

which all archaeologists, 'wet' or 'dry', would do well to dwell.

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JOHN COLLIS The European Iron Age. Batsford Press, 1984. 192 pp, 52 figs and plates. £17.95 (Hard), £9.95 (Soft). ISBN 0-7134-3415-1 (Cased), ISBN 0-7134-3452X (Limp).

Reviewed by John Alexander

Many who work in this field have talked of writing a book with this title, but none have dared appear in print. The knowledge required for it is immense, scattered, and in a dozen or more languages. John Collis comes to it with the advantages of nearly two decades' work in the central and western European mainland and a command of the ancient languages needed, and is therefore well qualified to attempt a synthesis. He has written an excellent and useful book aimed not at specialists but at the community at large, and can only be faulted for promising in his title something which he never apparently intended to perform. The same kind of promise was made some years ago by V. Megaw with his title Art of the European Iron Age, which equated European with La Tène art and ignored all the other schools. Collis concentrates on a zone of Europe which stretches S.E.-N.W. from the Aegean coastlands through Italy and Central Europe to the British Isles and does not discuss either Scandinavia or northeast Europe on one side or Iberia on the other, as his maps (e.g. p. 27) show. His selection of a special zone of study is legitimate and fascinating, but it excludes nearly half of Europe, and the title should be different. If he were to change his title it would also be as well to drop 'Iron Age', a now out-dated concept, when his real study is the first millennium B.C.

He is interested in four problems: the development of

Aegean and Italian iron-using states; the spread northwards of their commercial influences into Central Europe; the rise and southward spread of Celtic (la Tène) peoples; and the impact of the expanding Roman Empire in northwestern Europe. Within this framework he has written a most informative book. That it is intended for the intelligent general public is shown by an introductory chapter on 'Attitudes to the Past' which sets out his position as 'a prehistorian viewing the world from Central Europe'. It is a pity, however, that in it he castigates Diffusion as 'a dangerous and misleading concept' (p. 14) and illustrates it with the wilder shores of eccentricity, for he had to go on and admit that what he is discussing undoubtedly involves the diffusion of ideas and techniques as well as objects, especially for the knowledge of iron-using.

The heart of the book lies in the next four chapters. Two, entitled 'The Old Order' and 'Reawakening in the East' describe the Mycenaean world of the Aegean and the rise of iron-using Aegean and Western Asian states. It is disappointing that the Phoenicians, whose influence in the Central and West Mediterranean coastlands was so great, and who preceded the Greeks there, are not better considered and are not mentioned in the index. The Greeks and Etruscans in the chapter headed 'The Trade Explosion' are dealt with more faithfully, although some of the illustrations (e.g. 16a-b) need replacing. In Central Europe the coverage is excellent and the illustrations superb. The period 500-250 B.C. is headed, rather surprisingly for one standing in Central Europe, 'The Tide Ebbs', but this great period of Celtic expansion and the phases of La Tène is well described and has many unfamiliar and useful illustrations.

The final chapter discusses economic revival and the coming of Roman armies to northwestern Europe, and summarises much of the work to which Collis has been a major contributor. The vexed question of 'oppida' is handled boldly as the 'deliberate founding of large urban centres' (p. 140), although the claim that Caesar's use of the term is being followed may be disputed.

This book, with its notes and select bibliography, can be confidently recommended even if a different book with the same title still remains to be written.

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L. G. FREEMAN (ED.), Views of the Past. Essays in Old World Prehistory and Paleoanthropology. Mouton, The Hague, 1978. 445 pp., 3 plates. £19.95 (estimated) ISBN 90-279-7670-8.

Reviewed by Tim Reynolds

The result of a session entitled 'Paleoanthropology: Behavior' at the IXth ICAES in Chicago, 1973, this volume of thirteen papers is another in the Mouton series covering 'World Anthropology'. As with others of this series it is well presented and clear, however, it contrasts these others in a striking imbalance between length of papers and the lack of a definite focus. Aimed at Old World palaeo-behaviour, it shows a curious lack of contributions by workers based in the Old World, a bias towards Spain (papers by Freeman (2), Clark and Richards), and, despite usage of the terminology of the 'New Archaeology' (Freeman, Fedele, Hassan) its contents remain rather traditional (see especially Singer and Wymer). This latter point is somewhat of a disappointment for behavioural archaeology could, at this time, easily pack the volume with controversial topics for debate. This problem surely lies in

the length of time taken to publish the book, some five years, during which period method, theory and database have all altered. The volume, therefore, contains many anachronisms such as Freeman's spatial-functional analysis which, in the early seventies, would have been rather more topical. The paper by Clark and Richards is a fine initial site report of the La Riera cave, and includes useful illustrations of Asturian lithics. The paper by Straus and Walker is important historically as the first published use of casts in microwear studies, and the amino-acid dating of bone from Olduvai (Hare, Turnbull and Taylor) is similarly interesting. The paper by Singer and Wymer on population movement between Africa and Asia returns to old classification problems which lead to artefacts moving about, representing populations. This seems more a reflection of the behaviour of archaeologists than of palaeobehaviour!

Wide coverage within the old world is admirable. Papers by Hassan, Gonzalez Echegary and Saxon cover, between them, the late Pleistocene and early Holocene industries of the Levant and North Africa. Saxon adopts an environmental approach for the Mesolithic of these areas. Fedele adopts a similar perspective in his discussion of human occupation in the Italian Alps.

Two of the papers are particularly lengthy, and cover areas into which Western archaeologists rarely delve. Shimkin presents a review of the Upper Palaeolithic of North Central Eurasia and Luchterhand takes a sideways step into the adaptive niches of Homo erectus in eastern Asia following a relatively lengthy examination of Late Cenozoic climatic change and mammalian evolution. Both papers present useful data and area summaries for reference but neither will provide great enlightenment