

# Reviews

## New Book Chronicle

COLIN RENFREW & PAUL BAHN (ed.). *The Cambridge world prehistory*. 3 volumes. xxxii+2049 pages, numerous b&w illustrations. 2014. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 978-0-521-11993-1 hardback £450 & \$675.

In the first issue of 2015 we devoted the whole of the NBC to a single publication, Springer's massive *Encyclopedia of global archaeology*, edited by Claire Smith. The appearance of another blockbusting set of volumes of global remit, authored by a cast of prominent scholars, demands similar attention. The three-volume *Cambridge world prehistory*, however, adopts a rather different format to the *Encyclopedia* and this has encouraged us to seek some specialist insight. This issue's NBC therefore takes the form of three parallel reviews—one dedicated to each regional volume—by reviewers invited on the basis of their regional expertise.

### Volume 1: Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and the Pacific

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Although not called an encyclopaedia, the three volumes of *The Cambridge world prehistory* certainly comprise an encyclopaedic venture. The jacket notes state that the editors, Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn, aim to deliver “a systematic and authoritative examination of the prehistory of every region around the world”, and the tables of contents show they have not cut any corners. In Volume 1, the subject of this first review, we thus find concise but geographically and chronologically exhaustive treatments of Africa (North and Sub-Saharan), southern Asia including Island Southeast Asia, and the Pacific, covering continental Australia as well as the Pacific Islands. Innovatively for a project such as this, regular chapters on linguistics (‘Languages’) and genetics (‘DNA’) complement the otherwise predominantly archaeological and palaeoanthropological emphasis.

The contributions are gathered into four sections: ‘Introduction’, ‘Africa’, ‘South and Southeast Asia’ and ‘The Pacific’. The first section includes a generic introduction to the entire enterprise, as well as justification for the inclusion of DNA and linguistics. In addition to the usual background information that opens broad synthetic works, the general introduction also explains another interesting dimension of the project: although it is concerned with *prehistory*—that is, the history of pre- or non-literate societies—the editors have commissioned summary accounts of key early literate societies to round off the narratives concerning earlier periods. Thus in the present volume we find short summaries covering Pharaonic history, Classical and post-Classical Africa, historic India and historic Mainland Southeast Asia. Prehistory ended in the Pacific with the arrival of literate modern Europeans, so there is no such wrap-up for that region.

The inclusion of DNA and linguistics—‘molecular genetics’ and ‘archaeolinguistics’ in the jacket blurb—is heralded as cutting edge. The introduction to the study of ancient DNA is short and sweet, at just five pages of text. Conversely, the introduction to linguistics gets 24 pages of text; it is co-authored by co-editor Renfrew, and the more lengthy treatment reflects his well-developed interest in the topic. The two fields of enquiry are not joined in any synthesis but remain separate, each with its own set of possibilities and problems in relation to the regional archaeology under consideration. More on this shortly.

Part II, the Africa section, begins in the Late Miocene about six million years ago, following the split of humans and chimpanzees from a common ancestor. We get a quick but comprehensive tour of the biology of “all fossil human ancestor species except those belonging to the genus *Homo*” (p. 47), followed by an equally concise run-down of the “stone artifacts [that] represent the dawn of human material culture” (p. 65).

The scene is then set for the rest of the volume—indeed, for all three volumes—with a short, sharp chapter: ‘The Human Revolution’. This discusses

genetic evidence for the ‘Out of Africa’ model of modern human origins, as well as related questions arising in the genetics of Africa (modern and prehistoric), including matters overlapping with linguistics, such as the origins of human language and the genetics of ‘click’ language speakers and of the spread of Bantu languages across most of southern Africa.

The remainder of Part II follows the course of human history in Africa through to post-Classical times. It starts with a survey of the physical remains of the genus *Homo* up to and including anatomically modern humans (AMH). It then works its way through the Sub-Saharan Middle Stone Age, Later Stone Age of southern Africa, North Africa after the Middle Palaeolithic, Holocene West Africa, the archaeology of the Central African rainforest, the later prehistory of southern Africa, the prehistory of East Africa, Egypt in three chapters from the Neolithic to the Pharaohs, and a summary of the Classical and post-Classical periods, including the expansion of Islam (and Arabic), right up to the nineteenth-century European ‘scramble for Africa’. Part II concludes with an overview of African languages.

Parts III and IV, ‘South and Southeast Asia’ and ‘The Pacific’ respectively, adopt the same basic structure as Part II. They start with the earliest evidence and work through to the end of prehistory, each with their own chapters on DNA and languages. Part III opens with chapters on the Palaeolithic of South and Southeast Asia and then the DNA chapter. The section then outlines the Upper Palaeolithic of both regions together before concentrating on South Asia and considering post-Pleistocene (post-Ice Age) food production in South Asia, the Indus Valley civilisation, India beyond the Indus civilisation and finally historic India. The focus next moves to Southeast Asia to examine early food production, mainland complex societies, the mainland in early historic times, Indonesian and, separately, Philippines prehistory, and then the linguistic overview.

At 129 pages, Part IV is only half the length of the other two regional treatments in the volume. Sandwiched between the DNA and languages chapters we find the Pleistocene in Australia, New Guinea and nearby archipelagos (by their archaeological names of Sahul and Near Oceania), separate chapters on post-Ice Age New Guinea and Australia, and the Island Pacific regions of Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia, and last but not least (despite being part of Polynesia), New Zealand.

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Volume 1 alone is a prodigious undertaking. How well does it work? That depends. It is framed in the jacket notes as a “resource for any student or scholar of archaeology”. It does, however, assume not a little general archaeological knowledge on the reader’s part; junior students (taking a narrow definition of ‘student’) may need to reach for Renfrew and Bahn’s (2012) well-known undergraduate textbook.

Extending students in this way is no bad thing, but I am unsure how useful the volume will be for anyone more advanced in their career. This is because—as is inevitable with these sorts of exercises—it is, except in broad terms, already out of date and the treatments are mostly too concise to replace the original papers that most scholars will still need to consult. Being out of date is a risk all researchers face but is more of problem for projects such as this, which claim more substantial and permanent authority than less ambitious books and certainly most journal articles. Moreover, in paring down vast bodies of original research, a great deal of detail and nuance is unavoidably lost, scholarly bias can override even-handedness in the succinct characterisation—even the mention—of controversies and basic errors can be introduced. As a major ‘reference work’, edited for a prestigious publisher by two prominent scholars, such errors, biases and over-simplifications can easily become scholarly ‘truths’, at least for non-specialist users.

That said, the Pacific section, where my own expertise lies, is a pretty good run-down on the basics (notwithstanding the omission of such up-to-the-minute discoveries as Polynesian chickens in the pre-Columbian Americas and Lapita ceramics on the south coast of New Guinea). The authors’ various blind spots and predilections are well known to me, and I cannot see any glaring errors or omissions or significantly biased portrayals. Debates of intense interest to the *cognoscenti*, but probably of little or no interest to anyone else—such as the ins-and-outs of the Lapita dispersal or the nature and origins of mid- to Late Holocene change in Australia—are dealt with appropriately. If the other regional sections are like this—and from a non-specialist’s perspective they certainly seem to be—then the volume succeeds admirably as a quick reference guide, but one that needs to be checked against the specialist literature for anything more than a general overview.

In this context, the DNA and languages chapters are a mixed blessing. That they are included at all is excellent, but they are too specialised in content and

writing style—the languages chapters in particular—to add as much as they might for non-specialists. As a Pacific archaeologist, I am used to reading the details of both biological and linguistic research because unlike many other parts of the world we have long worked routinely across all three data sets. Yet I found the other language chapters heavy going for the most part.

Another issue is that the volume is not nearly as well integrated as it could and should be. I understand that the editors think it premature to synthesise the archaeology, linguistics and genetics in a unified narrative. They—or their Cambridge University Press collaborators—could, however, have done much more cross-referencing both within and between the four main sections. References to processes and events discussed in two or more contributions seem random for the most part, and key dates or interpretations of important matters often vary substantially without even passing acknowledgement that other contributors might have different ideas, or might have something complementary to add.

One important example is the date of the ‘African exodus’ of AMH and the implications of that date for their appearance in southern Asia and to the initial colonisation of Sahul (Australia, Tasmania and New Guinea joined by lowered Ice Age sea levels). If AMH left Africa only 50 000–60 000 years ago, as stated in several places, how did they get to Australia by the same date, as stated in several other places? Matters concerning early *Musa* bananas (which are Southeast Asian) in West Africa, the settlement of Madagascar and the emergence of food production in Southeast Asia and the New Guinea highlands should all have been cross-referenced.

If the archaeological treatment is generally very good, there are some errors of fact, mostly connected with geography; these sometimes really do make a difference. For example, on page 563, the distance from Papua New Guinea to the Admiralty Islands is stated as around 60km—instead of 200km—although this lower figure might refer to that part of the journey that is out of sight of land (but this is actually more like 75km). A Pleistocene ocean voyage of 200km would be something extraordinary, the more so that a substantial part of it would have been ‘blind’. Another geographical error can be found on page 623, where Buka is placed west of Nissan instead of east, incorrectly locating it in the Bismarck Archipelago rather than the Solomon Islands. This means that, contrary to the portrayal in

that chapter, there are Pleistocene rather than only late Holocene sites in the Solomon Islands. That has major implications for our understanding of the settlement of Oceania, and it is why the Solomons are included in Near Oceania, rather than remote Oceania, which was uninhabited before Lapita times.

A “systematic and authoritative examination of the prehistory of every region around the world”, especially when supplemented with chapters on DNA and languages, should be a library acquisition of enduring value. It is, however, by its nature already out of date and will only become even more so. A second edition would allow errors to be eliminated, cross-references improved and inconsistencies explained. An electronic edition, however, would allow the authors to incorporate up-to-the-minute material through regular—say, annual—updates, as well as to make use of colour illustrations.

## Volume 2: East Asia and the Americas

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For Volume 2 of this ambitious enterprise, Renfrew and Bahn have assembled an ‘A’ team of regional experts, allowing them scope to shape their chapters according to their areas of specialisation.

The authors provide up-to-date coverage of the Lower to Middle Palaeolithic (East Asia) and Upper Palaeolithic (north-east Asia) and four chapters on Palaeoindian and Archaic in North, Central and South America; three chapters on the Neolithic in Asia and three on the Formative in the Americas; two chapters on early complex societies and early urban states in northern and southern China and six on the Americas; and two chapters on full-blown empires. In addition to these traditional areas of world prehistory research, the volume also includes chapters on less well-known topics, including Holocene societies of Korea and Japan, the Russian Far East, five chapters on North America, one on the Caribbean and three on South America, including the southern Andes, northern Andes and Amazonia.

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In scope and depth, it is an unparalleled overview of the prehistory of East Asia and the Americas. It is a must read for anyone interested in overviews of these regions, raising the bar over previous encyclopaedic treatments. It falls short, however, as a synthetic work. First, the scope of the volume presents some difficulties: East Asia and the Americas are strange bedfellows, and it is hard to envision a scholarly group focusing on Amer-asian prehistory. Second, nowhere is the question of relevance addressed head on. What should the archaeology of the future look like? Should archaeologists not take a more pro-active stance as primary architects of how the past is reconstructed, contributing to contemporary discourses such as climate change, sustainability and human rights?

Volume 2 includes brief summaries on human DNA research (modern and ancient) at the start of each regional section and much more in-depth reviews of historical linguistic research at the close of each section. The DNA chapters, co-authored by Forster and Renfrew, lack detail and integration. They omit, for example, key publications such as those dealing with the updated three-stage colonisation model for the peopling of North America. This is understandable to a point, but it flies in the face of new work that builds upon the earlier global perspectives of Cavalli-Sforza and colleagues with respect to genes, clines and population histories published two decades ago. There are also missteps that underscore these trends. For example, *Homo erectus pekinensis* is not only 'old school' taxonomy with respect to Pleistocene hominins, but this erroneous subspecies is misspelled in the text. Another example is that for early modern humans, most authors today adopt 'anatomically modern humans' (AMH) to distinguish them from 'later' modern humans, but here early modern humans (EMH) is used instead.

The authoritative chapters on language provide overviews of a vast amount of scholarship from East Asia and the Americas, noting the great linguistic diversity in both areas. These follow traditional approaches to historical linguistics, but they might have also included oral history, prosody and semantics, and body language—speech and gesture—in other words, parole. As the inclusion of these summaries suggests, both genetics and languages are critical for understanding, but there is little linkage to these themes by the authors of the regional chapters.

Where is climate, and human-natural systems, in all of this? Some archaeologists, including

some of the authors in this work, are self-proclaimed climate-determinists. Indeed, many of the individual chapters and cultural histories seem imbued with environmental determinism. Post-Pleistocene adaptations to climate change, although mentioned, are not explored, even though this is one of the premiere issues of the day. Surely, climate is critical for change in agricultural societies and the expansion of farming peoples?

The book expands on Renfrew's long interest in relations between material culture, language and genetics, notably his work on Indo-European languages and the language-farming hypothesis. The traditional view of agriculture, based on human-plant interactions, is maintained: seed crops, full domestication and intensification. More attention, however, might have been paid to other plants, some quite resistant to change, within domesticated landscapes. The nearly 100 native plants at some stage of domestication recognised in Amazonia—an environment where almost every little cutting grows up again with very little help—explodes the focus on a few key species and population domestication. Similarly, for animals: is a sea cow livestock? Perhaps so when it, like turtles, was kept in pens of thousands.

East Asia and the Americas do not fit the civilising impulse, as it has been defined elsewhere. They do not work quite as planned, which, in turn, makes us wonder how well they work elsewhere. In part, this is due to the state of knowledge. We know much more about the eastern woodlands of North America than the Amazon, but to omit the latter would be egregious: it is hard to work there, yes, but more critical has been the overarching assumption that little happened there. Compendiums such as this one still seem to force debate down well-known alleys, some of which seem like dead-ends in terms of identifying alternative histories.

Writing the histories of people without history is a violent act. For the current volume, East Asia and the Americas, one might have at least emphasised the history of ideas and called out the fact that prehistory is imbued with certain biases. Indeed, the very notion of prehistory is particularly painful as an organising principle in this volume: the Farthest East, the other side of the Occident—these most exotic of places to Westerners. This may seem unimportant, but for many it is central. It was the same logic that convinced Marx that imperial China, and the Asiatic mode of production, was to be stratified beneath Greece and Rome, an idea long ago disabused by K.C. Chang

(1989). Yet, here again, European terms (Neolithic, Early and Upper Palaeolithic, the Bronze and Iron Ages) are used unapologetically as global concepts, at least with respect to the East Asian archaeological record, with slight modifications in the Americas, changing Palaeolithic to Palaeo-Indian, Mesolithic to Archaic, and Neolithic to Formative. As usual, we have iron and stone over bamboo and textiles, economic intensification over astronomy and so on.

Throughout the volume, the traditional approaches of cultural history and explanatory models are amply expressed, but what about history, alternative ways of knowing, or questions of agency, gender and power, or the idea of prehistory itself, deeply imbued with cultural evolutionist assumptions and a lingering Orientalism? It almost seems that the authors, including many contributors who represent the conceptual vanguard of each area, were instructed not to delve too deeply into theory. No tilting at windmills here. Keep to the facts, with little discussion of alternatives, schisms, factionalism or witch-hunts. Is this not what Lévi-Strauss (1961) called the “cannibalizing instincts of the historical process”? It robs alternative histories of their power to unsettle hidden biases in how we interpret the archaeological, as well as their potential incendiary effect (Latour 2009), which seems particularly significant given the popularity of Eurocentric renderings of prehistoric(like) people in the modern world, people presumably without history (e.g. Diamond 2012; Chagnon 2013).

How far have we moved beyond savages, barbarians and civilisation, the three ages, and revolutions? Writing and history rise alongside cities, science and technology, but as one Native American leader once observed to us: “one of these days you guys will wake up, 90% of the world isn’t White.” It is worth remembering the living descendants, who are also engaged with the past. Using the term prehistory does not let anybody off the hook. In one way or another, we all work with living traditions, each recreating the past differently. Where are these debates, the ideas and discoveries that bring life to archaeology, genes and languages—both among archaeologists and out there in the ‘real world’?

Such an approach does not require the adoption of a radical post-modern stance, but it does require some attention to agency and voice, and the critical question of who owns the past and to what ends. Nor is it a criticism of any of the chapters in this volume, which are well ordered, well written and up-to-

date. The volume and its companions are marvellous compendiums of archaeological facts. Indeed, it is pointless to fault it for what it is: the definitive chronicle of human beings before AD 1500. This is not even a critique of the editors, necessarily, as this is a library run, and as such well worth the paper. But, it would be an omission of any critique (or meta-critique, if you will) that fails to point out that the project is missing something important: heart and soul! Where should we be going with all of this? What are the disagreements? Where are the great battles, the crises, of our time? Even some of the seasoned pugilists who grace these pages appear mute on what might be most important to many readers: why is archaeology important and for whom? Archaeology does matter, but here the flood of detail is often poorly synthesised *vis à vis* the larger project of world prehistory.

This is no doubt the high water mark of global compendiums and—dare we say—may be the last, as electronic sharing of material becomes the norm. Yet even though it is a magisterial treatment, who will use it? This is a book written by archaeologists for archaeologists. At the very least it calls out for a companion volume: prehistory and beyond, critical world prehistory or archaeologies of the future. Nonetheless, we cannot imagine any major library that should not have a copy of these volumes as the best global overview to date.

## Volume 3: West and Central Asia, and Europe

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divided by region. The individual authors have been chosen for their expertise and personal involvement in their subject area, and have evidently been given a degree of freedom to fulfil their brief. Some have

Volume 3 spans what are surely the two richest archaeological regions in the world: Western and Central Asia, and Europe and the Mediterranean. It does so in 29 chapters, some covering broad themes, others defined by period or

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written quite short pieces of about 6000 words, others have been more expansive, taking twice the length. The result is a lively variety of approaches reflecting the preferences and personalities of their authors. Contrast, for example, Chapman writing on 'Early Food production in Southeastern Europe' with Molodin and Polos'mak's treatment of 'Southern Siberia during the Bronze and Early Iron Periods'. Chapman chooses to focus tightly on the process of forager/farmer interaction in a short but stimulating discussion, while Molodin & Polos'mak take a more expansive view of their brief, offering first an account of the history of Siberian archaeology followed by detailed descriptions of the numerous cultural groups occupying the region from the fifth to first millennium BC; this chapter is invaluable in making available material published almost exclusively in Russian to western readers.

These two chapters are, perhaps, extremes. Most authors have chosen to combine a discussion of material culture with explanatory models, usually opting for a narrative (i.e. chronological) presentation. Some, however, are more adventurous. Zilhão, for example, facing the task of summarising the Upper Palaeolithic of Europe, takes a more thematic approach, dealing first with the concept of the Upper Palaeolithic and then exploring settlement, subsistence, intensification, demography and innovation, before moving on to social geography and culture. This is an inspiring and thought-provoking contribution that immediately opens up the excitement and intellectual challenge of the subject.

In constructing the volume the editors have had to grapple with the problem of what constitutes prehistory—a difficult task when dealing with the Old World. They seem to have leaned more to the French view, which separates the ancient world into *préhistoire* and *prohistoire* with the divide around the beginning of the Bronze Age, and they have concentrated on *préhistoire*. This could be justified by arguing that *préhistoire* covers a much longer time span than *prohistoire*, but the result is that rich and complex later periods such as Europe in the second and first millennium BC have had to be dealt with rather breathlessly in a way that does scant justice to the quality of the data and the historical significance of the period. To complete the historical overview there are two short essays: 'Western Asia after Alexander' by Herrmann and 'The Classical World' by Snodgrass—unenviable tasks perhaps, but challenges evidently relished by the authors. Herrmann takes us

thematically through the rich potential of the Parthian and Sasanian Empires, while Snodgrass reflects on Greeks, Romans and Byzantines with the assurance of the master, drawing out wise and unexpected observations to delight us. These entertaining essays bring the regional narratives to neat conclusions.

Although both of the main sections—Western and Central Asia, and Europe and the Mediterranean—are treated regionally and chronologically, each is given coherence by overarching essays on 'DNA' (Forster and Renfrew) and 'Languages' (Heggarty and Renfrew). These are most welcome, not least because they relieve the other authors of having to deal piecemeal with these complex issues. The two essays on DNA are fairly brief. They carry a warning that we are at the beginning of such studies when data are still sparse and barely susceptible to statistical testing. Care is needed so as not to hasten to unjustifiable conclusions. That said, ancient DNA is already making significant contributions to our understanding of the spread of the Neolithic package into Europe, and it is helping to define a 'European' component among the Tarim Basin population of western China.

The two chapters on languages will, for many readers, be a revelation. They are brilliant, judicious essays of lasting value with wide implications for our understanding of the archaeological evidence. Many complex issues are addressed. Among them, as one might have expected, is the long-debated question of the spread of Indo-European into Europe. Did it come from Anatolia with the advance of the Neolithic c. 7000 BC or from the steppe region several millennia later? The evidence for both views is fully presented and debated and, although it now points firmly in favour of the Anatolian hypotheses, the authors carefully avoid arriving at a definitive conclusion, preferring to leave the question open. Similarly, while seeming to favour the idea that Celtic developed in the Atlantic zone, no decisive position is taken. In their desire to be judicious the writers seem, sometimes, to be bending over backwards to stay upright. These chapters, on languages and genetics, by presenting the evidence strictly within the parameters of the specific discipline, nicely avoid the circular arguments that sometimes arise from cherry picking and juxtaposing disparate data. To what degree the three disciplines can ever be brought together in mutual support remains an open question.

The success of the chapters on languages and genetics in providing overarching perspectives raises the

question of whether the volume would have benefited from other chapters of this sort. One theme, almost totally obscured by the structure of the book, is the importance of geography to our understanding of the human story. The maritime interface of Europe and its riverine corridors and the expansive swathe of steppe sweeping from the Great Hungarian Plain to the Altai Mountains are among the geographical givens that have dramatically influenced human development. This is sometimes made explicit, for example in 'Early Food Production in Southwestern Europe' by Zilhão and in 'The Post-Neolithic of Eastern Europe' by Hanks, but an overview of geography, constraining and facilitating connectivity, would have been a great help to the reader. Another theme worthy of specific consideration is climate. Most authors refer, in passing, to shifts in climate affecting cultural changes, but broad consideration of climatic variation through the Holocene would have provided an invaluable background.

One of the most difficult tasks the editors had to face was how to divide the two regions into coherent chapters to allow an even coverage. For both regions they decided that the Early Palaeolithic and Upper Palaeolithic should be dealt with on a region-wide basis. Generally this works well although Sharon, commissioned to write 'The Early Prehistory of Western and Central Asia', chose to concentrate entirely on the Levant. From the beginning of the Neolithic onwards the mega-regions are divided into smaller geographical zones. For Western and Central Asia five chapters are devoted to the origins and development of Neolithic societies. Bar-Yosef offers a thorough overview of the origins of sedentism, concentrating on the Levant, Syria and south-eastern Turkey. Thereafter, separate chapters on the Levant, Syria, Mesopotamia and Iran, and Anatolia take the story up to the third millennium. Inevitably there is some overlap, but there is also fragmentation, making it difficult for the reader to gain an overall impression of the broad trajectory of change. That said, the individual chapters are cohesive and provide useful accounts of regional developments. Separate chapters are devoted to the Caucasus, Arabia, Central Asia and Southern Siberia. These cover the full span of prehistory and provide very useful introductions (and bibliographies) to regions not often considered in the more general literature. Curiously, for the crucial regions of steppe lying between Central Asia and southern Siberia, it is necessary to turn to the chapter on 'The Post-Neolithic in Eastern Europe'. Splitting

Central Asia in this way has obscured the important connections that link the different ecological zones.

The treatment of Europe and the Mediterranean (with emphasis on its northern shore), from the Neolithic period onwards, suffers to some extent by the way the continent is arbitrarily divided into western, central and eastern parts. Although western, or Atlantic, Europe has a degree of cultural coherence over time, a better divide for the rest would have been into the riverine north and east, and the Mediterranean south. As it is, 'The Later Prehistory of Central and Northern Europe' by Harding has to cover the region from Sicily to Sweden from the Beaker period to the Iron Age. The only way in which the author is able to give a degree of coherence to such diversity is by considering themes such as settlement, death and burial, the use of metals and warfare. In the end, no scheme of regional divisions is perfect, but by dividing Europe and the Mediterranean in this way, essential connections are obscured. While this in no way diminishes the value of the individual chapters, it can leave the reader with a partial and sometimes rather distorted picture.

The authors have all been keenly aware of the challenges presented by writing regional essays of this kind. They have approached the task in different ways—narrative, thematic, problematic, culture by culture—reflecting many different traditions of scholarship. The constraints of length have also required careful selection, which has been done with wisdom born of a familiarity with the subject matter. The result is a rich melange—a taster's menu, both satisfying and tantalising.

Something must be said of the production values, which are in general high, as one would expect of Cambridge University Press. The editing of the illustrations, however, has been surprisingly slack. Some images have been left untrimmed, plans that authors intended to be placed together for comparisons have been dispersed and printed at a variety of scales and many of the images have been printed at excessive size for what they show.

According to the jacket blurb, the *Cambridge world prehistory* is designed to serve as a resource for students of archaeology and others "looking to research a particular topic, tradition, region or period within prehistory". Judged by these criteria the volume is a resounding success. It is an invaluable and unparalleled resource, allowing the reader to get quickly into a chosen subject area, guided by an expert overview and supported by a well-chosen

bibliography. It will be the first port of call for all students for years to come.

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## Books received

The list includes all books received between 1 January 2015 and 28 February 2015.

### General

- BENJAMIN S. ARBUCKLE & SUE ANN MCCARTY (ed.). 2014. *Animals and inequality in the ancient world*. xviii+388 pages, 87 b&w illustrations, 19 tables. Boulder: University Press of Colorado; 978-1-60732-285-6 hardback \$70.
- NEAL FERRIS, RODNEY HARRISON & MICHAEL V. WILCOX. 2014. *Rethinking colonial pasts through archaeology*. xvi+511 pages, 52 b&w illustrations. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 978-0-19-969669-7 hardback £100.
- NATHAN GOODALE & WILLIAM ANDREFSKY, JR (ed.). 2015. *Lithic technological systems and evolutionary theory*. xix+297 pages, 112 b&w illustrations, 15 tables. New York: Cambridge University Press; 978-1-107-02646-9 hardback £65.
- DAN HICKS & ALICE STEVENSON (ed.). 2013. *World archaeology at the Pitt Rivers Museum: a characterization*. xi+572 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations, 32 tables. Oxford: Archaeopress; 978-1-905739-58-5 paperback £39.50.
- ALAN KAISER. 2015. *Archaeology, sexism, and scandal. The long-suppressed story of one woman's discoveries and the man who stole credit for them*. xx+251 pages, numerous b&w illustrations. London: Rowman & Littlefield; 978-1-4422-3003-3 hardback £22.95.

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CHRISTOPHER KNÜSEL & MARTIN SMITH (ed.). 2014. *The Routledge handbook of the bioarchaeology of human conflict*. xlvi+706 pages, numerous b&w illustrations, numerous tables. Oxford & New York: Routledge; 978-0-415-84219-8 hardback £140.

CHARLES E. ORSER JR. 2015. *Archaeological thinking: how to make sense of the past*. xii+175 pages, several b&w illustrations. London: Rowman & Littlefield; 978-1-4422-2698-2 paperback £17.95.

PASCAL SEMONSUT. 2015. *Jean Clottes: un archéologue dans le siècle*. 223 pages. Arles: Errance; 978-2-87772-580-4 paperback €23.

GREGORY J. WIGHTMAN. 2015. *The origins of religion in the Paleolithic*. xii+293 pages, 10 b&w illustrations. London & Lanham (MD): Rowman & Littlefield; 978-1-4422-4289-0 hardback \$85.

### European pre- and protohistory

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