

Book Reviews

Katina Lillios. *The Archaeology of the Iberian Peninsula: From the Paleolithic to the Bronze Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020, 387pp, 112 b/w illustr., 8 colour plates, hbk, ISBN 978-1-107-11334-30)

Katina Lillios took on an ambitious task by offering a complete, updated, and synthesized vision of the prehistory of the Iberian Peninsula and the result is a success. *The Archaeology of the Iberian Peninsula* is no minor undertaking, as anyone familiar with research in this region knows, given the substantial volume of recent publications. Those whose work focuses on different areas or periods may glance at the seventy-four pages of bibliographic references cited to gain an idea of the size of the project. The greatly increased volume of new data on settlements, mobility, physical anthropology, or chronology, to name just a few domains that have seen significant change in the last decades, is owed to the incorporation of techniques from disciplines such as biology, chemistry, or physics into archaeology. Lillios, an archaeologist with more than thirty years of experience in Iberian prehistory, is well aware of that and she demonstrates it throughout the book.

Despite the plentiful information available, the author has managed to produce a text of a moderate length (387 pages), which, together with the paperback format, allows for comfortable and relatively fast reading. Although this might seem a minor matter for some, I believe it is crucial that such a book be read not only by specialists but also by university students or any reader interested in the prehistory of the Iberian Peninsula. Single authorship ensures a homogeneous writing style and the format adopted, with bibliographical references and notes at the end

of each chapter, lightens a text aimed at a wide readership. Thus, *The Archaeology of the Iberian Peninsula* can be recommended as a reference work, but it could also be a Christmas present to a friend interested in the prehistoric societies that inhabited what is now Spain and Portugal.

Readers may wonder whether similar titles are available. Recently published manuals include *La Prehistoria (Historia de España, 3er milenio)* (Vega Toscano et al., 2003), *Prehistoria de la Península Ibérica* (Barandiarán et al., 2012), *Prehistoria antigua de la Península Ibérica* and *Prehistoria reciente de la Península Ibérica*, both edited by Menéndez Fernández (2012, 2013), or *La Prehistoria en la Península Ibérica* (López García, 2017). Unlike the book under review, however, all these books were co-authored, with different specialists contributing their own chapters, which results in a diversity of styles, issues considered, and some regions being given more prominence than others. Moreover, most publications are in Spanish and clearly intended for a university audience. By contrast, Lillios' work is written in English, a language in which there is no equivalent recent work, it is by a single author, it offers a balanced coverage not only between Portugal and Spain but among all regions of Iberia, and its style is more accessible to a wide readership.

The book consists of a short preface, seven chapters, a bibliographic reference section, and a useful index. The numerous figures are well chosen, although they are

all third-party material, including photographs, illustrations, or plans. It might have been a positive step to incorporate original illustrations, something still rare in this type of work. The graphic apparatus is mostly monochrome, except for eight colour plates in the central part of the volume.

The first of the seven chapters, 'Setting the Stage: The History of Iberian Archaeology and Geography of the Iberian Peninsula', and the last, 'Archaeologies and Histories of the Iberian Past', work as an introduction and conclusion, respectively. In Chapter 1, in addition to the geographical characterization of the Iberian Peninsula, the author synthesizes historiographical sources for both Spain and Portugal, an approach that is unfortunately all too rare. As for the concluding chapter, Lillios gives her opinion on some of the main areas of current research, such as mobility, violence, and gender, among others. She also outlines some ideas about the future of prehistoric archaeology in the Iberian Peninsula, pointing to the relevance of studying museum collections instead of conducting new excavations, as well as the potential of digital repositories (I would add open access) for researchers to compare different datasets. Lillios herself is the creator and curator of ESPRIT—the Engraved Stone Plaque Registry and Inquiry Tool (<https://iberian.its.uiowa.edu/>), a digital catalogue of Iberian Chalcolithic engraved stones.

Chapters 2 to 6 constitute the bulk of the work. Although the author is a specialist in later prehistory, she seems to have successfully maintained a balance between the periods treated. Chapters 2, 'The First Iberians and Last Neanderthals: The Lower and Middle Paleolithic (1,400,000–35,000 BP)' and Chapter 3, 'The First Modern Humans in Iberia: The Late Pleistocene /Upper Paleolithic

(42,000–12,000 BP)' cover a vast timespan. In both, the major results of new investigations are exposed, with more space devoted to aspects such as the site of Atapuerca (pp. 39–46), the Neanderthal occupation of Iberia (pp. 53–61), or the rock art of the Côa Valley (pp. 82–85). The relevance of these findings over others and the limitations of the book's length justify this choice.

The fourth chapter, 'The Creation of New Worlds: The Mesolithic through Middle Neolithic (11,000–3500 BCE)' addresses the last hunter-gatherer communities and the first farming communities. Here, as in the next two chapters, there are subsections called 'Histories' which do not feature in the first two chapters and which I believe would have been worth including for greater homogeneity. Chapter 5, 'The Expansion of Interregional Contacts: The Late Neolithic and Early Copper Age (3500–2500 BCE)' and Chapter 6, 'The Emergence of Ranked Societies: The Late Copper Age to Early Bronze Age (2500–1500 BCE)' are the most engaging and complete parts of the book, more analytical and less descriptive than the previous sections, possibly because these are the areas of the author's expertise. Key issues, such as collective burials within the framework of megalithism and its relationship with social organization (pp. 190–201), the Beaker phenomenon (pp. 229–39), or hierarchy in Argaric society (pp. 253–59), are addressed. On these and other topics, Lillios provides various contrasting views, from the traditional interpretations to the more recent proposals.

Without wishing to downplay the importance of the work, I would make three critical points. First, although it is understandable that the author has decided to take a prudent position, it is sometimes difficult to know Lillios' views on some of the key issues she mentions, for example on the extinction of the

Neanderthals, the neolithization process, or the role of ditched enclosures. Second, the periodization used may be somewhat cumbersome for less knowledgeable readers, even though it is frequently used in research publications. Since all periodization is ultimately an artifice, problems will always arise, depending on the place to which we refer. It would have been easier to simply distinguish between 'Neolithic', 'Copper Age' and 'Bronze Age' in the later prehistoric sections. Third, Lillios ends her review in the Early Bronze Age; we thus miss out on the later Bronze Age, Iron Age, and the first contacts of the local population with the Phoenicians or Greeks. While any overview of this kind must draw a line somewhere, in my opinion, the inclusion of a section on the later Bronze Age and the Iron Age would have improved the book.

Lillios concludes by saying that she hopes to 'have provided a helpful synthesis of the state of the field and a framework for developing directions for future research' (p. 300). She has definitively achieved this. *The Archaeology of the Iberian Peninsula* is an immense work of synthesis

that will highlight the research carried out in this part of Europe and disseminate knowledge on Iberian prehistory among specialists as well as the general public.

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Lisa Nevett and James Whitley, eds. *An Age of Experiment: Classical Archaeology Transformed 1976–2014*. (Cambridge: MacDonal Institute for Archaeological Research, 2018, xv and 264pp., 78 b/w and colour illustr., 10 tables, hbk, ISBN 9781902937809).

This edited volume presents papers from a conference held in 2014 at Magdalene College, Cambridge to celebrate the contributions of Anthony Snodgrass to the discipline of Classical archaeology. The authors are Snodgrass' former students and include many prominent members of the field; a separate volume collects the conference papers of Snodgrass' colleagues and peers (Bintliff & Rutter eds., 2016).

Editors Lisa Nevett and James Whitley present the book not as a traditional Festschrift, but rather as a disciplinary history of Classical archaeology since 1976, when Snodgrass joined the Cambridge Classics faculty, as well as an exploration of current debates on the future of the field (pp. 2–3). While the various chapters do not quite coalesce into a unified narrative of developments in