

offer, arguing against discarding it in the way that hypercritical post-colonialism demands.

Finally, the last four contributions deal mainly with the Lower Rhine region. While Nico Roymans analyses the role played by Hercules in the construction of Batavian identity, Ton Derks expertly explores the potential of epigraphic evidence for understanding the ethnic identity of the Batavians and their neighbouring groups. In this sense, epigraphy constitutes a first-class source for ethnicity, often allowing us to discern whether ethnic identities were merely *constructs* imposed from outside, or if they were in fact accepted as an *emic* reality by individuals. Frans Theuws, meanwhile, criticizes the widespread practice of interpreting in ethnic terms the variations in the funerary record of Late Antique northern Gaul. Finally, Jos Bazelmans uses the interesting case of the Frisians to explore to what extent the continuity of an ethnonym also involves settlement continuity.

The articles in this volume vary greatly both in content and in the different perspectives adopted by their authors. This, however, contributes positively to the enrichment of the debate on the problems inherent in studying ethnicity. Though there is a certain consensus in understanding ethnicity as a dynamic and subjective construction, the greatest discrepancies reside in the potential of material culture to offer relevant information. Some authors are quite optimistic (Morgan, Crielaard), while others are openly sceptical (Strobel, Whittaker, Theuws).

Two central issues announced in the volume's title are present throughout the book: *power* and *tradition*. The relations of power constitute an essential element in both inter- and intra-group relationships: depending greatly on variables such as gender, age, or social status, ethnic manifestations and even ethnic sentiment itself must have been extremely heterogeneous within the same groups. Unfortunately, one of the issues least explored in this book is gender relations. As the authors admit in the introduction (p. 9), one of the main challenges for the future will be 'engendering ethnicity'.

'Tradition' – or rather, the 'creation of tradition' – is another fundamental aspect of ethnogenetic processes. In fact, through origin myths, ethnic groups attempt to give eminently cultural processes a 'natural' appearance, creating legendary narratives which include the role of a common 'fatherland', mythological battles,

and migrations, to cite just a few examples. The concept of *Traditionskern* of the medievalist Wenskus (1961) is key in this sense, especially if applied with the nuances offered by authors including Wolfram, Pohl, or Roymans himself.

To sum up, this should be a mandatory read for all researchers interested in ethnic identity, both at the theoretical-methodological level and for its application to the Ancient World. Undoubtedly, we are dealing with an extremely complex issue, where the limits of archaeology become evident. There is, however, a future for the construction of a renewed 'archaeology of ethnicity': work has barely begun but books such as this, steps in the right direction, are showing the way.

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Peter F. Biehl and Yuri Ya. Rassamakin, eds, *Import and Imitation in Archaeology*. (Langenweißbach: Beier & Beran [Schriften des Zentrums für Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte des Schwarzmeerraumes 11], 2008, 254 pp., 99 illustr., hbk, ISBN 978 3 937517 95 7)

This volume was edited as a natural follow-up from sessions at two conferences organized by

the EAA held at Thessaloniki (2002) and St Petersburg (2003). From a chronological perspective the articles included in the book cover a large palette, from the Late Neolithic until the Migration Period, with special attention paid to the Bronze Age, the Early Iron Age, and the Roman period, and from a spatial perspective they range widely over the broad area between the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea. The volume arises from the need to differentiate the ways of imitation in material culture, and also from the desire to define the term 'import' as a metaphor used for different forms of the exchange of goods. All the articles are written in English, with abstracts in English and Ukrainian.

The first contribution is written by the editors of the volume and has the same title as the book. Here we find the main objectives of this volume spelled out: to publish new archaeological data with a specific focus on the eastern part of Europe in order for the material to be available to the scientific community; and to define the archaeological concepts of import and imitation. Both of these purposes are seen as integral to a better understanding of comparative analyses of the concepts in eastern and western archaeology. The editors considered that the book should mirror a general paradigm in modern archaeology which considers some essential concepts such as 'invention' and 'innovation', including models of migration and diffusion, as leading inevitably to broader concepts of cultural change, contact, import/export, and receipt and adaptation of transferred items. The models use a variety of concepts such as centre and periphery, trade and exchange, and style and interaction or communication. Other theoretical aspects include: authenticity, identity, determinative factors of the material culture or of the elements of the material culture imported or imitated. The starting point of the discussion is the idea that material culture has an active role in social relations and human behaviour.

Alice M. Choyke (*Shifting meaning and value through imitation in the European Late Neolithic*) defines the term 'imitation' according to the *American Heritage College Dictionary*, but she notes that the definition does not consider the social or cognitive imperative usually behind the imitation. Choyke classifies imitation in five types: 1. imitation in easily available materials; 2. imitation as enhancement of original meanings; 3. imitation and material transformations

across intra-societal boundaries; 4. copies of specific emblematic forms altered for use in new functional contexts; and 5. copying of forms between groups without transfer of meaning. One single object can be framed within several types of imitation.

Another opinion on the terminology comes from Janusz Czebreszuk and Marzena Szmyt (*What lies behind 'import' and 'imitation'? Case studies from the European Late Neolithic*), who consider the terms imitation and import to be purely conventional. In their analysis the authors use several concepts as metaphoric and metonymic transformations. They consider that these concepts, the signs, the symbols, and the objects that carry them, suffered many transformations during a transfer.

Taras Tkachuk (*Ceramic imports and imitations in Trypillia culture and the end of Period C I–Period C II [3900–3300 BC]*) provides a study of the import and imitation of ceramics in the final stage of the Trypillia culture. The author considers ceramics not specific to the Trypillia culture, with different ornamentation, as imports. The 'imitated' ceramics are of foreign form, but are constructed from the same clay as wares in the ceramic complex previously created. He considers that the imports and the ceramic imitations had a vital role in unravelling problems of similarity between local groups, and he also notes these ceramics help to understand the intensity of the communication.

Yuri Ya. Rassamakin and Alla V. Nikolova (*Carpathian imports and imitations in context of the Eneolithic and Early Bronze Age of the Black Sea steppe area*) examine the archaeological research that took place in kurgan 10, near Sofievka Kakhovka village, Kherson region, on the left bank of the Dnieper river. The first tomb, framed in Yamnaya culture, contained a jar with asymmetric handles, which has caused a vast degree of analysis over this type of vessel and also serious considerations over the absolute and relative chronology of Yamnaya culture.

Alexander A. Bauer (*Import, imitation, or communication? Pottery style, technology and coastal contact in the Early Bronze Age Black Sea*) observes the fact that, lacking proof of direct imports, local imitation is possible, as are population movements through some specific regions. The terms import and imitation become somehow interpretative options in the case of the Black Sea area, where during the Early Bronze Age there was an inter-regional

contact, which can be characterized by the term of 'communication'.

Peter F. Biehl ('Import', 'imitation' or 'communication'? *Figurines from the Lower Danube and Mycenae*) defines the term 'import', using the Compact Edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, as 'to bring in; to introduce from a foreign or external source or from one use, connection, or relation into another'. Also the term includes 'to convey to another, communicate (information)'. Biehl considers that other concepts should also be considered, such as invention and innovation. Another concept is proposed for the analysis of art by Gert J. van Wijngaarden (*The relevance of authenticity. Mycenaean-type pottery in the Mediterranean*), who considers that authenticity is a real problem, underlining the need for a true debate on theorizing the concept.

Augustin M^a Lucena Martin (*Things we have, things we lack. Reconsidering the first contacts between the Aegean and central and west Mediterranean*) considers it necessary to distinguish between the movement of materials and the movement of ideas as roots of differentiation between import/export and imitation. Imitation is difficult to prove, and the simple fact of imitation implies a large degree of external influence, compared to the influence generated by the import as a phenomenon.

Sergey V. Makhortykh (*About the question of Cimmerian imports and imitations in central Europe*) considers that material culture experiences new influences all the time, especially in frontier areas, and the best example is the distribution of the luxurious goods imported especially for the superior classes of the society.

Hrvoje Potrebica (*Contacts between Greece and Pannonia in the Early Iron Age with special concern for the area of Thessalonika*) identifies a special category of objects, consisting of small garment pieces, transported from great distances, as prestige goods. The author's observations show how the process of influence works by studying the notion and theory of import, and he classifies the imports in three broad categories: import of objects; import of ideas; and import of technologies and/or art craft.

Margherita Carucci (*The Sette Sale Domus. A proposal of reading*) considers the imitation or replication of some decorative elements in the same complex, the Roman *domus*, from different regions, which could suggest not only contacts, but also exchange of goods and intra- and inter-familial communication.

Anders Kaliff (*The Goths and Scandinavia. Contacts between Scandinavia, the southern Baltic coast and the Black Sea area during the Early Iron Age and Roman period*) studies the contacts of the population from the Baltic coast with eastern Sweden. The archaeological traces suggest that the first contacts were in the Bronze Age, and these continued in the Iron Age, and later on, in the Roman period.

Nancy L. Wicker (*Scandinavian Migration Period bracteates found outside the Nordic area. Import or imitation?*) discusses the bracteates, golden pendants, dated around the 5th–6th centuries AD, in the Migration Period. The author considers import and imitation to be important factors of cultural exchange, and the case study over the bracteates is a suggestive one. This specific type of object represents a cultural identity and political alliances made by marriage.

Each of the articles from this book presents a well-argued case study, which reflects the title of the book and the main purposes of the editors. The large spatial area and extended timescale offer a global perspective on the problems relating to import and imitation. The editors as well as the authors of this volume are prestigious researchers. The intention for this book, not to close the debate over the problems involved but to make an impact on archaeological research by inviting innovative approaches to the materials, is successfully achieved.

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Since its founding in 1998, the AREA – ARchives of European Archaeology – Network has worked to promote research on the history of archaeology; to study, catalogue, and help preserve the main archives bearing on the memory, achievements, and heritage of the discipline; and to investigate the complex relationships