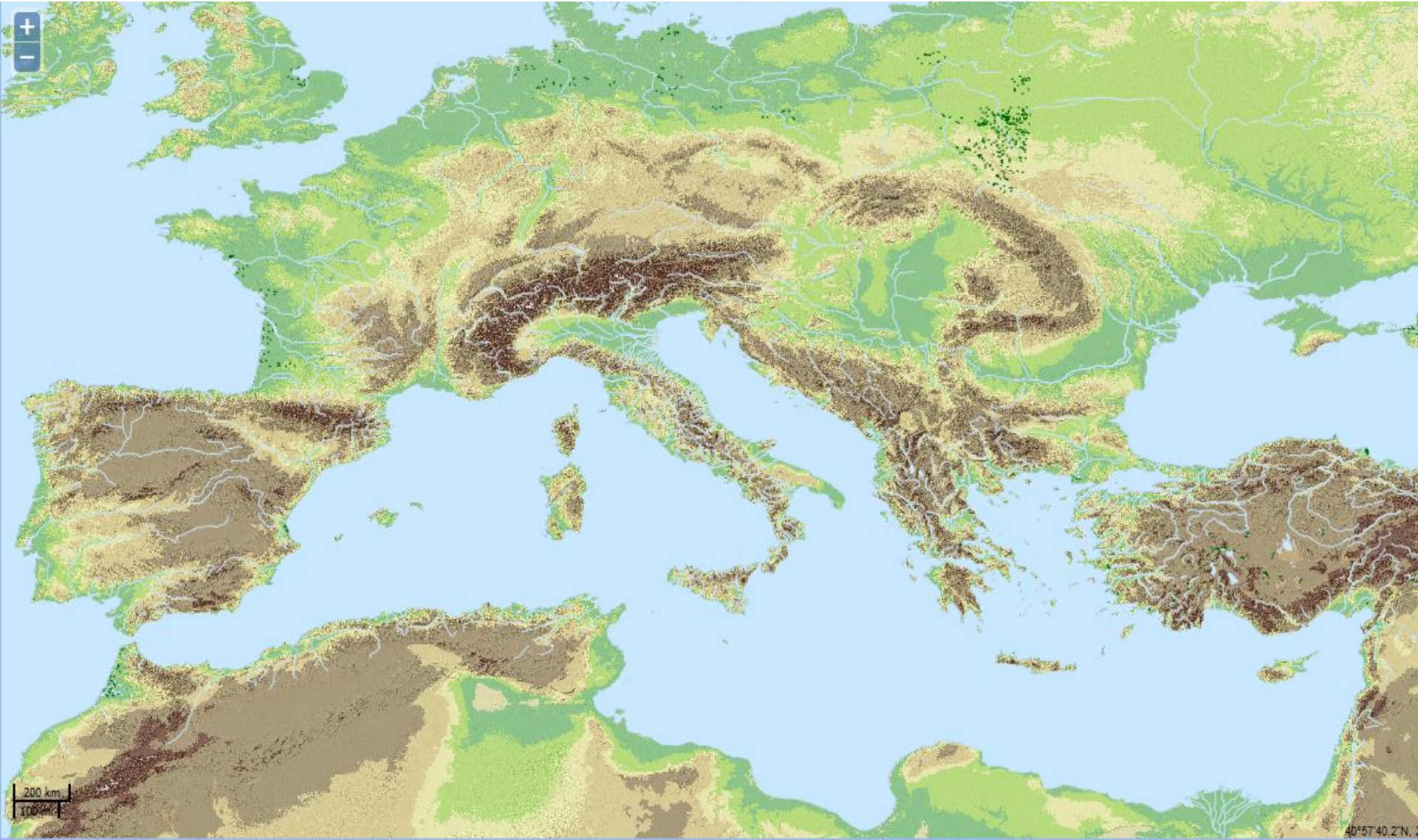
Tarquinius, It

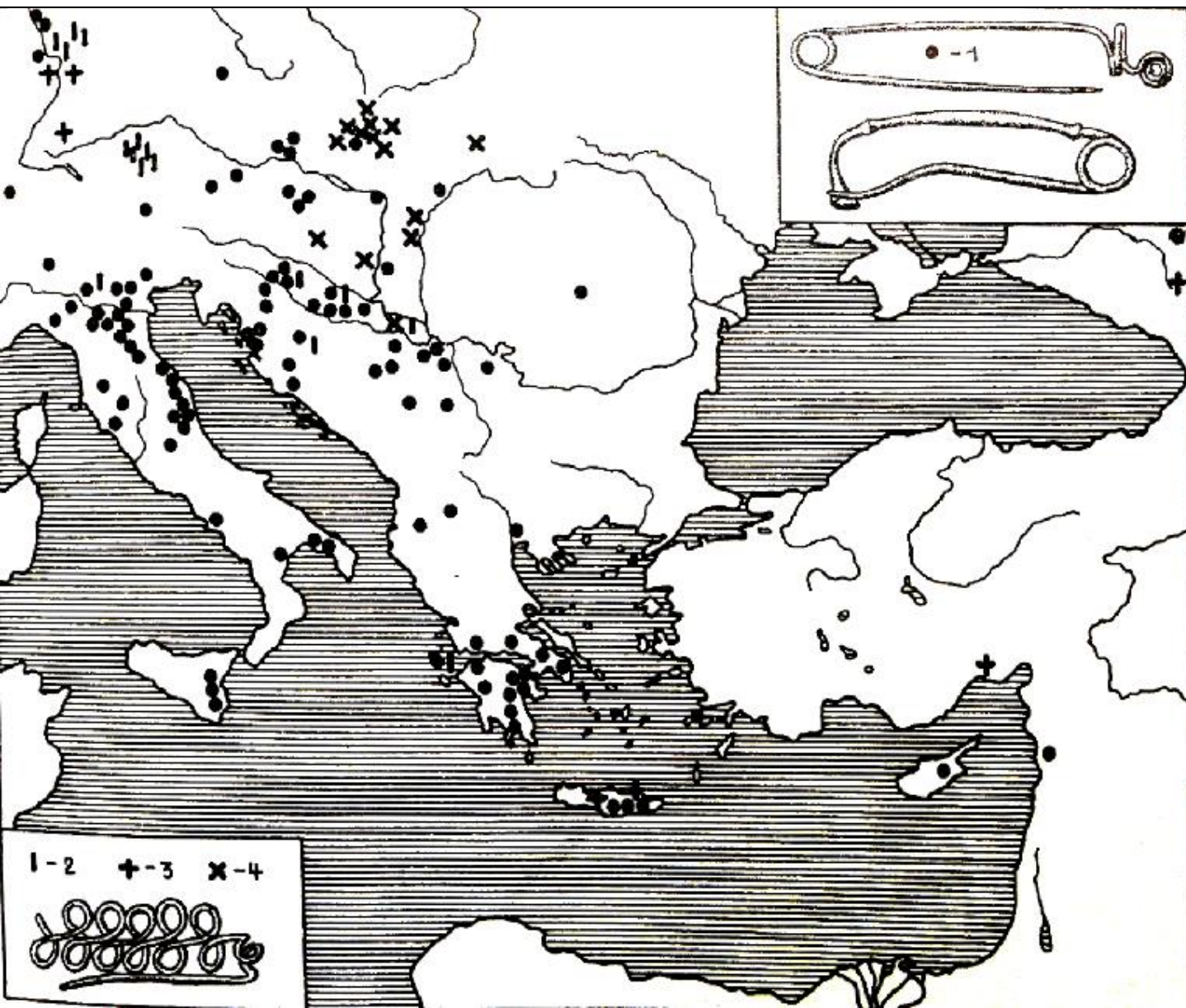


# Transregional contacts at the beginning of the Urnfield period (ca. 1300–1200/1150 BC)

-a well established network of transregional contacts based on raw materials exchange

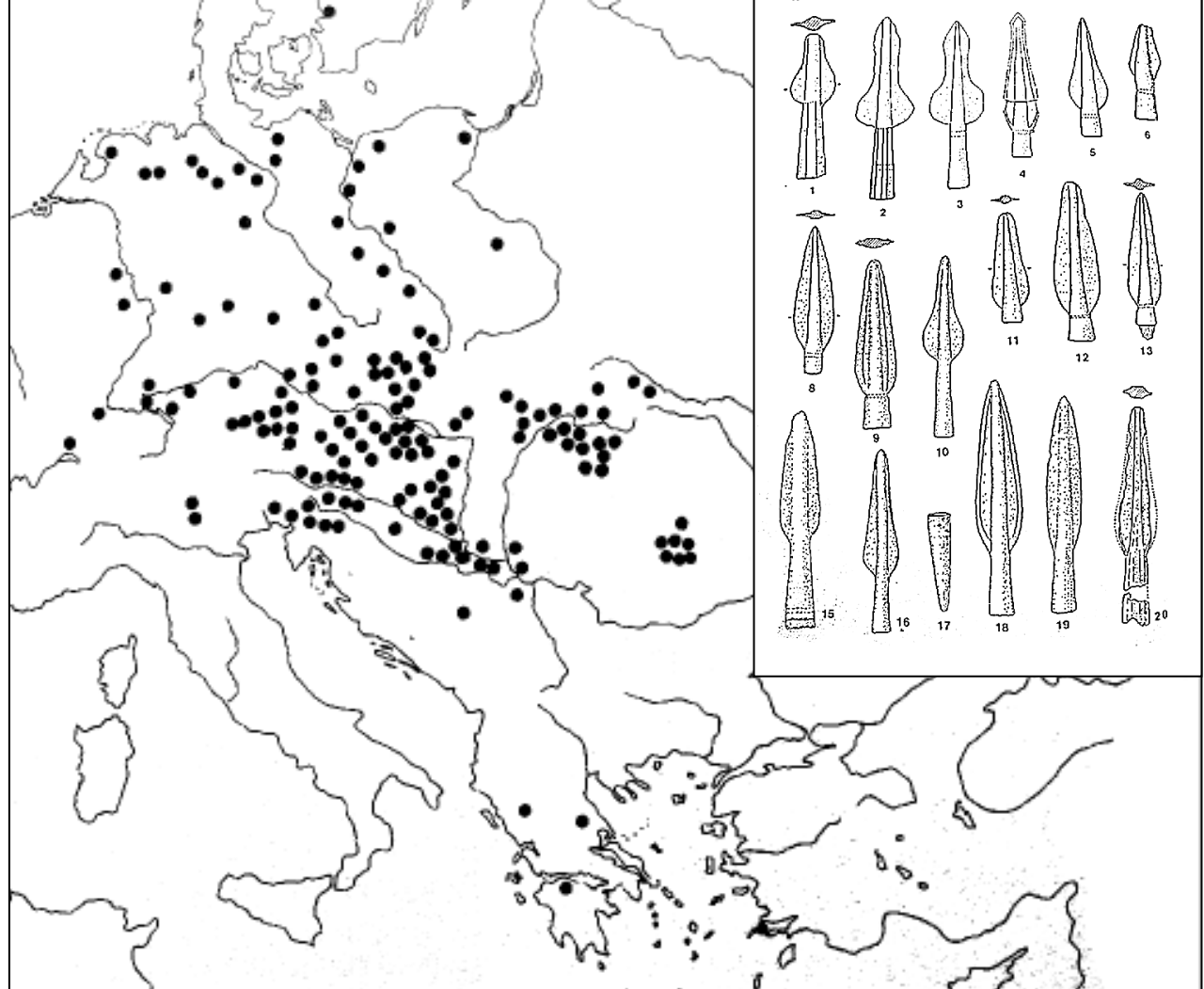
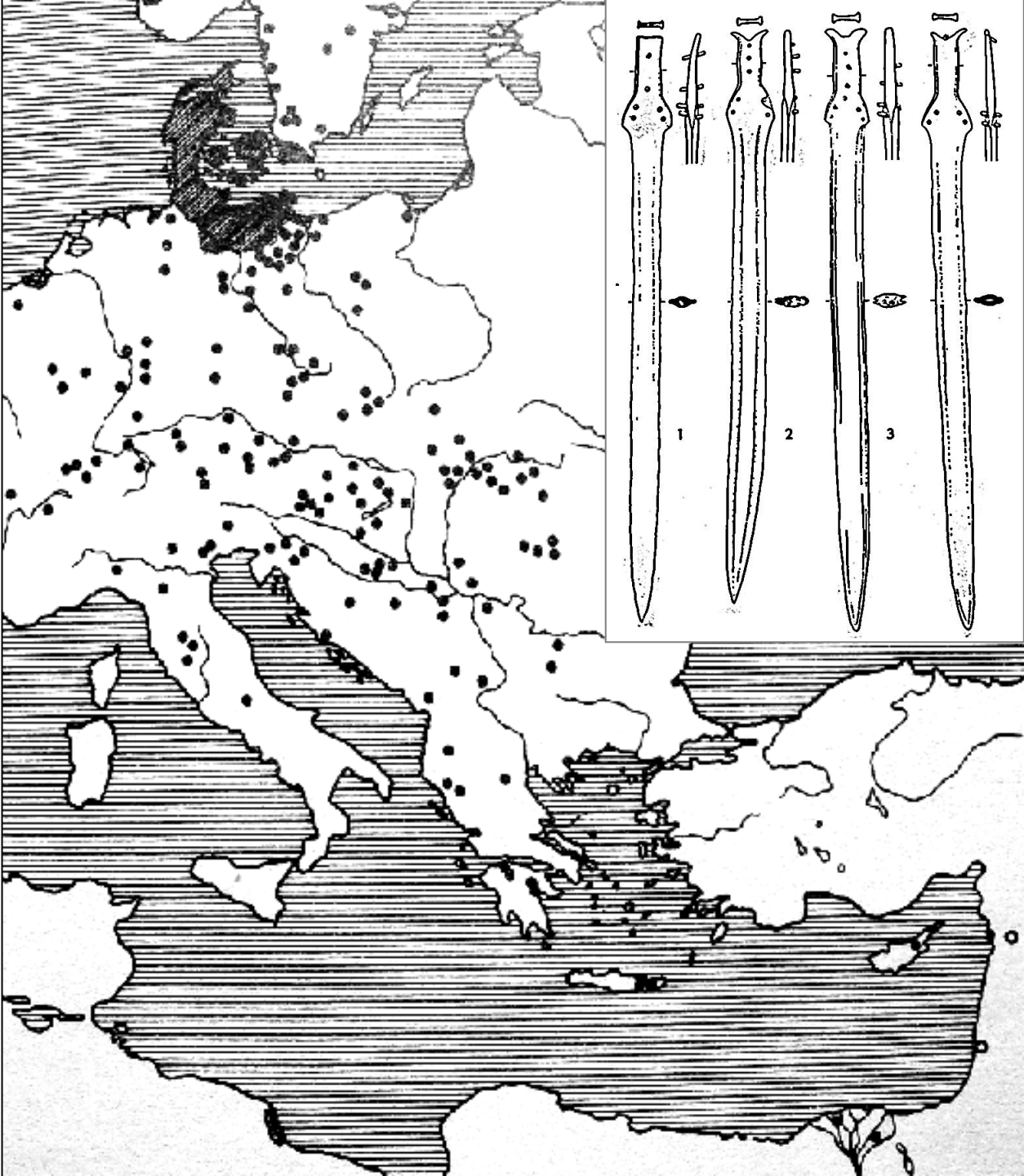
-strong players in the system including Mycenaean Greece, Hittite and Egyptian empires



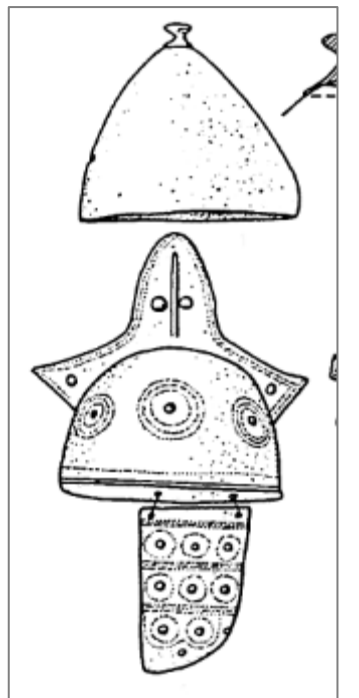
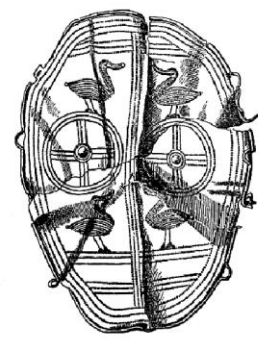
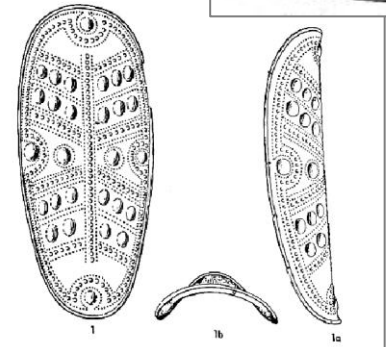
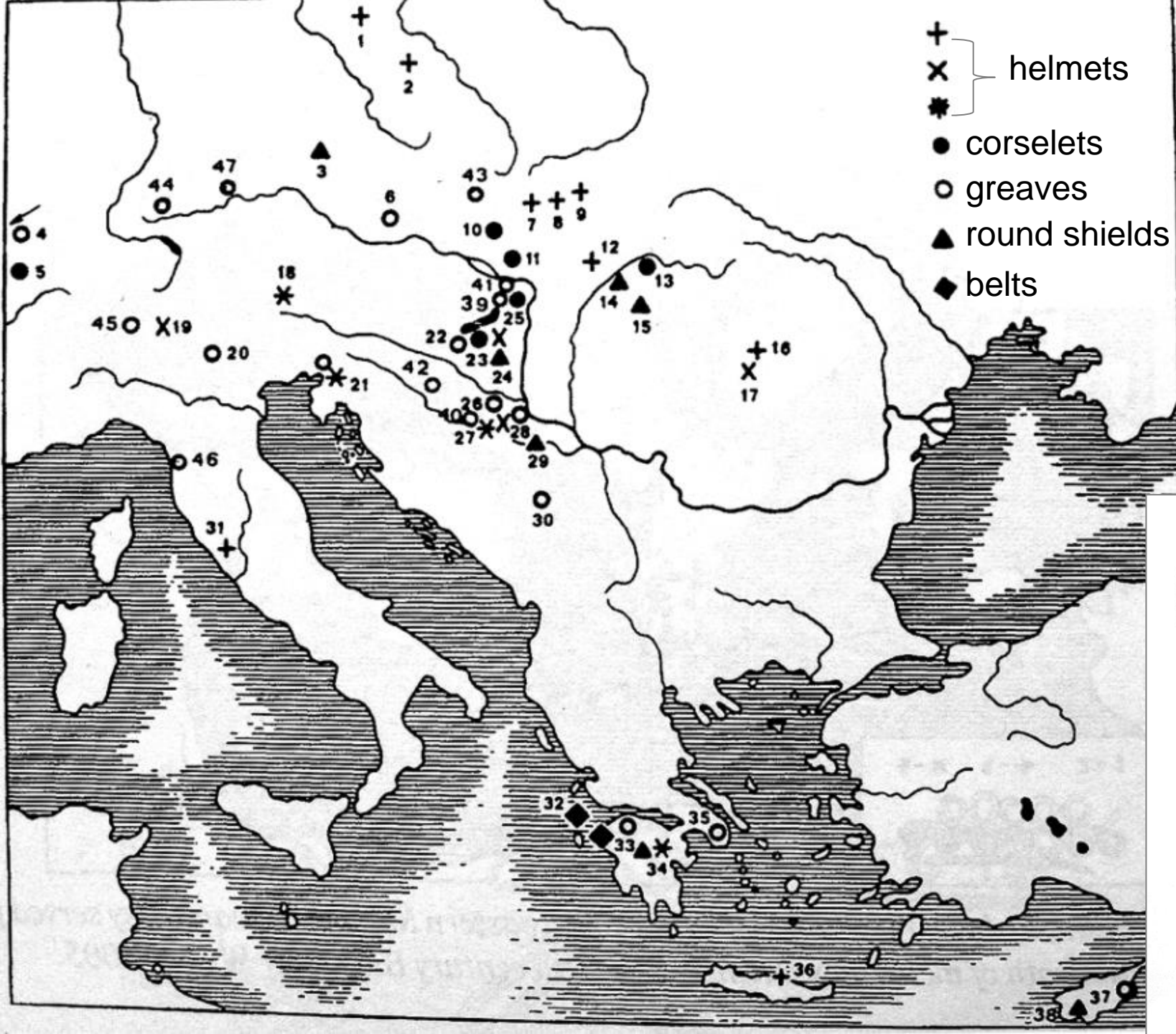


-new types of artefacts come to existence and get widespread throughout Europe

← brooches



-appearance and pan-European diffusion of new types of weaponry and armour => new way of waging war  
 -mobile warriors migrating in small groups from central Europe and Italy to the Aegean  
 -swords of Naue II type and lanceolate spearheads



-the majority of finds of Urnfield culture weaponry in the Aegean apparently comes from Italy

[https://www.academia.edu/4972900/Mycenaean\\_Greece\\_and\\_Bronze\\_Age\\_Italy\\_Cooperation\\_Trade\\_or\\_War](https://www.academia.edu/4972900/Mycenaean_Greece_and_Bronze_Age_Italy_Cooperation_Trade_or_War)

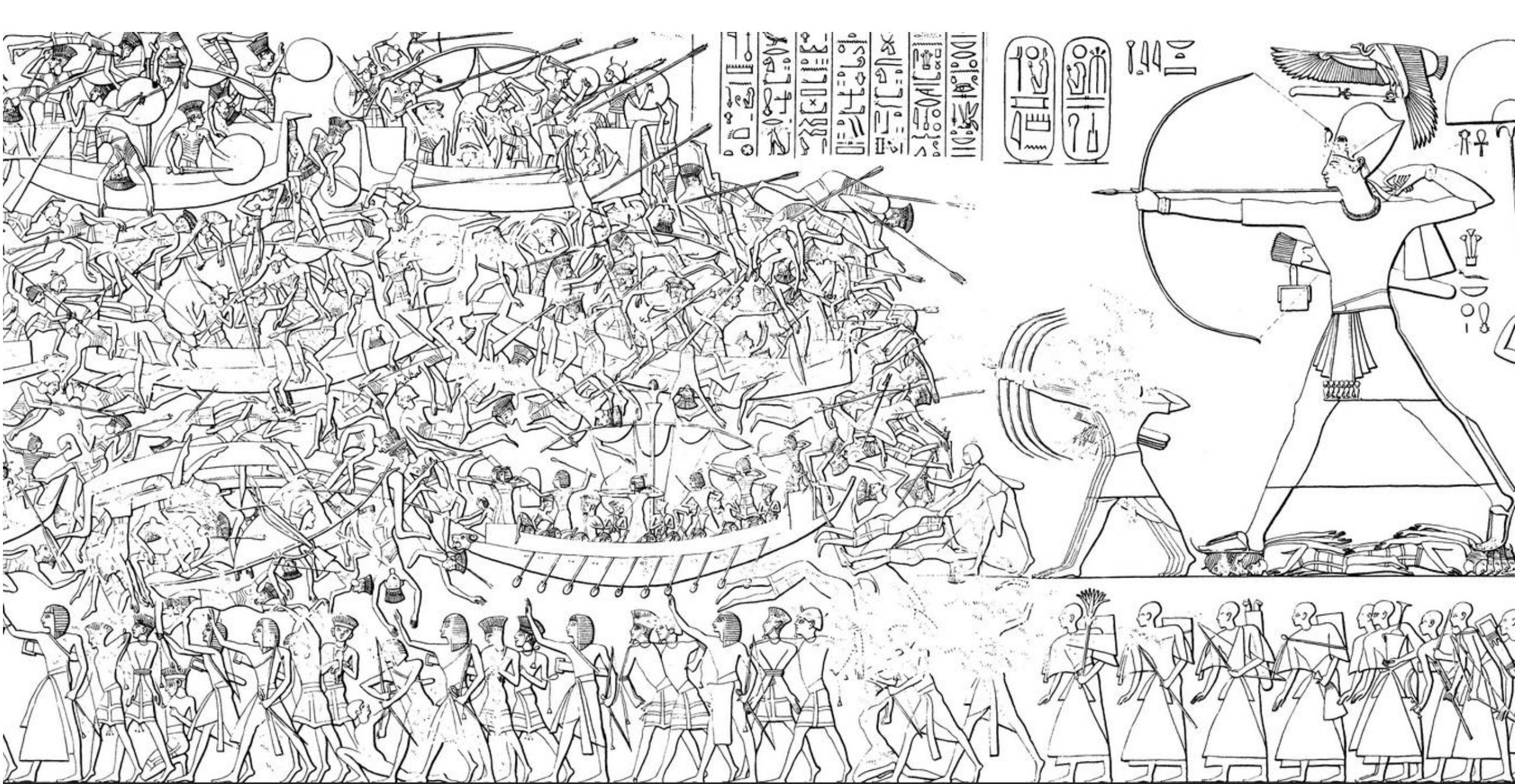


⇒ Communities of people of Italian (or generally European?) origin arriving in Greece and the Near East as mercenaries (?) or (soon-to-be) conquerors

⇒ Ca 1200 BC Mycenaean palaces come to their end

⇒ Ca 1210/1150 BC incursions of Sea peoples on Levantine Coast and Egypt

⇒ Collapse of Bronze Age system throughout Europe and the Near East



Medinet Habu – Ramesses III defeats the invasion of Sea Peoples

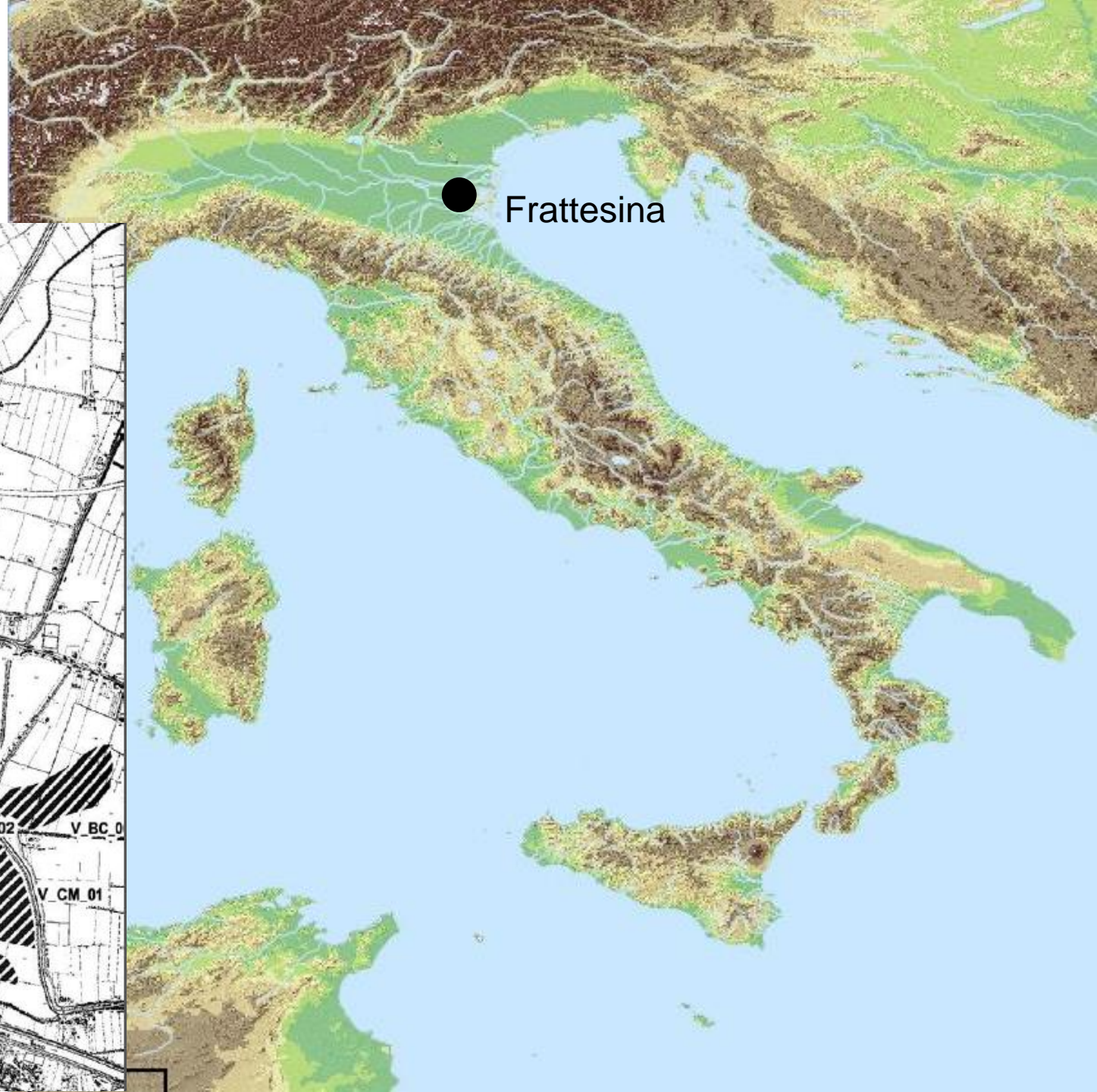


# Transregional contacts in the Later Urnfield period (ca 1200 – 800 aC)

- collapse of previously established networks
- disappearance of Mycenenan civilisation
- disintegration of Hetite empire
- marginalisation of Egypt



-in the Western Mediterranean, the only site of higher social complexity and building in some ways on the earlier social and economic models is Frattesina in the Po delta

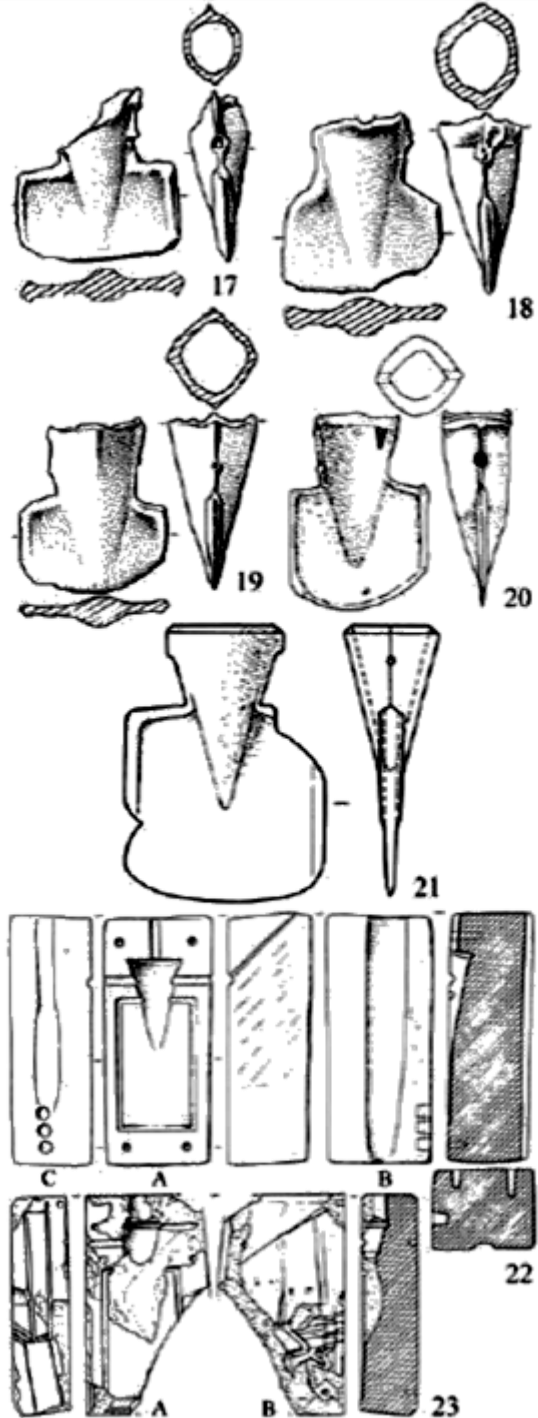


-13<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> c. BC

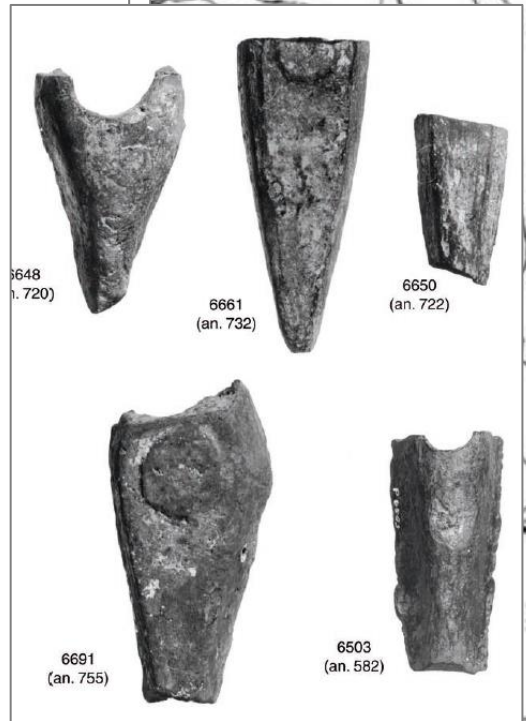
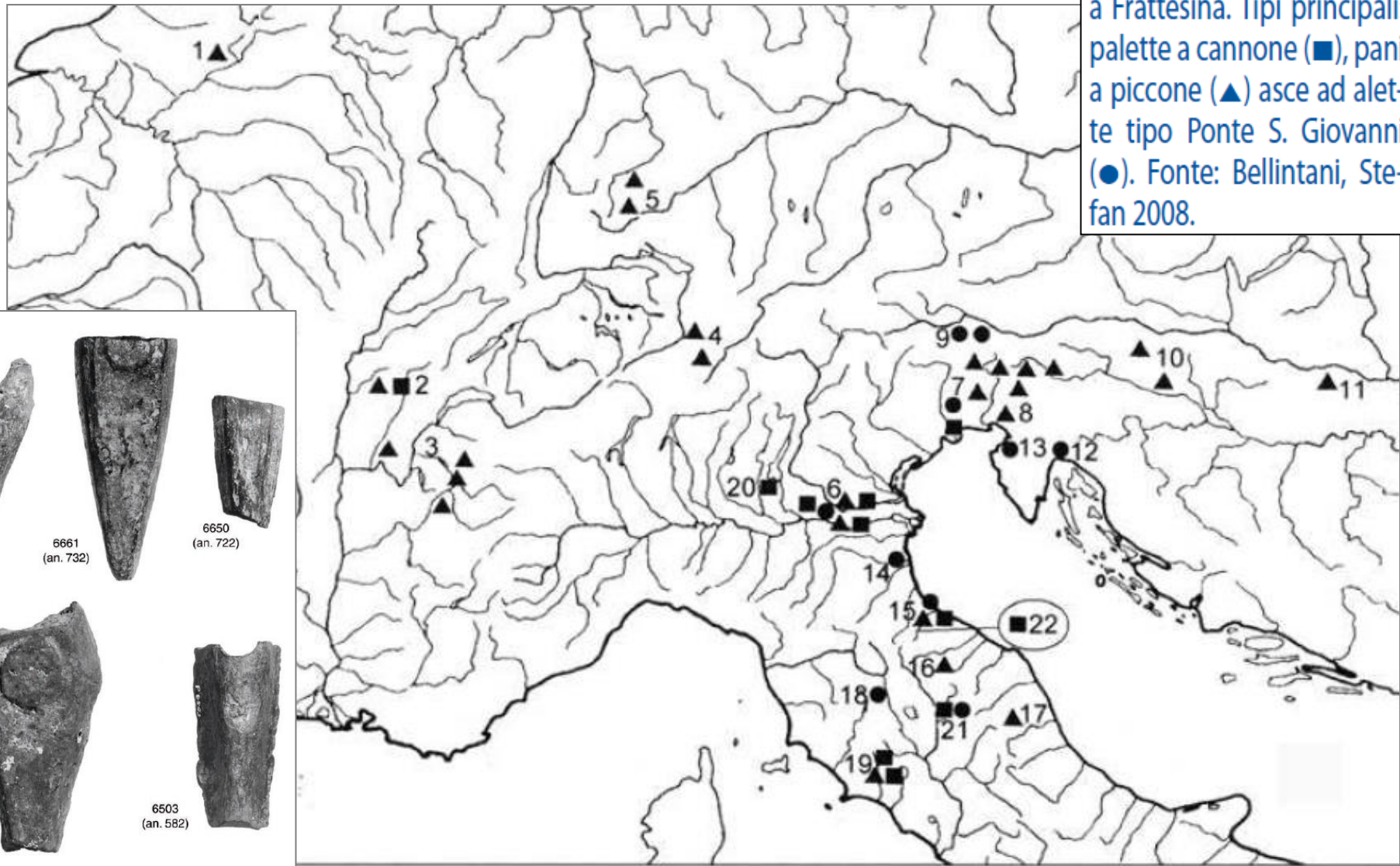
-a settlement area (ca 20 ha) and cemeteries in vicinity

-long distance trade and concentration of specialised production





-bronze smelting:  
 -shovel- and pick-shaped ingots cast in Frattesina  
 and distributed widely accross Italy and the Alpine area



Distribuzione in direzione delle regioni centrali della penisola italiana e dell'Europa di manufatti metallici documentati in particolare a Frattesina. Tipi principali: palette a cannone (■), pani a piccone (▲) asce ad alette tipo Ponte S. Giovanni (●). Fonte: Bellintani, Stefan 2008.

- working of bone, antler, ivory (!), and ostrich eggs (!!!)
- glass
- amber
- .....



# Frattesina and glass

large scale production of glass beads



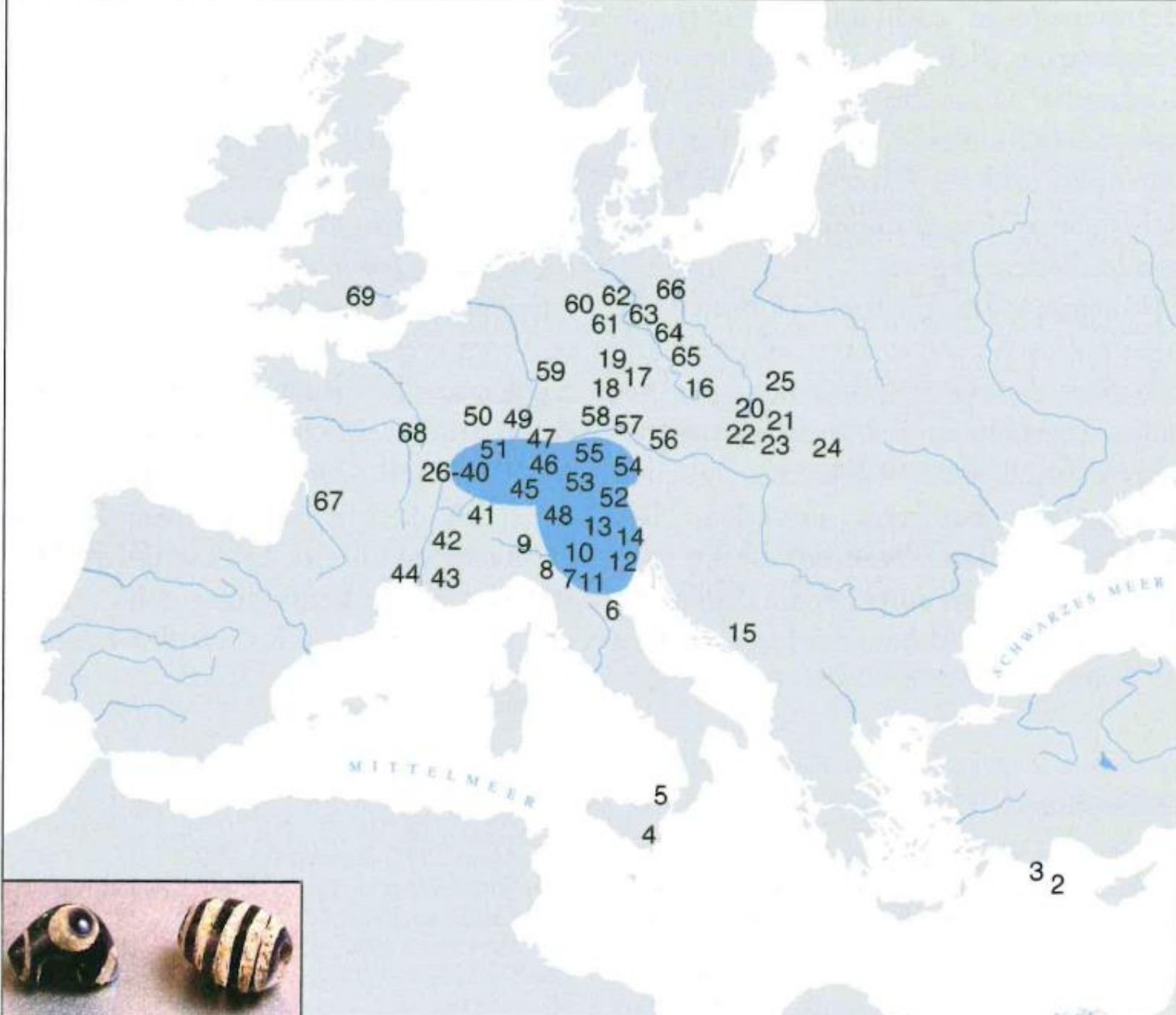
Raw glass



Glass coated pottery (!)



crucibles



- glass of alkali type in which the flux used was made of plant ashes
- its characteristic chemical signature made it possible to trace the Frattesina glass beads throughout Italy and Transalpine Europe (P. Bellintani)
- after the demise of Frattesina the alkali glass recipe got lost and was only reintroduced in the Middle ages



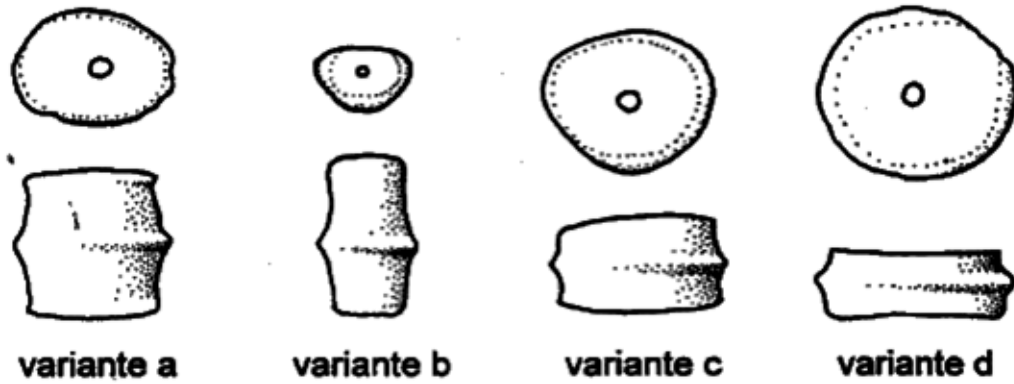
## Frattesina amber working

-amber of Baltic origin

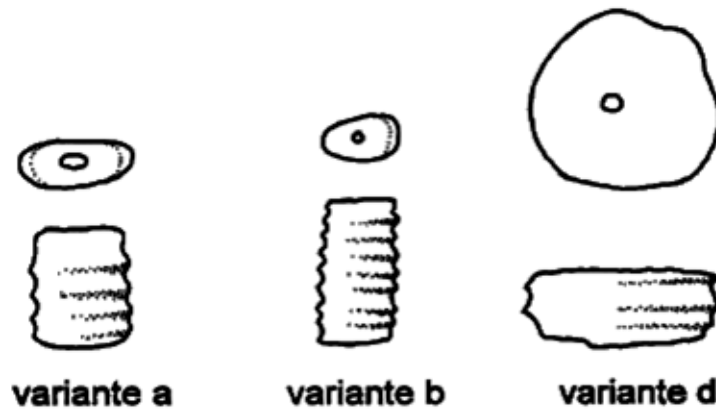
-local production of bead types Tyrins and Allumiere, which are widespread in the the whole of Mediterranean and represent the most common amber artefacts in Late bronze Age

-Tyrins type beads are named after find from the Mycenenan palace in Tyrins where beads of this form were found arranged in a weird circular ornament

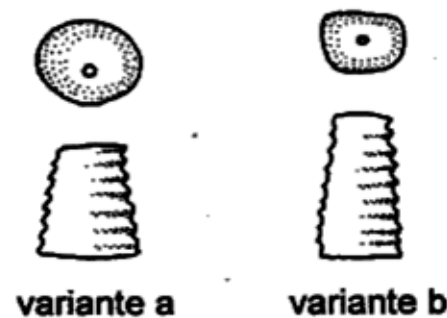
### VAGHI TIPO TIRINTO



### VAGHI TIPO ALLUMIERE CILINDRICI



### VAGHI TIPO ALLUMIERE TRONCOCONICI





⇒ the Urnfield culture(s) = **unifying element of cis- and transalpine Europe**

⇒ (±) **koiné** of bronze **artefacts**, funerary rite (=ideology), **iconography** (=religion) and a net of (unconspicuous) contacts from the Baltic to Sicily, from the Rhine delta to Crete and from Catalunya to Palestine

⇒ unity as a departure point of the following development

**FROM  
THE BRONZE  
TO THE  
IRON AGE  
(900–700 BC)**

-900 BC is conventionally considered the beginning of the Iron Age in Italy

-rather than large scale appearance of Iron it marks beginning of significant cultural and social transformations





-at ca. 900 BC Frattesina is abandoned

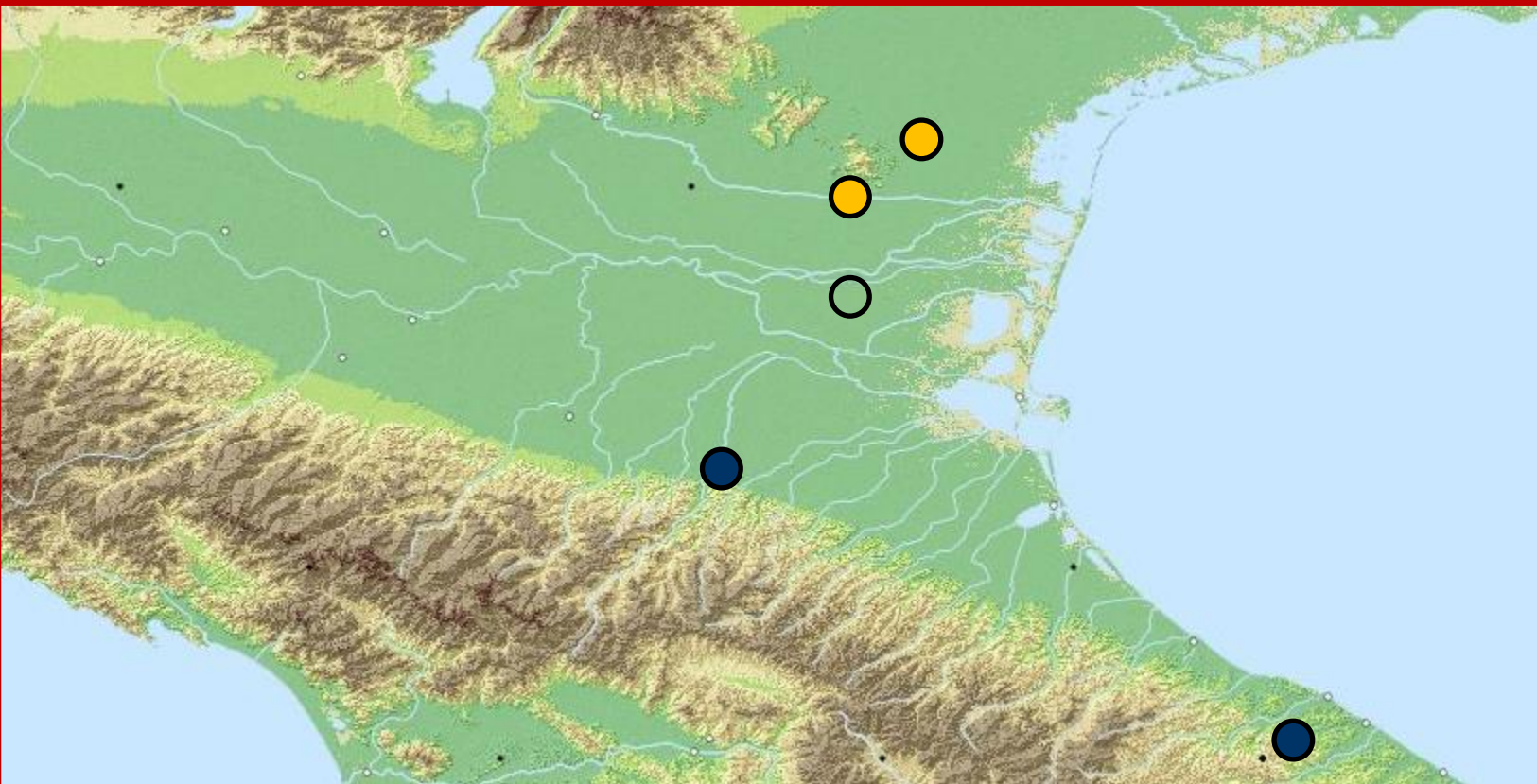


-at the same moment other centres emerge  
north and south of Po

→ Este and Padua in Veneto

→ Bologna and Verucchio in Emilia Romagna

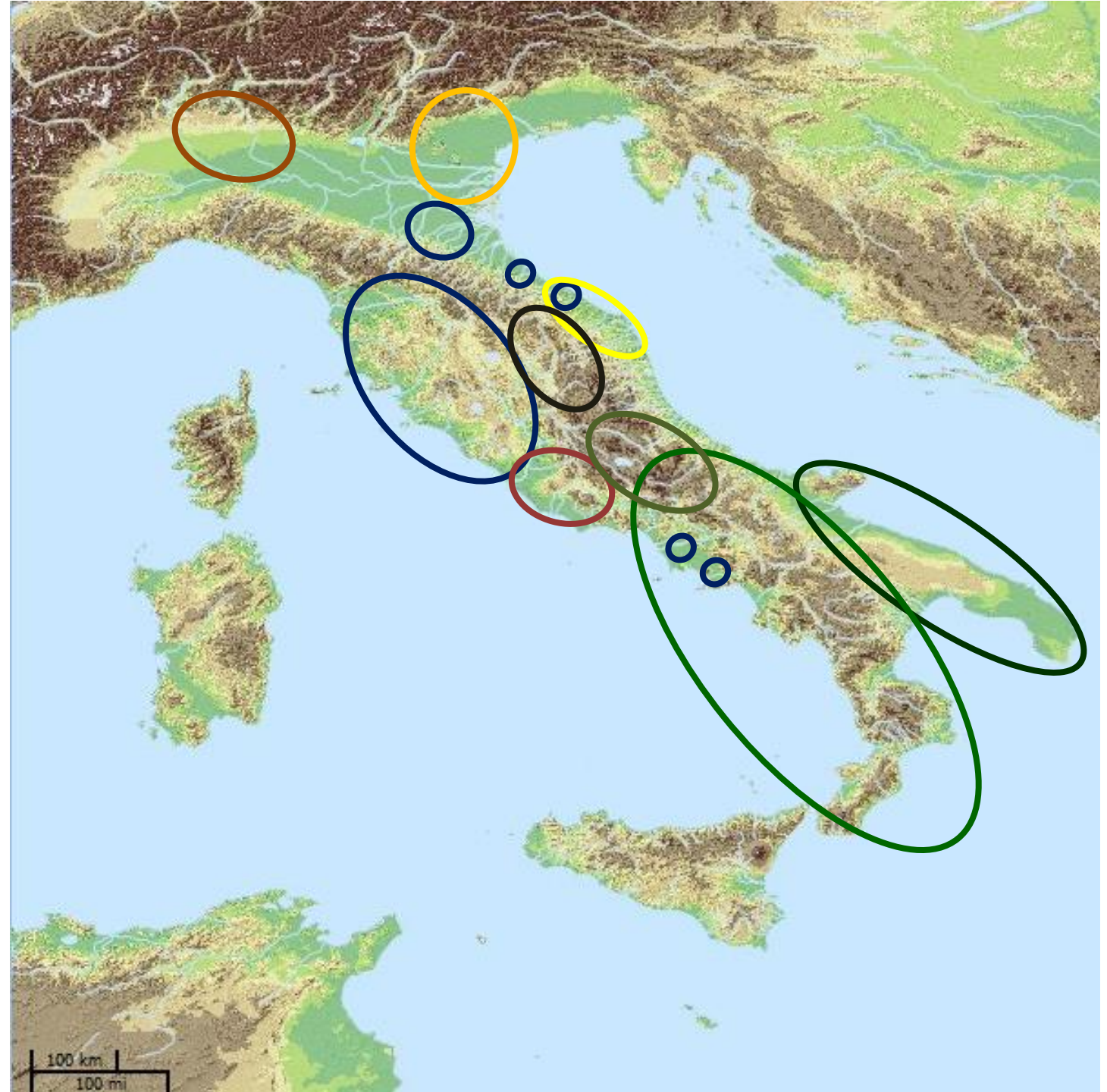
-all are of these large agglomerations  
concentrating specialised production and  
inheriting thus the role of Frattesina



- from ca 900 BC Italy is divided in two halves
  - the north retains the urnfield traditions in both ritual (cremations) and material sense
  - the south adopts inhumations (‘fossa cultures’) and new forms of material cultures emerge there



-over the 9th century local cultures cristalise in Italy to develop in their respektive regions down to the Roman conquest



THE  
VILLANOVA  
CULTURE

900–700/680 ...  
–510 aC

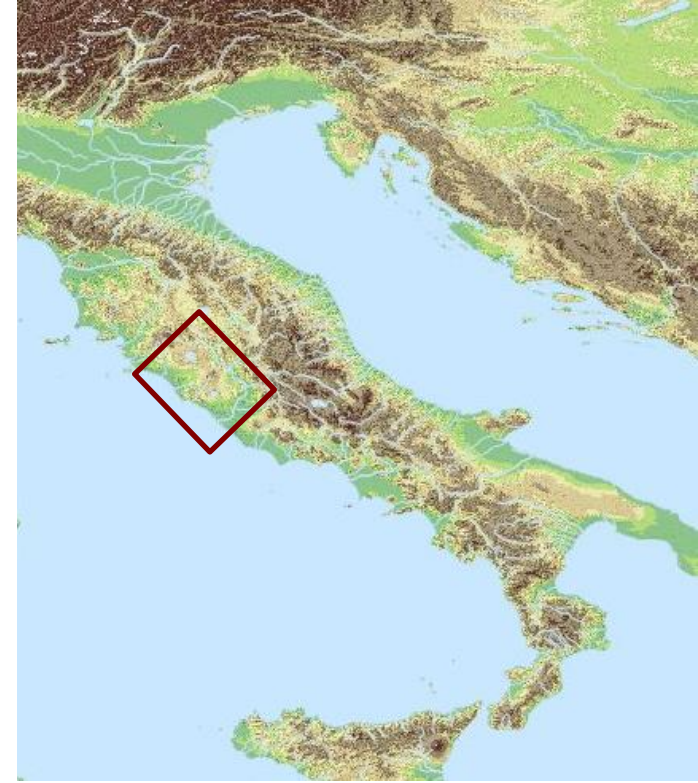
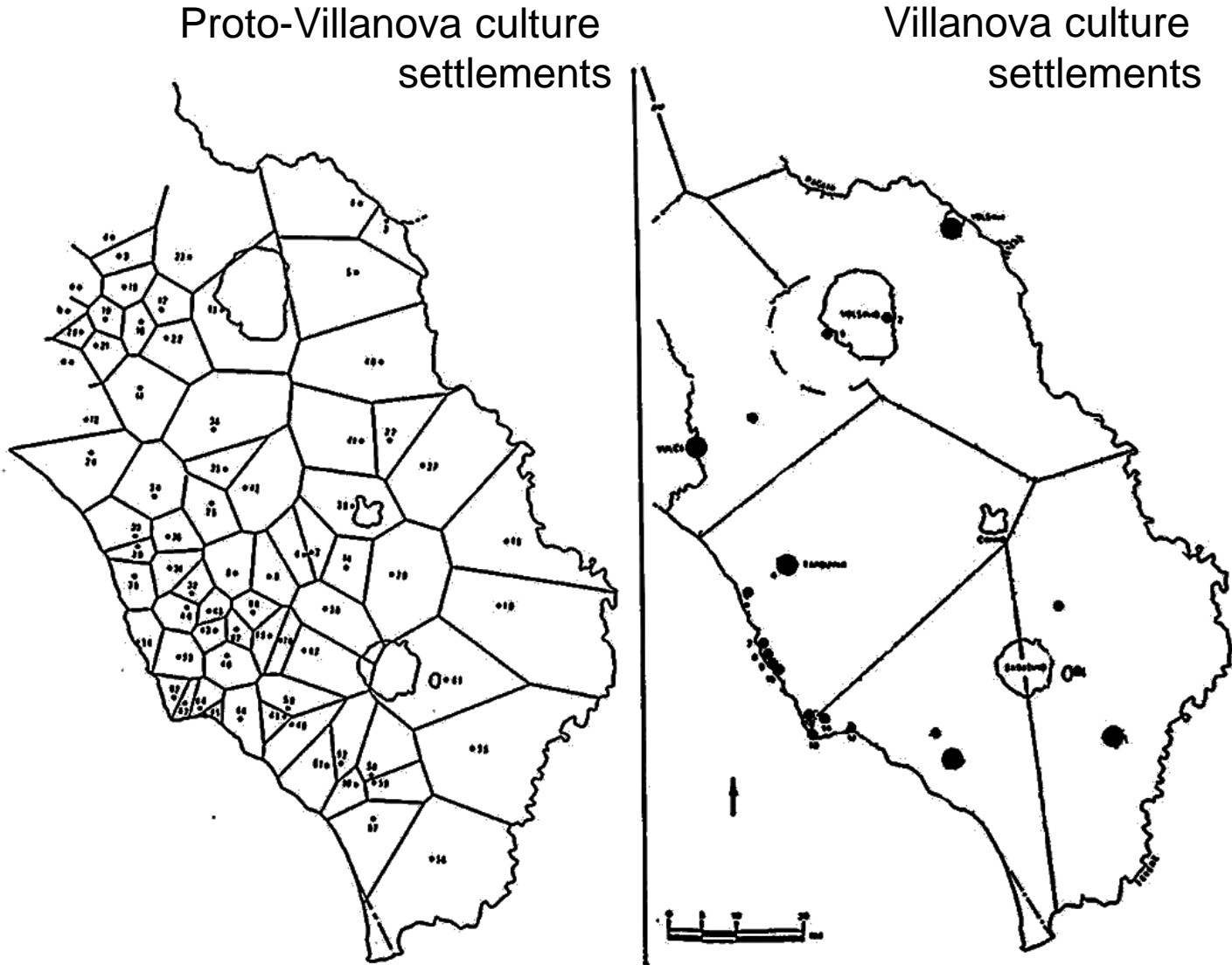




- the Villanova culture (Tuscany, Northern Lazio, Emilia-Romagna; punctual appearance in Marche and Campania)
- an Urnfield culture of the Early Iron Age
- developing from the Protovillanovan culture



-throughout the region the transition from Protovillanovan to the Villanovan culture is marked with strong centralisation and creation of large populous centres to become the future Etrucan cities





Volterra

Populonia

Vetulonia

Vulci

Tarquinii

Clusium

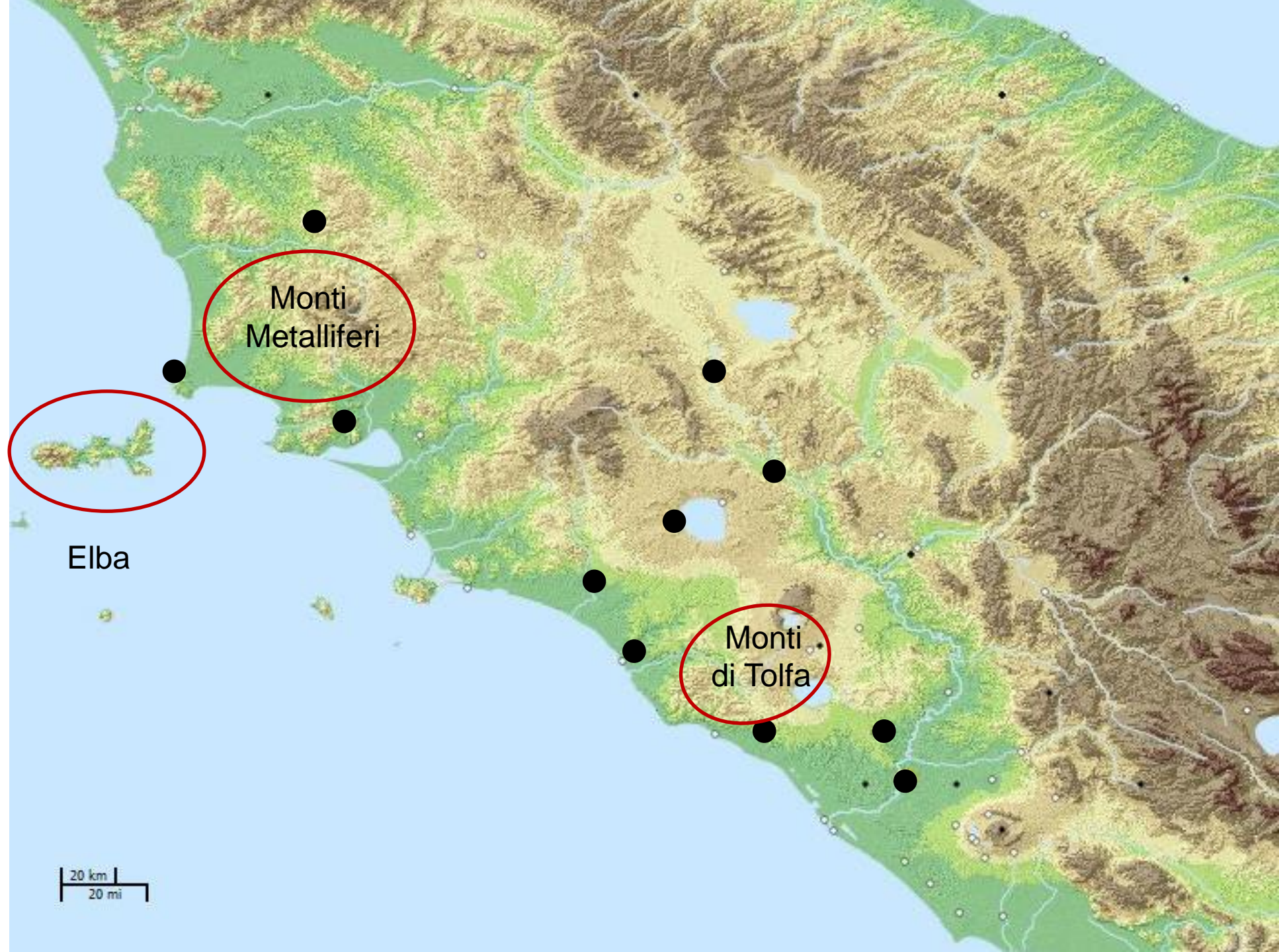
Volsinii

Cerae

Veii

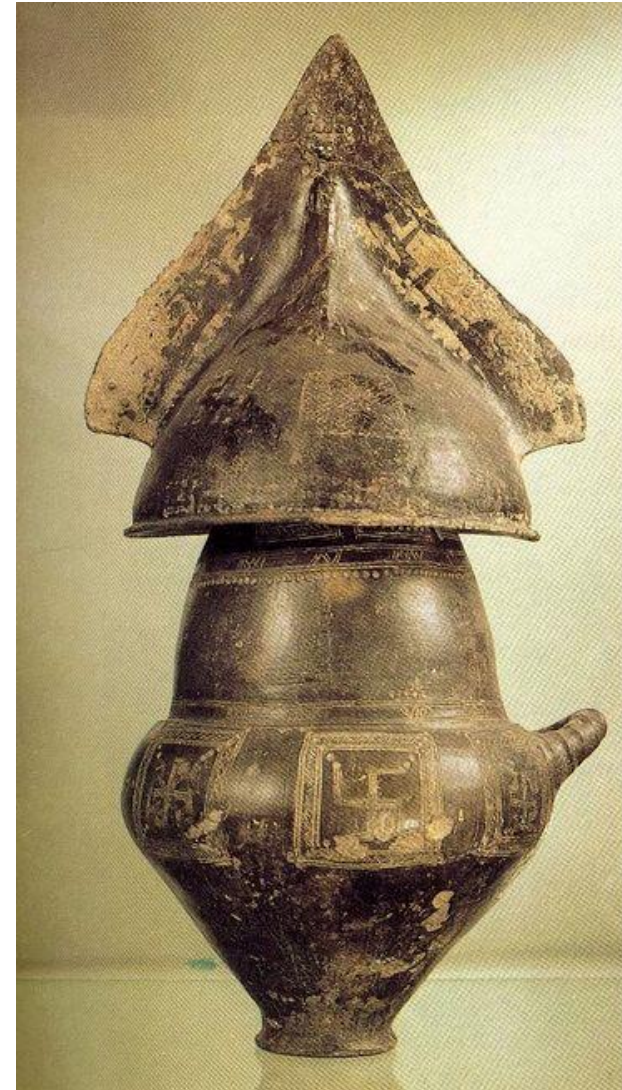
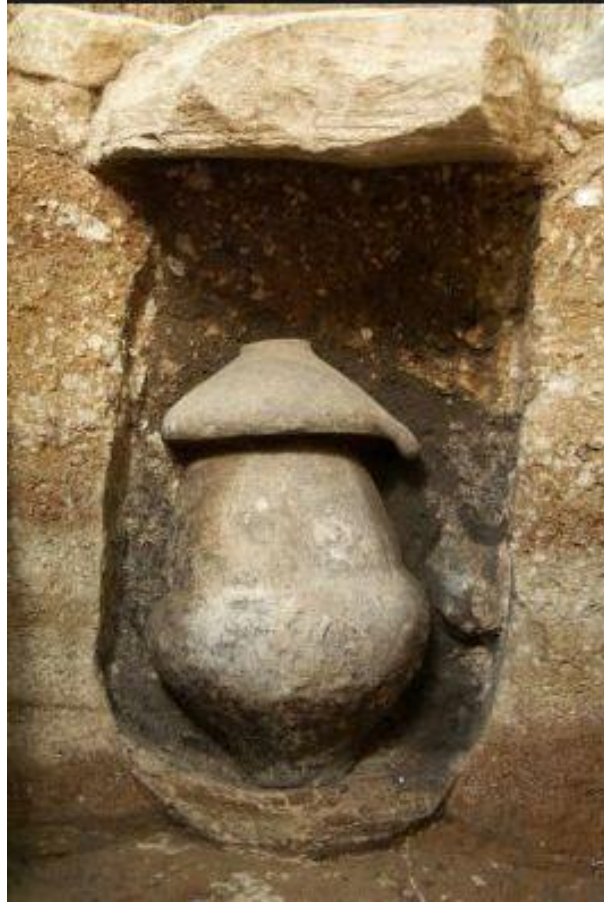
20 km  
20 mi

-foci of the Villanovan urbanisation process concentrate in the regions of metal extraction



The Villanovan burial rite remains basically unchanged from the protovillanovan – poor cremations in an urn

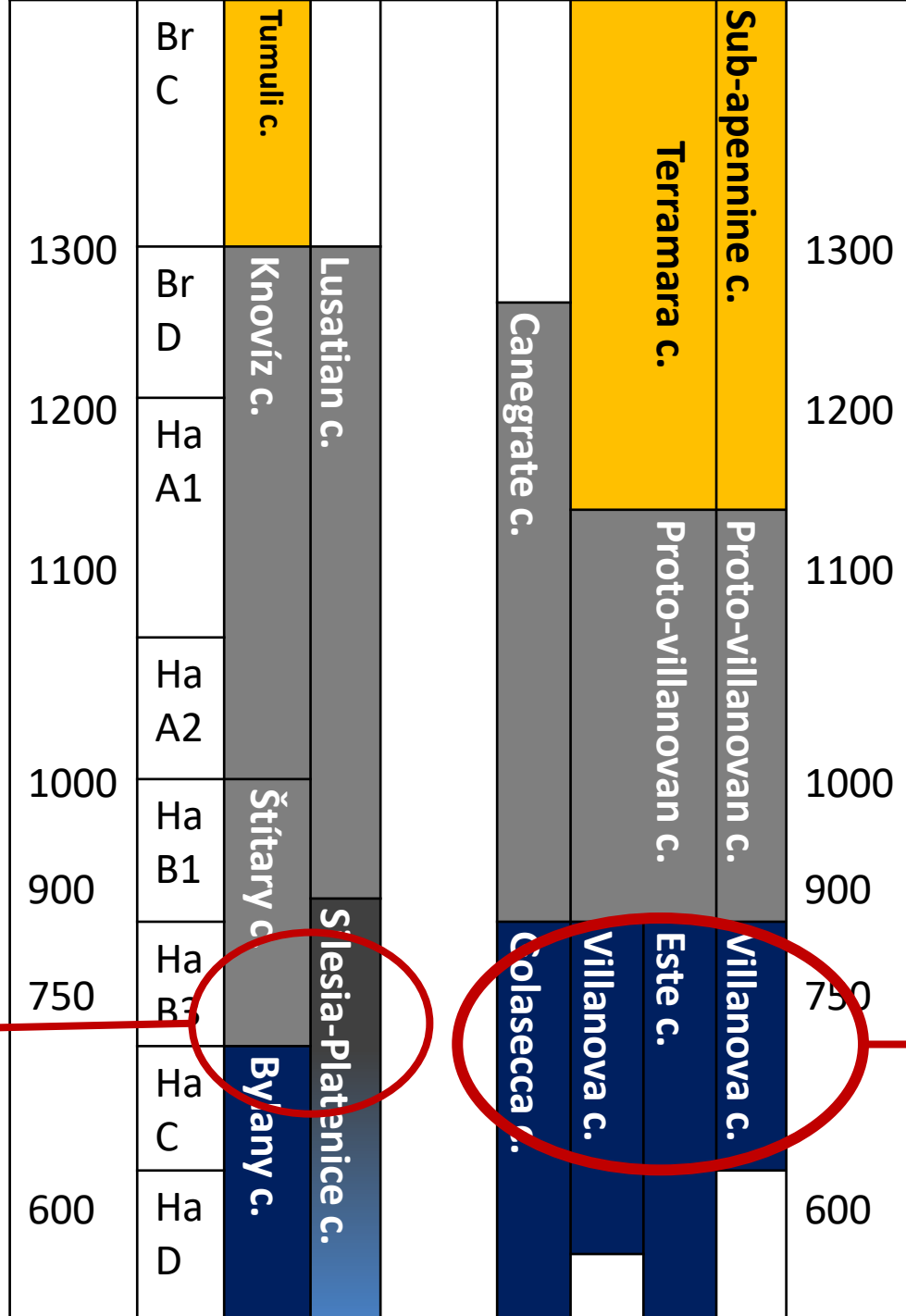
Appearance of large cemeteries organised in family based clusters



-from late VIII c. BC burials  
bear testimony of social  
differentiation



Tarquinius



## Uneven developments South and North of the Alps

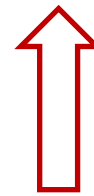
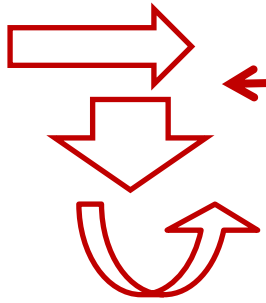
### Italy

-the void after collapse of the Bronze Age economical system (caused by Italians) seems to have had no serious repercussions

-stable Protovillanovan Frattesina  
=> stable EIA cultures – among them the Villanova culture as a solid self-contained social and economical system developing steadily from 8th century on

### Central Europe

-flourish of urnfield cultures (Knovíz/Štítary cultures; Lusatian culture) coming to a sudden end in the 8th century BC on the transition to the Iron Age with a slight revival only some 150 years later

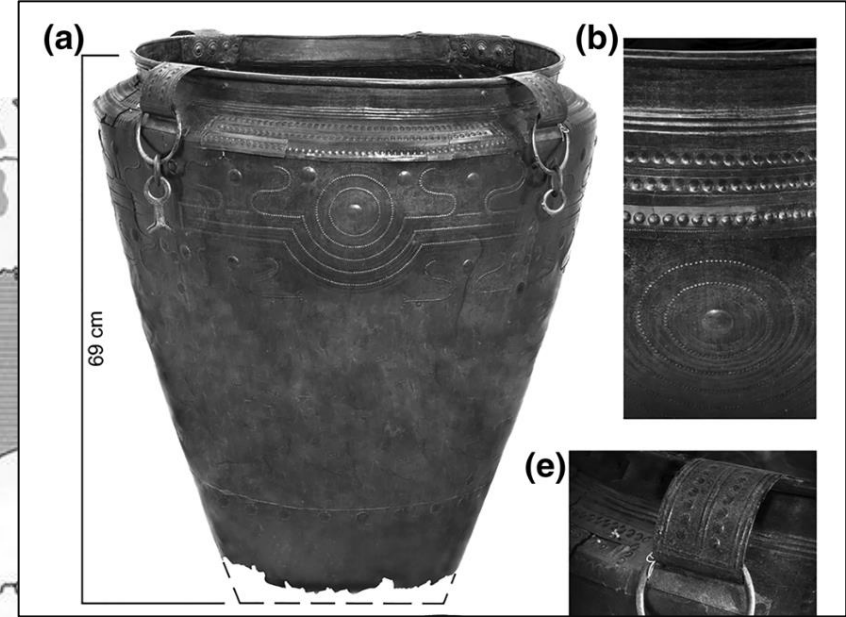
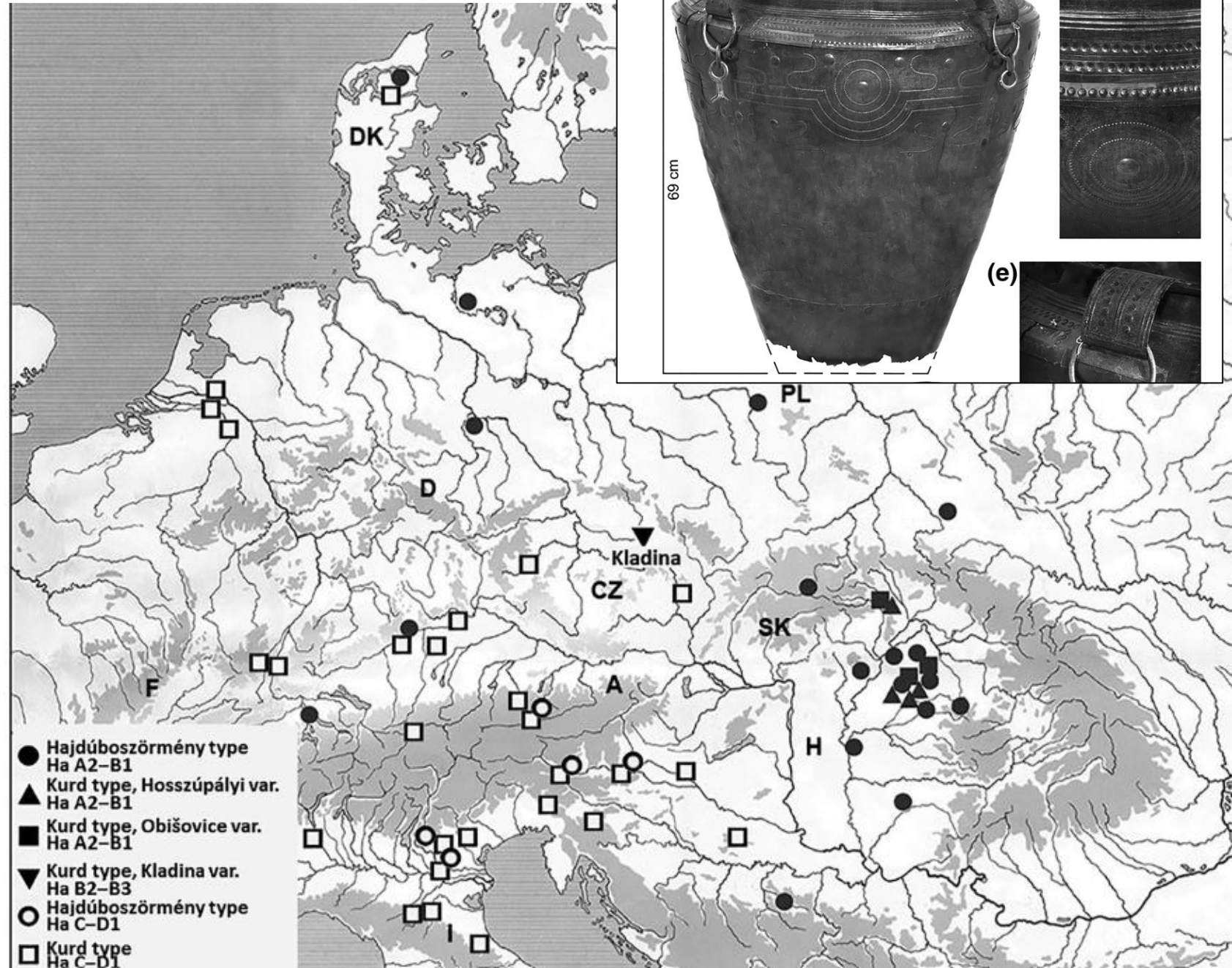


## Trasalpina contacts in the 9th – 8th c. BC

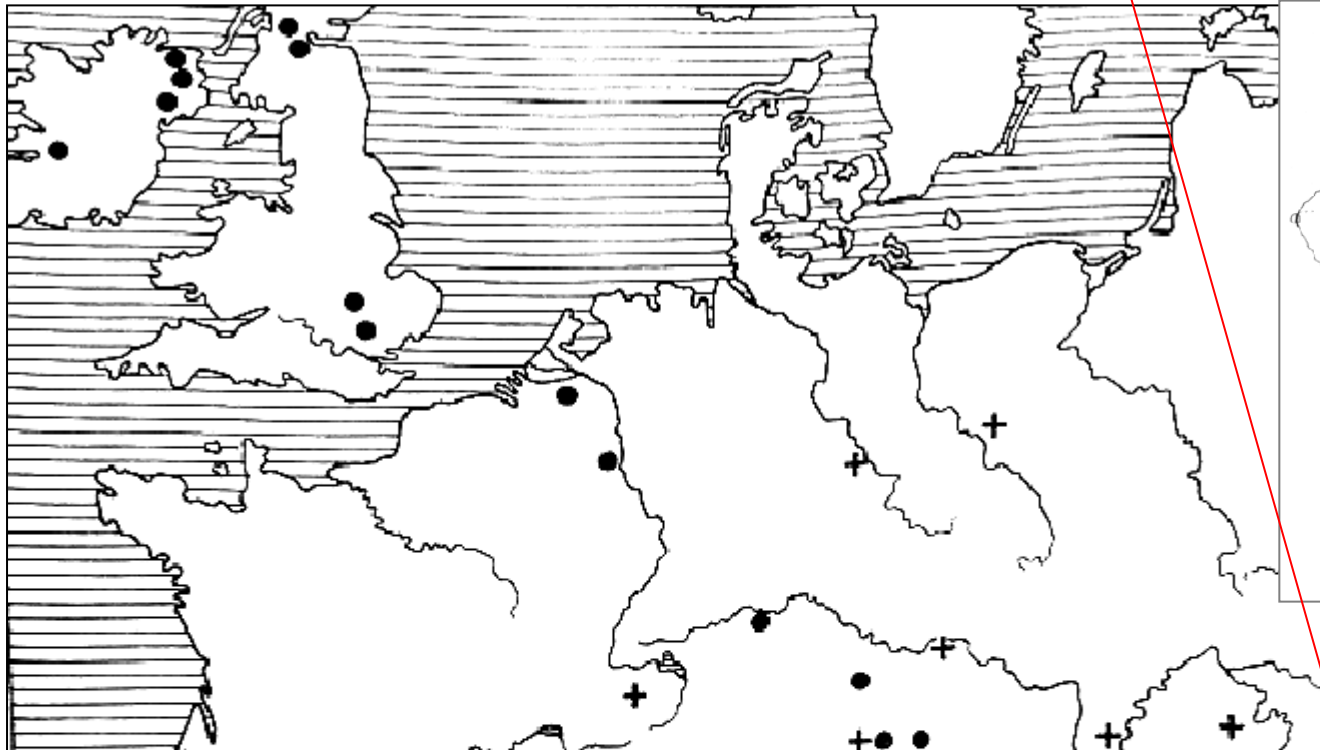
-material culture of urnfield cultures is relatively uniform throughout the territory

-similar artefacts are widespread in the entire territory of the culture and it is often difficult to tell to what extent they are imports and to what they reflect shared material culture (which by itself is highly indicative of an interconnected world)

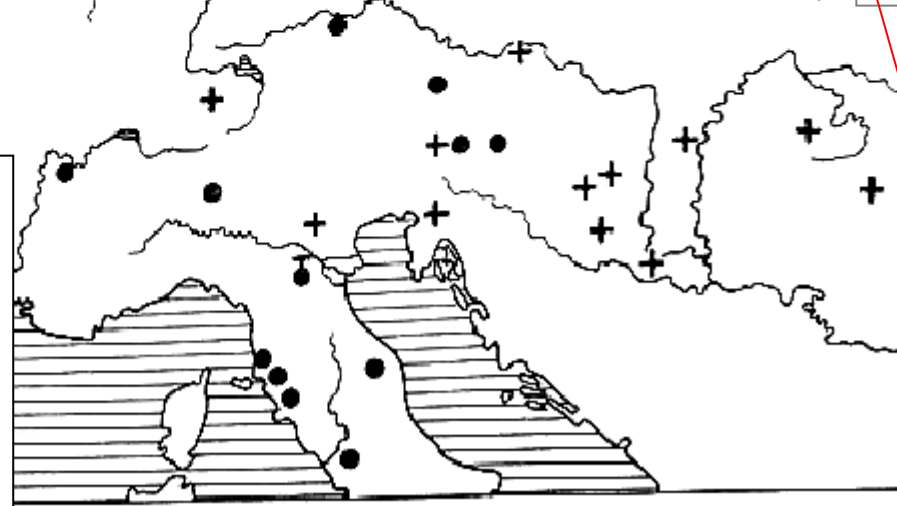
-several examples below



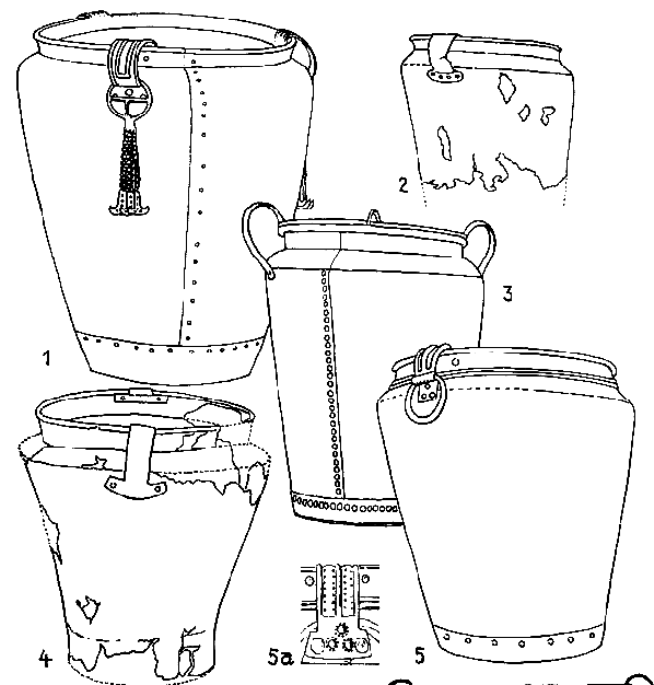




Bronzeblechurnen:  
 1. Gevelinghausen, Kr. Meschede, Grabfund  
 2. Veji, Prov. Rom, Nekr. Quattro Fontanili, Grab AA 1

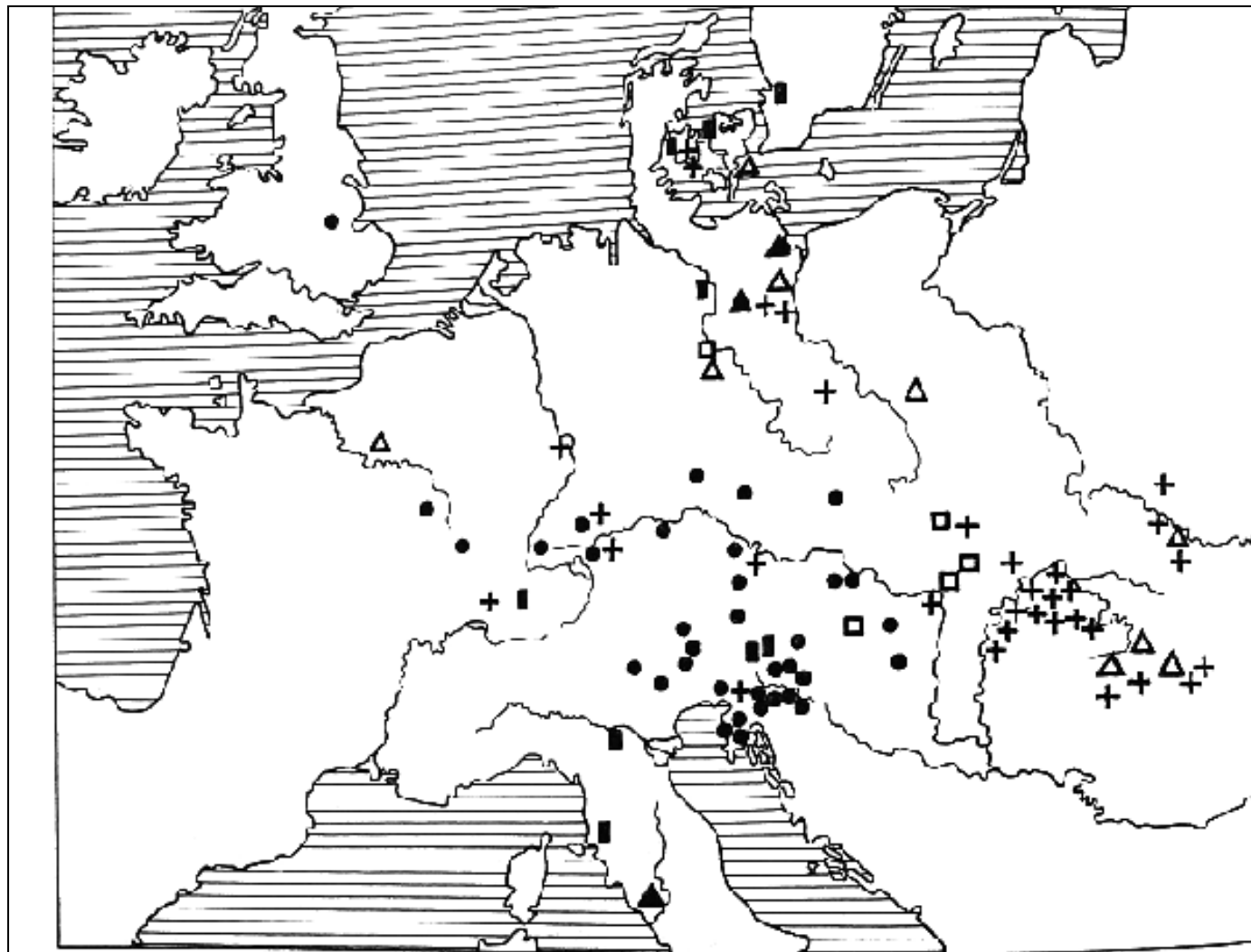
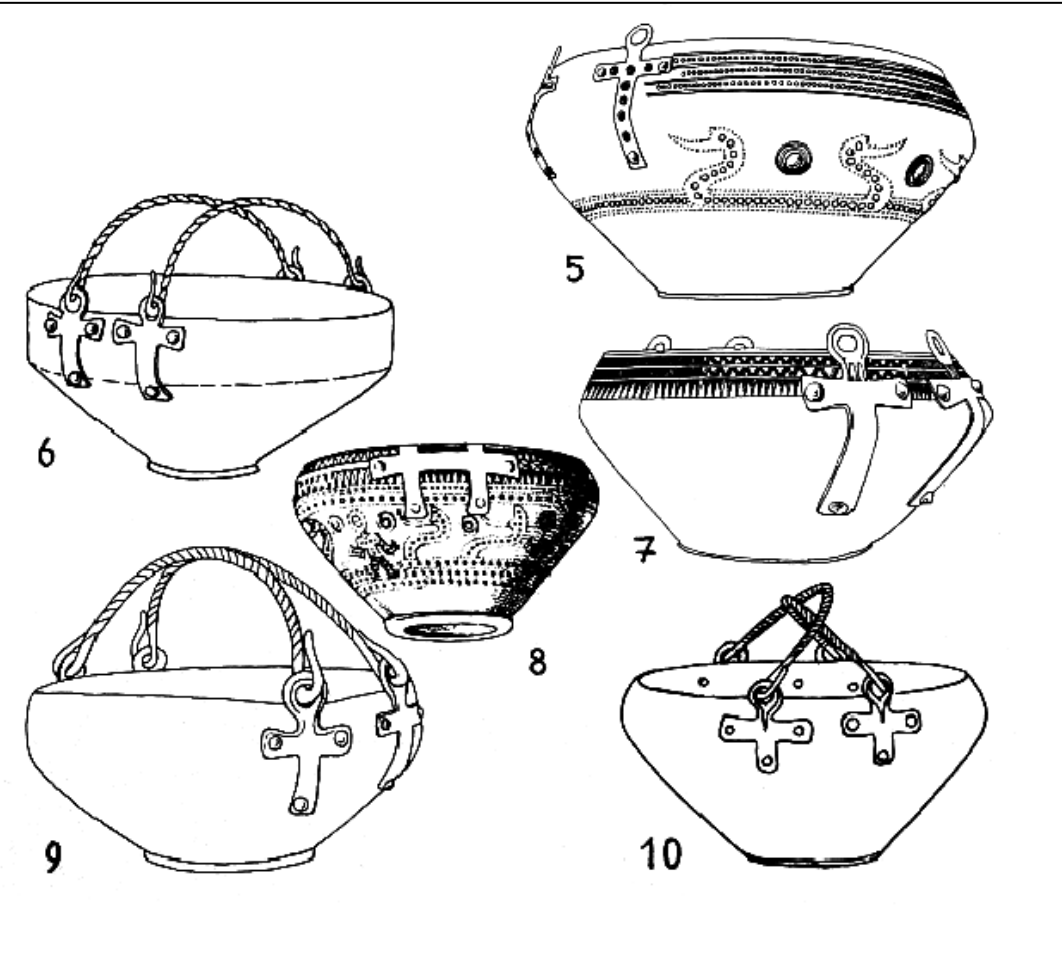


Karte 5. Eimer des Typus Kurd [S. 31].  
 Eisenfelderzeit. ● Hallstattzeit. ▴ Ton-Nachbildung.



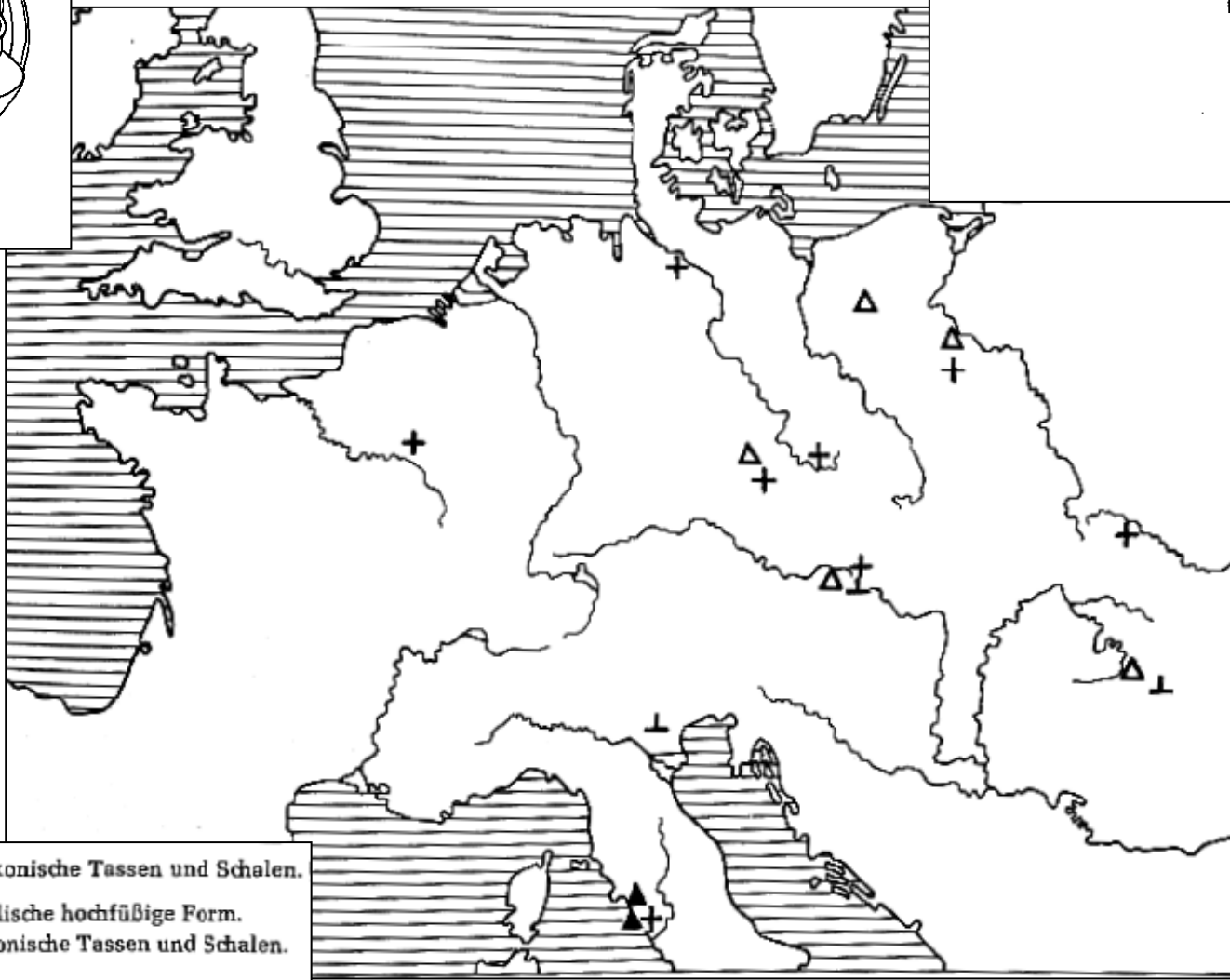
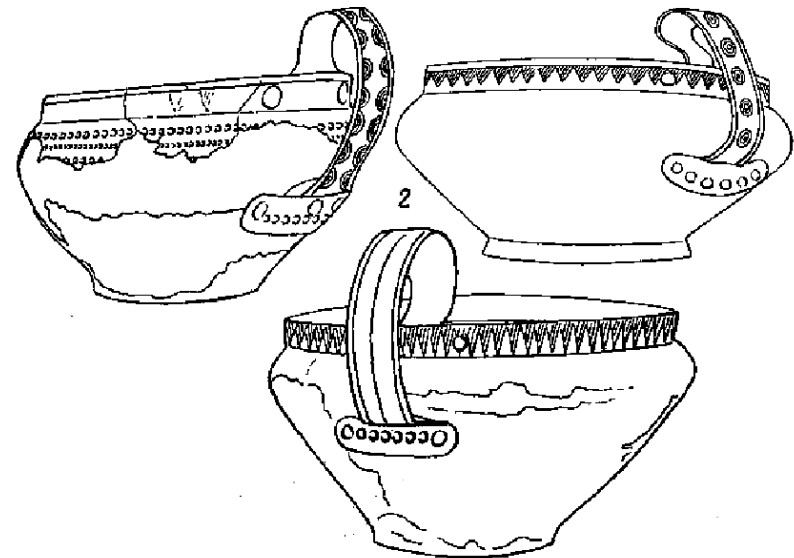
Germany Italy  
 Poland





Karte 1. Kreuzattaschenbecken [S. 11].

- |   |             |   |                 |
|---|-------------|---|-----------------|
| □ | Gruppe A    | Becken mit Dreieckselassen.   | Urnenfelderzeit |
| + | Gruppe B 1  | Becken mit Kreuzattaschen, Standboden und gerundeter Wandung.                                 | Urnenfelderzeit |
| △ | Gruppe B 2a | Becken mit Kreuzattaschen, Standboden und geknickter Wandung.                                 | Urnenfelderzeit |
| ▲ | Gruppe B 2a | Becken mit Kreuzattaschen, Standboden und geknickter Wandung.                                 | Hallstattzeit   |
| ■ | Gruppe B 2b | Becken mit Kreuzattaschen, Standboden, hochschultrig geknickter Wandung und mehrteiligem Fuß. | Hallstattzeit   |
| ● | Gruppe C    | Becken mit Kreuzattaschen, vollrunder Wandung, ohne Standboden.                               | Hallstattzeit   |



Karte 3. Tassen des Typus Stillfried-Hostomice, Doppelkonische Tassen und Schalen.

+ Typische Form Stillfried-Hostomice.

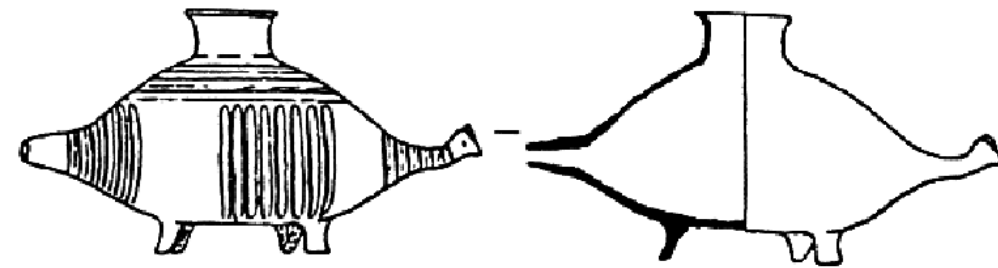
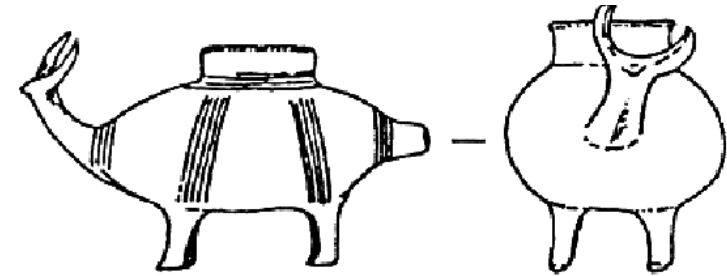
▲ Mittelitalische hochfüßige Form.

⊥ Verwandte Formen.

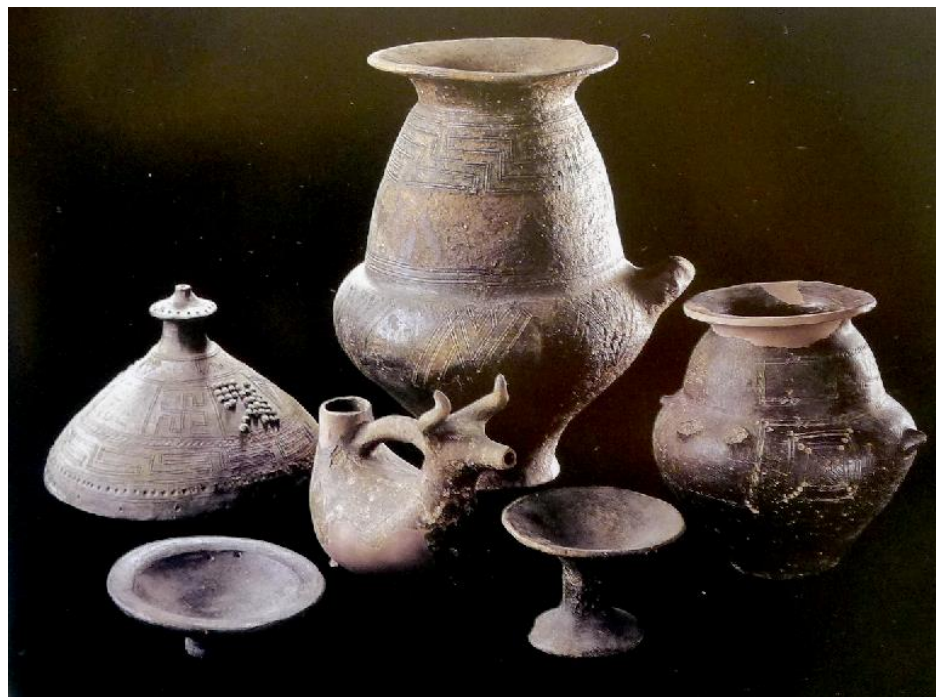
△ Doppelkonische Tassen und Schalen.



Este(Padua)



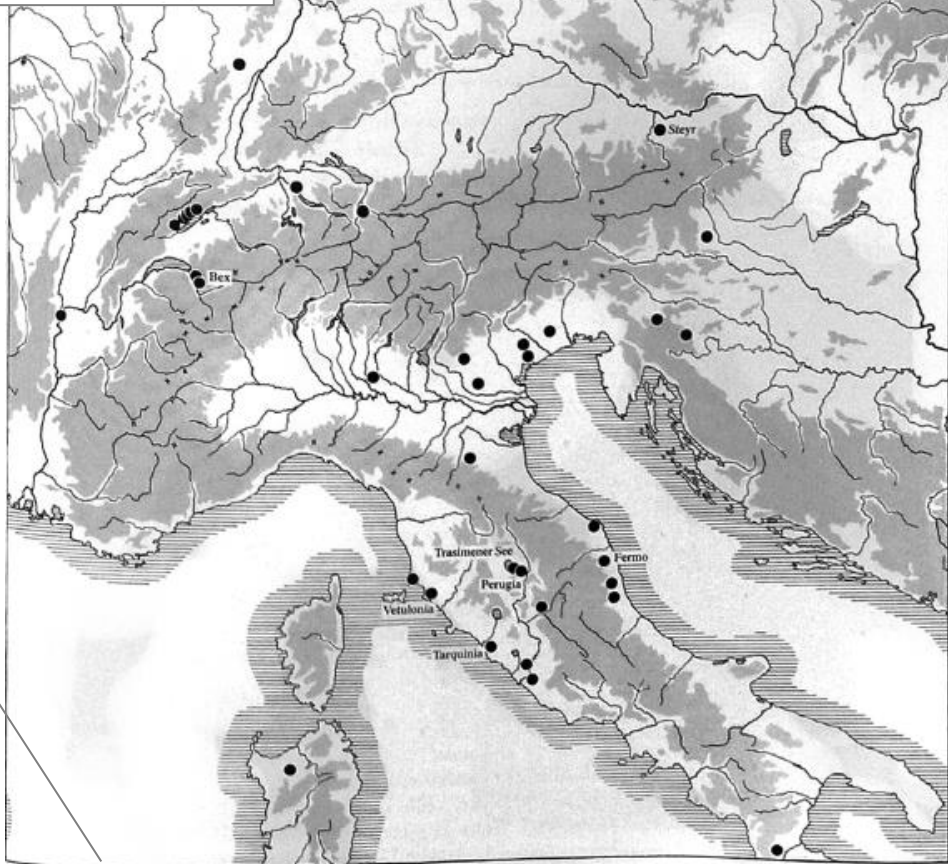
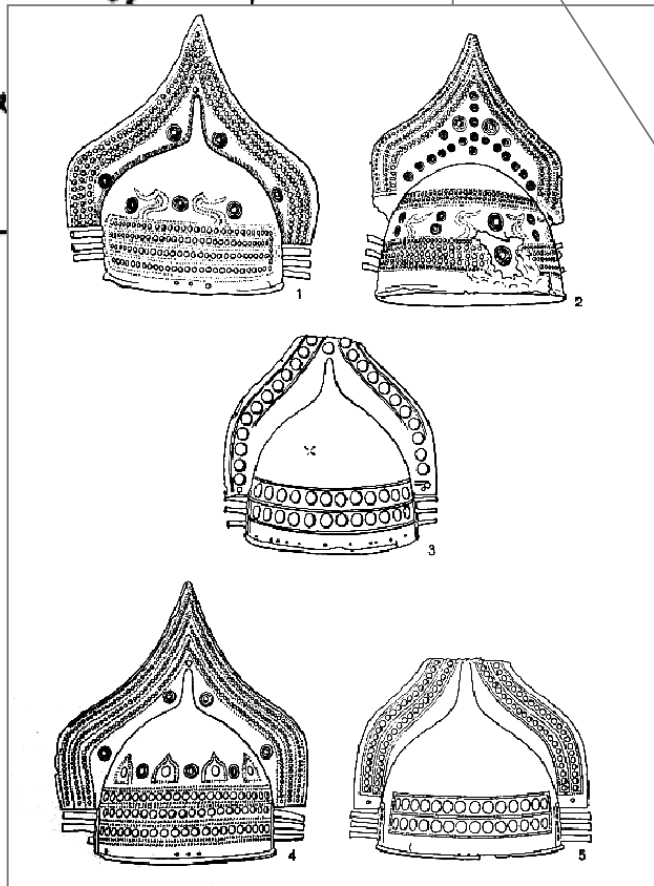
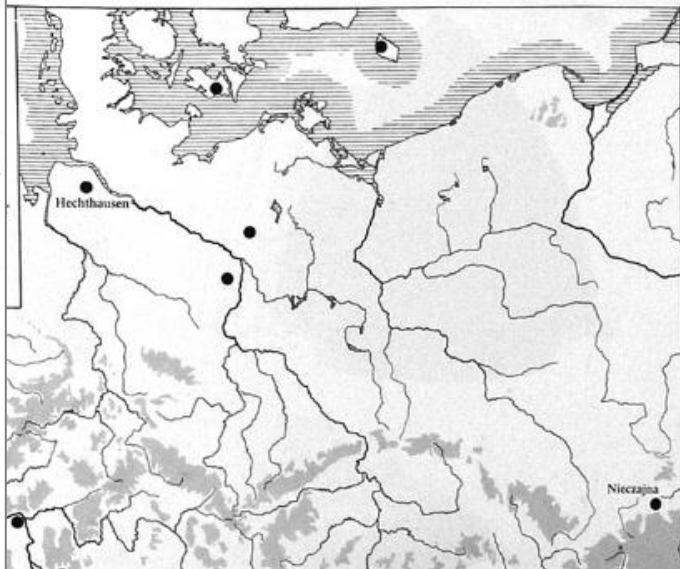
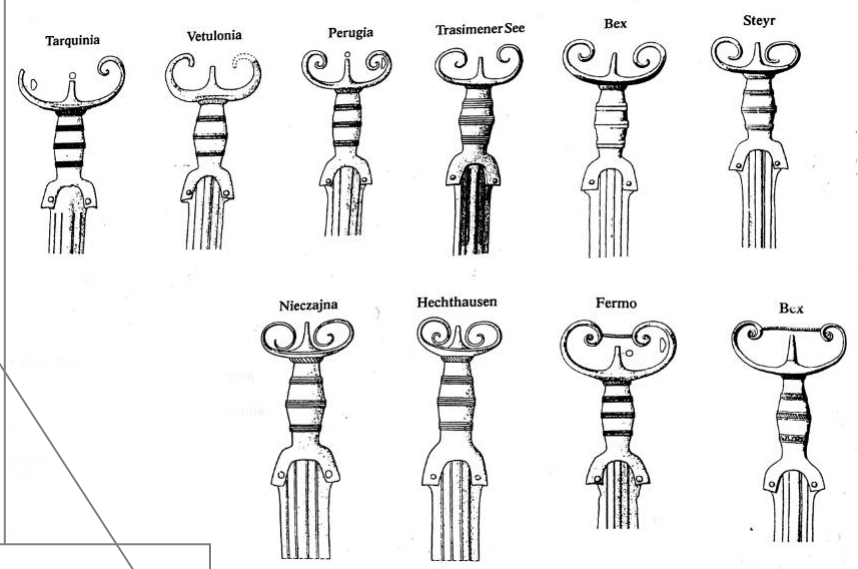
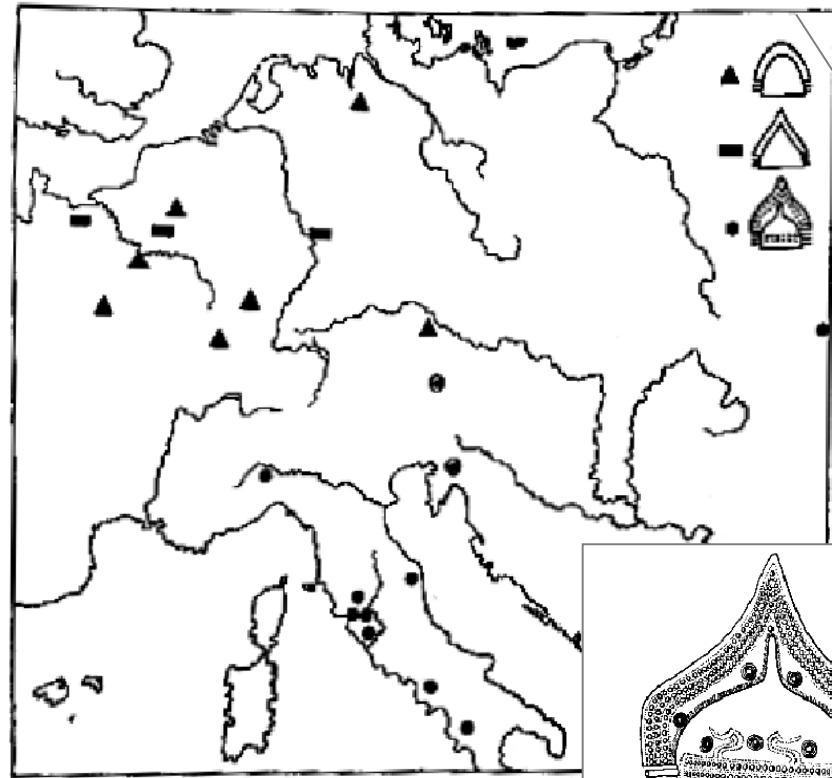
Bologna

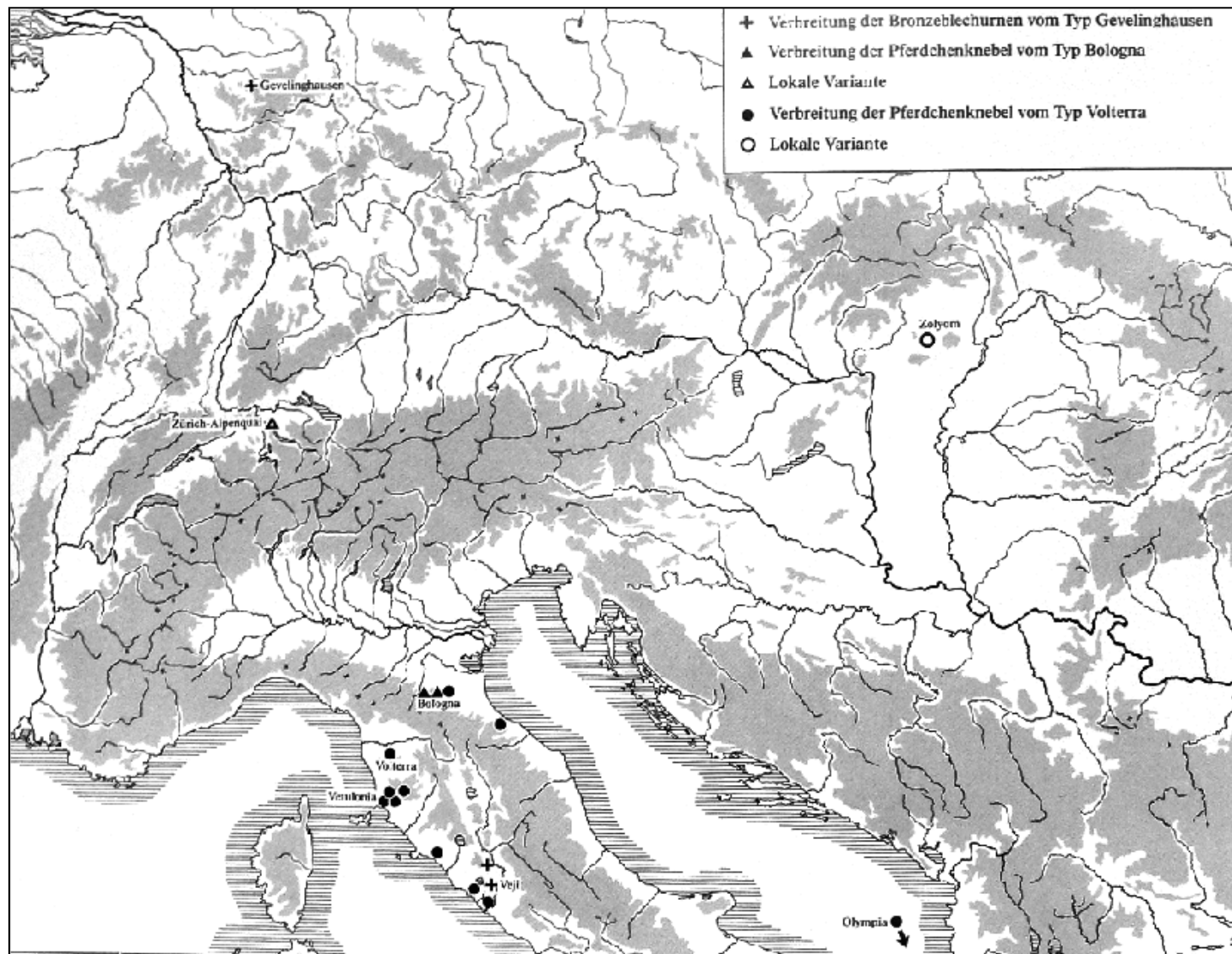


Tarquinia

Eastern Bohemia



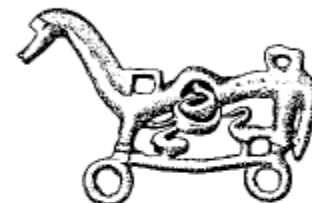




1 Olympia



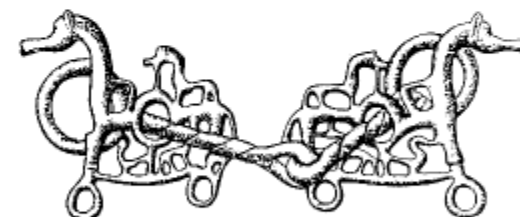
2 Zürich-Alpenquai



3 Bologna



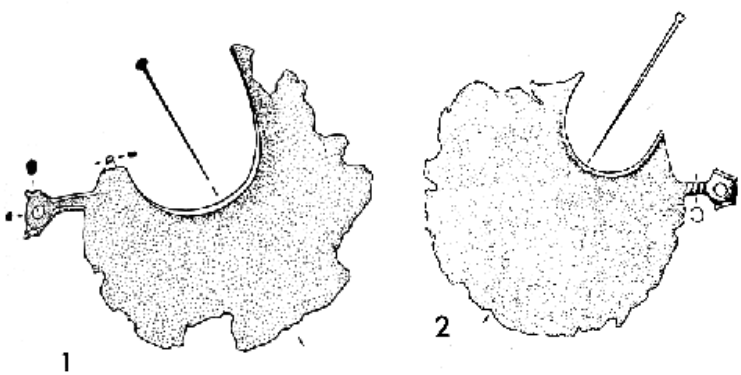
4 Kom. Zolyom



5 Accesasee bei Grosseto



6 »Dänemark«

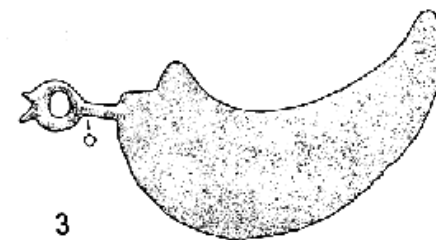


1

Mörigen

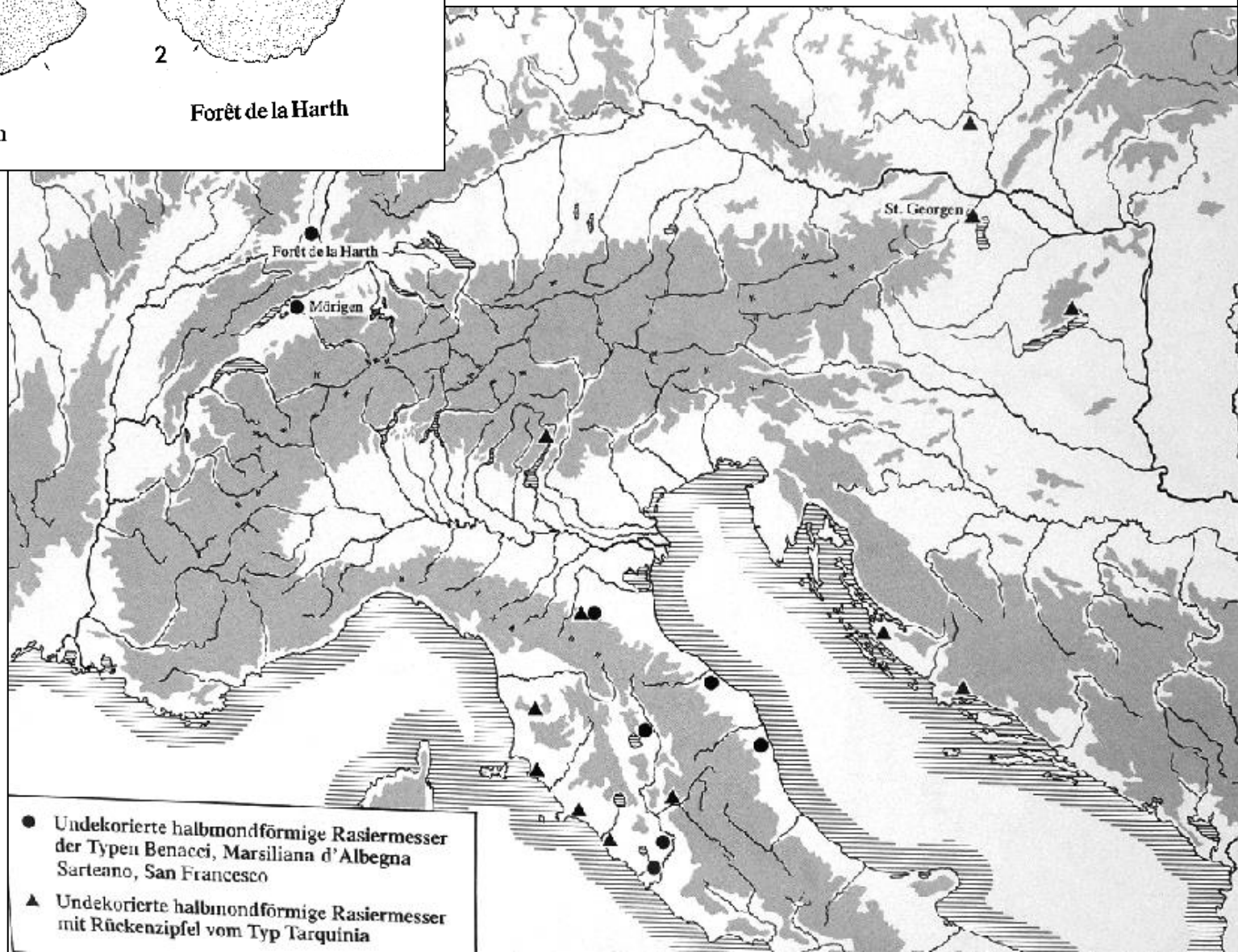
2

Forêt de la Harth



3

St. Georgen



- Undekorierte halbmondförmige Rasiermesser der Typen Benacci, Marsiliana d'Albegna Sarteano, San Francesco
- ▲ Undekorierte halbmondförmige Rasiermesser mit Rückenzipfel vom Typ Tarquinia

so what....?

-Urnfield cultures are epitome of a highly interconnected culture

-strong links between Mediterranean and Central Europe up to a point that (with a slight exaggeration) both regions can be considered part of a single ideological and cultural world

-this situation makes it difficult to describe in more detail the nature of many interactions

-BUT ...

... as such Urnfield cultures are the ideal departure point for study of further development and differentiation of both regions and of interaction between them



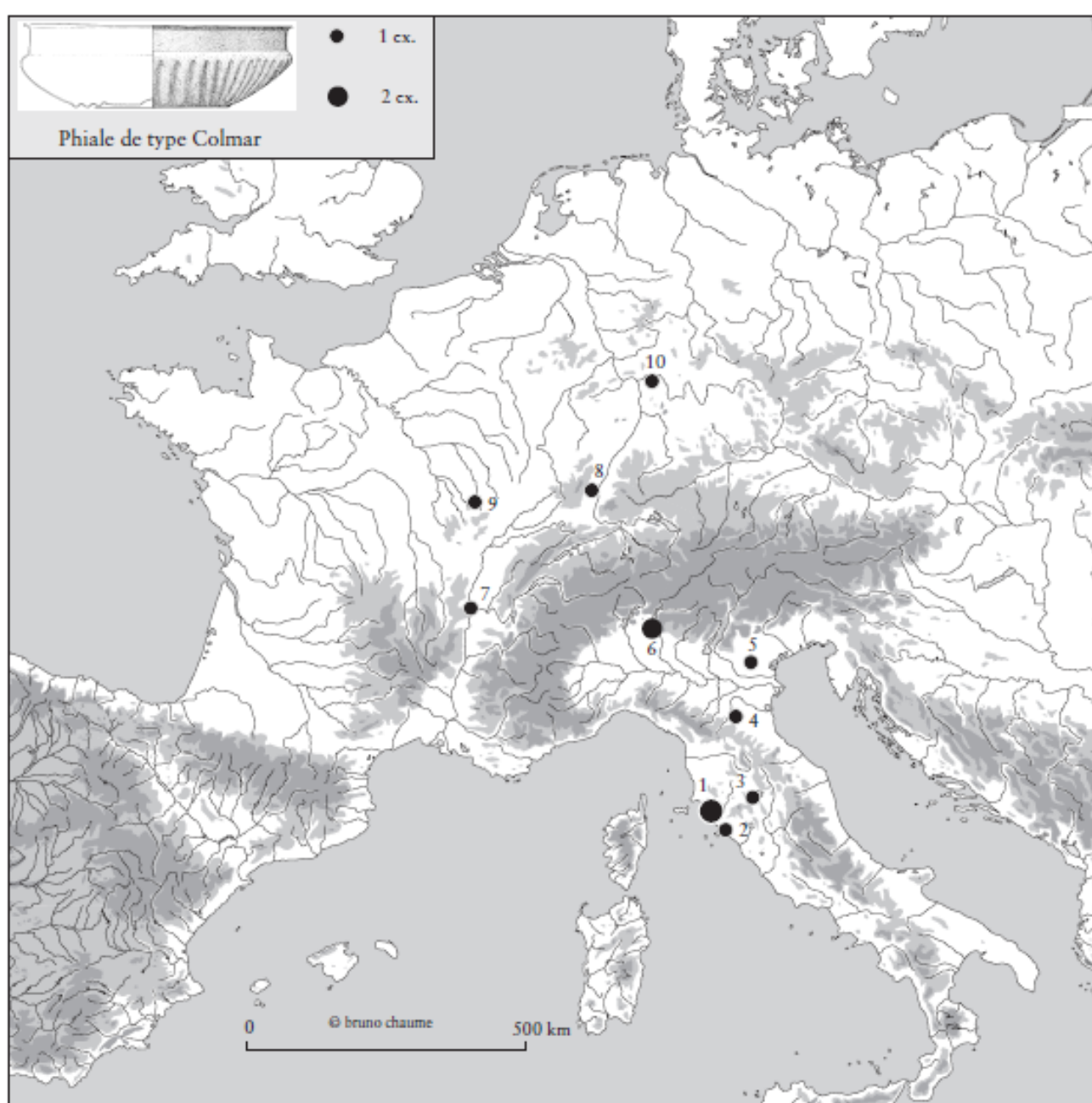


Fig. 14. Carte de répartition des phiales de type Colmar (d'après O.-H. Frey; B. Chaume, Feugère 1990, Feugère 1992): 1 Vetulonia, 2 Marsiliana d'Albegna, 3 Chiusi, 4 Bologna, 5 Este, 6 Como Ca'Morta, 7 Lyon (les environs), 8 Apperwihr, 9 Poiseul-la-Ville et La Perrière, 10 Francfort sur le Main.

To be continued...

