

Raum keinen vergleichbaren Begriff gibt. Eine theoretisch-wissenschaftliche Beschäftigung mit der Interaktion zwischen Denkmal, Forschung und Vermittlung, der Rezeption durch das Publikum und dem unterschiedlichen Verständnis aufgrund eigener Vorstellungen ist notwendig. Wie bei der Tagung herausgearbeitet wurde, beeinflusst die moderne Vorstellung von realen, aber auch von fiktiven Grenzen die Diskussion um antike Grenzsyste me und kann bei der Vermittlungsarbeit eine Rolle spielen.

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**KRISTIAN KRISTIANSEN, Archaeology and the Genetic Revolution in European Prehistory.** Elements in the Archaeology of Europe. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2022. £ 17.00. ISBN 978-1-009-22868-8. 92 pages with 16 colour illustrations (incl. 4 maps) and 9 b/w illustrations.

This volume, part of the EAA-supported Cambridge Elements series, has set itself the goal of meeting the “theoretical and methodological challenges raised by the third science revolution”, wanting to show “how to practice interdisciplinarity in this new age” and seeking to define “some crucial but undertheorized categories”, such as ethnicity, in order to “produce a new and theoretically informed historical narrative” (back cover). I will admit from the start that in my view, it has largely failed in this endeavour. In places, it has also left me rather frustrated.

The reason I believe this book does not live up to its goals is that interdisciplinarity, theory, and not least informed historical narratives need careful argumentation, balanced weighting of pros and cons, and some modicum of nuance. The author of this volume, as a seasoned academic, is aware of this. What he has offered is, instead, a bald and bellicose version of his own well-known view which, shorn of the constraints of more scholarly publication conventions, proceeds through unsubstantiated statements of “fact”, selective quoting and outright dismissal of alternative views. The source of my frustration is therefore not that I disagree with most of the interpretations offered – this was only to be expected after all – but the way in which they are framed. It falls short of what

a good scholarly outreach publication should achieve, namely some appreciation of the diversity of academic debate and why it is important.

The volume consists of an introduction of 20 pages, a methods section that with 34 pages makes up the lion share of the book, two short chapters on “Transformation and migration in Later European Prehistory” (seven pages) and “Towards Interpretative Integration: Cultural, Genetic, and Social Admixture Processes” (five pages) and less than two pages offering a concluding perspective.

The introduction (pp. 1–20) sets out the main premises of the book by lauding various scientific revolutions that have shaped archaeology: Darwinian,  $^{14}\text{C}$  and the “strontium/DNA” revolution (with Big Data added on p. 3), in which readers will have no trouble recognising the third scientific revolution of earlier articles (e. g. KRISTIANSEN 2014). While footnote 1 reassures us that discussion about the interpretation of scientific results remains possible, this is most definitely not offered, and indeed frequently actively rejected. To name one example, there is no mention of the problematic history of Social Darwinism in archaeology, allied as it was to colonial endeavours. No doubt, Darwinist ideas also did help archaeology transcend the confines of biblical chronologies, and this is the point Kristian Kristiansen wishes to stress. Yet by reducing the contribution of selected ideas and selected scholars to bold either/or statements in this way, the volume draws out a series of linear success stories without much debate or contingency. K. Kristiansen’s own readings are styled as self-evidently true and generally accepted (e. g. p. 13). Criticisms are effectively silenced, either by not mentioning them at all, or by brushing aside some of the more vocal alternative voices with summary and superficial criticism (e. g. p. 19).

The methods chapter (pp. 20–54), which makes up the majority of the book, starts with a clear statement that Kristiansen’s perspective is top-down and Marxist. This is potentially productive, but makes it all the more strange that power relations in the present, notably the unequal clout of scientific fields based on incentive-oriented funding and the unfortunate hierarchies of scientific outlets which demand over-generalisation and over-simplifications (*Nature, Science*) are not mentioned at all. Instead, Kristiansen focuses on the past, where he identifies institutions and their dialectical relationships as key driving forces of historical change. This sounds fruitful, but we are left largely in the dark about what institutions actually are in this context. Over the course of the chapter, the term is used for any social group at any scale of interaction, and even for particular kinds of activities. For example, kin groups and ethnic groups are institutions, so are households and marriage systems, and so is burial ritual. It is thus never quite clear what work this concept is doing in interpretations, or what labelling something “an institution” actually implies. In any case, by picking and choosing certain readings of parts of the archaeological evidence (such as who gets buried under Anatolian Neolithic house floors) and declaring some bits of it to be important “institutions”, Kristiansen succeeds in summarising prehistoric European social development between 6000 and 2000 BC as a set of simple oppositions between collective and individual leadership, divided and individual personhood, and centralised and decentralised communities (pp. 32–36, graph p. 34). This can hardly do justice to what is a complex patchwork of social developments over four millennia, a point that could at least have been acknowledged.

Kristiansen then tackles a number of definitional problems, such as archaeological cultures (pp. 27–30) or ethnicity. One can only agree that archaeologists over the years have missed a trick in how they have debated the relation between culture and ethnicity, and have often been lacking in interdisciplinary awareness and interpretational subtlety. Yet in the end, this book is another missed opportunity. Criticisms levelled at a simplistic concept of ethnic groups as closed social groups are dismissed with the comment that once we have written sources, there are ethnic groups everywhere (p. 36). The implication is that such ethnic groups more or less correspond to the mod-

ern Western folk idea of “ethnicity”. This ignores decades of careful scholarship, amongst others by Stefan Burmeister (hidden under the pseudonym “Bürmeister” throughout the volume) in trying to disentangle what sorts of collectivities such early historic “ethnic groups” actually were and how they were flexibly composed in the face of changing circumstances. Rather, several of Kristiansen’s critics are accused of simply playing the Kossinna card (p. 37), or worse the “race card” (p. 38), an overgeneralised critique that absolves Kristiansen from having to undertake any serious engagement with his own use of terminology. In the following few pages, the reader is then treated to a somewhat compressed view of how “ethnicity” allegedly works in European prehistory: it is about elites and their power games in trying to gain control over territory. Only their agency matters. Elites can of course be one driving force behind ethnogenesis, but there are others (see e.g. HU 2013), conveniently not mentioned here. Instead, the text is backed by some very partial, out of context and selective quoting, for example of Sian Jones’ landmark 1997 book “The archaeology of Ethnicity” (JONES 1997). We end up with a situation in which historical texts can be paired with material culture traits to identify territorially bounded ethnic groups united under a king or chief (p. 40). At this point, it is hard to still agree with Kristiansen when he states (p. 38) that the simplistic misinterpretation of archaeogenetic results is a fringe problem encountered in some popular outreach pieces. It is, instead, right here.

Similarly, while women held an “important social position” (p. 40), political power was actually held by men and consolidated “through the exercise of control of women and the power of their reproduction” (p. 41), a statement also neither backed up in detail, nor contextualised in the wider, somewhat more diverse debates surrounding gender in the Neolithic and Bronze Age. The problem with all these statements is not necessarily that they are made, but rather that no evidence is presented in any detail. Everything is simply stated as uncontested and self-evident. The criticisms levelled against these kinds of reading by generations of archaeologists are not referenced, let alone explained fairly, or actually in some way directly countered with new data. The dissenting voices which appear are all too often caricatured as raving, politically correct loonies with clouded vision.

From then on, the volume is on a slippery slope into what sometimes reads like a piece of fiction. Figure 15b is particularly eloquent in this regard. It shows how “surplus males”, i. e. those who don’t inherit in a strict system of primogeniture, were sent to some sort of “training camp” where they were apparently prepared for raiding and colonising Neolithic Europe. To my knowledge, there is no archaeological evidence for such camps, while the reading of Indo-European mythology on which this is allegedly based is extremely superficial (see criticism in BURMEISTER 2022, 51–63). Undeterred, Kristiansen proceeds to drop in “unfree labour” (p. 51) without any further explanation, to map a series of suspiciously circular “chiefdoms” (Fig. 17, although in fairness some are elliptical) populated by Bronze Age people whose demography can apparently be estimated using “later Celtic and Germanic sources” (p. 53), and where “[b]oys would typically be placed with socially superior groups” (whatever these now are) for fosterage (p. 53), whereas girls “would typically be married out to lower-standing groups” (pp. 53–54), a move politically surprising even on its own terms, but offered here, once again, without presenting or discussing any form of evidence. Personally, while of course this reading is possible, I am mystified as to how we could ever know this level of detail with the degree of utter conviction with which it is put forth here.

The actual case study chapters continue in this vein, and at this point a strong sense of *déjà-vu* (or rather *déjà-lu*) kicked in. Lip service is paid to a diversity of local situations, or to previous criticisms of some concepts, while the same already well-known scenario is then presented, only this time as a statement of (alleged) fact and shorn of supporting evidence. Chapter 3 (pp. 54–61) establishes migration as either an almost psychopathic or a crisis-driven behaviour (essentially one

main reason for moving is when militarised societies need to colonise new land, but climatic deterioration and demographic drivers can also play a role). This forms the backdrop for the very brief case study in chapter 4 (pp. 61–66), billed as “interpretative integration”, once again sketching a picture of young male warriors raiding for women. There is really not much more to say, and you have read it all before anyway.

The concluding remarks start on a promising note when Kristiansen (p. 67) states that one way out of the stalemate of the migration debate could be to engage more decidedly with what “colonization” actually is as a process and how its varied outcomes can be traced. This book could have been really interesting if it had started from this perspective, charting long-term effects of migrations and of changes in power relationships and showing both the possible violent sides and the strategies of accommodation and resistance. Unfortunately, this is too big a topic to bite off at the end of the volume, where it cannot be given justice. The question of how Neolithic groups saw other societies they encountered on their migrations is important and deserves detailed consideration. Instead, the book ends with the idea, presented in highly compressed form, that the lack of interbreeding visible between hunter-gatherers and farmers was due to Neolithic societies being part of “a civilizational enterprise defining us against them. Superior versus inferior” (p. 67). The transformation of Neolithic settlers into early modern European settler-colonialists is thereby completed, mode of production and degree of “civilization” are once again happily equated, without having to pass through the annoying detour of actually arguing this statement in detail, and reflecting on its implications.

In addition, the volume contains a fair share of illustrations that provide a scientific aesthetic, but remain light on informational content. The very first graph of the book, for example, seems to provide some kind of measure for the transformation of “relative” into “absolute” knowledge by charting the increasing scale of absolute knowledge from “burial archaeology” to “settlement and contract archaeology”, topped up by “science data”. It is left entirely unclear what the unit of measurement is, whether this is based on any data, and how relative and absolute knowledge are split from each other. As such, the graph adds nothing to the assertions of the text itself.

So, is the book all bad, and who should read it? Having been written by one of Europe’s most successful Bronze Age scholars, the volume evidently has many good sides. The style is accessible, the content is based on insights from many of Kristiansen’s own projects, with their results clearly summarised, and there are important insights about, for example, the virtues of interdisciplinarity.

Still, most archaeologists actively involved in aDNA research, or with the European Neolithic and Bronze Age, do not need to read this volume – indeed, in the acknowledgements on page 91 Kristiansen lists the handful of earlier and more rigorously referenced articles on which the present text is very closely based. Can it be recommended to students? Personally, I would also rather refer them to the existing scholarly articles, in order to show how archaeological detail can be woven into an argument. It could, however, be an interesting class exercise to get students to unpick some of the more compressed claims repeated in this volume. As an offering aimed at the general public, the book does cover a lot of ground in a relaxed, narrative form and could provide a starting point for interested readers. However, the cavalier and cherry-picking use of the evidence, the tendency to radical generalisation and the summary despatching of criticisms are, in my view, not a good example for how academic argument should work and be presented – and indeed fall below Kristiansen’s usual standard in this regard.

Still, my feeling is that Kristiansen has been asked to summarise his own viewpoint in an easy-going style in 70 pages or so, and to be fair, this is what he has delivered. The problem perhaps lies elsewhere. The Cambridge Elements series promises short guides that are both “authoritative”

and “cutting-edge”. This is a difficult balance to strike under any circumstances, but in my view, there was no need for the series editors to limit themselves quite so exclusively to the “authoritative” side. In this book, readers are offered a well-known name repeating well-known arguments already amply communicated elsewhere. Archaeogenetics is dynamic, with many projects, many studies, and many early-career colleagues offering a variety of interesting readings and trying to navigate their way in this challenging field. There was more cutting-edge stuff out there. I can only hope that there will be a follow-up volume in this series that showcases some of these alternative voices, making them more widely heard.

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**JOCHEN WEBER / JOACHIM WAHL / ALBERT ZINK (Hrsg.), Osteologische Paläopathologie. Ein Handbuch für Anthropologen, Mediziner und Archäologen.** Lehmanns Media, Berlin 2022. € 89,95. ISBN 978-3-96543-314-4 (Festeinband). € 79,95. ISBN 978-3-96543-340-3 (E-Book). 688 Seiten mit zahlreichen Abbildungen.

Die Vorlage eines umfangreichen Werkes zur Paläopathologie in Deutschland ist sehr zu begrüßen. Zwar werden in den Lehrbüchern zur prähistorischen Anthropologie von Bernd Herrmann (HERRMANN et al. 1990) und Gisela Grupe, Michaela Harbeck und George C. McGlynn (GRUPE et al. 2015) zahlreiche Fälle abgebildet, doch spielt die Paläopathologie dort erwartungsgemäß eine untergeordnete Rolle. International gesehen muss das vorliegende Buch zum einen mit Donald Ortner (1938–2012) klassischem Werk „Identification of Pathological Conditions in Human Skeletal Remains“ (ORTNER/PUTSCHAR 1981; ORTNER 2003) verglichen werden, das nach seinem Tod in dritter Auflage von Jane BUIKSTRA (2019) herausgegeben wurde, zum anderen mit dem von Anne L. Grauer herausgegebenen „Routledge Handbook of Paleopathology“ (GRAUER 2023). Insgesamt ergänzen sich die genannten Bücher.