

all-embracing study of social change: hence the recurrent references to Hodder(1979:446-454), and Renfrew(1976:198-220), and are aware of the difficulty of integrating their economic analyses in an attempt to analyse the most "glaring" problems of the French Neolithic: the appearance of megaliths at diverse periods and in diverse cultural contexts, the problems of cultural regionalisation and "supra-cultural" exchange (e.g. the notorious difficulty of interpreting the "Chasseen", a problem mentioned by most of the contributors), and the widespread adoption of coarse, undecorated ceramics by some late Neolithic groups as opposed to fine-wares in other areas. It is here that one feels the main potentialities for future work are located.

Most attempts to deal with these sorts of problems by the contributors are tentative, though such a modest and "prudent" approach is doubtless preferable to grandiose generalisations, especially as much of the detailed economic work remains to be done. Scarre offers a useful summary of these problems in the concluding chapter, including the very basic, but as far as I know, quite original observation that in many areas the distribution of spectacular settlement structures and collective burial in tombs are mutually exclusive, and that this seems a genuine reflection of the archaeological material, rather than a consequence of differential fieldwork. It is just this kind of diversity of context and patterning which is not taken into account by most generalised explanations of "megalithism", and which helps define areas for further research.

All in all, a very valuable guide to a complex and culturally rich area and period, with an abundance of data relevant to many of the current problems of prehistoric European archaeology.

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OLE KLINDT-JENSEN, A History of Scandinavian archaeology. Thames & Hudson, London, 1975. 144pp. £4.95 (Soft) ISBN 0 500 79006 X

Reviewed by Chris Chippindale.

This book was written ten years ago, and it must first be explained why it should be reviewed now. Simply, it is a short book, it is cheap, and it gives an admirable academic history at essay length (80 pages) of that long period from the 16th to the beginning of this century, when Scandinavian archaeology was, in all sorts of ways, far in advance of the rest of Europe. The book-binding is shoddy, so you may have to read a copy quickly before it falls apart; and there never was a hardback edition because (the story goes) the sheets for it went missing at the printers

and were pulped by accident.

The last part of the book, on "recent archaeology" in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland (but not Iceland, which scarcely gets a mention), actually covers from 1900 to the 1940s. Mostly this is a collection of paragraphs about individual archaeologists' life-works, which makes hard going for the outsider; it emphasizes how much the first half of the century in Scandinavia, as in Britain, was mostly to do with refining typologies, cultural groupings and relative chronologies, without much questioning of - or advance on - the theoretical framework established in the later 19th century.

The meat is in the earlier part, the evolution of archaeology from the Renaissance to 1900, and especially the golden age from Thomsen to Montelius. It is striking how rapidly Scandinavian antiquaries built on their early breakthrough to a three-age classification. By 1854, when the British were only just escaping from a chaos of Druidic, Celtic, Saxon, Belgic and ancient British remains, Worsaae was already into a five-stage chronology with early and late splits in the stone and iron ages. Again, the argument between Montelius and Muller in the 1880s is a preview of all later controversies about how much typological change is a simple function of time, and how much it relates to contemporary regional groupings, functional differences and the social roles of the sexes. Here, the Pitt-Rivers approach, with the insistence on universal evolutionary schemes, which could float independently of place and specific period, was of no service to working out the historical particulars of later prehistoric Europe; nor perhaps was the whole ethnological movement, of living and dead savages to be studied together as equal relics of an evolutionary stage, that was so

influential in England in the 1870s.

The record in the preservation of monuments and finds is even more remarkable. The 17th-century Swedish laws provided blanket protection for all standing monuments and an enforceable state claim to all archaeological material - not just gold and silver treasure - found in the ground. That was much better protection - even if much enforced - than British monuments and portable antiquities have now. A powerful, centralised antiquities service has its dangers, of course: as I have pointed in an ARC article (Vol. 2(1), pp.59-65), it was only the capricious obstinacy of its private owner that prevented the archaeology of Stonehenge being quarried away by 19th-century "experts" like General Pitt-Rivers. Today, responsible people in Sweden have to hide rock-engraving sites from the official policy of painting over the figures with bituminous red paint.

Klindt-Jensen does not explore why the climate for the development of archaeology in Scandinavia was so favourable. I wonder if the special circumstances of nationalism were a key, specifically in the pursuit of a Danish identity to resist Prussian expansion, and generally in the long rivalry between the Scandinavian states. There was also an ethnic continuity, from medieval times back through the heroic age of the sagas and into prehistory, without a Roman occupation to make a break. The British concern with identifying racial incursions, such an obstacle to archaeological progress in the 19th century, was the corresponding response here to an early history known to include repeated invasions. Again, their lack of overseas empires (beyond fragments like half of the Virgin Islands) may have focussed attention on the Scandinavian homelands, whilst the world role of Britain pushed its

domestic remains very much into the second class of antiquities.

Although Judith Rodden's History of British Archaeology has been promised almost since pre-historic times, nothing like this yet exists for Britain. Will someone please write - soon - a good, short, analytical history of archaeology in the British Isles?

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IAN HODDER (ED.), Symbolic and Structural Archaeology. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1982. 188 pp. £\$19.50 (Hard) ISBN 0-521-24406-4

Reviewed by Valerie Pinsky

Despite the diversity of issues they raise, the fifteen contributions to this edited volume constitute a unified, and unqualified, departure from traditional new archaeology. If a major premise of processual archaeology was that the past is knowable given appropriate theoretical and methodological tools, the overriding assumption of Hodder's proposed "contextual" archaeology is that it is knowable primarily in culturally meaningful, symbolic and ideological terms. An important implication of this view is, moreover, that particular methodological approaches have inhibited rather than enhanced our ability to produce such knowledge; the new archaeology's emphasis on ecological functionalism, and on deriving and testing law-like propositions within a hypothetico-deductive framework are seen to stem from an apotheosised and impoverished conception of science, and therefore to preclude precisely the sort of particular, historical and contextual understanding which any concern with these matters requires. Consequently, it is in a symbolic and "structural" (generative) approach that a viable alternative is sought.

The core of the book is devoted to an exploration of a wide range of notions of symbolism and 'structure', and their implications for an emerging archaeological theory of material culture. The four papers in Part 1 develop the theoretical basis of a structural and symbolic perspective, considering its departure from both functionalist and 'high' structuralist theories, as well as its epistemological premises. The introductory paper by Hodder is a sweeping review of the limitations of existing approaches in archaeology; both functionalism and structuralism proper are held to share many of the same crucial weaknesses, specifically, a failure to develop an adequate theory of social action which acknowledges the central role of individual actors in the process of social change, a consideration of historical context, and a static view of material culture patterning which fails to consider the rules and codes by which such patterning is generated (p. 8). For Hodder, adaptive "systems" are opposed to meaningful "structures"; the former are simply externally observable patterns of association, while the latter are the internal rules and codes which generate those patterns. Material culture patterning is thus held to be "a structured set of differences" (p. 7) having non-arbitrary, symbolic meaning which is relative to specific historical and cultural contexts, and which plays an "active" part in the ideological legitimization of social relations (p. 10). The remaining papers in this section consider in fuller detail various bodies of social philosophy relevant to these issues: Miller reviews an extensive body of psychological and linguistic literature pertaining to processes of human categorisation and suggests its value for archaeological studies of material culture, arguing that these processes "mediate and organise the social construction of reality, and may be