
Organizers: Christopher Prescott, Institute of Archaeology, University of Oslo Norway
Håkon Glørstad, Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo Norway

Time: Thursday morning

Room:

Session abstract:

The aim of the EAA is to promote the management and interpretation of the European archaeological heritage. Since Childe's day the concept of a European archaeology and identity - the concept of Europe - has varied concurrently with theoretical trends in archaeology. Both processual and post-modern archaeology have, with notable exceptions, been small-scale archaeologies. A number of recent studies have again explored explanations and accounts on a continental scale, not the least concerning the Bronze Age. In the wake of these studies, renewed theoretical and methodological approaches are being hammered out.

We would argue that elements of a European heritage can be identified not only as a national strategy of the present, but also as a process in prehistory - the cultural and political transformations of the third millennium BC in European prehistory sparking of this process. The transformation of third millennium society initiated the processes and mechanisms that led up to the complex political, social and cultural institutions of the first half of the second millennium BC. From this time on an authentic historical continuum leading towards present society can be identified. In some places – like Scandinavia - this process seems to sever the bounds to the past, creating a new historical trajectory. This break is, i.a., represented by the introduction of permanently occupied farms, more intensively tilled fields, deforestation in order to create pastures, an evolving metal industry and distribution of prestige objects, long distance contact, and the initial establishment of hierarchical political institutions, promoting a predatory culture.

In this session we want to focus on processes in the past and the present leading towards a unifying concept or appearance of culture, making up a fundament for the creation of our part of the world as a unity, as Europe. To this end we would like to welcome papers dealing with the transformation of third millennium Europe or the local impact of this transformation. We would also like to welcome papers that follow the initial historical trajectory into the following centuries. Finally, we also invite papers that explore the ideological, political and social context of the renewed interest in narratives that incorporate large scale – indeed continental – factors in their exploration the final Neolithic/ earliest Bronze Age.
Paper abstracts:

**INTRODUCTION** (10 min.)

Christopher Prescott and Håkon Glørstad

**TRACING BIFACIAL PROJECTILE POINTS**

Jan Apel, Institute of Archaeology, University College London, UK

During the archaeological excavations along the new stretch of the main arterial road, the E4, in northern Uppland, eastern Central Sweden, bifacially thinned arrowheads and associated waste by-products made out of flint, or flint-like materials, were found at several late Neolithic and Bronze age sites. A preliminary examination of the material suggested that Northern Uppland was a border area where two different traditions of making bifacial projectile points met. These different traditions demarcate a classic cultural barrier between south and north Sweden with roots back to the Mesolithic. This cultural barrier is also a long lasting division between hunter-gatherers/herders in the north and farming communities in the south. This realization triggered an interest in questions concerning the reasons behind the inclusion of surface pressure flaking technologies in these economically and socially differentially situated populations.

In this paper, I intend to present an attempt to trace the chronological and spatial distribution of the use of surface pressure flaking in space and time. Such an endeavour will by necessity remain sketchy, but the arising pattern indicates that there is a strong selection towards the incorporation of this particular technological element across a vast geographical area, transgressing climatic and socioeconomic boundaries, during the fourth and third millennium BC.

**PERCEIVING CHANGES IN THE III MILLENNIUM CAL. BC IN EUROPE THROUGH POTTERY: GALICIA, BRITTANY AND DENMARK AS AN EXAMPLE**

M. Pilar Prieto-Martínez, Paleoenvironment, Heritage and Landscape Laboratory, IIT–University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain

In the III millennium BC in Europe, a series of global changes occurred. Pottery is a good indicator of these changes, particularly at social level. The introduction of bell-beaker pottery in a wide area of Europe reflects this dynamic of change, as it represents a different social model to that established in the Late Neolithic. We believe that its acceptance is connected with the development of new mechanisms of circulation that made it possible to expand and stabilise this new model, which was a key factor the appearance and development of the Bronze Age. In order to develop our hypothesis we have selected three European regions: Galicia, Brittany and Denmark.

Our methodology is based on comparing the pottery from these areas. We will focus on the transformations that occurred in pottery styles throughout this
millennium, with special emphasis on the decoration used. We will explore the transition from a Neolithic model defined by strong regional diversity in the first half of the millennium – especially the ‘Penha’ style in Galicia (integrated in the western half of the Iberian Peninsula), the ‘Conguel’, ‘Quessoy’, Kerugou’ and ‘Groh Collé’ styles in Brittany, and the Corded Ware of Denmark (forming part of a much wider territory in Central Europe and the Baltic) – to a model belonging to the Bronze Age, marked by standardisation and homogeneity in the second half, with the bell-beaker style spread throughout much of Europe.

Our goal is to identify the features of the pottery that contribute towards offering a clearer definition of the mechanisms of circulation that made it possible to stabilise the different European networks in the second half of the III millennium BC. In this sense, bell-beaker decoration provides the ideal support for transmitting a new ideology.

THE BEAKER CULTURE AND BRONZE AGE BEGINNINGS ALONG THE NORWEGIAN COAST; SO MUCH SO FAST

Christopher Prescott, Institute of Archaeology, University of Oslo, Norway

The Late Neolithic (the LN, 2350-1750 BC) in Norway can be regarded as the initiation of the Bronze Age in southern and coastal Norway. LN-developments were probably sparked by Beaker influences, conceivably also migration, from northern Jutland in Denmark to Lista and Jæren in Southern Norway, and are thus part of wider southern Scandinavian development around the Battle Axe Period to LN-Beaker transition.

From these geographically and chronologically restricted beginnings, early LN technology, modes of production and culture quickly spread throughout southern and coastal replacing older social, cultural and production forms, and redefining a historical trajectory. Spreading perhaps as far as 1000 km from the Beaker areas in Lista and Rogaland, the speed in which these wide-reaching and dramatic changes took place is equally remarkable, perhaps taking place within a generation.

This paper discusses processes and mechanisms that may help in understanding this puzzling outcome of mid third millennium processes.

BEAKER PERIOD EUROPE – FIGHTING, FEUDING, OR THE ENEMY WITHIN?

Nick Thorpe, Institute of archaeology, University of Winchester, UK

The Beaker period was traditionally cited as a case of violent change because of the assumption that Beakers were spread by the Beaker Folk and the seemingly obvious warfare symbolism of the associated artefacts – barbed-and-tanged flint arrowheads, wristguards, copper daggers and battle axes. Models from the 1970s onwards rejected the Beaker Folk but were equivocal about Beaker period violence. In line with general rethinking of the Beaker phenomenon, regional variation now appears to be crucial, despite the similarities in material culture. In some areas, e.g. Iberia, defensive architecture is clearly not a Beaker development, but continued to be important. The architecture itself points to the importance of archers, as do skeletal
injuries. In the South of France and Switzerland, in contrast, evidence of violence declines, except against warrior statues. In East central Europe, while defensive architecture is largely missing, weapon burials are found in large numbers – but are these warriors? A similar picture exists for Britain, but here the nature of the burials of some of the violently deceased, raises the issue of whether these are war dead, or whether they may be sacrifices, or those who had transgressed in some way – the enemy within.

LATE NEOLITHIC EXPANSION TO NORWAY – MEMORIES OF A SEA-BORNE EPISODE

Einar Østmo, Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo, Norway

During the Early and Middle Neolithic, South Scandinavian Neolithic cultures were present in Norway foremost in the Oslo Fjord region in SE Norway. Late Neolithic finds are however abundant above all in SW Norway, certainly testifying to the opening of the sea route across the Skagerrak. These finds include Bell Beaker pottery and pressure-flaked points with tang and barbs, in addition to numerous flint daggers and other items. Arguably, the sea-borne expansion was connected with recent inventions concerning shipbuilding, probably made possible by the new metal tools, foremost axes. This marks the beginning of the Northern shipbuilding tradition, distinct from those found in Britain and in the Mediterranean and gave rise to the development of Scandinavian shipbuilding during the Bronze and Iron Ages.

A REGIONAL STUDY OF EUROPEAN PHENOMENA?
TRANSFORMATIONS IN MORTUARY PRACTICES IN NORTHUMBERLAND c. 2400-1500 BC

Chris Fowler, Newcastle University, UK

I am currently researching Chalcolithic/early Bronze Age mortuary practices at a regional scale, focussing on the present-day county of Northumberland, in northeast England. One reason for this focus is to provide a detailed study of a region other than eastern Yorkshire and Wessex, which have to date formed the backbone of archaeological understanding of Britain in the period, and assess the degree of regional diversity evident in these practices.

Some suites of objects and mortuary practices were adopted in Britain as they became widespread in much of continental Europe (especially those associated with Beaker pottery), but it seems that their adoption was not uniform. In this paper I will consider the extent to which changing Northumbrian mortuary practices relate to broader social and cultural changes occurring across Europe. In other words, I will answer the call from the session organisers to address ‘the local impact of this transformation’ - in this case, the transformation as viewed through the trajectory of mortuary practices. I will illustrate that in Northumberland claims to hierarchical social differentiation were very rarely made through mortuary practices, and specific grave goods were associated with mortuary rituals rather than individual identities of the deceased. It will also be demonstrated that while some features of these mortuary practices changed between 2400-1500 BC, other key
elements reoccurred throughout the period. To what extent does this suggest that the same 'transformations' were taking place here as elsewhere? The extent to which these elements reflect local traditions which sat alongside changing ideas about mortuary activity derived from communication within a wider world will be considered.

**PERSONHOODS FOR EUROPE: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTION OF EUROPEAN-NESS**

Herdis Hølleland, Institute of Archaeology, University of Oslo, Norway

The concept of personhood is a rather new addition to archaeological vocabulary that, to use Chris Fowlers definition, refers to 'the condition or state of being a person, as it is understood in any specific context'. While the topic of personhood has yet to be fully integrated in the European Bronze Age research, I argue that, by analysing archaeologists' categorisations of material culture, one can detect the existence of a notion of a 'pan-European Bronze Age personhood'. Thus in this paper I aim to examine how European and European-ness become meaningful categories through the way in which Childe and Hawkes came to conceptualise the personhood of the peoples of Bronze Age Europe as dynamic, original and entrepreneurial individuals. As the first to have a large-scale perspective on pan-European prehistory, and, more importantly in this context, argued that Bronze Age was the period when Europe became European, it is of importance to re-examine Childe and Hawkes’ interpretations; by doing this it becomes apparent that their notion of the 'European Bronze Age individual' is present in recent archaeological and heritage interpretations of the period.

**TWO WAYS TO EUROPE**

Håkon Glørstad, Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo, Norway

In 1972 and 1994 Norway had a popular vote for or against the European Union. At both occasions the majority of the voters turned down the union. This paper discusses some of the reasons for this rejection in an archaeological perspective. The part of the country where the majority of the voters were positive towards the union is approximately the same area where most traces of the early Neolithic TRB culture can be found (3800 BC). This is the districts around the Oslo fjord. At two other occasions the Stone Age material of Norway is also heavily influenced by continental Europe. These are the initial occupation of the coast after the Ice Age (9000 BC) and the late Neolithic period (2400 BC). Contrary to the TRB complex, these two waves of influence cover a much larger part of the country. This could be related to two very different ways of organising contact relations and control. The rejection of the European Union, the limited distribution of the TRB complex, and the homogenisation of northwest European culture in the third millennium BC can be interpreted as examples of the working of these two strategies in very different historical settings.