



*First described by William Stukely in 1776, Castlerigg Stone Circle is an impressive illustration of the significance of landscape in the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age. From its location on the level top of a low hill the imposing peaks of Helvellyn, Skiddaw, Grasmooor and Blencathra are seen in a dramatic panorama from the site. Built around 3000 BC it comprises approximately 40 stones in flattened circles and measures around 32m at its widest point. The photograph was taken by Chris Ceaser on 12 December 2009 using a Canon 5Dmk II camera with 24–70mm lens @51mm. F20. ISO 100 ([www.chrisceaser.com](http://www.chrisceaser.com)).*



*'Mina Primavera' (top) is a 2000-year-old haematite mine located in the Ingenio valley of the Nasca region, southern Peru. The site was exploited from the first to the thirteenth century AD, with peak exploitation by the Early Nasca culture (second to fifth centuries). Haematite (iron oxide) was extracted from the mine and crushed to a fine powder in basin mortars within the cave. It was probably used as a pigment for painting the famous Nasca ceramic vessels. The interior of the mine (bottom) has the appearance of a bright crimson cavern. The current archaeological project is directed by Dr Kevin Vaughn and is funded by the National Geographic Society. The photographs were taken by Field Director Hendrik Van Gijsegem in June 2010 using a Canon EOS Digital Rebel XS; f/3.5; 3.2 second exposure; ISO-800; focal length: 23mm (h.van.gijsegem@gmail.com).*

# EDITORIAL

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that an archaeologist in possession of a research idea must be in need of a large sum of money. Ideas that win such grants are intended to support rather more than a wife and a mother-in-law: a veritable posse of new employees is acquired by the home university as well as kudos and ranking. As the research councils see it, cash makes knowledge; the more adventurous the idea, the larger the sum required to achieve the breakthrough. Thus national and international competitions are staged to attract applications from all and sundry and award the most 'sexy' with sums that would once have been thought unreal. This process is one of the more addictive in our time. Writers, sculptors and talent show competitors are made or broken by these random encounters with obscene amounts of surplus cash—so why not archaeologists?

It was not always like this. Archaeological projects used to grow like gardens, adding value now and then in the form of unexpected finds or the gradual dawn of a new paradigm. That was when we were empiricists, and exploring the past was a compulsion rather than an earner. Emeritus Professor Harumpher, now retired to the country, likes to boast that he has never received a grant for anything at all. That never stopped him from carrying out over 30 excavations, which he is now getting down to publishing in between telephone calls to nieces and long walks with the dog. His excavations were staffed by volunteers and students, whose principal asset was loyalty, and whose reward was the excitement of taking part, supplemented by the occasional sandwich. "In all the life-enhancing activity of humans, the amateur excels over the professional" that is another of his favourite sayings—though not of course applicable to his own 36 years of teaching.

If archaeological research needs fieldwork, then it has certainly got more expensive. It has also got more disciplined, more productive, more credible and more rewarding—more professional in fact. We can see more, and know more, thanks to precision digging, a battery of new onsite techniques and a willingness to match the area opened to the question posed. But the new field research is programmed through design, itself fed by evaluation where an idea is first tested against the terrain and the resources available. A field project can thus be initiated by quite modest sums, and becomes eligible for implementation at professional level, with consequent costs, only when the design has been completed and preferably reviewed through public exposure in advance of its implementation.

This procedure does not fit too well with the process of awarding research grants, which rarely allows a phase of prior evaluation; on the contrary, many of the councils seeking sexiness won't give grants to a project that has already started, or to study the results of one that remains unpublished. Thus when a million euros are offered to do a dig, they are often offered blind. Most applicants have understood this, so avoid including excavation, archaeology's prime research instrument, in their package. If started, it's ineligible, if not started, it's too risky. This is not at all satisfactory, but it is up to us to educate the research councils. Ground-breaking archaeology nearly always requires us to break ground; and this delving in the earth *always* needs a pilot study to determine the size of the excavation, the methods to be employed and *ipso facto*, the cost. Moreover, the wealth of new knowledge

is not necessarily related to the size of the grant. Universities might like the award to be as large as possible, but the researcher is looking for funds to match the objective, not a massive windfall destined to submerge her/him in administration. Big questions can be addressed with small sums, and there are thousands of new ideas out there, sprouting in unexpected places. This is the academic reality. Meanwhile the economic and political reality is that persons of every walk of life shall compete for a government bonanza, whatever the subject, whatever the purpose, whatever the outcome, provided it has the 'wow factor'. It's time for something more sophisticated in the grant-giving world.

UISPP (Union Internationale des Sciences Pré- et Protohistoriques—otherwise IUPPS in English) renewed itself during its Brazil conference in September, with new statutes



*Archaeology and language: Colin Renfrew, MacDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, Cambridge (left) and Adama Samassékou, President of the African Academy of Languages (Mali) meeting at UISPP in September 2011.*

to be implemented by newly elected officers: Jean Bourgeois is president, Luiz Oosterbeek secretary and François Djindjian treasurer. The omens are good. Two professional bids to host the congress were agreed—Burgos in 2014 and Melbourne in 2017. The set of Scientific Commissions generate results for report every three years, and their leaders make up the UISPP council. In theory anyone can occupy this role by promoting a research mission supported by ten archaeologists from at least six countries and two continents. And the Union will now have ordinary and honorary members, so there is a better chance of ideas welling up from ground level (where most of us work).

This is an important change. Just as the Anglophone countries have appeared to believe that research innovation is powered by money, Francophone tradition sees it as driven by hierarchy; one has faith in market-forces and the other in the wise ones of the tribe. While both have administrative convenience, there is no good reason to assume that either of these ancient prescriptions will serve new knowledge or find our future. Peer-review is essential, but it only works if we start from a common base-line: new ideas are the prerogative of all.

In some ways the new ethos aligns UISPP more closely with WAC, its enlightened progeny sprung from the anti-apartheid congress at Southampton in 1986. As has often been observed, while South Africa has since resolved its agony of social division, the archaeologists have managed to keep theirs going and even stoke it up. It may be that we are just politically slow-witted, but it is more probable that our division has taken a new regenerated form. Many speakers at UISPP emphasised the significance of the word 'science' in its title, crediting the genesis of the organisation to the virtues of early approaches to prehistory, particularly to the Palaeolithic in France. Some let the cat out of the bag (or the elephant out of the room) by disclosing the true nature of science's enemy—the post-processual indulgences of the last two decades.

---

Tally for 2011. The paper relating to each topic may be located in the index using the author's name in brackets.

---

*PLEISTOCENE*

1. *Before 100K BP*

2. *100–25K BP*: major revision of radiocarbon dates (Higham, T.); Dzudzuana Cave, Georgia (Bar-Yosef); hominins and climate in central China (Morgan); return to Franchthi Cave (Douka); early cave art style (von Petzinger); trajectories of invention (Lombard).
3. *25–10K BP*: the eye as symbol (Watson); a communal centre at Wadi Faynan, Jordan (Mithen); settling down in the Pyrenees (Langlais); producing microburins (De Wilde); burial at El Mirón, Spain (Straus); Hakenasa Cave, Chile (Osorio); first rock art in Egypt (Huyge); symbolism of *pongo* art, Uganda (Namono).

*HOLOCENE*

1. *8000–5000 BC*: pottery in the Egyptian desert (Jórdeczka); Meso-Neo diet in Croatia (Lightfoot); ritual and landscape in the Konya Plain, Turkey (Baird); colonisation of SE Asia (Barker; Spriggs); harvesting tools from Iberia (Palomo); coastal traffic in Chile (Ballester); microstratigraphy at Çatalhöyük (Shillito); LBK and hunter-gatherers co-existing on the Danube (Bickle); geography of LBK farming in south-west Germany (Bogaard).
  2. *5000–4000 BC*: exchange between Hungary and the Baltic (Czekaj-Zastawny); traffic in the Irish Sea (Garrow); children in European monumental burials (Thomas).
  3. *4000–3000 BC*: horse sacrifice in Kazakhstan (Outram); carts arrive at the Baltic (Mischka).
  4. *3000–2000 BC*: sacrificial ritual at Ur (Baadsgaard); a long-lived ceremonial centre in Scotland (Noble); Beaker salt production in Spain (Guerra-Doce); assessing bullion in Lebanon (Genz); the Iceman's last days (Zink; Groenman-van Waateringe; Fasolo; Carrancini).
  5. *2000–1000 BC*: giant enclosure in Romania (Szentmiklosi); earliest stone forts in China (Shelach); a battlefield in north-east Germany, c. 1200 BC (Jantzen); settlement of remote Oceania (Hung); arrival of farming in SE Asia (Higham, C.); traffic in plants across the Indian ocean (Fuller); agro-pastoralism in Peru (Chepstow-Lusty); using British spears (Anderson); Tutankhamun's ritual wines (Guasch-Jané); modelling Aegean traffic after Thera (Knappett); diet of Bronze Age miners (Schibler); bone-working at Anyang, China (Campbell).
  6. *1000–0 BC*: Jacobsthal's *Early Celtic Art* (Crawford); a goldsmith in Iberia (Perea); conflict in Cambodia (Domett); arrival of bronze in SE Asia (Higham, C.); infant sacrifice in Carthage (Smith, P.); open-air hunter-gatherers in Lesotho (Mitchell); ritual deposition of bronzes in Switzerland (Fischer); La Tène anthropoid daggers and corkscrews (Carlson).
  7. *AD 0–1000*: traffic in textiles across the Indian Ocean (Cameron); chickens in Burkina Faso (Dueppen); salt production in Fiji (Burley); a gold hoard in Staffordshire, England (Carver); foreigners in Harold Bluetooth's army (Price); a royal tomb in Guatemala (Žralka); board games in Roman Britain (Hall); uses of mortaria (Cramp); coin moulds from Mali (Nixon).
  8. *AD 1000–1500*: a republican city in Mesoamerica (Fargher); representing children in Serbian cemeteries (Djurić); Taíno carved wood from the Caribbean (Ostapkowicz); religious authority in Hawai'i (McCoy).
  9. *AD 1500–2000*: colonial rock art in Malaysia (Saidin); life in Greenland in the Little Ice Age (Grønnow); origin of Cherokee writing (Weeks); dog-hair blankets of the *Salish* (Solazzo); ancient potting tradition in Rajasthan (Sarkar); an early observatory in Cambridge (Evans); *Sex Pistols* graffiti (Graves-Brown).
-

Suspicion also lingers against the archaeology of historical periods. But it is not likely that UISPP will be able to keep its distance from these much longer. One of the highlights of the congress was Colin Renfrew's masterly review of the interplay between material culture, language and genetics, taking us on a journey through the European Neolithic to make an eventual landfall in the Amazon basin. Here is the home of numerous languages, some, as stressed by Adama Samassékou, in danger of extinction and in need of a kind of *anthropologie préventive*. Archaeology, language, and genetics, and their application to modern communities—all this sounds pretty like historical archaeology to me. It shouldn't be too long before there is a UISPP Scientific Commission on the archaeology of verbalised societies, and another, perhaps more urgent, on the uses and interpretation of genetics.

Our annual Tally summarises the findings of our authors in 2011. We are getting more precise, and braver, in evoking the *thinking* of Palaeolithic persons, from artefacts, from art and from the judicious use of analogy. Still high on the agenda is the detection of the earliest symbolic behaviour, which hovers around the Middle-Upper Stone Age boundary. However, the period before 100K remains blank on our tally, suggesting that scientists have yet to appreciate it as an integral part of the later human story.

The onset of settled life is tracked in China, Croatia, Turkey, Iberia, the north German plain and the Egyptian desert, using proxies such as pottery and diet. But two other themes endure. Ritual assembly, noted at WF16 in Jordan and on the Konya Plain, appears again as a social prime mover—perhaps as important as cultivation; and hunter-gatherers and farmers are found to have co-existed, now on the Danube as elsewhere. Every year, wider-ranging prehistoric travel becomes more credible—precocious examples here come from coastal Chile, the Irish Sea, remote Oceania and the Indian Ocean. In the future we might not be surprised to find both focused worship and habitual human mobility extending deep into the Mesolithic and beyond.

After agriculture, pottery and the cart are securely established, the world seems to turn its attention to serious violence. People experiment with different ways of ceremonial killing, here in Mesopotamia, Europe and Kazakhstan, and we have a pitched battle with cavalry in Bavaria. Away from the vacuous bloodletting of alpha males, archaeology encounters more creative legacies: goldsmithing in Iberia, bone-working in China, a sophisticated wine-list in Tutankumun's Egypt, the polished black wood effigies of the Taino, board games in Roman Britain and the evocative nineteenth-century rock art of Malaysia, featuring paddle steamers and pipe-smoking colonials, hands on hips. Of course, no-one will pretend that these artists, craftsmen and players experienced much relief from the relentless disruption of politicians, but their products cannot fail to engender respect and fellow-feeling in the archaeologists that encounter them. Even the graffiti left by the *Sex Pistols* in a London flat can enhance the archaeologist's role as illuminator of the doings of people.

In this year, interestingly, *The News of the World* was closed down. Its strapline was “All Human Life is Here”—if this is not patented, perhaps we might adopt it at *Antiquity*.

Martin Carver  
York, 1 December 2011