Davide Tanasi and Nicholas C. Vella (eds), *Site, artefacts and landscape - Prehistoric Borg in-Nadur, Malta*, 45-68 ©2011 Polimetrica International Scientific Publisher Monza/Italy

# 3. Borg in-Nadur: the excavations of Margaret A. Murray and David H. Trump

Nicholas C. Vella – Department of Classics and Archaeology, University of Malta, Malta nicholas.vella@um.edu.mt

MariaElena Zammit – Prehistoric Sites Department, Heritage Malta, Malta maria-elena.zammit@gov.mt

Anton Bugeja – Independent researcher, Malta. antonbugeja@hotmail.com

**Abstract**. Two major excavation campaigns took place at the site of Borg in-Nadur in the twentieth century, one by Margaret Murray and another by David Trump. This paper highlights the discoveries and interpretations put forth by archaeologists. Archival material is used to throw light on the published stratigraphic sequence from the Bronze Age huts at the site<sup>1</sup>.

**Keywords**: Margaret Murray, David Trump, Borg in-Nadur, archives, stratigraphy, chronology.

### 3.1. Introduction

Like many archaeological sites in Malta and Gozo, Borg in-Nadur was caught in that great flurry of antiquarian activity which was to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> We are grateful to Maxine Anastasi for preparing for publication the illustrations appearing here and for discussing with us the appraisal of the stratigraphy.



Figure 3.1. Slabs of limestone discovered at Borg in-Nadur in 1955 (source: National Museum of Archaeology, Heritage Malta).

take the islands by storm in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. No description of the islands could be had without reference to the Temple of Melkarte (Phoenician Melgart) which allegedly stood there. By the time that the idea of prehistory for Malta was accepted by scholars at the very beginning of the twentieth century, the megalithic ruins at Borg in-Nadur were recognised for what they were and the association with the classical temple largely forgotten<sup>2</sup>. Two major archaeological investigations took place at the prehistoric remains of Borg in-Nadur, the first by Margaret Murray in the area of the megalithic remains and the second by David Trump in the area immediately behind the large fortification wall. Two other discoveries of note were also made over the years. The first concerns the retrieval of two slabs of Globigerina Limestone found in May 1955 whilst digging a trench for the laying of pipes in a field to the north of the megalithic remains<sup>3</sup> (Fig. 3.1). Unfortunately, the exact location of this find is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Bugeja, this volume. <sup>3</sup> MAR 1956: 7.



Figure 3.2. The large wall (arrowed) discovered inside an agricultural terrace at Borg in-Nadur in 1998. A thick ash layer (marked with an asterisk) was also revealed lying over bedrock (source: National Museum of Archaeology/Heritage Malta).

not known; neither do we know whether the stones were removed from the trench and transferred to a store or museum for safekeeping. The second discovery concerns 'a massive masonry structure' found during illegal construction works on the south edge of the hilltop<sup>4</sup> (Figs 1.3, 3.2). Emergency excavations carried out in 1998 by personnel from the former Museums Department showed that the structure dated to the Borg in-Nadur phase and that the wall, especially the D-shaped bastion, once thought to close off the promontory on the landward side was in fact part of a more extensive fortification system that encircled the entire hilltop. Three unrecorded rock-cut silo pits have also been noted within the perimeter of the wall<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 1.3).

<sup>4</sup> Buhagiar 2000: 45; a photograph is included in this brief report.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Magro Conti 1999: 202. Here Magro Conti specifies that behind the wall the Borg in-Nadur phase deposit lay over a 1 m-thick ash layer of Tarxien Cemetery phase date. The correct co-ordinates of the wall are 57575E/65505N; those of the silo pits are 57460E/65575N; pers. comm. J. Magro Conti, 3 June 2011.

## 3.2. Margaret Murray at Borg in-Nadur (1921-1927)

The need to investigate the ruins at Borg in-Nadur properly was probably a conscious choice on the part of Themistocles Zammit who, starting from the first decade of the twentieth century, was spearheading a programme of archaeological excavations on a number of minor megalithic sites, often depending on local and foreign investigators for the day-to-day work on site, study and eventual publication. His choice for Borg in-Nadur fell on the young Margaret Murray, an assistant professor of Egyptology at the University of London. He met her there in 1920 when he was entertained by the great Egyptologist William Flinders Petrie<sup>6</sup>. In actual fact, Murray's initial excavations were at two minor sites 'which were urgently required for the new aerodrome'<sup>7</sup>, and it was only after complaining with Zammit 'at being given only the least interesting sites to excavate'<sup>8</sup> did she receive a concession to explore the megalithic site of Borg in-Nadur.

It is clear that Murray had wished to extend the excavations but it would appear that adjoining fields were not bought by the Government to turn the site into 'a national monument'9. This caused difficulties in disposing of the spoil from the excavations which was left in enormous piles on the edges. In all, Murray spent five summers in Malta, four of which digging and the last in the Valletta Museum compiling the seminal corpus of Bronze Age pottery<sup>10</sup>. Publication was aided by the Percy Sladen Memorial Fund of Britain.

Murray's investigations revealed the following remains (Fig. 3.4): an Apsidal Building, an Open Area or Main Enclosure, a Double Chapel, and the Field Stones. She worked to the standards of her time, described the excavations in each area thoroughly in her report, describing and recording (through drawing or photography) any stratification whenever possible 11, noting the findspots of

<sup>7</sup> Murray 1963: 129.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Zammit 1920.

<sup>8</sup> Murray 1963: 130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Murray 1929: 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Murray 1934.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Drawn sections appear in Murray 1923: pl. 7; Murray 1925: pl. 15; Murray 1929: pl. 20.



Figure 3.3. The Entrance through the Megalithic Enclosure cleared down to bedrock (source: National Museum of Archaeology/Heritage Malta).

objects<sup>12</sup>, and offering interpretations often on the basis of discussions with Zammit<sup>13</sup>. She often had to go back on conclusions made in a preliminary fashion after the pottery had been studied, noticing that what was thought to be an undisturbed layer was in fact not so<sup>14</sup>. Evans made a detailed appraisal of the site following his study visit in 1958 during which he did not fail to remark that many features noted by Murray were by his time buried under debris<sup>15</sup>. Without access to additional fieldnotes, Evans' assessment remains largely valid<sup>16</sup>.

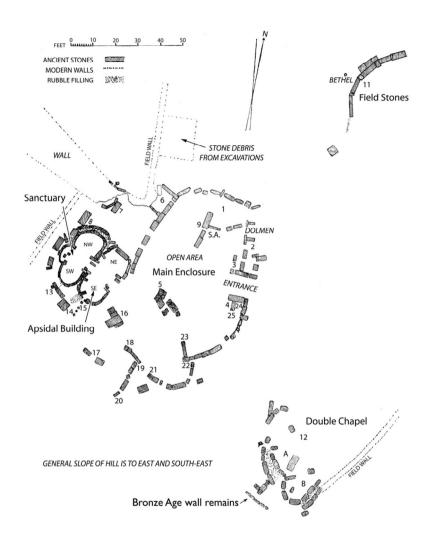
<sup>12</sup> This was done in the textual description but also as annotations accompanying drawn objects, including lithics and pottery; see the catalogue by C. Vella included in the accompanying DVD for those lithics which could be identified to findspot, and Tanasi, this volume on the pottery (chapter 4). See also the comments made in a review by Zammit 1924: 143.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Murray 1923: 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Murray 1923: 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Evans 1971: 6-14; see p. 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Pace 2004: 105-107.



**Figure 3.4.** The final plan of the archaeological remains at Borg in-Nadur published by Murray (1929: pl. 1). The annotations have been re-written for the sake of clarity and other labels given by Murray to features have been added (digitised by Maxine Anastasi).



Figure 3.5. The north-east apse of the Apsidal Building cleared from the archaeological deposit; the photograph shows the level of the field soil (source: National Museum of Archaeology/Heritage Malta).

The Apsidal Building is a four-apsed temple with a shallow niche at the end (Fig. 3.5). The walls were generally low but otherwise well preserved; the external north walls were only traced beyond the north-west apse. The floor was made of the usual hard torba (pounded, wetted limestone powder mixed with flakes) placed on a preparatory layer of angular pebbles, except in the end niche or 'sanctuary' where the floor was the rock surface. In it a conical hole with an oval mouth was found containing two lithic implements, identified by C. Vella elsewhere in this volume as a chert knife and an all-round flint scraper, the first found below the second<sup>17</sup>. In the south-west apse, torba and pebbles reached a thickness of about 30 cm. All the torba was removed by excavation to reveal the natural rock surface throughout except along the axis where a threshold slab was discovered between the two sets of apses<sup>18</sup>. Objects of note above the floor included a limestone mortar found surrounded with pots that had been crushed in situ and a 'column' in the south-east apse and a 'betyl' in the north-west

<sup>18</sup> Murray 1925: 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Murray 1923: 22; 1925: 21. The pieces were catalogued by Murray 1923: pl. 17, no. 30 and pl. 21 'flint implement' (= lithic no. 3 and lithic no. 1 respectively in C. Vella's chapter and catalogue).

apse<sup>19</sup>; in the south-west apse traces of fire had left a circular impression on the *torba* floor, measuring about 1.5 m in diameter<sup>20</sup>. Below the floor, on the other hand, Murray reports the discovery of flint implements and Neolithic pottery in the north-east apse, nothing under the north-east apse, and fragments of Neolithic pottery in the south-east apse; along the axis, she found shells, flint flakes and Neolithic pottery. Murray accepted Zammit's interpretation of the building as a 'temple'<sup>21</sup> and pointed out that the three stones or pillars found standing on the rock floor in the end niche were 'emblems' in which the deity 'resides'<sup>22</sup>. About such pillars Murray presented a typology in her third report, noting that the crudest, like the ones from her 'sanctuary' often marked 'the most holy place'<sup>23</sup>.

The Open Area or Main Enclosure lies outside the temple and a good part of the megalithic wall was uncovered by excavation<sup>24</sup>. Murray identified an Entrance on the east side (Fig. 3.3) but what she defined as a Dolmen is probably a closed niche, as suggested by Evans<sup>25</sup>. Nothing much can be said about the 'Field Stones', that line of stones curving to the east, northwards of the enclosure; Murray still thought they were 'unexplained' in her last report<sup>26</sup>. They were already buried under a field in 1958, if not wholly destroyed, together with the standing stone which Zammit thought was a 'Bethel-stone'<sup>27</sup> found outside it and marked on the plan. The other outlying building found by Murray to the south of the remains and dubbed by her as the 'Double Chapel'28 for no clear reason is now practically buried by soil from the surrounding fields and overgrowth. Here the prevailing pottery discovered by Murray was of Bronze Age date but the lowermost layer found on bedrock contained Neolithic pottery, confirming the sequence established by

\_

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Murray 1923: 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Murray 1925: 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Murray 1923: 24-25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Murray 1923: 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Murray 1929: 25-28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Murray 1923: 26-27; 1925: 24-27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Evans 1971: 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Murray 1929: 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Murray 1923: 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Murray 1929: 4-8.

Zammit at Tarxien<sup>29</sup>. From here came a stone 'idol' and a stone mould<sup>30</sup>: the 'painted sherd' identified as Mycenaean by Lord William Taylour in 1958<sup>31</sup>, was found outside the Double Chapel to the west beyond a wall identified by Murray as Bronze Age in date<sup>32</sup>

To what extent the structural remains discovered by Murray at Borg in-Nadur can be dated back to the Temple period is difficult to determine, even because the sequence of floors in different areas makes it altogether clear that the buildings had a long history of use. The Apsidal Building can be safely identified as a 'temple' on the basis of the similarities in ground plan with other sites; even reviewers did not query this at the time of publication<sup>33</sup>. But it is possible that the activities for which remains were found above the torba floors date to the Bronze Age, and that mortars, 'betyls' and 'standing stones' belong to this period; going by the small quantity of Tarxien Cemetery phase pottery recovered from the site, in fact, most activity would seem to belong to the Middle Bronze Age<sup>34</sup>. The megalithic set-up of the Open Area, then, could have defined the temple forecourt already in the Temple period, as Murray thought<sup>35</sup>, although alterations taking place in successive periods cannot be excluded. The arrangement is not dissimilar, in fact, to what artists recorded beneath the temple complex at Ggantija. Gozo, in the nineteenth century: there, a trilithic structure may have acted as a monumental entrance to the temple complex built above an artificial plaza defined by a megalithic retaining wall<sup>36</sup>.

Murray 1929: 7; Tanasi 2008: 15-16 and fig. 6.
 See Veca, this volume.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Murray 1929: 8, pl. 20.1; Taylour 1959: 80.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Murray 1929: 8.

<sup>33</sup> Zammit 1924; Childe 1929. Schuchhardt (1928) remained adamant that the 'temples' were in fact houses.

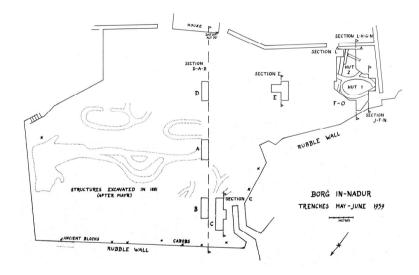
34 See Tanasi, this volume (chapter 4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Murray 1929: 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Evans 1971: 180-181; Grima 2004: 44-46. The regularity and evolution of temple forms perhaps requires revision on account of the differences apparent at several sites.

# 3.3. David H. Trump at Borġ in-Nadur (1959)

The excavations conducted by David Trump in 1959 at the site of Borġ in-Nadur were carried out with the intent of throwing light on the periodisation scheme of late prehistoric Malta, in particular the Middle and Late Bronze Ages (periods II B and II C in the chronological scheme devised by John D. Evans)<sup>37</sup>. The type site for period II B was Borġ in-Nadur established on account of the pottery with characteristic shiny red slip with a tendency to crackle and flake off, unearthed by Murray in the temple area, which bore resemblance to some pottery Evans had seen in Sicily<sup>38</sup>.



**Figure 3.6.** Site plan with the location of the trenches at Borg in-Nadur (source: National Museum of Archaeology/Heritage Malta archives).

The excavations were split into two campaigns, one of five weeks (11 May to 17 June) and a shorter one of one week in September of the same year. Work was intended to explore the remains that the Permanent Archaeological Commission had investigated behind

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Evans 1953: 69-76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Evans 1953: 88-90.

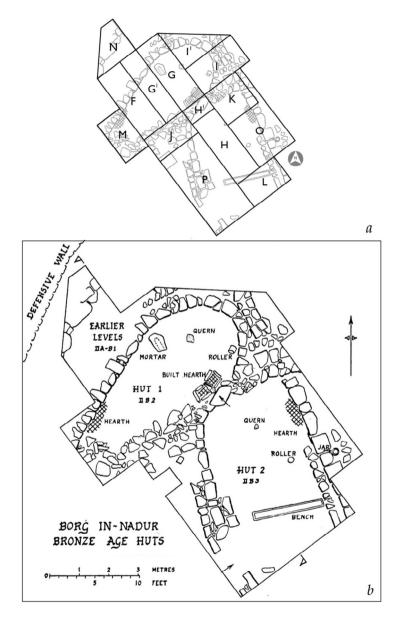


Figure 3.7. Elevated view of Hut 1 (left) and Hut 2 (right) after excavation (source: National Museum of Archaeology/Heritage Malta).

the D-shaped wall, recorded by Galizia in August 1881 and known through a photograph appended to a copy of Caruana's report (Fig. 9.4)<sup>39</sup>, but a crop of barley forced Trump to site the trenches in the western half of the same field (Fig. 3.6). Five linear sondages – A to E – were dug, each measuring 4 by 1.5 m; the sixth trench, F, located not far from the rubble boundary wall at the extreme west corner of the field, revealed a stone wall below topsoil. As a result of this discovery, Trump extended trench F to cover an area of 72 sq. m to expose remains which he identified as two contiguous oval huts, Hut 1 and Hut 2 (Figs 3.7, 3.8).

The digging was conducted by two museum labourers and a number of English volunteers who worked under the direction of Trump who was on site every day. A report was submitted for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> See Grima, this volume. Mayr had seen a 'sketch plan' ('planskizze'; Mayr 1901: 688 fn. 3) not a photograph on the basis of which he produced his own drawing (Fig. 2.8). Thanks to Hanna Stöger for checking our reading of the German original.



**Figure 3.8.** (a) Reconstruction of the position of the trenches excavated by Trump in the area of the huts (drawn by Maxine Anastasi); (b) plan of the Bronze Age huts (after Trump 1961: fig. 2).

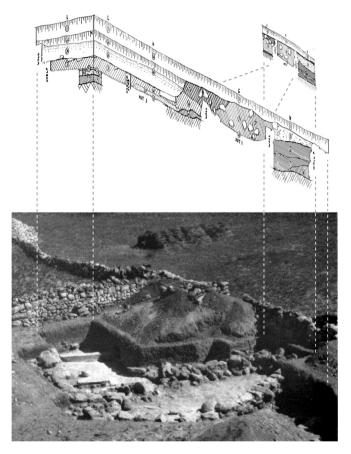
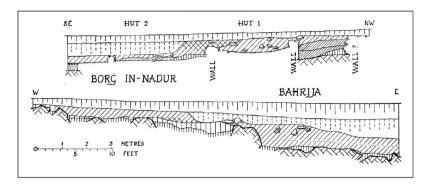


Figure 3.9. Position of the unpublished section drawing (shown in Fig. 3.13a) through the huts. The photograph was published by Trump (1961: pl. 13, lower).

publication in the journal of Britain's Prehistoric Society; it appeared in 1961. This included a description and study of the stratification to which were appended a plan (Fig. 3.8b), a section (Fig. 3.10 top) and a number of photographs of the site and finds<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Trump 1961: figs 1 (site location map), 2 (plan of the huts), 3 (section of the trench), pls 12 (photograph of the huts seen from the top of the defensive wall) and 14-15 (photograph of the pottery from each phase: II B1, II B2, II B3).



**Figure 3.10.** Section drawings published by Trump in the report which appeared in the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* (after Trump 1961: fig. 3).

Another report which was published in the museum's annual report provides a history of the site based on the sequence encountered together with a location map showing the trenches, a plan and section drawings<sup>41</sup>.

Trump distinguished seven phases in the trenches he extended beyond trench F (G, H, H', I, I', K, L, M, N, O, P) and in both published reports he described them by making reference to the main section (running NW-SE) which he recorded and published (Figs 3.10 top).

Phase 1 was marked by a settlement of Tarxien Cemetery folk (period II A in Evans' scheme) marked essentially by a wall in the extreme north of the trench. The pottery recovered was identical to what Zammit had discovered at the type site in Tarxien. In phase 2, new pottery was hailed as the arrival of new people who mix with the villagers and produce their bright red-slipped pottery with cut-out and ribbed decoration. No structural remains were made out with the exception of a small patch of floor. Trump associated this phase with the novel pottery style, classifying it as II B1.

Phase 3 produced no structural remains but is marked by the disappearance of Tarxien Cemetery phase pottery.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> MAR 1960: 3-4; the illustrations are devoid of pagination or figure number.

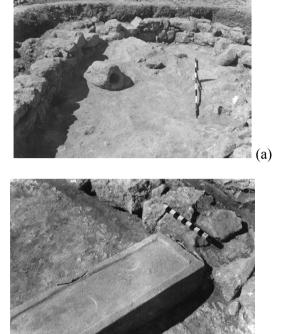


Figure 3.11. (a) Detail of Hut 1 with mortar (left), quern (centre) and roller (right) lying on the floor; (b) detail of the rebate round the edge of the top side of the limestone bench lying on the floor of Hut 2 (source: National Museum of Archaeology/Heritage Malta).

In phase 4 a hut (Hut 1) was built by cutting into the accumulated deposits for the foundations in dry rubble. Oval in shape, the hut measured 3.5 m wide and 7.5 m long, with the major axis running SW-NE. The floor was an irregular layer made from crushed and pounded soft limestone, technically called torba. On the floor lay a guern, a stone roller, and a stone mortar; along one wall was an open-air hearth (Fig. 3.11a). The pottery recovered from the rubbish that accumulated over the floor was classified as II B2: it included chevron patterns and the red slip was duller, blotchy, and unpolished.

In phase 5 a second hut, Hut 2, measuring 3.5 m wide and traced for 6 m until it passed under the field wall to the south-east, was built (Fig. 3.7). The eastern wall was flanked internally by a low bench built in rubble stones. The floor consisted of bedrock to the north and *torba* to the south where a well-dressed slab of stone, 2.9 m long and 0.30 by 0.30 m in section was discovered, with a recessed border along the top face<sup>42</sup> (Fig. 3.11b); the *torba* was renewed by another layer at a later date. A roller, a quern and an open hearth were discovered inside the hut. A fireplace with two compartments was built across the entrance of Hut 1 by now abandoned. In Hut 2, on its floors and inside cracks in the walls, Trump found pottery, some of which was smashed and left to lie where it fell; since the ware was different from the pottery recovered in Hut 1, with fine ware that was 'dark, most often black with brownish or deep red blotches', he thought that this represented a third phase, calling it II B3.<sup>43</sup>

Phase 6 was marked by field use in Roman times on the basis of the pottery recovered in the subsoil; topsoil, instead, constitutes Trump's phase 7.

## 3.3.1. Appraisal of Trump's stratigraphy: back to the fieldnotes

For years following Trump's work at Borg in-Nadur, no additional excavation work was carried out that could throw new light on the published sequence. The work by the Italian Missione Archeologica Italiana at Tas-Silg between 1963 and 1970 was so inconclusive that archaeological investigations were renewed by the University of Malta (1996-2005) in the southern enclosure and by various Italian teams in the northern enclosure after 1997. The University of Malta's excavations did reveal a sequence of layers of Bronze Age date in one of the trenches and the details will appear in print shortly. In the northern enclosure, the excavators from Rome's "La Sapienza" University say that an uninterrupted sequence from the Tarxien phase (Late Neolithic) to the Borg in-Nadur phase (Late Bronze Age) has been revealed in the new trenches dug immediately beyond the area of the Neolithic temple. It is possible that the

 $<sup>^{42}</sup>$  The stone block is not dissimilar to those found at Borg in-Nadur in 1955 (fig. 3.1 and above).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Trump 1961: 256, 258, pl. 15.

publication of pottery assemblages and associated stratigraphic sequences, together with the structural remains, from both excavations, and from others carried out by or under the direction of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage (formerly the Museums

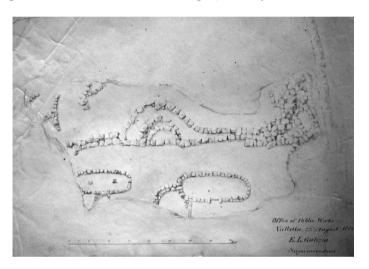
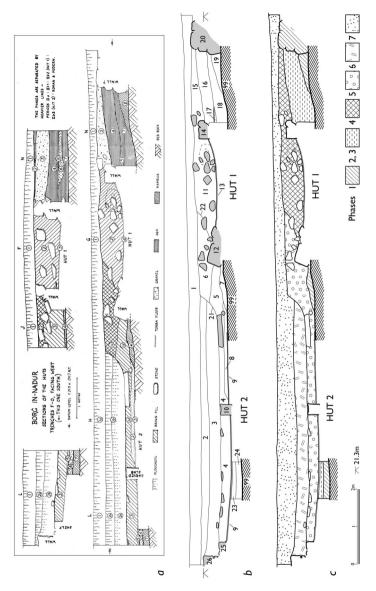


Figure 3.12. Detail of the photograph reproduced elsewhere in this volume (Fig. 9.4) showing huts excavated in the late nineteenth century behind the large fortification wall.

Department), will throw additional light on the characterisation and periodisation of Bronze Age Malta.

Research carried out in connection with the preparation of this volume, in particular the photograph appended to Caruana's report which shows the remains discovered behind the D-shaped wall (see above)<sup>44</sup>, allows us to note the similarities that exist between the hut remains uncovered by Trump and those explored in the late nineteenth century. The structures are all oval in shape, with marked thresholds and have walls built in what is clearly rubble which act as foundations for a superstructure in another material; they also contained equipment used for processing agricultural produce. The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Reference is made to it in Bugeja, this volume and Grima, this volume.



**Figure 3.13.** (a) Section drawing of the stratification across the hut area (source: National Museum of Archaeology/Heritage Malta archives); (b, c) redrawn stratification with numbers corresponding to layers and features, and shading corresponding to the phasing (drawn by Maxine Anastasi).

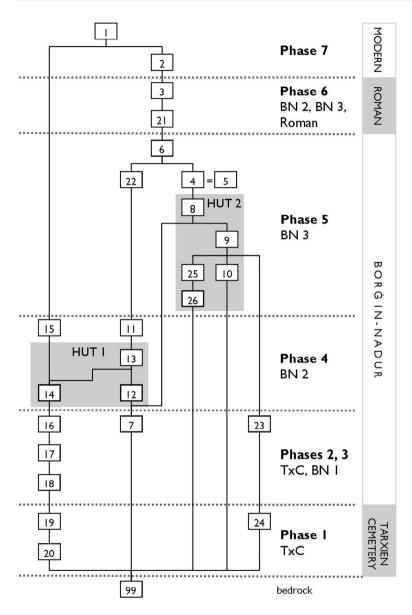


Figure 3.14. Harris Matrix of the stratification in the area of the Bronze Age huts; TxC = Tarxien Cemetery pottery, BN = Borg in-Nadur pottery according to phase (drawn by Maxine Anastasi).

photograph clearly shows a mortar and what may be a roller lying on the floor of the hut on the left hand (western) side (Fig. 3.12)<sup>45</sup>.

At this stage we feel that we ought to make reference to an essay published recently by the Australian scholar Claudia Sagona who has questioned Trump's interpretation of the stratigraphic sequence at Borg in-Nadur<sup>46</sup>. Making use of the section-drawing published by Trump (Fig. 3.10 top), where different deposits were given different shading conventions for which an explanatory key was, unfortunately, missing, Sagona suggests that the sequence of hut construction ought to be reversed, and that Hut 2 with its characterstic II B 3 pottery should be earlier than Hut 1 with its II B 2 pottery<sup>47</sup>. In this manner, the II B 3 pottery is interpreted as pottery of sub-standard Tarxien Cemetery type rather than marking the heyday of pottery production in the Bronze Age.<sup>48</sup>

In order to address the matter raised by Sagona, we decided to go through Trump's fieldnotes and other records kept in the archives of the National Museum of Archaeology<sup>49</sup>. Included with the twenty-six-page handwritten account and drawn record of the excavation is the section which corresponds to the western face of trenches L, H (and its extension H'), G and N combined together. For each trench a list of deposits encountered is given<sup>50</sup>. A table also lists the pottery found in each trench according to style<sup>51</sup>. More important for the issue under discussion here is a section drawing located in the museum archives which not only includes the key to the shading conventions adopted for it but a number is also given for every deposit encountered. This section drawing is being published for the first time here (Figs 3.9, 3.13a). These numbers correspond to the sequence of deposits excavated in each trench, described in the fieldnotes.

\_

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> What may be a mortar is located at the bottom of one of the rock-cut silo pits at In-Nuffara in Gozo, visible in Cilia 2004: 226 (top, right).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Sagona 2008.

<sup>47</sup> Sagona 2008: 492-493, fig. 3.1.

 <sup>48</sup> Sagona 2008: 494, fig. 4; the repercussions of this reading are discussed elsewhere in this volume (chapter 9).
 49 This was also done in the belief that archival material can throw precious light

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> This was also done in the belief that archival material can throw precious light on the interpretation of a particular site; see Zammit 2008; Pessina and Vella forthcoming; Bugeja, this volume.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Trump 1959-1960: 10r, 12r, 13r.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Trump 1959-1960: 11v.

A close study of the section drawing and the information contained in the fieldnotes makes it clear that the doubts raised by Sagona are misplaced. The deposit of 'hamrija' marked with the number 4, and which contained pottery of the Tarxien Cemetery phase, lies not on material containing II B 3 material but on bedrock. Moreover, II B 2 fill does *not* 'lie over both huts 1 and 2' as Sagona concludes. Unfortunately her reading of the section drawing, rather than of Trump's written account, has led her to think that the diagonal hatching in Trump's published section drawing (Fig. 3.10 top), reserved for the area above Huts 1 and 2, corresponds to the same deposit, and hence the same activity<sup>52</sup>. This is not the case. In the section drawing retrieved in the museum archives (Fig. 3.13a), the deposit which accumulated over Hut 1 (marked with the number 2, described in the fieldnotes as 'soft dark brown'53) is hatched in a different manner to the deposit which accumulated over the torba floors of Hut 2 (marked with the number 3 in trench L, the number 1d in trenches H and H'. described in the fieldnotes as 'brown earth'54 and 'hardbrown'55 respectively). It is clear that the deposit numbered 1c, reproduced in cross-hatching, lav over both the deposit that accumulated over the floor of Hut 1 (numbered 2) and also the deposit that accumulated over the floor of Hut 2 (numbered 1d).

In order to facilitate the visual representation of the stratigraphic sequence, the deposits drawn by Trump and represented by him in the section drawing were given a number (Fig. 3.13b, c) and drawn on a Harris Matrix (Fig. 3.14). The matrix has been 'stretched' to show a relative time sequence based on the changes in pottery styles proposed by Trump. The matrix itself does not reveal that Hut 1 is earlier than Hut 2. That would have been achieved had a physical link between torba floors 9 and 8 in Hut 2 and wall 12 belonging to Hut 1 been present in the section drawing. As it is, it is only the deposit we marked with the number 6, which contained II B 3 pottery, that is stratigraphically later than the deposits accumulated over the floors of Hut 2 (4 and 5 containing only II B

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Sagona labels this deposit 'II B 2' in the section drawing; Sagona 2008: fig. 3.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Trump 1959-1960: 10r.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Trump 1959-1960: 12r.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Trump 1959-1960: 10v.

3 pottery) and the deposits which accumulated over the floor of Hut 1 (11 containing only II B 2 pottery). The situation not represented in the section drawing, however, but slightly to the south and described in the fieldnotes and in the published report makes it clear that the walls of Hut 2 'butted against the earlier walls' 56, that is those of Hut 1.

#### References

Buhagiar, C. M. [2000] "National Museum of Archaeology news: 1988 and 1999", in *Malta Archaeological Review* 4: 44-50.

Childe, V. G. [1929] "Review of M. Murray, Excavations in Malta", in MAN 29: 147.

Cilia, D. (ed.) [2004] Malta before History. Miranda, Malta.

Evans, J. D. [1953] "The prehistoric culture-sequence in the Maltese archipelago", in *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 19: 41-94.

Grima, R. [2004] *The Archaeological Drawings of Charles Frederick de Brocktorff*. Midsea Books and Heritage Malta, Malta.

Magro Conti, J. [1999] "Aggression and defence in prehistoric Malta," in A. Mifsud and C. Savona Ventura (eds), Facets of Maltese Prehistory, pp. 191-208. Prehistoric Society of Malta, Malta.

MAR [1956] Report on the working of the Museum Department 1955-56. Malta.

MAR [1960] Report on the working of the Museum Department 1959-1960. Malta.

Mayr, A. [1901] 'Die Vorgeschichtlichen Denkmäler von Malta', in *Abhandlungen der Könglich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* I, 21/3: 642-721.

Murray, M. A. [1923] Excavations in Malta: Part I. B. Quaritch, London.

Murray, M. A. [1925] Excavations in Malta: Part II. B. Quaritch, London.

Murray, M. A. [1929] Excavations in Malta: Part III. B. Quaritch, London.

Murray, M. A. [1934] Corpus of the Bronze-Age Pottery of Malta. B. Quaritch, London.

Murray, M. [1963] My First Hundred Years. William Kimber, London.

Pace, A. [2004] "Borg in-Nadur, Birzebbuga," in D. Cilia (ed.), *Malta before History*, pp. 105-107. Miranda, Malta.

Pessina, A. and Vella, N. C. [forthcoming] "Introduction," in L. M. Ugolini, Malta: origini della civiltà mediterranea/Malta: Origins of Mediterranean Civilization. A re-edition with a Foreword and Introduction by Andrea Pessina

-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Trump 1959-1960: 9v; 1961: 256.

- and Nicholas C. Vella. Translation of the edition of 1934 by Louis J. Scerri, pp. xi-xxix. Midsea Books, Malta.
- Sagona, C. [2008] "Malta: between a rock and a hard place," in C. Sagona (ed.), Beyond the Homeland: Markers in Phoenician Chronology (Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement 28), pp. 487-536. Peeters, Leuven.
- Schuchhardt, C. [1928] "Review of M. Murray, Excavations in Malta: Part II", in Gnomon 4: 427-431.
- Tanasi, D. [2008] La Sicilia e l'arcipelago maltese nell'età del Bronzo Medio (KASA 3). Officina di Studi Medievali, Palermo.
- Taylour, W. [1959] Myceanean Pottery in Italy and Adjacent Areas. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Trump, D.H. [1959-60] Excavation Notes January 1959-June 1960, Vol. 1. Unpublished manuscript, National Museum of Archaeology, Heritage Malta.
- Trump, D.H. [1961] "The Later Prehistory of Malta", in *Proceedings of the* Prehistoric Society 27: 253-262.
- Zammit, M. E. [2008] "Ta' Hagrat 1923-1926: A Reassessment of the Excavation Archive", in M. E. Zammit and J. Mallia (eds), Ta' Hagrat and Skorba: Ancient Monuments in a Modern World, pp. 19-26. Heritage Malta, Malta.
- Zammit, T. [1920] Trip to Italy, France, UK (May-June 1920) and Misc. Notes. Unpublished manuscript, National Museum of Archaeology, Heritage Malta.
- Zammit, T. [1924] "Review of M. Murray, Excavations in Malta", in Man 24: 142-143.

**Nicholas C. Vella** is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Classics and Archaeology at the University of Malta. He co-directs several research projects in Malta and has co-edited *Debating Orientalization: Multidisciplinary Approaches to Change in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Equinox, 2006).

MariaElena Zammit studied Archaeology at the University of Malta and is a curator within the Prehistoric Sites Department, Heritage Malta. Her Master's dissertation consisted of an archaeological field survey of Il-Qlejgha tal-Bahrija and surrounding areas. Before joining Heritage Malta, she worked as a freelance archaeologist on monitoring and excavation projects in Mdina and Rabat.

Anton Bugeja, a family doctor by profession, has a keen interest in Maltese antiquities and has been active as an amateur archaeologist for years. His current areas of research concern the use of historical and archival records to throw light on Maltese archaeological sites, the contribution made by amateurs to Maltese archaeology, and the development of antiquarianism and archaeology in nineteenth-century Malta