
E DITORIAL

John Chapman
General Editor
University of Durham

After the publication of the first thematic issue of the *European Journal of Archaeology* – on ‘Public Archaeology’ issue 2(2) – we now return to the broader mix of times, places and topics characteristic of other issues of the Journal. Three main themes are covered in this issue: non-destructive archaeological survey (two articles by Siemaszko and van Leusen (with contributions by Barratt and Gaffney); ritual (two articles by Brück and Oestigaard); and archaeo-magnetic studies (a single article by Lanos, Kovacheva and Chauvin).

Jerzy Siemaszko has directed intensive field survey in north-east Poland as part of the systematic coverage of the whole country (the PAR project). In this report, he focuses on the surface lithic remains of late Palaeolithic and Mesolithic campsites and temporary camps in the Lega microregion, providing some details on the two-dimensional recording of all surface lithics on selected important sites and targeted excavation of small settlements, flint workshops and a cemetery. In contrast to the more dispersed late Palaeolithic sites, six permanent Mesolithic base camps can be identified, which form the basis for short-term tethered mobility accounting for 70 percent of all lithic discard, interpreted as short-term stops. It seems likely that the emergence of early forms of ‘community areas’, *pace* Neustupny, can be dated to the Mesolithic in this area, based on resource-rich lakes radially linked by transport routes. Stylistic differentiation is also more characteristic of the Mesolithic than of the late Palaeolithic but, even then, only 10 percent of the lithics are ‘culturally’ diagnostic, in comparison to 60 percent being dateable finds.

The second survey article concerns the high-precision mapping of a single Roman *civitas* capital in the British Midlands – at Wroxeter (*Viroconium Cornoviorum*). Martijn van Leusen and his colleagues realized that the creation of Wroxeter as an international laboratory for the testing of geophysical survey equipment and digital analysis methods depended upon cartographic representation of an unusually high level of precision for archaeology. Since even the most detailed Ordnance Survey mapping did not provide sufficient accuracy for the establishment of control points relative to existing buildings or fence lines, the team used differential GPS, via four satellites, to tie in 18 control points to Ordnance Survey trig. points. The control points, horizontally accurate to 3 mm, now form the basis for the mapping of ‘local’ geophysical investigations (accurate to 125 mm) and the integration of aerial photography (accurate to 100 mm) onto a GRASS GIS. This research has enabled the production of a Virtual Reality atlas of the Roman town, which will be used in site management and tourism. This state-of-the art survey article will surely set European standards in high-precision survey well into the next millennium.

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The pair of articles on ritual share core features but come from very different directions. Both Brück and Oestigaard interpret ritual in terms of practical social action designed to achieve cultural goals – in the case of the former, the life-cyclical transformations of middle Bronze Age individuals, houses and settlements through rites of passage; for the latter, the clear definition of cremation in the Bronze and Iron Ages of Norway as a succession of transformations whose stages may be very distinct in time/space. While Brück devotes most of her article to disentangling the complex debates over the definition of ritual amongst anthropologists and archaeologists over the last two decades, Oestigaard relates cremation practice to the dual-culture hypothesis, a precursor to core-periphery modelling which seeks to establish the nature of relations between northern and southern Scandinavia and the rest of Europe in later prehistory and protohistory.

Brück's critique centres on the ritual – secular dualism, which reduces to the non-utilitarian – functional opposition in much archaeology. This is hard to sustain in anthropology, since most traits characterizing ritual are also found in non-ritual contexts. Brück's solution to this bottleneck is that ritual is just as practical and causally effective as other social action, but is framed within different forms of cultural logic from that of 20th-century rationalism. This article takes the debate about the nature of ritual an important step further.

Oestigaard takes an audacious step away from core-periphery modelling with the claim that individuals from the north Scandinavian periphery made voyages south into Europe, well before the Viking era, and came back with artifacts such as Bronze Age face-urns (for later use as cremation urns) and Roman Vestland-style cauldrons (in which cremated remains of leaders were carried home). This argument forms part of the most decisive critique of core-periphery models – that they tend to ignore local responses in the peripheries in favour of overarching cultural expansion leading to structural dependency. A case of the pre-Vikings fighting back?

In the last article, Lanos, Kovacheva and Chauvin tell a tale of two archaeomagnetic centres – the Rennes laboratory in Brittany and the Sofia laboratory in Bulgaria. After a valuable summary of the work of both labs, as well as a resume of work done elsewhere in Europe, the authors discuss new solutions to problems of accurate dating of both *in situ* and displaced objects. An important point is that, in both countries, the original archaeological dating of objects used in the early years of archaeomagnetic studies have now changed, thus prompting re-evaluations of these baseline studies of the prehistoric period in Bulgaria and the Roman period in France. While the Bulgarian lab has used the 100-year moving window approach to produce an archaeomagnetic curve stretching back 8000 years, the Rennes team has developed Bayesian methods of assessing the key dates in their curve going back 2000 years. The approach using multiple chronological solutions is clearly of great significance and could lead to widespread re-evaluation of European archaeomagnetic curves.

Finally, millennium bugs and postage permitting, this issue should be the last issue to reach the EAA membership in the AD second millennium. On behalf of everyone associated with the *European Journal of Archaeology*, I should like to wish you a happy third millennium, a healthy 21st century and a prosperous New Year!