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978-0-521-10360-2 - Forest Farmers and Stockherders: Early Agriculture and its Consequences in
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Peter Bogucki

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Forest Farmers and Stockherders

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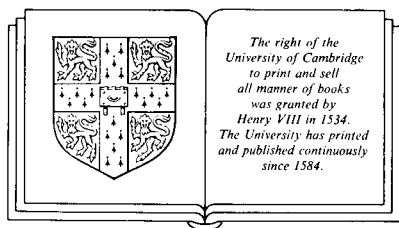
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PETER BOGUCKI Forbes College, Princeton University

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PREFACE

This book has had a fairly prolonged gestation period, which began soon after the completion of my doctoral dissertation in 1981. To some degree, it was the inevitable result of thinking that had taken place on issues which surrounded my dissertation topic but which were too broad to warrant their inclusion in that work. At the time, I thought that I was sufficiently well informed on the Neolithic of central Europe to set these ideas to paper in fairly short order. Five years later, I have been disabused of such ambitious thoughts and instead have realized that ideas do not automatically translate themselves into prose.

When I attempted to characterize the approach taken in this book to a colleague, his reaction was, “so you’re trying to hang a little theory on the data.” European prehistorians for decades have had a practice of publishing copious volumes of data and hoping that from these data an image of prehistoric life will emerge. In recent years, the impact of anthropological archaeology has led to attempts to construct theoretical models of prehistoric society, often with little direct consideration of the relevant data or with a selective culling of those data which support the argument. My attempt in this volume is to try to synthesize these approaches, first by considering the empirical data on Neolithic adaptations in central Europe in some detail, then by linking those data directly to models drawn from anthropological theory.

The result is what appears at first glance to be a curious mix of both inductive and deductive argument. To some degree, this has been necessitated by the volume and complexity of the fundamental data and the need to organize them in a coherent manner. Essentially, this book seeks to examine the behavior of Neolithic communities in its environmental context and to propose some ideas to explain patterns of similarities and differences. There is considerable overlap between these two goals, and description and interpretation have sometimes become intertwined. This book is not a synthesis, nor is it a polemic. Rather, it represents a particular viewpoint on a body of archaeological data. The positions taken here are not incontrovertible, and their purpose is to lead others to endorse, to refine, or to reject them.

I am considerably indebted to my European and American colleagues who, through conversation and correspondence, have provided insights and information on recent fieldwork and interpretations. These include J. Lüning (Frankfurt), M. Dohrn-Ihmig (Frankfurt), M. Ilett (Paris), H. Schlichtherle (Hemmenhofen), A. Zimmerman (Frankfurt), D. Kaufmann (Halle), F. Hamond (Belfast), N. Starling (London), J.P. Farruggia (Paris), C. Bakels (Leiden), J. Bakker (Amsterdam), H.

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I am grateful to my superiors at Princeton – Joan Girgus, Gene Lowe, and especially John Wilson – for allowing me to have the time necessary to complete this book when they could easily have found additional duties to add to my administrative portfolio. Peggy Hoffman permitted me to store files on her computer account, thus making it considerably easier to manage the manuscript. Robert Matthews of the Department of Physics Photo Lab helped with the reproduction of Figure 2.5.

Finally, my wife Virginia and daughters Caroline and Marianna have tolerated the writing of this book for the last few years. They have had to put up with lawns unmowed and outings missed, and to dedicate this book to them seems to be meager compensation for their patience.