The Mesolithic in Europe is a quality book, well made and put together, using good materials and with excellent graphic reproduction. It is also worthy of mention that the quality of what must be in many cases translations is very good. In comparison with the latest offerings from other presses this book actually seems cheap, even at #35 ! For these features alone Bonsall should feel pleased. The criticisms mentioned above do not mean that the book is of no value. The many review articles and their attendant bibliographic references see to that. It makes an ideal place from which to start research; I am glad that it is now on my shelf. It is a great pity, though, that the book squanders much that would be interesting by not making attempts to penetrate wider issues than simply being 'Mesolithic'.

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WILLIAM N. MORGAN, *Prehistoric Architecture in Micronesia* Kegan Paul International, London. 1989 xvi, 166pp. $65.00 Hard. ISBN 0 7103 0358 0

Reviewed by Peter Gathercole,
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The archaeology of Micronesia -- those isolated archipelagos in the western Pacific -- is less well known than that of Melanesia to the south and Polynesia to the east. But in the last decade much work has been done, particularly surveys to establish the variety and time-contexts of sites on both high islands and atolls. Where much is still unknown, the interpretation of surveying surface evidence can be risky, but detailed descriptions of such remains need not await more extensive archaeological investigations.

This book, written by an American architect who first became fascinated by the subject when on naval service in 1954, is an unabashed labour of love. The author has compiled a survey of secular and religious structures, including platforms, terraces, artificial islets and their attendant features, modern traditional buildings and megalithic remains on Palau, Yap, Pohnpei and Kosrae in the Carolines, and on Guam, Rota and Tinian in the Southern Marianas. He ignores, unfortunately, the architecture of Kiribati, Nauru and the Marshall Islands. The photographs and drawings, the latter including perspectives, plans, elevations, transverse sections and maps, are of a very high standard. Paradoxically, no actual people appear in the modern as distinct from the archival photographs, giving them an abstract, non-anthropological air.

Nonetheless, the impressive stone remains and chief's and communal wooden houses are attractively presented. The magnificent administrative and ceremonial centres at Nan Madol on Pohnpei and Leluh (Lele) on Kosrae have pride of place in the book. Nan Madol has 92 artificial islets, "many surrounded by retaining walls of immense basalt boulders and stacks of naturally formed prismatic basalt, (some of which) rise 6 to 30 feet above the surfaces (of the interior coral rubble fill) to form enclosures for mortuaries and residences" (p. 62), with attendant canals and lagoons. At the culmination of its development Leluh comprised over a hundred walled enclosures. Both settlements were material expressions of highly stratified and status disciplined societies somewhat similar to those documented in Polynesia.

Another feature of the book is the discussion of the Latte of the Marianas. These comprise parallel rows of stone columns surmounted by hemispherical capstones, which in the famous example called the House of Taga on Tinian, recorded during Commodore Anson's visit in 1742, have a height of 16 feet. These structures were the footings of wooden houses, though opinions differ concerning the type of house erected thereon.

Although Morgan writes with an architectural stance, he draws on a good deal of archaeological and ethnographic data, including the fine German studies undertaken before 1914. There is a certain unevenness of treatment between the island groups discussed, partly a reflection of the present state of research, but this does not detract from the book's usefulness. It is very well produced and it has an up-to-date bibliography and an adequate index.

RODNEY CASTLEDEN *The Knossos Labyrinth: a new view of the 'Palace of Minos' at Knossos* Routledge, London, 1990. xi, 205pp., plans, illus., 17.95 (Hard) ISBN 0-415-03315-2

Reviewed by John Carman
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This book aims to do quite a lot. As its author says on page 5:

> apart from establishing... a new perspective on the Labyrinth's original purpose, the book functions as a guide to the site, including descriptions and explanations for many of the surviving chambers, corridors and other structures, as well as suggesting what may have been lost by fire, collapse or erosion.

So, simultaneously and in a single (relatively inexpensive and slim) volume, Castleden tries to combine reinterpretation, popular description, and guide book to a site of immense importance.

The question needs to be asked whether these three roles can be united in a single work. Each has limitations of its own that will constrain the others. The act of reinterpretation requires a deep knowledge of the site and its archaeology, and this must be displayed if the reinterpretation is to be taken seriously by the professionals who do have that knowledge (Castleden is by training a geographer and geomorphologist who has previously published on British prehistory: he may be considered to lack, therefore, the credentials of a 'true' classical archaeologist). At the same time, the audience at whom ones work is aimed must be the correct one if the reinterpretation is to affect future work on the site and material from it. But this rules out any chance of a popular readership for the work of reinterpretation: few enough professional archaeologists wish to wade through page after page of stratigraphic analysis, and it cannot be assumed that the wider public will wish to do so either. Similarly, a popular format requires use of straightforward language without recourse to jargon and complicated technicality. At the same time, pictures, maps, plans and so on must be readily understandable in a popular work, whose readers may be unfamiliar with their use. As for a guide book, it should lead the visitor through the site in as clear a manner as possible, establishing the relationships between structural elements and their function in the living system of which the building was once a part.

Castleden's chosen strategy is to tell us a story about Knossos. Chapter 1 covers the legends surrounding the site: the 'cultural discovery' of Knossos. Chapters 2 and 3 cover the archaeological discovery of the site by Minos Kalokairinos, Heinrich Schliemann and Arthur Evans to 1900. Chapter 4 covers the early prehistory of Crete to the building of the 'palace'. Chapters 5 and 6 demolish, respectively, Evans' view of the site as a royal palace and Wunderlich's as a necropolis. Chapter 7 presents the site as Castleden sees it -- not a palace, not a