

Editorial

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This issue of the *European Journal of Archaeology* marks the start of a new publishing partnership between the European Association of Archaeologists and Maney – a leading publisher of academic archaeology journals, who share our ambition to enhance further the quality, reputation, readership, and impact of our international peer-reviewed journal. Working together, our aim is to publish – both in print and online – the best new archaeological research undertaken in and around Europe. Our scope remains broad, with original articles ranging from major reviews of the prehistoric and historic archaeology of Europe and neighbouring regions, to reports on key archaeological discoveries set within a European context, to cutting-edge research and debates on science-based archaeology, archaeological method and theory, public archaeology, and the history of archaeology, to interviews reflecting upon the life and work of significant European archaeologists. Thought-provoking reviews also remain a key feature of the *EJA*, including: commissioned book reviews that summarize and assess new publications, evaluations of museum exhibitions and archaeological films, and critical commentaries accompanying published articles. And so, in this issue, you will find six articles and eight book reviews, all dealing with interesting new research and thinking about aspects of European archaeology. I summarize and comment on these below.

David Orton provides a comprehensive and critical synthesis of the available zooarchaeological data relating to the Balkan Neolithic, and especially the Vinča ‘culture’. Although he emphasizes diverse regional and local trajectories, Orton also identifies a widespread (but not universal) and relatively sudden increase in the abundance of cattle in the later Neolithic (especially compared to caprines). This, he explains in terms of the socio-economic development of more specialized and large-scale cattle herding, managed by a more mobile cattle-herding segment of the population, occurring at the same time as an overall decrease in residential mobility. As Orton himself acknowledges, these findings raise more questions than answers. For example, why did cattle take off at some sites but not at others? Evidently, Balkan prehistorians still have much to debate.

André Costopoulos and his collaborators place the complexification of prehistoric hunter-gatherers in Finnish northern Bothnia in a well-argued context of economic, social, and environmental change. They draw attention to a period of reduced mobility, increased population density, and growing social complexity (marked, for example, by the development of economic specialization, site hierarchies, long-distance trade contacts, and the unique ‘Giants’ church’ monuments) between around 4000 and 2000 cal BC, in which cultural developments were focussed on relatively stable places in the landscape, less affected by contemporary major environmental changes along the Bothnian coast. Since these developments essentially delayed the northward extension of the

agricultural Neolithic, this study should deepen our understanding of the 'Mesolithic–Neolithic' transition in Northern Europe.

Susanna Harris takes a slice of time – the fourteenth century cal BC – to compare the use and significance of woven textiles and animal skins in a data-rich sample of four Bronze Age cultures situated across and beyond Europe, extending from southern Scandinavia, to the Hallstatt salt mines in Austria, Late Minoan Crete, and later Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt. Despite the inevitable discrepancies in the quality and quantity of the regional evidence, this transnational survey highlights the versatility of 'cloth' and its makers to produce a wide range of cultural products. Some elements of 'cloth culture' were widely shared, but significant regional variability also existed, correlating with different environmental and cultural conditions (with a southern preference for cool and clean linen over warm wool, for example), as well as different social orders. Wider, anthropologically informed theories of material culture, dress, the body, and identity would add to the interpretative aspect of this study. Nevertheless, Harris' article provides a useful synthesis of current textile research and its contribution to our understanding of ancient societies.

Fiona Shapland and Ian Armit consider the ways in which selected human bones (such as perforated cranial fragments and femur heads) were modified and utilized as cultural artefacts by members of Iron Age and – arguably – Norse residential communities in Atlantic Scotland. They also consider the implications of such practices for past attitudes towards the dead and their potent physical remains. Their regional case-study ties in with a growing number of studies published over the last decade linking material culture, the body, and death, and it will be interesting to see where such studies lead us on a wider European scale.

Rhea Brettel and her collaborators set out to identify historically documented Germanic migrants to Britain during the fifth century AD, through their isotope analysis of a small sample of early medieval cemetery populations from south-east England, Germany, and France. Although the results could be interpreted in terms of an immigrant population from continental north-west Europe having been buried at Ringlemere Farm in Kent, the similarities in the geological formations of the studied regions, and Brettel et al.'s careful and critical approach, actually lead them to question the current ability of strontium and oxygen isotope studies to answer definitively this particular question of provenance. As a consequence, they conclude by calling for new research on the dietary practices of early medieval populations in Europe, which would have impacted on the isotope values ingested by them.

Nina Witosek's article represents the revised version of her well-received key-note presentation at the opening ceremony of the 17th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists, held in Oslo in September 2011. Essentially, this is an essay about the heritage process. In it, Witosek warns European archaeologists that, in the challenging current political context of economic collapse and environmental crisis, they should resist being called upon to generate nationalist myths of origin and identity, but, instead, should emphasize themes of human unity and of the beauty of the world in which we live. Given Witosek's particular style of writing and epistemology, it is important to point out that she is not an archaeologist, but an interdisciplinary scholar with research interests in the comparative history of cultures, Scandinavian studies, and sustainability, and also a fiction writer – all of which inform the present article, and provide food for thought.

The following reviews section evaluates a variety of recently published books. It begins with three edited volumes on prehistory: the first on the origins and development of

seafaring; the second on Romanian later prehistory, dedicated to Attila László – Emeritus Professor at the A.I. Cuza University of Iași; and the third on the relations between megalithic and rock-cut tombs in the Western Mediterranean. Two single-authored monographs follow: on the rock art of Norway, and the urbanization of Etruria. Next comes John Collis’ stimulating combination of praise and criticism for Miranda Aldhouse-Green’s new book on the Druids. The section then ends with two historical archaeology books: one on Roman mining and metallurgy in the eastern Sierra Morena mountain range of Spain, the other the proceedings of the Fifteenth Viking Congress.

We are always interested in considering new articles to publish in the *EJA*, on any aspect of European archaeology. If you would like to submit an article, do please note that updated instructions for authors and details of how to submit online are now available on the *EJA* website <http://www.maney.co.uk/index.php/journals/eja/>.