

A NEW LOOK

The proliferation of new journals is a well-known academic and commercial phenomenon in archaeology, as in all other disciplines. In 1992, the editorial board of the Journal of European Archaeology realised the opportunities for more dialogue and mutual understanding among archaeologists offered by the new, less-divided Europe after the Fall of the Berlin Wall. Their vision was a journal in which new ideas, data, professional practices and management skills could be freely exchanged across East and West. That remains the policy of the Journal now – the dream is still alive! But the route to fulfilling that vision is never straightforward and new possibilities have opened up which could not have been anticipated by the first Board.

This year is a crucial time of major change for the European Association of Archaeologists. The EAA itself has become established in the worldview of European and other archaeologists; whether the views of members and non-members are positive or negative, the EAA has made itself a key body in the archaeological arena. There is a sense that the EAA has come of age! But increasing demands on its capacity – whether Presidential, Financial, Secretarial or Editorial – mean that the EAA has needed to develop new methods, new practices and new action. The Journal of European Archaeology is no different from the its parent/guardian – the EAA – it needs to grow and develop beyond the capacity of its early years. For this reason, we are changing publishers from Cruithne Press.

THIS ISSUE

Because of the pressures of time, the Executive Board of the European Association of Archaeologists has agreed upon a lengthy transitional period between the time of Cruithne Press and the fully-fledged production of the Journal by our new publishers, to begin in 1998. This transitional period – comprising 5.1 and 5.2 – is hedged around by (academic and commercial) ritual, of which this editorial forms a part, but I think readers will agree that this issue has distinctive characteristics of their own which help to bridge the gap.

A broad range of distinctive and innovative articles is included, covering the Palaeolithic to the Medieval periods and thematic topics. Two of the articles emphasise recent research breakthroughs in the world of European hunter-gatherers and their occupation of dramatic gorges. The update on the key Portuguese Palaeolithic rock art project in the Foz de Côa by João Zilhão gives readers a taste of why the Côa valley is an art site of world importance. The results of ¹³C dietary analysis and AMS dating for the Mesolithic of the Iron Gates gorge by Clive Bonsall and co-authors indicate new insights achieved by scientific analysis of old and apparently intractable data.

Andrew Sherratt once opined that wool was as important to the European Bronze Age as bronze. Also featured in this issue are articles about both sides of the debate: Marie Louise Stig Sørensen on the symbolic codes of Bronze Age costumes and Margarita Primas on a new approach to metallurgy and Bronze Age economics. In a third article on the Bronze Age, Emilia Pásztor and Curt Roslund explore the symbolic dimensions of dolmen location on Malta. In the only Iron Age article, Natalie Venclová establishes a dialogue with a former contributor, Matthew Murray, on the meaning of the La Tène *Viereckschanzen* of Central Europe – reaching conclusions quite at variance with Murray. This cut-and-thrust is relatively new to the pages of the Journal and is to be encouraged. Finally for period pieces, Karen Høilund Nielsen proposes a new model for the spread of the distinctive Animal Art Style of the Early Medieval Scandinavian world – Salin's Style II. In a thematic archaeozoological paper, László Bartosiewicz takes issue with the uniformitarian assumptions of the value of meat cuts held in the field by defining the variability found within modern nation states and their sub-groups. Because of pressures of time and space, the Reviews Section has been deferred to issue 5.2, when Mike Shanks will produce a mega-section.

LOOKING BACK

It is fitting here to pay tribute to a founder member of the EAA and the Journal's first publisher. Ross Samson not only helped to guide the JEA into existence but also sustained the Journal when few members had recognised the JEA as a new opportunity for publication in an international refereed journal. Many of the articles in issues 2.1 and 2.2 have a Hiberno-Canadian flavour and Ross is to be congratulated not only for his support of the JEA but also for his scholarship and research contributions. After issue 2.2, Ross Samson's own press – Cruithne Press – took over the production of the JEA from Avebury, Ltd. and he continued to produce the Journal until issue 4. The Association owes much to Ross for his efforts and every member should recognise the magnitude of his contribution.

CONTINUITY

Members of the EAA should be in no doubt that, beside the changes of this transitional period and the new journal format in 1998, there will be a major element of continuity. This continuity takes three main forms. On the personal side, the same Editorial Board elected by the Executive Board of the Association will continue its duties, subject to cyclical replacement at the AGM. But, more important, the aims and objectives of the Journal, and their main working practices, will remain as defined in the Editorial of issue 3.2 (1995:vii–x). But this does not exclude new practices in the future, since these aims and practices are subject to review by the Editorial Board every two years. Members with strong views on our aims and practices are encouraged to write to the General Editor.

The third element of continuity is perhaps the most important. Although the EAA will soon be changing its publishers, the new publishers are as committed to the EAA and its aims as the previous publisher. It is on this basis that all the members of the EAA can look forward to an expanded, more regular service providing a new-look journal of international quality.

John Chapman
General Editor