10, by D.S. Reese), and the plant remains (Chapter 11, by E. Margaritis). In Part III, P. Betancourt discusses the motivations behind the construction of such a fort (Chapter 12), the place of Aphrodite's Kephali in the early stages of defensive architecture in the eastern Mediterranean (Chapter 13) and the social and economic significance of the site (Chapter 14). The volume is completed by two appendices respectively concerned with the results of petrographic (Appendix A, by E. Nodarou) and residue analyses (Appendix B, by A.J. Koh & P. Betancourt).

The reconstruction of a fort at Aphrodite's Kephali is based on the presence of the remains of parallel walls that are seen to form a double circuit following the top of the hill, with cross walls between the two circuits creating casemates. This fortification wall enclosed, minimally, a two-room structure to the south and an open court to the north. A heavily burnt area suggests that signal fires were lit in the court. A small cave adjacent to the two-room structure was probably used for storage and perhaps as a source of water. In spite of its poor state of preservation and rather small assemblage, the site provides useful information regarding architecture, material culture and social and economic life in this region of the island at the beginning of the third millennium. For instance, plant remains and the results of residue analyses add to the corpus of evidence regarding the extensive exploitation of olive and vine and the production of oil and wine at an early date. In the same vein, the discovery of obsidian from Melos and pottery from various production centres indicates that the site enjoyed access to regional and interregional exchange systems. Decorated *pithoi* and smaller closed vessels testify not only to specialised craftsmanship but also to the important storage function of the fort and its large capacity. The lack of animal bones, medium-sized storage vases and loom weights, and the scarcity of tools, all support the impression that the site was not home to a typical domestic community.

Aphrodite's Kephali is one of a series of sites that were established in naturally defendable positions along the south coast of the island at the end of the Neolithic and the beginning of the Bronze Age. The phenomenon is generally linked to the arrival of newcomers. It testifies to some kind of insecurity in southern Crete, in contrast to the north where undefended and stable coastal settlements prospered. According to Betancourt, the fort of Aphrodite's Kephali would have been related to the inland expansion of the colonists during the Early Minoan IA, helping to "establish a secure and defensible base for the immediate territory" (p. 131). The two-room building could only have accommodated a few individuals, but a larger group could have gathered in the open court in times of danger. The effort invested in the construction of the fort and the storage of significant quantities of commodities point to the involvement of several communities; decisions regarding mutual defence were apparently made at a supra-local level. As stressed by Betancourt, the evidence from Aphrodite's Kephali may therefore indicate that early polities, comprising several hamlets and farmsteads, already existed in the southern isthmus of Ierapetra during the Early Minoan IA period.

Overall, this volume constitutes a valuable addition to the bibliography. It offers a new picture of the first decades of the Bronze Age in eastern Crete. Further, it stresses that sites which at first may appear small, poor and badly preserved, still have potential if carefully excavated and studied by specialists within the framework of a multidisciplinary approach.

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Manuel Fernández-Götz, Holger Wendlig & Katja Winger (ed.). *Paths to complexity: centralisation and urbanisation in Iron Age Europe*. viii+232 pages, numerous b&w illustrations. 2014. Oxford & Philadelphia (PA): Oxbow; 978-1-78297-723-0 hardback £65.

Over the last two decades, understanding of the European Iron Age has changed significantly. Although the renewed interest in this period that has swept the entire continent has touched many aspects of Iron Age studies, it is around the theme of settlement organisation that the interests of scholars from East and West—and of both the Early and Late Iron Ages—have most often intersected. The editors of the present volume have undertaken the laudable task of gathering some of the prominent figures in this field, including some of their own,

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younger generation, in order to present the current state of research.

The scholarly ferment noted above has already produced several multi-author volumes dealing with urbanisation. The present volume, nevertheless, boasts several traits that put it ahead of the rest: first, it successfully covers all of the most significant new developments in both Eastern and Western Europe, during both the Early and Late Iron Ages. Secondly, written entirely in English, it has the merit of rendering accessible to the English-speaking scholarly community the latest news on continental research. Although some of the papers are—as their authors confess—English translations of studies published elsewhere in French, German or Czech, hopefully few readers will feel short-changed.

In the introductory study, the editors set the basic framework, including an inevitably painstaking discussion of urban definitions, in which they opt for a context-dependent approach. At the same time, they argue that the Early and Late Iron Age urbanisations should not be regarded as separate phenomena but rather as two manifestations of a single long-term process. In his outline of urbanisation in Temperate Europe in the sixth to first centuries BC, Collis puts great stress on the specific social and political structure of the Transalpine world based on tribal states, as opposed to the Mediterranean city-state model.

A section dedicated to the Early Iron Age is introduced by Fernández-Götz's contribution on the Heuneburg. The 'biographical approach' promised in the title is, in reality, a detailed presentation of the site's history with natural stress on its Late Halstatt phase, and with no further theoretical or methodological explication (although this is no problem). The old excavations and the new research in the lower town are well integrated and set into a broader territorial context with a discussion of burial mounds in the site's vicinity. The diversity of Early Iron Age central places in France is clearly outlined by Milcent in his comparison of Mt Lassois and Bourges. The author deconstructs the once sacred term of 'princely seat', demonstrating that, in reality, these sites vary enormously in terms of morphology and function.

Golosetti touches (as other papers do) upon the role played in urbanisation processes by factors other than the strictly functional. Observing the reuse of Bronze Age stelae in Early Iron Age southern France, he argues for a strong role for ideological factors such as places of memory in centralisation processes.

For Salač, opening the section on modelling settlement complexity, Iron Age settlement dynamics are manifestations of cyclical processes of urbanisation; within this model, *oppida* are seen as dead ends rather than the only, and final, outcome. This model derived from modern sociology is proposed as a (provisionally) universal replacement for earlier linear schemes. Time will show how well it stands up when tested in various different contexts, the diversity and specificity of which Salač is fully aware. In contrast, Danielisová builds her model 'bottom-up', setting late La Tène society into the context of (food) production controlled by the elite. von Nicolai's analysis of hoards in association with hillforts and ramparts reminds us again that there is more to settlement walls than their defensive functions.

The inspiring contribution of Lukas stands out in that it analyses the term '*oppidum*' from a historical-semantic perspective, including its usage, context and (significant) transformation among the earliest scholars excavating and studying Bibracte. Also concentrating on this key site, Rieckhoff's contribution examines 'Space, architecture and identity'; she deploys a complex theoretical approach—that is not completely convincing—to examine issues such as the significance of communal building as a means of social cohesion.

In a series of case-studies, Holzer presents the Austrian site of Roseldorf, or rather its sanctuaries—the settlement agglomeration itself remains largely unexplored. Sanctuaries also play a significant role in the contribution by Wendling and Winger, concerning the general development of Manching; sanctuaries are the focal points at the moment of the site's foundation and they maintain their significance despite the constant transformations of the settlement that followed. The noteworthy paper by Moore and Ponroy not only provides a fine overview of the non-fortified settlements in pre-Roman Gaul but also propounds an explanation for the settlement shifts, so variable from region to region and so difficult to fit into a single scheme. According to the authors' daring but attractive interpretation, this constant flow is a reflection of extremely individual and localised political competition resulting in haphazard trajectories.

The particular settlement model developed by Poux on the grounds of the situation observed in Auvergne supposes contemporaneity of three functionally diverse urban settlements in proximity, constituting a kind of polycentric urban landscape.

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This proposed system is centred once again around a sanctuary.

Key concepts that recur in a number of the papers include urban definition and status (although most of the contributors accept that these sites are urban), the significance of sanctuaries and other social factors in the urbanisation process, and the ever greater variability of the evidence on local and regional levels. In sum, even though the reader well acquainted with the main themes might occasionally be tempted to skip a few pages with which they are already familiar, the volume as a whole samples the essential developments of recent European Iron Age research; it is rich in information and clearly presented.

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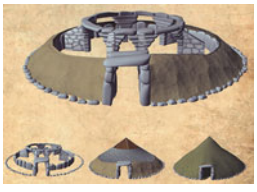
Mike Parker Pearson & Marek Zvelebil. *Excavations at Cill Donnain: a Bronze Age settlement and Iron Age wheelhouse in South Uist*. xiv+233 pages, 186 b&w illustrations, 49 tables. 2014. Oxford & Philadelphia (PA): Oxbow; 978-1-78297-627-1 hardback £25.



The site of Cill Donnain lies in the coastal *machair* (windblown shell sands) of South Uist in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland. It was excavated from 1989–1991 as part of Sheffield University's long-running SEARCH Project (Sheffield Environmental and Research Campaign in the Hebrides), which focused on the multi-period landscape archaeology of South Uist and Barra. This volume forms the latest in a series of monographs that together provide a richly detailed picture of human settlement in the region from the Neolithic to the post-medieval period (see Branigan & Foster 1995; Parker Pearson 2012).

This particular excavation, however, had an unhappy history. The original excavator, Marek Zvelebil, was a renowned specialist on the Mesolithic–Neolithic transition, who initially undertook the work thinking that he was dealing with a shell midden, akin to the Late Mesolithic examples known from Oronsay and elsewhere in the Inner Hebrides. Unfortunately (from Zvelebil's point of view at least), there was nothing remotely of that date at Cill Donnain, and he was left to dig a predominantly Iron Age site in which he had very limited interest. Unsurprisingly, he never wrote it up. That task instead fell to his colleague Mike Parker Pearson, following Zvelebil's untimely death in 2011.

Writing up someone else's excavation is always difficult. Missing sections, duplicated context numbers and misinterpreted stratigraphic relationships are all par for the course. Nonetheless, the problems here were (to put it mildly) unusually challenging. Recollections from some of the site supervisors, and from Parker Pearson himself, who had worked with Zvelebil during the SEARCH Project and had visited the excavations at Cill Donnain, paint a candid picture of an excavation in near total chaos. Despite this, Parker Pearson has managed to assemble a coherent report that contributes usefully to the wider settlement picture emerging from the SEARCH Project.

The main focus of the excavation was a small, stone-built Iron Age wheelhouse (so-called because the radial stone partitions resemble the spokes of a wheel in plan), but human occupation at Cill Donnain extended from the Early/Middle Bronze Age to the Late Norse period. This extraordinary longevity is by no means unusual in a Hebridean context and highlights the international importance of these Hebridean machair landscapes. Although the excavations hardly touched the earliest layers, which were associated with Cordoned Urn pottery, it was nonetheless possible to plot their approximate extent through coring, and Parker Pearson also argues for the presence of at least two associated houses. This tantalising evidence is enough to suggest that an exceptionally rare and potentially well-preserved Bronze Age settlement remains buried under the Cill Donnain machair.

The wheelhouse itself, at only 6.5m in diameter, was remarkably small and was probably, as Parker Pearson suggests, a peripheral element of a larger Iron Age settlement extending under the adjacent sand-hill to the east. Its rather slight outer wall seems unlikely to have supported the type of monumental roof construction seen at other *machair* wheelhouses, such as those at Sollas in North Uist (Campbell 1991) and Cnip in Lewis (Armit 2006). The building's status as an annex or out-building might also explain some of the apparent peculiarities of the finds assemblage. The complete lack of querns, for example, is very unusual and quite distinct from other wheelhouses, such as Cnip, which produced numerous examples built into the walls and floors of the building (Armit

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