EDITORIAL

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In this last issue for the year 2000, the Journal focuses on three big issues in European archaeology – mobility, pioneers and memory. Since three aspects of memory are discussed in Peter Biehl and Alexander Gramsch's Book marks, I merely allude to them here. The issues of mobility and pioneers are touched upon in the articles which also divide thematically into two pairs: two articles which bracket the beginning and the end of the Mesolithic period in south east Europe and two papers on scientific methods of sourcing.

Miracle, Galanidou and Forenbaher seek to demonstrate the principal ways in which the karstic area of north east Istria was re-colonized in the early Holocene. The Pupićina Project has now investigated four cave sites: Sěbrn abri is the focus of this article. Through detailed analysis of a small excavated sample, the authors define two stages in colonization strategies – a 'look-see' phase lasting no more than two centuries, during which people were assessing the place for its potential in regional settlement, and a more intensive phase, in which red deer exploitation was selected as the principal site function. The fine-grained chronology of the abri, based upon a series of AMS dates, means that the sedimentological, bone taphonomic and lithic analyses can be linked to other sites in the region, as well as compared within the Sěbrn abri.

The Iron Gates gorge was settled throughout the Mesolithic, with key cultural developments occurring during the 'contact' phase with pioneer farmers. Research on the Iron Gates Mesolithic (IGM) has recently gained a new lease of life with the opening of the Lepenski Vir archives, with access controlled by an academic committee. The first fruits of this welcome initiative from Belgrade were visible in the IGM Edinburgh conference of March/April 2000 (to be reviewed in the next TEA by Mirjana Roksandi), in papers given at the May 2000 Ljubljana Neolithic seminar and in an EAA-2000 session in Lisbon on IGM violence. An intriguing question is why the excavator, the late Dragoslav Srejovi, never utilized this rich and detailed excavation record, not least to refute critiques of his excavation and recording techniques by eastern and western colleagues alike (this editor included).

European Journal of Archaeology Vol. 3(3): 291–292

The important paper by Radovanović on houses and burials at Lepenski Vir exploits the newly available contextual data to define the time/space distributions of mortuary practices. The clear differences through time are matched by spatial differences between upstream and downstream houses and locations nearer to and further from the Danube. Most importantly, Radovanović documents the collapse of the strong division between foragers (levels I-II) and farmers (level III), both in stratigraphic terms and in mortuary practices. The potential for AMS dating to date individual objects or events is finally making a major difference to interpretations of the IGM. A highly probable resolution of one of the classic dating problems is that the more recent charcoal in the houses dates the house, while the much older AMS dates on skeletal material indicates the deposition of ancestral bones (see, for Swedish megaliths, Persson and Sjøgren, *Journal of European Archaeology* 3[2], 1995, or vol. 4, 1996).

The potential of human skeletal remains for archaeological science is well demonstrated in Montgomery, Budd and Evans's article. The premise is simple: if bronzes can be sourced, why not humans? The authors' pioneering technique has immense potential, especially in areas with contrasting adjacent geological units, since the local food chain introduces its own characteristic signal into human bodies, isotopically distinguishable despite bone diagenetic effects. For the debate on the mobility or otherwise of the British Neolithic, this is an important breakthrough, since it constitutes the first direct evidence for mobility.

Ruiz-Taboada and Montero may not be using pioneering scientific techniques but their work is equally valuable in providing primary analytical and spatial data for the debate over the complexity of Iberian Bronze Age societies. From Childe onwards, metallurgy has been used in theories of the emergence of complexity. Here, the fruitful combination of grindstone and metals analysis enables a new perspective on local and medium-distance mobility in the La Mancha area of south east Spain. It will be hard to support theses based upon social complexity in this area if future data replicate the pattern defined here.

A whole new generation of geochemical and biochemical techniques is now becoming available for archaeological applications, many of which are underpinned by better understanding of bone diagenesis. At this critical time for archaeological science, it is appropriate that the Journal will seek to bring these new techniques to the attention of the membership by the inclusion, from issue 4(2), August 2001 onwards, of short papers on these new developments. Any archaeological scientist who wishes to submit a paper or help the General Editor select papers should contact me.

My contact details are in fact soon to change temporarily, since the General Editor will be on research leave in Budapest from January to September 2001. Please continue to send any email correspondence to: [j.c.chapman@durham.ac.uk] and manuscripts/correspondence to the new address: c/o Paszternak, I., Hegedus Gyula u., 27/II, Budapest, Hungary.

https://doi.org/10.1179/146195700807860846 Published online by Cambridge University Press