

interpretation over the next decade. They will, no doubt, be further informed and amended by current research bringing the Kentish royal estate centre and monastery at Lyminge to publication (Thomas 2011), and by wider debates on the relationship between elites and the spectrum of farming, artisan and merchant populations (Loveluck 2013; Oosthuizen 2013).

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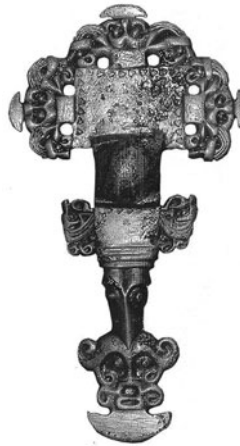
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TOBY F. MARTIN. *The cruciform brooch and Anglo-Saxon England* (Anglo-Saxon Studies 25). 2015. xiii+338 pages, numerous b&w illustrations, and 17 tables. Woodbridge: Boydell; 978-1-84383-993-4 hardback \$120.



In his study of the cruciform brooches of fifth- and sixth-century England, Toby Martin has produced a magisterial analysis that can be commended to anyone with an interest in the relationships between material culture, society and our understanding of the past, as well as all readers interested in the emergence of Anglo-Saxon identities. Much of the book is devoted to constructing a typology of the material from its humble origins in the early fifth century to its last ostentatious gasp in the later sixth century. Martin is rightly unapologetic about his emphasis on typology, stressing its particular value as an interpretative framework in this context, given the number of such brooches (over 2000), their coherent evolution over time and the number of other artefacts with which they can be cross-correlated, as well as osteology and changing burial practices. His analysis is embedded in debates about ethnogenesis, and a plausible case is made for these brooches being selected and developed as an active marker of a nascent ‘Anglian’ identity for audiences within eastern England, Britain more widely and perhaps also the Continent. One of the many strengths of the book is its continuous awareness of the wider context of brooch-wearing among Migration Period women throughout Europe (including Scandinavia).

Martin sees the cruciform brooch in its earliest manifestations (c. AD 420) as a marker for migration, entering England largely as a paired, *peplos*-dress fastener on the bodies of women from Northern Europe, but not yet an important marker of age, status, gender or ethnicity. Once in England, it develops a trajectory of its own and shifts dramatically in function as well as form, becoming primarily a centrally placed cloak fastener (or pair of cloak fasteners) and much more complex in design. Martin convincingly connects this to the assertion of elite status within households. This is combined with an astute analysis of the way in which this middle phase of development is underpinned by a fundamentally

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different design conception, more complex, more local in its variety and composed from a range of “specific but interchangeable attributes” (p. 89). This shifts again in the mid to late sixth century, as the cruciform brooches become more elaborate and flatter for their final generation, at a time when analogous brooch types had already fallen out of use elsewhere. Martin links this with their function as markers of elite female status within the household, and as prestigious objects of patronage, acquired by a woman as she entered maturity, even matriarchy.

Indeed, Martin never loses sight of these brooches as gendered objects. Where possible, he subjects the grave contexts to a scrupulous analysis, considering and critiquing those few examples when a cruciform brooch has been found in an osteologically unusual context, and demonstrating that most of these are based on a questionable appraisal of the bones; the others were largely either deposited as fragments (and therefore probably had a different story attached to them) or early enough that the brooch type had not yet acquired its association with female gender roles. If there is a critique to be made of this chapter, it is in his apparently uncritical acceptance of the ageing of skeletons in his sources. Mature adult females are divided into groups for 26–40 and “over 40”. Those who have been ascribed to the “over 40” age group have very few brooches compared to those aged 26–40, but possible reasons for this are not addressed directly. Instead, attention is firmly on the 26–40 age group, described as probably to have been “grandmothers”, even “living ancestors” (p. 230). It is notoriously difficult, however, to date middle-aged and older skeletons with precision: there is often a mismatch between biological age and chronological age; and many of the women thus described could have been decades older than suggested here, especially if they had enjoyed a lifetime of good health and nourishment.

This is, however, a minor criticism. Overall, Martin has produced a thoughtful and ambitious study, subjecting his material to analyses from many different directions, and he is scrupulous in pointing out the flaws as well as the advantages of the different methodologies employed. He is both theoretically sophisticated and deeply grounded in the details of the data, rejecting the further extremes of deconstruction and actor-network theory. It feels at times as though he knows every brooch by heart. As well as the points

discussed above, he considers the growth of kingdoms; the role of the patron; the changing technologies that facilitated the stylistic transformation of these brooches; the potential significance of the small range of Salin Style I motifs that enters the repertoire; and the extent to which brooches were repaired, suggesting that they were often treasured over a lifetime and a constituent element of these women’s identities. Martin himself points out the limitations of the study of a single artefact type, and suggests the potential for comparing his conclusions to other elements of female-furnished burial of the fifth and sixth centuries. The book is exceptionally well illustrated and written in a fluent and accessible style.

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Books received

This list includes all books received between 1 July 2015 and 31 August 2015.

General

- BRENDA J. BAKER & TAKEYUKI TSUDA (ed.). 2015. *Migration and disruptions: toward a unifying theory of ancient and contemporary migrations*. xiii+348 pages, 26 b&w illustrations, and 6 tables. Gainesville: University Press of Florida; 978-0-8130-6080-4 hardback \$84.95.
- PAUL EVERILL & PAMELA IRVING (ed.). 2015. *Rescue archaeology: foundations for the future*. xxiii+293 pages, several colour and b&w illustrations. Hertford: Rescue–The British Archaeological Trust; 978-0-903789-20-2 paperback £29.
- JAMIE HAMPSON. 2015. *Rock art and regional identity: a comparative perspective*. 248 pages, 102 b&w illustrations. Walnut Creek (CA): Left Coast; 978-1-61132-371-9 hardback \$79.
- LYNNE KELLY. 2015. *Knowledge and power in prehistoric societies: orality, memory, and the transmission of culture*. xxvi+276 pages, 43 b&w illustrations, 4 tables. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 978-1-107-05937-5 hardback £64.99.
- MIKE ROBINSON & HELAINE SILVERMAN (ed.). 2015. *Encounters with popular pasts: cultural heritage and popular culture*. ix+253 pages, numerous colour and