

Editorial

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Welcome to the second issue of the *European Journal of Archaeology* for 2012. In this packed issue, you will find: first, two general articles; then, a special section of five articles dedicated to underwater archaeology in Europe; and, finally, ten reviews of recent major publications of significance to European archaeology. Below, I summarize and comment on these contributions.

Mercedes Murillo-Barroso and Marcos Martín-Torres provide a useful overview of the circulation and provenance of amber in the Iberian Peninsula throughout prehistory, incorporating the results of their own scientific characterization studies of amber from three later prehistoric sites in Spain. They show that, despite the availability of Iberian amber deposits, amber from other sources was widely imported into the region, including a pommel probably made of Sicilian amber (or ‘simitite’) deposited at the important Copper Age megalithic site of Valencina de la Concepción, as well as beads made of Baltic amber (or ‘succinite’) deposited at Middle Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The claim that simetite was imported into south-west Spain is particularly interesting, and will undoubtedly generate further debate, as – hopefully – will questions regarding the values ascribed to this widely known but under-interpreted exotic material.

David Cowley and Birger Stichelbaut highlight the potential of collections of millions of historic aerial photographs as a research and heritage management resource for European archaeology. In particular, they show how these under-appreciated archives can – when approached critically – contribute significantly to archaeological site discovery, to mapping and interpreting battlefields and other conflict landscapes, and to understanding landscape change over the last century. This article also prompts the question, what is the relationship of aerial photography to historic mapping and to present-day LiDAR (Light Detection And Ranging) remote sensing technology?

Marinella Pasquinucci was instrumental in commissioning and managing the five articles published here on underwater archaeology – a project which began back in 2008 when Marinella was a member of the *EJA*'s Editorial Board and when Alan Saville was the General Editor. I am very grateful to both of them for their efforts in bringing this important aspect of European archaeology to the pages of the *EJA*. Marinella also kindly contributed to the commentaries on these articles presented below. Key themes shared by them include: the history of underwater archaeological research, conservation and museum projects since World War II; the ever-expanding parameters of what constitutes underwater archaeology; the ongoing threats to underwater heritage and the measures being taken to protect, manage and promote it; the importance of documenting underwater archaeological remains; and the strengths and weaknesses of related organizations that depend upon government funding.

Jonathan Benjamin and Alex Hale promote an inclusive approach to the study and management of underwater archaeological sites and landscapes found in a variety of complementary maritime and inland environments, ranging from offshore to coastal, estuarine, riverine, and lacustrine. They emphasize the importance of prehistoric underwater archaeologies, which have attracted less than their fair share of attention from the underwater archaeological community, not to mention the wider public. They also highlight the network of archaeologists, marine geophysicists, environmental scientists, and commercial and industrial organizations that is currently collaborating, with European Science Foundation funding, to develop research on the prehistoric landscapes of the European continental shelf.

Carmen García Rivera and Milagros Alzaga García describe how underwater archaeological heritage is managed in the Spanish region of Andalusia, particularly through the work of the Underwater Archaeology Centre (*CAS – Centro de Arqueología Subacuática*). Their underwater archaeological map of Andalusia represents a fundamental tool used in the documentation, protection, preservation, researching, and promotion of this heritage. Because the region has seen much navigation and trade since antiquity, and especially because Seville and Cádiz were major ports for colonial trade with America, the region has an outstanding underwater archaeological heritage. Sadly, the shipwrecks' rich cargoes attract treasure hunters. As a consequence, the Centre has played a key part in enhancing relevant legislation, training and co-operation, and in Spain's pioneering legal action against a treasure-hunting company.

Michel L'Hour, likewise, describes the evolving work of the French Department of Underwater Archaeological Research (*DRASSM – Département des Recherches Archéologiques Subaquatiques et Sous-Marines*), whose daunting remit is to manage, develop and protect the entire underwater heritage in French territorial waters around the world. Legal instruments, government funding, staff training, extensive databases, a new purpose-built research vessel, and international co-operation are all key ingredients in their success.

Irena Radić Rossi provides an historical overview of the underwater archaeological heritage of Croatia and of the development of related programmes of research, protection, and public presentation. It is worth noting that *in situ* preservation has been established here as a common practice since 1973, well before the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage. Hopefully, the International Centre for Underwater Archaeology, established in Zadar in 2007 and designated as a UNESCO Category II Centre, will now overcome some of the long-term structural weaknesses in the management of Croatia's underwater heritage, and also reverse the continued destruction by developers of important underwater archaeological sites along the Adriatic coast.

Last but not the least, Ufuk Kocabaş presents an introduction to the history of underwater archaeology in Turkey and an up-date on research on the extraordinary assemblage of at least 36 shipwrecks discovered in the Byzantine harbour of Constantinople, in the Yenikapı district of modern-day Istanbul. The well-preserved remains of galleys and trading vessels are contributing significantly to our understanding of ship typology and construction between the fifth and tenth centuries AD, and could become an important element of Turkey's cultural heritage, particularly if a planned new museum comes to fruition.

The following reviews section, edited by Leonardo García Sanjuán and Estella Weiss-Krejci, evaluates the latest crop of archaeological publications of European-scale significance. It begins with a thought-provoking discussion of the first published output of the EAA's Archaeology and Gender in Europe (AGE) Working Party. Next comes an excellent review of Werner Herzog's film about the Palaeolithic paintings of Chauvet Cave. This is followed by details of an edited volume on Upper Palaeolithic households and domesticity in the Paris basin. Later prehistory is well served by reviews of books on: the Middle Neolithic rhyton – a distinctive ceramic vessel of the Adriatic Danilo culture; comparisons between the development of complex societies in the American Southwest and the Iberian Peninsula; the circulation and value of 'exotica' across the Mediterranean; theories about the 'state' and their relevance to archaeology; and Lotte Hedeager's second book on the Scandinavian Iron Age. Finally, adding to his co-authored paper in this issue of the *EJA*, there are reviews of two edited volumes in which David Cowley has played a leading part: both dealing with aerial photographs, the second also with the broader field of remote sensing and its relevance to archaeological heritage management.

We hope you find something of interest in this issue of the *EJA*. If you would like to submit an article yourself on any aspect of European archaeology, or inform us of a book or other major publication that deserves review, do contact us via the *EJA* website – <http://www.maney.co.uk/index.php/journals/eja/>. We look forward to hearing from you.