FINGERPRINTING THE IRON AGE
Approaches to identity in the European Iron Age. Integrating South-Eastern Europe into the debate.
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The ARTLAB Network: Art, landscape and the body in Iron Age south-east Europe

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The Iron Age in Europe is a period of tremendous cultural dynamism, during which the cultural values and constructs of urbanised Mediterranean civilisations clashed with alternative webs of identity in ‘barbarian’ temperate Europe. Until recently cultural identities in Iron Age Europe were viewed as a series of monolithic entities (Romans, Celts etc). Yet it is improbable that collective identity was predominantly national or even tribal at this time. The ARTLAB network, established in 2008 through a networking grant from HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area), comprises an international group of researchers based primarily in south-east Europe and the UK, who are interested in the study of cultural identities during the Iron Age and in the development of new approaches to their study. Specifically, we examine material culture (especially art), bodily treatments and patterns of landscape inhabitation to provide new insights into the construction and negotiation of identity. Emergent identities are materialised through a range of media. In Slovenia and Croatia, we see the development of the artistic tradition known as ‘situla art’, focussed on the production of elaborate metalwork decorated with complex figural scenes containing both secular and mythic content (drawing on Etruscan technologies). This art form depicts the human body, carefully constructed in relation to posture, clothing, gesture, expression etc, and is concerned with issues of status, gender and ethnicity. Attitudes to the body can also be addressed through treatments of the dead, which also undergo significant change during the period. New culturally-mediated landscapes also appear, where religious, funerary, domestic and economic activities are drawn together within circumscribed areas, within which movement and experience are carefully choreographed. This paper outlines the research agendas underlying the establishment of the ARTLAB network and explores key issues in the study of identity-formation in the south-east European Iron Age.

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Identity, integration, power relations and the study of the European Iron Age

Staša Babić (Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Archaeology, University of Belgrade, Serbia)

The consensus reached during the second half of the 20th century among the humanities that individual and group identities are constructed in constant processes of negotiation among social actors, has penetrated archaeology over the past couple of decades on two distinct planes: affairs of the past and those of the present. The planned conference addresses both these issues, but on different levels of conceptualization. I will now concentrate on the second plane, that of the present, convinced that the way in which we investigate past is deeply embedded in our own modern affairs and relations. Introducing the constructivist concept of identity into the archaeological investigation of the past, and the European Iron Age in particular, is the goal undoubtedly much more vividly pursued and with more substantial results, in some parts of Europe, notably Great Britain. Hence the first main goal stated in the conference abstract is “to encourage the dialogue on a general level between South-East European and British archaeology” – to integrate South Eastern Europe into the debate, as emphasized in the very title. In this way, two discrete entities are implied and geographical denominators are equated with theoretical “stages” or, at the very least, “strands” of archaeological investigation. The outcome is a generalized polarity between Us and Them. At the same time, a vast body of literature rightly questions this polarized pattern when dealing with the past communities. The question arises whether we – archaeologists, regardless of our geographical provenance, are able to abandon this approach when dealing with the past, while retaining some of its crucial elements when we are thinking about our present groupings. Bearing in mind the doubtless differences in archaeological practices around the globe, possible ways of addressing this condition will be discussed, that may go beyond sharp divisions into Us and Them and lead us a step forward the integration, through negotiation of various lived experiences.

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Coexisting and Interfering of the Late Iron Age Transylvanian Communities

Dr. Sándor Berecki (Mureș County Museum)

At the end of the 4th century BC the eastern territories of the Carpathian Basin were relatively hastily colonized by the Celtic tribes. The present state of research asserts that these tribes came from the direction of the Great Hungarian Plain, where previously they established contacts with the Scythian population of those regions. On the other hand, for that period, the ethnic entities of Transylvania are not that well traceable. The archaeological investigators tried to establish the ethnic specifics of the communities based on the archaeological evidence. Since all the communities interconnected, some of the sites preserved the so called “ethnic markers” of more than one entity. It was the case of the cemetery from Aiud, where Scythian artefacts appeared in Celtic graves, while the settlement from Morești was one of the sites, where elements of the Dacian material culture appeared together with Celtic and Germanic artefacts. But as the recent reinterpretations of these materials evidenced, not all the cases indicate the coexistence or the interference of different ethnic societies. The present paper intends to present the historiography of “ethnicisation” of the archaeological cultures from the 4th to 2nd centuries BC from the perspective of the reanalyzing the archaeological materials from Morești. It also designs to trace the character of interconnections between the communities of the area, as well as to define the nature of the cohabitation or cultural interferences.

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Negotiating Identity on the Edge of Empire

Dr Louisa Campbell, University of Glasgow (l.campbell.2@research.gla.ac.uk)

Despite benefiting from a rich resource of material and standing remains, northern Britain has remained relatively peripheral in academic discussions of Iron Age societies. This paper seeks to reverse previous Romanocentric stances by exploring the geographically variable and temporally episodic character of the Roman and Iron Age interface beyond the north-western frontier of Empire during the early centuries AD. I will propose a theoretically-informed interpretive framework for the assessment of Iron Age societies appropriating Imperial objects. Concepts such as materiality and objectification will be used to provide material models to consider the social role played by objects in the negotiation of provincial identities. The paper will further explore the proposal that a strongly held sense of cultural identity may have contributed to northern societies’ capacity to resist the potentially oppressive imposition of Roman cultural values experienced elsewhere in the Empire. Following on from Bourdieu’s habitus concept (1977), I progress the proposal that identity is socially constructed by the repeated performance of activities or ideological rituals so that behaviours and idealised characteristics and roles are learned from an early age. Such notions of normality and values are then reinforced and maintained through objects, such as pottery, and discursive, especially ritualised, and non-discursive practices. Consequently, artefacts are part of material conditions which are embedded in the cultural systems within which they are produced and their meanings are both constructed by and in turn construct social structures. The physical, metaphysical and symbolic reconstitution of the material culture of Empire into existing socially specific conditions are suggested as central to provincial strategies for perpetuating traditional belief systems thereby facilitating the systematic and continual reinforcement of cultural identities.

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More Celtic Myths and Inventions: what archaeology can and cannot do.

John Collis. (University of Sheffield)

There has been a radical rethink of the Celts over the last quarter of a century, but we still do not have a general consensus on our theoretical basis or methodology, indeed we cannot even agree on a definition of the ancient Celts. At the moment Ray Karl and I are disputing how we can use the written sources of the Celtic speaking peoples in the early Christian period when looking at prehistory on the continent and in Britain. But both of us would disagree fundamentally with the methodology, indeed the whole conceptual basis of what Barry Cunliffe and John Koch have written in their recent publication Celtic from the West. Are concepts like the Celts and Celtic languages more a hindrance than a help?
The Early Iron Age of North-eastern Slovenia – Landscape, Burial and the Body

Assist. Dr. Matija Črešnar (University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Department of Archaeology Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia, Centre for Preventive Archaeology)

Until recently the Early Iron Age landscape of north-eastern Slovenia was marked mainly by monumental structures such as hillforts and the belonging barrow groups. On the contrary the lowlands were due to the lack of finds rather neglected in the study of the wider landscape. The paper considers on the one hand the different possible influences that led to the creation of the Early Iron Age landscape as we can understand it after the numerous new extensive excavations in the lowland areas in north-eastern Slovenia carried out in the last 15 years. On the other hand an also important milestone in the study of the landscape is the application of remote sensing techniques, which enable a different insight into the past landscape and therewith give new possibilities for its understanding. The Early Iron Age is in the researched area deeply rooted in the LBA, i.e. Urnfield Period. However it is on the other hand also connected to the changes in various aspects of life in the wider area, which could be more precisely pinpointed after numerous radiocarbon analyses carried out on some significant archaeological contexts from the area. If we summarize, the research carried out in the last years has delivered important new data for further research of the Early Iron Age in the Eastern Slovenia and broader. However the results have to be examined further also in comparison with other areas to let recognize the different influences in this knitting of tradition and “innovation”.

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Gender agenda: tracing elusive identities in the funerary record of Late Iron Age and Early Hellenistic Thrace

Bela Dimova (Institute of Archaeology, UCL)

This paper investigates the issue of gender as an entry point to reassessing overlooked aspects of identity in Late Iron Age and Early Hellenistic Thrace. The paper considers mortuary evidence from two main regions in Thrace (central-south and north-east Bulgaria) between 5-3 centuries BC. One part of the analysis is dedicated to deconstructing the existing discourses about women's graves, and the relationship between gender and power in Thracian death practices. The second part of the analysis tests the assumed gender-markers, and identifies alternative patterns in the data. The third part of the analysis considers the performance of multiple identities in several case-studies. Building on this, it is argued that the assumed gender roles of subordinate women are unsustainable, and the trope of 'male warrior/king' obscures the complexity of the record. The quantitative study highlights expressions of regional identity and social status. The case studies elucidate highly individualised performances of multiple identities and social affiliations.

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Mediterranean wine and Dacian conviviality–ancient and modern myths and archaeological evidence

Mariana Egri (Babeș - Bolyai' University, Cluj Napoca)

Ancient authors wrote about Dacians' love of Mediterranean wine, as well as about their excesses, which led to a “prohibition” being imposed by the reformer King Burebista. The moralizing story has been taken over and often manipulated in many ways, first by writers and historians of the Enlightenment, then by nationalistic movements and lastly by communist propaganda. Their motivations were as diverse as their ideological origin. More recently, a few philologists, anthropologists and archaeologists explored this complicated story, proposing some interpretative models. Both the ancient and the modern myths regarding this problem, as well as the recently proposed interpretative models will be discussed. The paper is also going to re-asses the available archaeological evidence regarding the consumption of Mediterranean wine and other related implements in a variety of Dacian sites during the last two centuries before the Roman conquest. The aim is to investigate different regional patterns of the Dacian convivial practices, their evolution during the mentioned period and the ways in which the imported wine and wine-related objects were incorporated into them. Some primary analyses point to a variety of social and political meanings of the wine consumption amongst Dacian communities inside and outside the eastern Carpathian Basin. The final scope is to propose a comprehensive but also flexible interpretative model, more appropriate for a society characterised by regional structural differences, taking into consideration all the available archaeological evidence, as well as the most recent results of some detailed philological analyses.
Central places and the construction of collective identities in the Middle Rhine-Moselle region

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Major sanctuaries of civic religion, as well as meeting places of inter-group cult communities, offer one of the best possibilities for gaining access to ethnic constructs of the past at different scales of social organisation. In this sense, a good example of interrelationship between ethnicity, politics and religion is provided by the Treveri, one of the main Late Iron Age Gaulish polities (end of the 2nd – 1st century BC). Recent work on the oppida of this area has offered extensive information about public places and sanctuaries within the sites. Starting with the best known case, Titelberg, and expanding the view with key examples from other parts of the Gallic world, this paper will analyse the evidences of political, religious and economic activities in the central places of the Middle Rhine-Moselle region. As sites for collective rituals and festivities, these oppida served as a symbol for larger communities, and many of them also acted as minting centres. In short, they were places where politics, ritual and the construction of collective identities went hand in hand. Moreover, large-scale spatial analysis within the approximate territory of the Treveri shows a nearly regular spatial distribution of central places that can be put in relation with a division in different sub-entities, each one with an oppidum acting as a centre. Finally, the fact that all of them have also provided evidences of occupation dating form the Early La Tène period allows us to develop a new model of ethnogenesis in the study area, one that –far away from normative views of culture and traditional culture-historical approaches– is based on the integration of households and local groups into wider levels of socio-political organisation, in a process that can be described as “bottom up”.

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Sarmizegetusa Regia - the Identity of a Royal site?

Gelu Florea (Babeș Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca)

In the traditional Romanian archaeological literature that deals with the Dacian civilization the idea of the “unity of the Dacian material culture” is still very much present. Research in micro-community identity is barely starting and theoretical approaches are almost inexistent. One of the sites which best stands out as having its own characteristics, based on settlement elements, the pottery used and the craft activities, is Sarmizegetusa Regia. This talk aims to present some of the specific traits of this settlement and compare it to the contemporary sites from Dacia. The importance of ritual activities, the characteristics of the habitat and the unique character of some artefacts (e.g. the painted pottery, which is one of the most visible identity expressions) are just a couple of the parameters which make this site unique in Iron Age Dacia. All things considered, the question is whether the arguments are enough to regard the site as expressing a unique identity assumed since ancient times.

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The ethnical construction of Early Iron Age burials in Transylvania . Were they really Scythians?

Alexandra Ghenghea (Institute of Archaeology "Vasile Parvan" Bucharest)

The early Iron Age and the emergence of the first populations have been mainly approached from a cultural-historical perspective in Romanian historiography. Following Herodotus’s writings, the traditional Romanian archaeology created an ethnic configuration for the Ciumbrud burial pattern, considering it of a Scythian origin. The lack of settlements was considered to be both a fundamental reason in this respect as well as an analogy, for the cultural identification of the Ciumbrud type discoveries with Herodian Scythians. However, the current specialized literature concerning Herodotus’s writing showed nowadays how varied interpretations may be. Understanding Herodotus’s text as a credible source for documenting the peoples named by him in the mid-fifth century BC is no longer prevalent, a critical view of his writings being considered necessary. The Traditional View failed to take into consideration the variety of Herodotus’s writings’ interpretations suggested by classical scholars, limiting itself to using the text as such, and trying to locate geographically and archaeologically the Scythian ethnic area in a static way. This still remains the most powerful view in Romanian archaeology. However, there is no archaeological pattern common both to Transylvania and the north Pontic Steppes during the Early Iron Age. Differences are greater than resemblances. Scythian migration is not based on archaeological evidence but more likely a Herodian belief. I wish to explain in this paper how this Traditional View was created and how it was supported. Why was Herodotus’s writing perceived as being mandatory for understanding material culture? I am suggesting a different significance also for the Early Iron Age burial practices in Transylvania, moving beyond the current ethnical interpretation of the archaeological records.
Who are the Illyrians? Use and abuse of archaeology in the construction of national and trans-national identities in south-western Balkans.

Maja Gori (Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg – Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

One of the most controversial topics ongoing in the scientific debate regards archaeology and the role that it has in political issues, especially the ones linked to the concepts of ethnicity, cultural identity and nationalism. Archaeological remains are very powerful tools when they are used to give material reality to the historical narrative but also dangerous weapons when they are exploited to foster contemporary ethnic or identity-building issues. Archaeological objects can be indeed regarded as the material reflex of a population of the past considered to be the direct ancestor of a present ethnic group. The notion of ethnogenesis has known a big fortune in the Balkans because it allowed the former communist countries - but to some extent also the present democratic governments - to take possession of a distant past and to build up their new identity within modern political borders. In this way Thracian, Dacians and Illyrians are considered as the direct ancestors of the present Bulgarians, Rumanians and Albanians. This paper will be focused mainly on Albania and the Illyrian issue and on the complex plot of different factors that are strongly conditioning the Bronze Age and Iron Age archaeological scientific discourse. The paper will also make reference to the use of archaeological cultural heritage as part of the process of reinforcing national identity in some of the neighbouring countries: R. of Macedonia, Kosovo and Greece.

The Late Early Iron Age Communities and the Celtic tribes in South Eastern Europe

Mitja Guštin (Institute for Mediterranean Heritage, University of Primorska)

Since Philip II of Macedonia died by the “Celtic machaira” in 336 BC (Diodorus 16, 94, 39), and his son Alexander the Great met the representatives of the “Adriatic Celts” a year later in 335 during his campaign against the Tribali tribe (Ptolemy I, 138 J fr. 2; Strabon VII, 3, 8, Arian I, 4, 6-8), the presence of Celts has been quite well documented by numerous objects in the area of the southern Balkans, before their invasion to Greece and Delphi. Mostly we can connect the finds from the Illyrian, Macedonian and Greek milieu with characteristic Celtic militaria, e.g. swords, lances, helmets, etc. One of the well documented Celtic finds from the central Macedonian world are the numerous finds from warrior graves in Ohrid (ancient Lychnidos), which could perhaps be linked to early Celtic mercenaries. The Celtic tribes (Tavrisci, Scordisci) in South Eastern Europe are usually connected with the invasion of Celtic tribes into Western and Central Balkans and further to Greece (the legend of Delphi, 279 BC), and some of them having even crossed the Hellespont to Asia. With a comparison of the archaeological finds and the historical sources, we can recognize the imports and even the presence of Celts much earlier, even earlier than the identified typical La Tène style in the Communities of the Late Early Iron Age period in the Illyrian and Thracian lands.

A New Typology of South Italian Spearheads of the Iron Age: Using Functional Characteristics to Determine Spear Type

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Typologies, especially of spearheads, have been decried as inadequate by the archaeological community. They have prevented the synthetic study of ancient weapons and obscured cultural contacts, changes in form and distribution, and changes in fighting style. This paper presents a new typology of spearheads which is drawn from the functional characteristics of these weapons. The paper surveys material from a range of South Italian sites in Daunia, Basilicata and Southern Campania applying this new typology to large suites of weapons. From this assessment a number of conclusions have flowed regarding cultural contacts between indigenous Southern Italic groups and with immigrating groups of Villanovan and Greek origin. The assessment reveals the variety of spear forms in use and tracks changes over time. These changes expose cultural transformations and alterations in fighting styles.
Late Iron Age or Early Roman? Constructing Identities in the 1st Century Western Balkans

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Most of our knowledge of the Late Iron Age populations of the Western Balkans is based upon the texts written by the Greek and Roman authors. Traditionally, these texts have been used to demarcate areas inhabited by these populations and to associate certain material culture with various ethnic groups. Such reasoning is inspired by previous identification of material culture with ethnicity. The contexts of finds with mutually different ethnic associations were observed as imports or as a result of exchange, loot or war trophy. The more or less strict division between prehistorians and Romanists within the discipline has additionally complicated the clarification of the archeological situations from the 1st century AD where the local material culture was found together with the Roman objects. Little attention was paid to such finds, neglecting their potential to illustrate processes that occurred during the 1st century AD. Finds like these are not only important for tracing the cultural change, but also for explaining the construction of new hybrid provincial identities and their maintenance. The Iron Age populations are driven into the new social circumstances and in order to maintain their status in the new situation, they used visible parts of the “Roman” culture and integrated them into their own local needs. As a result, we can recognize new, hybrid identities, created by two (or more) different parties. The main goal of this paper is to break down the opposition between the Iron Age “ethnic groups” and the “Roman culture” through the ongoing debate on cultural transformation, known as the process of Romanization. This approach, different than the traditional one, suggest the reexamination of the nature of the non-Roman/Romans relation. According to this approach, the non-Roman people were never transformed to the Romans, but were creating a new local Roman culture. The Roman culture was reinvented in different local context, allowing the coexistence of imperial context of social changes and the local adoption of the Roman identity.

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The complex role of “southern influences” in emerging regional groups of the Iron Age in Central Europe

Elizabeth Jerem (Archaeological Institute, Hungarian Academy of Sciences Hungary)

It was some forty years ago when I first dealt with the southern connections of the Transdanubian Iron Age. Since then my interest has never faded and I have treated the subject in several papers. From among these in the volume entitled Die Osthallstattkultur (1996, 11-28) I summarized the previously published plausible models, such as the core-periphery model, the world system hypothesis, Kristiansen’s geographical interpretation etc., along with the ample literature on the topic. The impact the classical Mediterranean cultures exerted on the transitional or buffer zones and the questions in the focus of the present meeting have not lost their actuality ever since, as proven by the birth of many new projects and the publication of conference proceedings. In my present paper I will concentrate primarily on the Carpathian Basin, as a real contact territory between East and West, South and North: an area where the southern impulses arrived from at least three directions on different routes and, most importantly, at different times representing disparate chronological horizons. The means of interaction, their direct or indirect manner and the effects they triggered are also very distinct; these will be briefly illustrated by case studies. The original Greek or Etruscan import and technology transfer could imply significant changes from the perspective of innovation, new craft workshops and manufacture centres, while the invisible import, which brought about mainly ideological changes as regards burial rites, costumes, ritual frontiers and symbolism had decisive importance concerning the evolution of the sense of cultural and social identity of the inhabitant groups. In Central Europe the acculturation processes played a remarkable role, and it is sometimes difficult to follow who wielded political control and how the conditions of power developed within the indigenous population. Having generated significant changes the Celtic migration probably resulted in the emergence of multiple identities within a diverse cultural context, additionally causing a dynamic transformation and territorial reorganisation, which remained decisive even after the Roman conquest.

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Creating communities: torcs and identity

Jody Joy (Curator of European Iron Age Collections, the British Museum)

Torcs date from the 6th century BC – 1st century AD and are found across much of Europe, from the Czech Republic to Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula. Many are made of precious metals and some torc terminals are beautifully decorated. Torcs are often interpreted as high-status artefacts; the possessions of chiefs, warriors and princesses. Individuals depicted wearing torcs are also sometimes interpreted as deities or even heroes. In this paper I will build on these general interpretations by re-examining the torcs from the famous ‘goldfield’ at Snettisham, Norfolk. I will place the Snettisham finds in a wider European context through discussion of the production and technology of torcs, use-wear, and a re-examination of the context of deposition. Simply to argue that torcs are high-status is insufficient. The aim here is to examine the role of torcs in establishing and mediating relationships between people.

Scales of identity in La Tène Lower Austria: moving beyond Kossinna's and Eggers' paradigm

Raimund Karl (Bangor University)

Archaeological interpretations of social identity in Iron Age Austria are still dominated by the paradigm first established by Moriz Hoerness, Gustaf Kossinna and later rephrased by Hans-Jürgen Eggers. In simple terms, this paradigm states that groups characterised by specific features of material culture can be equated with specific groups of people, especially ethnic groups. In later prehistory, where the first, sparse historical records name some communities in a certain area, archaeological 'cultural' groups can even be identified by name. Thus, archaeologists have tried to identify Norici, Boii and other 'Celtic peoples' in the Austrian archaeological record. Yet, not only has this kind of 'ethnic interpretation' been severely criticised in the past few decades in the international archaeological discourse, it has also proven to be particularly difficult to identify any clearly delimited 'archaeological groups' at all. At the very best, any such groups that have been proposed have no clear boundaries, but are fuzzy, if they exist at all. Other kinds of social identities, on the other hand, have hardly been topics for study. At the very most, the odd analysis of the odd cemetery has tried to assess the social stratification of La Tène societies in Lower Austria, and has attempted to sexing (if not gendering) the burial record, even though these attempts have never gone beyond a simple identification of different 'wealth' and 'equipment' groups in the burial record. Interpretations of these groups as different social identity groups have remained implicit, if they have been attempted at all. Yet, there are a number of identity groups that can be identified quite clearly in the archaeological record of La Tène Lower Austria, even though they are at scales different from those proposed for ethnic groups. These groups are, for instance, the occupants of a single homestead, a village, hillfort communities, and also neighbourhoods consisting of several settlements separated from other similar 'pockets' by larger stretches of countryside without settlements. Many of these communities clearly express separate social identities: homesteads and hillforts separate themselves from their surroundings by fences or ramparts, thus creating an obvious distinction between those who are within and those outside of the community inhabiting them, and neighbourhoods, at least to a certain extent, seem to create similar us:them relationships by leaving stretches of land unsettled (though not necessarily unused). It will be argued that it is these kinds of identity groups - households, village communities and neighbourhoods - that are much more essential for the constitution of La Tène societies in Lower Austria than any 'ethnic identities', and that we should focus much more of our research onto understanding how these small-scale communities interacted with each other.

Community vs. Individual: the role of identity in the burials of Peucetia

Olivia Kelley (PhD Candidate, The University of Sydney)

The Iron Age burials of Peucetia, in central Puglia (Italy) have traditionally been interpreted as indicative of elite power structures, dominated by a male warrior ideal and epitomized by elaborate Greek-influenced ceramic vessels and large quantities of metal objects (Herring 2000). However, if one looks beyond this interpretation it is possible to see that the burials express a plethora of different aspects of both individual and group identity that step past the traditional warrior or chieftain paradigm. Whilst some aspects of the burial ritual can undoubtedly be connected to a specific individual identity, for example loomweights in female burials or strigils in male tombs, it is the combination of these individual elements with other more communal signifiers that illustrates more complex social constructions of identity. The presence of modest cooking vessels - in tombs belonging to all members of the community regardless of gender, age or
status - points to community-wide rituals of feasting and cooking that cross-cut those more individual identities. These rituals suggest that a complex negotiation of group identity was occurring at all levels of society. The use of feasting and food as a means of strengthening communal ties is well attested in ethnographic contexts, and the ritual of graveside feasting can be seen as an important locus through which individuals and groups may negotiate their membership of the community at large (Brey 2003; Dietler 1996, 2001). Of course, the burials of Peucetia cannot be interpreted as static reflections of one communal identity anymore than they can be seen to represent a single individual identity. They are clearly constructed as combinations of these facets, they are not solely indicative of one aspect but are complex and layered articulations. They reflect the very nature of identity as fluid and dynamic, and must surely be interpreted as composite constructions containing both individual and communal aspects simultaneously. This paper seeks to foreground this complexity and to stress the active role that all members of the community had in the creation of socio-cultural identity.

The Power and the Glory: hillforts, iron-working and the monumental landscape in the early Iron Age of central and south-eastern Slovenia.

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The landscape of the early Iron Age (EIA) in central and south-eastern Slovenia was a landscape, dominated by monumental structures - hillforts and barrow groups. This is a landscape redolent with the symbolism of elite power, the formation of which is traditionally explained by the agency of invasion from the Balkans or the Pannonian plain. However, the EIA landscape incorporated and transformed many elements of the preceding Late Bronze Age (LBA) landscape, largely by the agency of monumentalisation. The elaboration of hillfort settlement coincides with the appearance of a visible elite burial rite and the acquisition of iron technology suggests that major social reconfigurations were underway during the LBA/EIA transition with the development of a visible elite. The aim of this paper is to examine the expression of these social changes and the role of elite ideology in the creation of place in and passage through this monumental landscape. This landscape was the cumulative result of intense, but formalised elite competition throughout the EIA and is reflected in the structure of hillforts and barrow cemeteries themselves, as well as in the iconography of Situla art.

Tracing Ethnicity Backwards: The Use of Roman-period Collective Names in defining “Central Balkan Tribes”

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Collective identities of the Iron Age populations from the Central Balkan area are very often assessed with the help of written sources from the Classical Greek, Hellenistic and Roman times alike. This is especially true for addressing the problem of the ethnicity and connecting geographical areas and material culture with the names of communities recorded in ancient narratives. Although this kind of interpretation is loaded with a whole range of serious difficulties concerning the character of the ancient literary tradition and our understanding of it, I would like to point to one particular problem which regards the usage of the Roman period evidence in explaining pre-Roman (Iron Age) ethnic issues. Literary and epigraphic data describing the division of the province of Upper Moesia between various populations are used as indicators of continual existence of ethnic affiliations and territorial boundaries of these communities from the Iron Age to the Roman periods. In other words, there is a general presupposition that one Iron Age community would have had strictly defined collective identity expressed with a tribal name, and would have populated a strictly defined territory which represented the core of its ethnic space throughout the time. Such views take as granted that ethnicity is a nature-given, stable/unchangeable and timeless category which exists continuously regardless of social changes. Contrary to this standpoint, I would like to offer the possibility that collective identities in the Central Balkan area were affected with the creation of the province of Upper Moesia, and that this was directly connected to the Roman administrative divisions and organization of rule. The Roman authorities had a tendency to link one population to particular territory with defined borders due to easier control of it. In the case of Upper Moesia this general policy is combined with the establishment of
mining districts under the direct imperial supervision, and purposeful administrative linkage of the indigenous communities to ore-exploitation area. So, making of the territorial units with ethnic hint was not an official recognition of the pre-Roman state of affairs with respect to the locals’ opinion on the matters, but rather a rearrangement of the conquered territory according to the imperial needs. This is why we find references for more precisely defined “ethnic territories” in the Roman times and completely vague ones in the sources before the inclusion in the Roman state. But, this is exactly why those references could not be used in answering the question of ethnicities in pre-Roman times. So, instead of claiming stable ethnic identities of longue durée type I would like to emphasize their fluidity, dependence upon changes in socio-political reality and the direct impact of the imperial rule in the process of their creation.

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Fingerprinting Iron Age Communities in South-West-Germany and an Integrative Theory of Culture

Oliver Nakoinz (Freie University Berlin)

Cultural entities are one of the most important items of intersubjective dealing with human activities and historical processes. Especially in traditional archaeology culture is used to characterize the geographical dimension of human interaction. The concept of culture is the starting point of describing the interrelationship of ancient communities and of defining and identifying them. The concept of culture depends on a decent theory of culture. In the past centuries several theories of culture have been developed. Compilations and classifications of the theories are published from Kroeber & Kluckhohn (1952) and Reckwitz (2000) for example. Our problem is to find the most useful one. We can name ten important requirement of cultural theory which should: 1 Allow intersubjective dealing with complex systems of meaning; 2 Establish sounding theoretical Basis which integrates different complementary concepts instead of permanent paradigm change; 3 Be independent of space and time; 4 Be useful for empiric analysis in archaeology and suggesting methods; 5 Link to traditional archaeology; 6 Link to other disciplines; 7 Be not limited to a spatial view and cover the variety of culture; 8 Allow overlapping structures and is not limited to crisp geographic borders; 9 Allow polyhierarchical and polythetic structures; 10 Distinguish culture form identity. To comply with these requirements we can integrate several theories each covering specific points. Most important is the definition of culture. Hansen (2003, 39) defines "Kultur umfasst Standardisierungen, die in Kollektiven gelten” (culture involves standardizations which are valid in collectives). This is a metatheory which covers most of traditional definitions on an abstract level. Further components deal with the question for what purpose culture is used. Well known examples are the functional theories of Malinowski (1931), White (1969) and Kroeber & Parsons (1958). A wide range of theories or components in our integrative concept is concerned with the problem how the system of culture is working (for example: Dawkins 1976, Fleischer 2001, Hodder 1982 and Jones 2007). Despite the fact that these components or rather their exponents are competing in a social context the components itself are complementary in most points. Following the definition of Hansen cultures are something which have certain features in common. These features have a certain meaning in the associated collectives. For defining cultures and collectives we need not to know the meaning since culture is a formal construction. Identities are entities assigned on basis of meaning. The members of identities do not necessary have common features but they are assigned to be members. Cultures and identities are both groups of people which are defined in different way. Most identities have a corresponding culture. Considering the variety of cultures it is very difficult to match the corresponding entities. In terms of delimiting the groups/collectives culture can be seen as objective and identity as subjective. This fact leads to the convenient situation, that culture is the link between science which constructs meanings and humanities which deals with predefined meanings. Cultures are objects which can be dealt with both as scientific item and item of humanities. This is the cause of the archaeological importance of culture and the fact identities that identities often are identified with cultures. In practice we have a huge problem to outline the relation between cultures and identities. Well known examples of the confusion of culture and identity are Kossinna (1911) "Siedlungsschariologische Methode" and Huntingtons (1996) theory of the clash of civilizations. We need a more sophisticated dealing with cultures, culture theory and identities. The cultural theory has some methodological implications. We can identify identities using identity markers if we know them. Cultural markers in sense of express the cultural membership can not exist since this would be identity markers. Cultural index types can exist but we have to know the cultural significance of these types. In fact we do not want to investigate arbitrary cultures form the wide range of cultures. We want to investigate dominant cultures or cultures which are significant in a specific point. For example we can focus on regional cultures or subcultures in sense of culture of specific social groups. The identification of these cultures has to start with the whole spectrum of available features as types and structures. We call this "Typenspektrum". The Typenspektrum does not contain presence/absence-data but the characteristic share of all types. The Typenspektrum is a fingerprint of a culture. It can be used to identify a culture and to calculate cultural distances. Using the Typenspektren we can detect units with similar culture. Theory and method both are not limited on regional cultures but we focus on them in the case studies. Regional cultures need not to have crisp borders (Clarke 1968). With respect to
traditional terms of culture we can define archaeological culture as a regional culture with crisp border. The detection of such archaeological cultures and the analysis of the distribution of cultural similarities can help us to reconstruct prehistoric processes of interaction an interregional interrelationship. The first case study is concerned with the Hunsrück-Eifel-Kultur which proves to be an archaeological culture. The second case study deals with the Hallstatt culture in Baden-Württemberg. Inside the field of activity we can not detect crisp borders but see a polyhierarchical structure.

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The Quest for Group Identity in Late Iron Age Romania. Statistical reconstruction of groups based on funerary evidence

Cătălin Popa (Magdalene College/Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge).

This paper aims to explore group identity in the Carpathian Basin. It is based on the preliminary results obtained from applying cluster analysis on a dataset containing a large part of the funerary evidence from Late Iron Age Romania. The analysis indicates that one part of society experienced an important degree of group identity dynamics, while the other seemed relatively unitary and stable. Furthermore, some areas exhibited an intense process of identity acculturation, whereas others appeared to generally resist infiltrations. Two large groups, characterised by a different mortuary ritual, were identified through the analysis. Because of the complete geographical overlap of the two groups, the most likely scenario is that they reflected different parts of society. The first group contained exclusively inhumations and seems relatively unitary, with little variation observable between the different areas of the region under consideration. No group identity dynamic or division is apparent in this case. The second group however, made only of cremations, displays considerable variation. The geographical distribution of its’ two subgroups suggest the existence of competing identities, which generally functioned distinct from each other. In the areas where the two subgroups did come in contact, local variants were formed, existing in parallel with the ‘original’ model. Only in one area, South Western Transylvania, nearly all identity forms were present, indicating that it was a space of great cultural and even demographical mixture. However, in the Eastern part of the region only one model was ever employed.

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Changing Identities Of The Iron Age South Pannonian Communities

Dr. Hrvoje Potrebica and Dr. Marko Dizdar (Institute of Archaeology, University of Zagreb)

The area of the Northern Croatia covers part of the South Pannonian plain between the eastern Alps and the Danube valley. It lies on crossroads of the most important communication routes between Central and Southeastern Europe. Since the 19th century many important Iron Age sites were discovered in this area, but the last synthesis on the Iron Age was published more than 30 years ago. Recent research of several necropolises brought to light new evidence which significantly change our perspective on creation and development of the Iron Age communities in the Southern Pannonia. The presented results are based on research conducted on the Early Iron Age necropolises at Budinjak, Kaptol, Dolina, Batina and Sotin, as well as on several La Tène sites such as Zvonimirovo, Mali Bilač, Osijek and Sotin. The first important period is transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age which is marked by rich graves of new warrior elite. However, each cultural group follows its own dynamics of change and develops unique model of that cultural transformation. The Budinjak Group in the west develops as modification of well-known features of the Lower Carniola Hallstatt Culture, while the Kaptol Group emerges as central cultural phenomena of this area in the Early Iron Age. The last decade of research of elite burials under tumuli in Kaptol established this liminal group of the Hallstatt Cultural Complex as one of the most important links in cultural transfer between Central Europe on one side and Balkan as well as Mediterranean groups on the other side, with significant influence of constant West-East communication through the Sava valley. These cultural processes are reflected in construction of elite identity, especially visible in rich warrior as well as female burials. Early burials in Dolina provide interesting insight in the very beginning of the Iron Age obviously closely related with Donja Dolina, extremely important Iron Age communication centre located just across the river Sava. The eastern part of the Northern Croatia, i.e. communities of the Danubian area follow different development pattern. The transition from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age is much more gradual and less visible in significant changes of burial ritual. However, this area already in 7th century BC announces fundamental change which affected the area of the Eastern Hallstatt Circle in the mid 6th century BC. Tumuli burials disappear, giving place to elusive cultural features of the Late Hallstatt period. In this period we can begin to identify indigenous Pannonian population which will from late 4th century BC onwards undergo significant cultural changes as consequence of their interaction with already
‘latenized’ communities. The Late Iron Age of this area is dominated by two communities, Scordisci in the Danube Area and Taurisci in the southeastern Alpine region. In central area between them, which in the Early Iron Age belonged to the Kaptol Group, now we can presume existence of indigenous Pannonian communities of which we know very little. Although both Scordisci and Taurisci are described as Celtic communities, they demonstrate significantly different identities. The warrior elite of Scordisci is reflected in rich burials with weapons such as those from Mali Bilač or Sotin which also contain horse gear and imported bronze vessels from Northern Italian workshops. They acted as Roman allies in early stages of Roman conquest, which secured them better position in new political and administrative order which is documented in Graves from Ilok. Beside the Alpine area, Taurisci were also present in northwestern Croatia. This presence is marked by fortified settlements and graves in Drava and upper Sava valley. The most important site of this area is by all means cemetery in Zvonimirovo in the central Drava valley with many warrior graves as well as rich female burials.

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Technology and identity: the silver jewellery from the Židovar treasure

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The Židovar Treasure is a unique hoard of more than 130 pieces of silver jewellery, excavated in the site of Židovar, located c. 90 km northeast from Belgrade. It comprises about a dozen large silver arc Jarak-type fibulae, delicate silver chains, numerous pendants made from silver sheet metal, and assorted singular objects such as small boxes and toiletry equipment. Stylistic analysis has identified two main cultural groups among the material: the fibulae and chains are in a clear La Tène tradition, while the sheet-metal pendants are culturally closer to Hellenistic influences. Quantitative and microstructural analysis of a large part of the hoard using EPMA, optical microscope and portable XRF showed this stylistic separation to be mirrored in a compositional split into two metal alloy types. According to the pXRF data, the La Tène fibulae, chains and razors are made from a silver alloyed with several percent each of copper and tin, with a roughly 2:1 ratio of copper to tin, while the 'Hellenistic' jewellery is made from high-quality silver alloyed only with a few percent of copper. EPMA analysis sheds further light on the underlying composition for the two groups, revealing significant differences between surface and bulk composition. This demonstrates the added value that micro-invasive sampling can give to the metallurgical and archaeological interpretation of such artefacts. The archaeological interpretation considers these two metal types within a wider region, with emphasis set on the technological horizon of the Jarak type fibulae in the lower Danube region and their tentative chemical and cultural provenance.

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Identity in a cold climate: architecture and material culture

Ian Ralston (University of Edinburgh)

For much of the Iron Age of Scotland before the Roman horizon, the surviving archaeological record suggests that the marking of identity was most frequently achieved by the construction of houses, some monumental, and of enclosures. In comparative terms, evidence for the uses of material culture in terms of portable objects is much more muted, albeit never absent. Some consequences will be tentatively explored.

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Iron age identities in Central Europe

Peter C. Ramsl (Austrian Academy of Science, Natural History Museum Vienna)

This paper deals with Iron Age people in central Europe, better with late Hallstatt and La Tène in eastern Austria and surrounded areas. Talking about identities, we can mention different levels or states of identity. On the one hand there are group identities, dealing with different areas and social status classes inside a society. On the other hand we have personal or individual identity, which maybe can show the individual history of a single person.
In Eastern Austrian La Tène culture, group identities can be postulated (coming out of cemetery analysis) in different areas like the Traisen-valley and the area around the Leithagebirge. Also inside the society groups, different costume groups show different status and connections. Individual identity can be shown by burials which contain special grave goods. So Pottenbrunn 562 contains a special scabbard, which maybe shows different steps of manufacture and so of (military?) development. Another example is grave 37 of Mannersdorf /Leithagebirge – it contains a double needle, which is originated in the Balkan area. These examples raise questions of personal identity.

The human body image in networks of relationships between Central Europe and the Mediterranean in the early Iron Age

Katharina Rebay-Salisbury (“Tracing Networks: Craft Traditions in the Ancient Mediterranean and Beyond” Project, School of Archaeology and Ancient History University of Leicester, University Road, LE1 7RH Leicester, United Kingdom Email: kcrs1@le.ac.uk; Tel: +44 (0) 116 252 2101 Mobile: +44 (0) 7816 207 335) (http://www.tracingnetworks.ac.uk/content/web/human_representations.jsp)

To approach Iron Age identities from a new and different angle, this paper takes representations of the human body in a range of different materials as the focal point of investigation. Human representations play a role in how identities and social relations were constructed, maintained, practiced and communicated, as they do not only portray social situations, but also create social expectations. Rather than focusing on the narrative content, this presentation will scrutinize body images of the central European Hallstatt area for gestures and postures, routine practices, dress and associated objects as clues to understanding aspects of identity. Ideas and ideals of identity are comprised of a mosaic of elements, some of which may be termed gender, age, kinship, status, wealth, class, ethnicity or religion, and all these variables played into the way in which people were represented in art. Early Iron Age human images were not, however, a purely local product; they were bound up into large-scale networks of communication that included the Mediterranean. The stories that were told in narrative scenes and some aspects of ritual and burial practices in which human images played a part were widely shared, inter-regional themes, but were carried out locally. It is through these local variations that we can begin to understand how people placed themselves between the inter-regional and the local, how they negotiated personal identities in the setting of their society and how they constructed difference between themselves and others.

Material culture and multiple identities. On the social use of La Tène glass armrings in the Lower Rhine region

Nico Roymans (VU University Amsterdam)

Within the area of the European La Tène culture the Lower Rhine region attracts attention because of its extremely intensive occurrence of glass La Tène bracelets. The amazing rich evidence (over 4000 items have been inventorised until now) raises a series of interesting questions. Which factors have determined the dense distribution pattern? What are the major archaeological contexts in which the armrings have been found? Were they imported from southern regions, or largely produced in the Lower Rhine region itself? The paper will focus, however, on the social use of the armrings and their role in the construction of identities related to gender, age class and ethnicity.

Indigenous And Colonist Communities In Eastern Carpathian Basin At The Beginning Of The Second Iron Age. The Genesis Of An Eastern Celtic World

Aurel Rustoiu and Mariana Egeri (Institute of Archaeology and History of Art, Cluj Napoca and Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca)

The regions situated eastwards of the middle Danube (the Great Hungarian Plain and Transylvania) witnessed a strong process of colonisation due to the arrival of several Celtic communities, mainly from Transdanubia, but also from other
Central European areas, at the beginning of the Second Iron Age. First Celtic groups moved forward from Transdanubia to the east, in the northern part of the Great Hungarian Plain and on the upper Tisza valley. From these areas they further advanced to the south along the Apuseni Mountains and later arrived in Transylvania. Their advance is documented by a series of cemeteries placed along the mentioned route. Some cemeteries were established at the end of La Tène B1 and the beginning of La Tène B2 sub-phase. Others started only in La Tène B2, suggesting that the advance was slow, in successive phases, during the second half of the 4th century and the beginning of the 3rd century BC. The first scope of this study is to identify the ways in which Celtic colonists interacted with local communities and also how much of these interactions can be revealed through the analysis of archaeological evidence. Several discoveries suggest the appearance of different new communities, together with a variety of new manners of expressing individual or group identity. The second scope is to investigate the evolution of these new communities and the social and cultural transformations generated by their involvement in the demographic displacements related to the great invasion in the Balkans at the beginning of the 3rd century BC and to other collateral events. In both cases the detailed analysis of the funerary rite and ritual in certain representative cemeteries plays an important role. The third scope is to identify the ways in which certain peripheral communities from eastern Carpathian Basin evolved during this period given that they were not colonised by the Celts. The fortified settlements from Maramureş and some communities from eastern Transylvania are relevant for this discussion. Furthermore a comparison between the areas controlled by indigenous communities and those occupied by Celtic colonists may support the identification of different traditional or newly created cultural practices.

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Personal Adornment in Iron Age Britain: The Case of the Missing Glass Beads

Elizabeth Schech (Durham University E.M.Schech@Durham.ac.uk)

Personal adornment is a type of material culture that is worn directly on the body and such artefacts form a large proportion of the material record from Iron Age Britain. However, studies of personal adornment have a tendency to focus on the significance of metal objects such as brooches and torcs, many of which have continental counterparts. One artefact that is often absent from these discussions is the glass bead. These provide a particularly interesting object of study in comparison, as they are non-metallic, have many continental parallels, and often employ a wide variety of colour. Some of the earliest glass beads within Britain are thought to be those from the Arras style burials in East Yorkshire such as the Queen’s Barrow. However, as burial evidence is extremely rare in Britain, much of the evidence for glass beads comes from excavated settlement sites, or unprovenanced stray finds.

Although a rich burial tradition is lacking in Britain, the concept of identity in Iron Age Britain can be explored through the available evidence of the use of glass beads. Using two study regions, northeast Scotland and southwest England and an emphasis on excavated finds, this paper will explore regional identity using both a broad and a fine grained approach. This will compare the morphology of the glass beads found in each study region, and will also provide a comparison between the types of sites such objects were found at. Such an approach will begin to build an understanding of both regional identity and status within a regional context through the use of bodily adornment.

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Giving off Mixed Signals: Sexuality, Self and Other in Etruria and Greece

Lucy Shipley (University of Southampton)

The importance of sexuality to the construction of identity has been explored extensively in British archaeology in a variety of temporal contexts: the work of Nash (2001) and Gilchrist (2000) in particular has shown that sexuality is just as central a part of identity as ethnicity, status or age. This paper aims to bring the theoretical discussion of sexuality in archaeology in Britain and America (exemplified in the edited volumes of Bevan (2001) and Voss and Schmidt (2000)) to the context of Etruscan archaeology, and more particularly, the interplay between Etruscan and Athenian culture in the late sixth century BC. Aspects of sexuality within this relationship have been briefly touched upon by Bonfante (1996, 2000), and Kilmer (1993, 1997), but centred upon either Greek or Etruscan sexuality as depicted in funerary or ceramic art, without acknowledging either the role sexuality plays in identity construction, or the relationship between the society producing these sexual material culture, and that consuming them. This paper aims to fill this gap, exploring how sexual images on imported Greek vase painting were received in Etruria, and how Etruscan society used them in the manipulation of sexuality to create an identity for men and women through intimate gender performance, with a shared goal of maintaining family wealth and status through the production of heirs. It also considers how Greek visions of Etruscan sexuality were constructed, and how these coloured Greek visions of self and other in the colonial fashion.
explored by Knapp (2005) and van Dommelen (1997, 2002.) In this way, theory of identity, sexuality and cultural interaction will be woven together to explore their impact on this under-represented aspect of Greek and Etruscan identity, as expressed through material culture.

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A view from the South (west)

Simon Stoddart (Magdalene College/Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge).

Many of the identities investigated in this conference are highly fluid. This paper proposes to contrast and compare the southern, or more specifically the central Italian perspective, with the main body of evidence in this conference, mediated through the site of Nesactium in modern Istria (Northern modern Croatia). The situation in central Italy (Etruria and Umbria) also had areas of fluidity, which can be traced through multiple layers of the individual, the descent group, the urban community and the linguistic group. This reveals a developmental tension principally between the descent group and the urban community in the construction of identity, overlain by a marked regional differentiation that not only contrasts individual communities, but provides contrasts between the relatively bounded and relatively early identities of Southern Etruria (contra Latium) and the relatively fuzzy and late identities of Northern Etruria (contra Umbria). For the latter, fieldwork undertaken this August on the frontier between Etruscan Perugia and Umbrian Gubbio will be briefly reported. The paper will end by raising the question of how these sometimes more concrete identities are transformed in their entangled meaning and in the biography of their objects when found in the main study region of the conference. The example briefly taken will be the sixth century BC cemetery of Nesactium (Nesakcija), which contained distinctive material remains from Daunia, Attica, the circum Alpine region (situlae) and Etruria itself, as well as highly distinctive localised hybridised sculptures and pottery.

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In search of Thracians and Celts in Southern Thrace. Current issues in the constructions of identity and the interpretation of ethnic markers in Hellenistic period burial data.

Julij Emilov Stoyanov (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski Bulgaria)

(Re)construction of identity has been a main issue in multiple attempts to interpret the material evidence in Eastern Balkans since the establishment in the area of archaeology as academic discipline. Pre-Roman Iron Age studies in Bulgaria do not make an exception from the general trend, which aimed to bridge the gap between ancient written sources and “silent nature” of available archaeological data. Romantic approaches towards the past in combination to national myth of ancestors and modern state propaganda provided the ground or supported the emergence of monolithic and monumental image of ancient Thracians as antithesis of “neighboring” Hellenes, Illyrians, Scythians or Celts. The main task of archaeological investigation in such framework was to discover spectacular objects or structures, directly related to the “glorious past” and to illustrate the heroic picture with “Thracian silverware” and rulers’ tombs. Unequivocal Thracian interpretation became an essential component of Iron Age studies in inland parts of the region, following the example of “Interpretatio Thracica” in reading the books of Greek and Roman historiographers. Archaeological data about funerary practices in Eastern Balkans during the last three centuries BC is rather limited and does not allow an overall coherent picture. A series of case studies and an overview on several burial sites in nowadays Southern Bulgaria (near Mezek, Plovdiv and Kazanlak) however demonstrates the mechanism of ethnic constructions in archaeological explanatory paradigms, the roots of the “Thracophilic” approach as well as the background of recent “Celtophilic” trend. The concept of “ethnic markers” or “dominant features” of “consecutive archaeological horizons” fits well to static notion of identity, but fails to explicate changes in individual or group expressions of status as manifested in burial data, dated to Hellenistic period in Southern Thrace.

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Commodities and images: beyond culture history in the Iron Age Carpatho-Balkans

Timothy Taylor (University of Bradford)

In this paper I develop a line of reasoning which uses both material, iconographic, and textual evidence to provide a particular kind of alternative to the monothetic units of the standard culture-historical framework. By reframing key data
in the field of toreutics – repousse decorated metalwork – in terms of the concepts of ‘Limited Interest Group’ and ‘Eurasian Network’, it is possible to make inferences both about the scale of the ancient economy in the mid- to late first millennium BC and the different potential frames and scales of personal identity. Such analysis can not only make sense of otherwise puzzling aspects of the archaeological record, but can aid us in understanding how the sharp stress on ethnic categories, evident in the classical authors and continued across significant areas of orthodox contemporary scholarship, first came about. The insights are not wholly novel, and throw an interesting sidelight on the much earlier work of Tallgren, Appelgren-Kivalo and Hubert Schmidt, the implications of which have perhaps been underappreciated in modern scholarship.

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Political formation along a multiethnic continuum: some anthropological observations on the European Iron Age.

Tina L. Thurston (University at Buffalo, State University of New York)

Archaeologists have often been preoccupied with the differences between the way of doing among Celts, Germans, Britons, and Romans, but across Iron Age Europe, there were many shared political traditions, if texts are to be believed. Textual accounts and materiality can be compared to arrive at some conclusions, but what drives the formation of political traditions across such a broad area? A look at some anthropological studies of politics in recent and distant times indicates that just as some set of associated material culture is not a good predictor of special ethnicity, neither is ethnicity a good predictor of distinct political organization.

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Dividing the Dead

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This paper focuses on an evidence-based approach to dividing the dead. Through examination and integration of taphonomic signatures from three key and interrelated areas, the remains, the deposition context and the body’s behaviour within the contexts environmental conditions, different funerary and deposition characteristics can be identified. Focussing on a number of different sites from central southern Britain, a new evidenced based system of categorising Iron Age remains has been created that can be readily applied more widely. The system differentiates funerary and deposition behaviour between sites and individuals, whether it is intentional fragmentation or maintaining the body whole and intact in death.

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Anatolian Interfaces: Thracians, Persians and Greeks

Maya Vassileva (New Bulgarian University)

The present paper deals with Thracian emulation of Achaemenid representations of elite status. Monuments from Thrace however reveal borrowings from an already hybrid Anatolian-Persian-Greek ‘culture’. Scholars have long noticed Achaemenid affinities with fifth–fourth century BC finds from Thrace. It can be stated that the Persian military campaigns in the Balkans had an impact on the local elites. Achaemenid presence in the area was probably the original impetus for the Thracian aristocrats to emulate a similar code of royal status representations. However, Thracian kings and nobles adapted and creatively interpreted further the Achaemenid “borrowings”. The models that Thracian aristocracy emulated were „Graeco-Persian”, Ionian or „Lydo-Ionian” – that is, models from Western Anatolia rather than Persia itself. Proximity and similarities in the social structure of Thrace and Achaemenid Anatolia must have facilitated this emulation at this Western Achaemenid interface.

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‘Hellenized’ settlements and constructed ethnicities in the Balkan Iron Age

Ivan Vranic (Institute of Archaeology Belgrade)

Dozens of similar fortified Iron Age settlements have been discovered and excavated in the Balkan hinterlands in the last decades. Material records, dated from 5th to 3rd century BC, show many common characteristic and formal analogies with the Mediterranean world. Traditionally, the appearance of ashlar architecture, Greek imports, local ‘grey’ pottery, etc. have been ascribed to the process of ‘Hellenization’. At the same time, these settlements have been interpreted as material representation of the Thracian, Illyrian, Paionian, Dardanian or Greek ethnicities following the well-established ethnocentric perspective in the Balkan archaeology. As a result of the postcolonial theory, a different perspective on ‘Hellenization’ has been applied to the issues of contacts of the Greeks and Romans with the indigenous polities in the Mediterranean. At the same time, archaeological interest in identity led to re-thinking the concept of ethnicities as stable and monolithic entities and the recognition of the biases and dangers in such approach. All this theoretical changes mostly eluded the interpretation of the Balkan Iron Age. This paper aims to apply postcolonial approach for the reinterpretation of the issue of the emergence of ‘Hellenized’ settlements and to question the traditional archaeological constructions of the Iron Age ethnicities.

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Material Culture and the Problem of Celts, Germans, and Romans

Peter S. Wells (University of Minnesota)

Attempts to understand the social and political configurations of Late Iron Age western and central Europe have been dominated in the past by conceptions of groups known as Celts, Germans, and Romans. But these names impose categories on peoples that do not correspond to their own ideas about who they were. A different approach, through examination of patterns of manufacture, decoration, use, and deposition of pottery and of metal objects offers a more productive way of understanding how people, as individuals and as members of communities, created, expressed, and revised their identities to adapt to changing social and political circumstances in temperate Europe during the second and first centuries BC. Examples are drawn from the Danube region of Bavaria, where changes in material culture during this period are especially illuminating.
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For further details please contact Simon Stoddart (ss16@cam.ac.uk) or Giandaniele Castangia (gc412@cam.ac.uk)
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