

This PhD project uses a holistic, osteobiographical approach to explore the individual characteristics of the people who were buried at causewayed enclosures across southern Britain; both articulated bodies and disturbed/disarticulated remains. This paper will present some of the research conducted so far into the nature of these articulated burials in the form of osteobiographical profiles for several individuals from Neolithic causewayed enclosures. A pattern is emerging which may suggest the significance of pathological conditions which affected either an individual's appearance or their perception of the world, raising the possibility that these individuals were singled out to be buried as whole bodies and at causewayed enclosures for this reason. The presentation will focus on the osteological features of the bones themselves and the taphonomic evidence of the grave contexts, highlighting the effectiveness of both osteobiographical and taphonomic approaches. It will conclude by tying this evidence to key research questions - why bury people as whole bodies? What is the difference between these individuals and those deposited in barrows? Where do disarticulated remains fit into the Neolithic funerary landscape? It will conclude with a brief outline of the next stages of this research project.

9 PUNISHMENT IN THE IRON AGE? A CASE STUDY FROM NORTHWEST IRELAND

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Abstract format: Oral

The Irish Iron Age is a relatively enigmatic period, a time of profound societal and environmental change, and while our understanding has been greatly expanded over the last few decades the nuances of life at the time remain ambiguous. Recent excavations at Carroweigher, Co. Roscommon in Ireland revealed intriguing and rare evidence for contrasting burial practices dating to the latter centuries of the first millennium BC. The archaeological remains represent a single cremation burial of a seemingly important local individual placed in the centre of a large enclosure, and the mutilated unburnt body of a non-local male dumped in the open ditch of the same site. While not precisely contemporary, the timing of the latter burial appears to have occurred within living memory of the cremation, suggesting that this monument retained significance for the community and was deliberately selected for this event. Analysis of multi-isotope data suggests that the man in the ditch arrived in this locale during his older childhood, having spent his formative years in a much colder climate than western Ireland. His consequence was such that at the time of his death he was afforded the privilege of burial at an ancestral burial monument, however the mode of his ignominious deposition indicates a dramatic reduction in social status, and perhaps reflects enactment of a punitive code for an unknown transgression. This paper presents the results of multidisciplinary analyses (including osteological, isotopic, artefactual, environmental and radiocarbon dating evidence) undertaken to investigate the identity of the two individuals buried at Carroweigher and poses some tentative interpretation of their respective treatment in death.

10 IS IT SYMBOLIC? A POSSIBLE FOUR-YEAR-OLD TROPHY HEAD FROM THE IRON AGE (EL PALOMAR, OLIETE, SPAIN)

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Abstract format: Oral

Since the Chalcolithic and Bronze Age, there is evidence of the collections of heads of deceased individuals as a social tool in Western Europe, and specifically in the Iberian Peninsula. This is evident in collective burials, where the skulls are piled in concrete zones, or where they are missing. In addition, this phenomenon became notably widespread in the Iberian region and the meridional Gaulle with the practice of the "nailed heads" during the second Iron Age.

This practice is already recorded since the ancient Greco-Latin texts. According to previous studies, except for a few individuals aged 15-18 years old at the time of death, these nailed-heads would correspond to adult individuals and interpreted as individuals in military-capacity ages. Recent studies have also suggested that these heads were not only cut and nailed, but also embalmed, suggesting great care of the treatment.

The Iron-Age village of El Palomar de Oliete (Teruel, Iberian Peninsula) was excavated between 1977-1981, these works uncovered a well-structured neighborhood consisting of 11 houses and different warehouses from the III-I centuries BCE. Inside 6 of these houses, the excavations recovered the burials of 21 perinates and one fetal individual under the floor.

Here we present the case of an isolated cranium of a four-year-old individual found in "House 6", one of the houses where perinate individuals were also buried. This cranium was buried in the main room of the house under graveled

sediment. The bone preservation and taphonomic analyses suggest that the head was removed from the rest of the body while soft tissue was still preserved. In addition, micro-CT imaging has allowed us to diagnose one potential blunt trauma on the base of the cranium. Finally, we have conducted radiocarbon dates and genomic analyses to determine the chronology and sex of this unusual but probably symbolic burial.

11 RITUAL VIOLENCE OR VIOLENT RITUAL? DISENTANGLING DEATH NARRATIVES IN THE ORCADIAN NEOLITHIC

Abstract author(s): Crozier, Rebecca - Dittmar, Jenna (Dept of Archaeology, University of Aberdeen) - Oxenham, Marc (School of Archaeology and Anthropology, Australian National University)

Abstract format: Oral

The skeletal remains constrained within the megalithic architecture on the archipelago of Orkney, Scotland, have long provided a significant challenge for definitive interpretation. Lacking in bodily integrity and often-times characterised by significant fragmentation, the challenging nature of the assemblages has generated sophisticated yet diverse reconstructions of the significance of death in these early communities. Interpretations oscillate from the more natural ravages of time and nature, to considerations of ever more complex and sophisticated cosmologies of ancestors, personhood, embodiment and enchainment. The inherent equifinality of these competing narratives demands new evidence. The context of deposition within these megalithic structures renders the small number of tangible individuals as ostensibly distinct, special, somehow outstanding compared to all those who have, 'disappeared'. What else, beyond their locality, might give voice to the significance of these remains for those communities who originally engaged with them? This paper presents new evidence following a reassessment of the human remains from the chambered cairn of the Knowe of Rowiegar, Rousay, Orkney. Excavated in 1937, the skeletal assemblage, minimally representing 28 individuals, is dominated by fragmentary cranial remains. Although previous work has noted three perimortem cranial injuries, a recent reassessment has identified significantly more. The patterning of trauma across this assemblage is contextualised with previous work by RC, where similar injuries have been noted in Cuween chambered cairn, Mainland Orkney, and by others at Isbister, South Ronaldsay, Orkney. Multiple injuries to some individuals suggest a hitherto unrecognised intensity of violent interaction with the body. Faced with the ever-present issue of equifinality we ask, are these remains indicative of a ritualised mortuary practice, requiring a violent interaction with the deceased, or is this the end-stage of a violently dark death?

534 DIVERSITY IN THE SPREAD OF NEOLITHIC LIFEWAYS: EXPLORING REGIONAL DIFFERENCES ACROSS EURASIA [PAM]

Session theme: 5. (Extreme) Environments – Islands, Coasts, Margins, Centres

Session organisers: Connolly, Rory - Kačar, Sonja - Power, Robert (School of Archaeology, University College Dublin) - Pichon, Fiona (IMF-CSIC, Barcelona) - Salazar-García, Domingo (Departament de Prehistòria, Arqueologia i Història Antiga, Universitat de València; Department of Geological Sciences, University of Cape Town)

Session format: Regular session

Across Eurasia, the adoption of farming is associated with major socio-economic, technological, cultural, symbolic and biological transformations. This process is understood as the largely rapid spread of a sedentary economy based on agriculture, herding, and new technologies like pottery and polished stone tools, which originally dispersed from southwest Asia through demic diffusion and local interactions. However, regional differences are evident and there is considerable variability in the tempo of these processes. In some areas, the characteristic hallmarks of the Neolithic are absent or uncorrelated with the appearance of farming communities. In addition, subsistence strategies based on hunting, fishing, and gathering, typically associated with Mesolithic communities, persisted in some locations despite the confirmed presence of domesticates, pointing to encounters between hunter-gatherers and farming communities living in close proximity to one another. This undoubtedly contributed to some of the diversity visible in the archaeological record, however, there is still uncertainty about how and why regional differences arose. For instance, how did different Neolithisation routes affect the timing and spread? Or what role did local environmental factors play? Recent advances in techniques such as aDNA and a combination of isotopic analyses have provided valuable information on the spread and consolidation of Neolithic populations (ancestry) as well as economy (diet), and helped to discern the timing of overlap. Similarly, innovative and nuanced archaeological approaches to material culture have given rise to a number of wide-ranging studies which highlight and address the extent of diversity in the spread of Neolithic lifeways.

In this session, we welcome submissions from different regions across Eurasia with the aim of illustrating how the Neolithic, due to the cultural and environmental diversity in which it developed, manifests in different ways. The session will provide an opportunity to examine and discuss what factors lay behind these regional differences.