

PRESS RELEASE

Sidestone Press releases new book on Dutch Bronze Age settlements: *Living in a Dynamic Landscape* - by Stijn Arnoldussen

September 3rd 2008 Stijn Arnoldussen will defend his PhD thesis at Leiden University, the Netherlands. His extensive and excellent work on Bronze Age settlement sites in the Dutch river area has been published by Sidestone Press.

Today, half of the Netherlands is situated below sea level. Because of this, water-management is of key importance when it comes to maintaining present-day habitation of the Dutch low-lands. In prehistory, however, large parts of the Dutch landscape were highly dynamic due to ongoing fluvial sedimentation. Vast deltaic areas with ceaseless river activity formed the backdrop against which prehistoric occupation took place. Although such landscapes may seem inhospitable, the often excellently preserved archaeological evidence indicates that people lived in these lowlands throughout prehistory.

This book describes why Bronze Age farmers were keen to settle here and how these prehistoric communities structured the landscape around their house-sites at various scales. Using a vast body of evidence from several large-scale excavations in the Dutch river area, the author, reconstructs the changes in the cultural landscape over time. Starting from the Middle Neolithic, changing preferences for settlement site locations and changes in domestic architecture are traced in detail to the Iron Age. However, for proper understanding of the cultural landscape, not only settlements but also graves and patterns of object deposition - and their landscape characteristics - are discussed.

Unique selling point:

By using evidence of over 50 major excavations, yielding over 300 house plans, this book contains by far the richest data-set on Dutch Bronze Age settlements. Most of these results were not before published in English, making this book of over 500 pages a true academic treasure for an international audience.

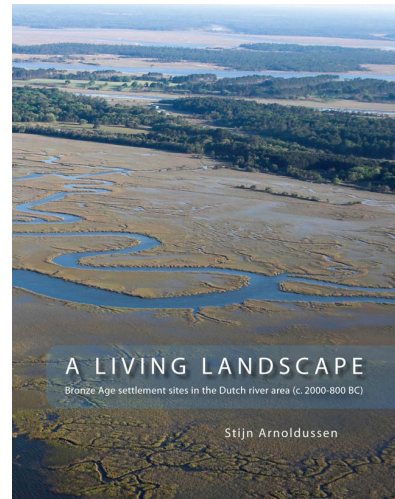
The in-depth presentation of Bronze Age settlement sites, as well as the critical discussion of models and premises current in later prehistoric settlement archaeology, have an important relevance stretching beyond the Dutch lowland areas on which it is based. The wealth of high-quality Dutch data is presented as a synthesized (yet well-annotated) narrative, that rises above mere site interpretation, even more so due to its landscape-scale focus. Therefore this book is a must-have for those interested in later prehistoric cultural landscapes and settlement archaeology.

About the author:

Stijn Arnoldussen studied prehistory of northwestern Europe at Leiden University and won the 'W.A. van Es' award for the best Dutch archaeological MA thesis. From 2003 to 2007 he was involved in a research project that focused on the Bronze Age cultural landscape in the Dutch river area. The present book is a result of this project. Stijn Arnoldussen is also co-editor of the book '*Bronze Age settlements in the Low Countries*' (Oxbow books, 2008). He is presently employed as a senior researcher with the Dutch National Service for Archaeology, Cultural Landscape and Built Heritage (RACM) and starting November 2008, he will be employed as a lecturer in later prehistory at the University of Groningen.

About the book:

title: 'A Living Landscape. Bronze Age settlement sites in the Dutch River area (c. 2000-800 BC)'
author: Stijn Arnoldussen
isbn: 978-90-8890-010-5



publisher: Sidestone Press (www.sidestone.com)
type of book: PhD thesis, Leiden University, The Netherlands
Format: 216 x 280mm, b/w offset printed 90gsm MC paper, sewn-and-glued binding, softback
No. of pages: 536
Price: € 44,95 (at www.sidestone.com incl. VAT excl. shipping)

KEYWORDS:

neolithic, bronze age, iron age, settlements, depositions, graves, cultural landscape, fluvial landscapes, The Netherlands, The Low Countries, Europe

Note: Accompanying this book is a set of appendices which is available as a separate book titled: "Appendices to: A Living Landscape. Bronze Age settlement sites in the Dutch river area (c. 2000-800 BC)" (190 pages, ISBN: 978-90-8890-012-9).

This book contains the six main appendices to "A Living Landscape". The discussion of the archaeological and geological research histories for the sites discussed in the main book, as well as more detailed source criticism and long-term overviews of the occupation histories of six (c. 30 km²) macro-regions around them, could – for sake of conciseness – not be incorporated into the main study's text. However, such discussions contain critical information necessary to correctly interpret the results of these excavations and to evaluate their representativeness. Therefore, it was decided to make this information available separately in this publication.

While these texts are primarily appendices to the PhD study referred to above, they can be read separately by those who are particularly interested in the results – thus far published nearly exclusively in Dutch – of the excavations at Zijderveld, Rumpst - Eigenblok, Wijk bij Duurstede, Meteren - De Bogen, Lienden - Kesteren or Dodewaard. In addition, the appendices provide a recent overview of the palaeogeographical development and occupation history of six large macro-regions in the Dutch river area. This information may be of relevance to those studying other sites within these macro-regions for the period under study (c. 2000-800 BC).

"Appendices to: A Living Landscape" (ISBN: 978-90-8890-012-9) is available for € 34,95 (at www.sidestone.com incl. VAT; excl. shipping).

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