The Body in History: Europe from the Palaeolithic to the Future

This book is a long-term history of how the human body has been understood in Europe from the Palaeolithic to the present day, focusing on specific moments of change. Developing a multi-scalar approach to the past, and drawing on the work of an interdisciplinary team of experts, the authors examine how the body has been treated in life, art and death for the last 40,000 years. Key case-study chapters examine Palaeolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Classical, Medieval, Early Modern and Modern bodies. What emerges is not merely a history of different understandings of the body, but a history of the different human bodies that have existed. Furthermore, the book argues, these bodies are not merely the product of historical circumstance, but are themselves key elements in shaping the changes that have swept across Europe since the arrival of modern humans.

John Robb is Reader in European Prehistory at Cambridge University. He has worked extensively in Central Mediterranean prehistory, archaeological theory and human skeletal studies, and is the author of The Early Mediterranean Village (Cambridge University Press, 2007). He edits the Cambridge Archaeological Journal and is currently researching prehistoric art in Europe.

Oliver J. T. Harris is Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Leicester. He is the co-director of the Ardnamurchan Transitions Project, which examines the long-term occupation of the Ardnamurchan peninsula in western Scotland and excavates sites from all periods including Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Viking and post-medieval. He has published on Neolithic Britain and archaeological theory in a range of journals including Archaeological Dialogues, World Archaeology and the European Journal of Archaeology. He is currently writing a book on the archaeology of communities.
The Body in History

Europe from the Palaeolithic to the Future

Edited by

John Robb
University of Cambridge

Oliver J. T. Harris
University of Leicester
Contents

Figures page ix
Plates xv
Tables xvii
Contributors xix
Acknowledgments xxi
Preface xxiii

1. O brave new world, that has such people in it ..................... 1
   Oliver J. T. Harris and John Robb
   Bodies in crisis – or everyday invisible strangeness? 1
   Bodies have history 3
   Not just another history of the body . . . 4

2. Body worlds and their history: Some working concepts ............ 7
   Oliver J. T. Harris and John Robb
   Body worlds: Social reality as bodily process 7
   The world we live (bodily) in 7
   Back to social reality: Body worlds 10
   Cultural difference 11
   Practical ontology 15
   The body as a historical problem 21
   For example . . . modernist histories of the modern body 21
   Scale and causality: Intellectual tools for large-scale history 26

3. The limits of the body ....................................... 32
   Dušan Borić, Oliver J. T. Harris, Preston Miracle and John Robb
   Death and the landscape in Mesolithic Denmark 32
   The Upper Palaeolithic: New forms of embodiment 33
   Settling bodies down? The Neolithic body 45
   Conclusion: The body in historical process 58
### Contents

#### 4. The body in its social context ................................................. 64
*Oliver J. T. Harris, Katharina Rebay-Salisbury, John Robb and Marie Louise Stig Sørensen*

- Reassembling the ashes .......................................................... 64
- The big change in middle prehistory: Europe between 3500 BC and 1500 BC ................................................................. 65
- Living and dying, 3500 BC to 1500 BC ........................................ 68
- The process of change .............................................................. 83
- Conclusions: The body in (and as) social context ....................... 92

#### 5. The body and politics ............................................................ 98
*Oliver J. T. Harris, Jessica Hughes, Robin Osborne, John Robb and Simon Stoddart*

- Perfect in death ................................................................. 98
- The Classical world ............................................................ 100
- The body world of Classical Greece: The view on the streets .......... 105
- The Classical body as cultural politics ..................................... 115
- The later history of the Classical body .................................... 122
- Conclusion: The body and politics ......................................... 125

#### 6. The body and God ............................................................... 129
*Oliver J. T. Harris and John Robb*

- Life is a pilgrimage .............................................................. 129
- Medievalness familiar and strange ......................................... 130
- From the Classical to the Christian world ............................... 130
- Where is ‘the medieval body’? ............................................... 132
- The three bodies of the medieval world .................................. 132
- Living between three bodies: Tensions and accommodations ....... 148
- Conclusions: Living the medieval body .................................... 159

#### 7. The body in the age of knowledge ........................................... 164
*Oliver J. T. Harris, John Robb and Sarah Tarlow*

- A matter of life and death ...................................................... 164
- The historical background .................................................... 165
- Post-medieval religion: The increasingly worldly body and the body in death ................................................................. 169
- Philosophy: From soul and body to mind and nature .................. 171
- The empirical gaze: The emergence of knowledge specialists ....... 172
- The medical gaze and the body as machine ............................. 175
- Social presentation and interiority: The body as person ............. 179
- Disciplining the body ............................................................ 182
- The body overseas: The emergence of ‘race’ ............................. 186
- Historical process in the modern period .................................. 188

#### 8. The body in the age of technology .......................................... 196
*Oliver J. T. Harris, Maryon McDonald and John Robb*

- Introduction: Home is where the heart is .............................. 196
- Technology and society ......................................................... 197
- Technology, society and the body re-thought ......................... 200
- Conclusion: Dominant modalities .......................................... 208
Contents

9. The body in history: A concluding essay ....................... 213
   Olivier J. T. Harris and John Robb
   The paradoxical body ........................................... 213
   Body worlds: Living in bodies .................................. 215
   The long history of the human body ......................... 215
   Lessons from macro-history: How change happens ........ 221
   In the mirror of history ...................................... 230

Epilogue .................................................................. 235
   Marilyn Strathern

Bibliography ............................................................ 237

Index ....................................................................... 259
Figures

1 The Sabarl axe page 15
2 Space and the body: the Kabyle house. a) diagram of the house; b) synoptic diagram of Berber house 15
3 Habitus, fields of action and ongoing actions 21
4 Relations between fields of action and doxic meanings 21
5 ‘Reflexive representations’ photomosaics – different patterns emerge according to the scale at which it is viewed. a) Parthenon frieze metope; b) image is constructed from mosaic of images returned from Google search for key terms related to picture theme 27
6 Contingent causality: a multi-scalar model 29
7 Black-boxing across scales of analysis 29
8 Sites mentioned in Chapter 3 33
9 Ostentatious skill and size: Solutrean laurel leaf point from France 36
10 The famous triple burial from the Gravettian site of Dolní Věstonice, Czech Republic 37
11 Red deer skull carved into a mask, Star Carr, Yorkshire, England 37
12 ‘Venus’ figurines: a) Willendorf, Austria; b) Kostenki, Russia; c) Late Magdalenian female plaquettes from Wilczyce, Poland 39
13 Engraved shoulder blade (fragment) showing hybrid human/animal male figure from Mas d’Azil cave, France 40
14 Cave art hybrids from Les Trois Frères (first and third) and Lascaux (middle), France 41
15 Grave 8 at Vedbaek, Denmark 43
16 Trapezoidal hut from Lepenski Vir, Serbia 43
17 Human-fish carved boulder from Lepenski Vir, Serbia 45
18 Natufian burial at Hilazon Tachtit, Israel 47
19 Neolithic plastered skull from Tell Aswad, Syria 47
20 PPNA figurines considered to be female, from Mureybet, Northern Levant (left) and Netiv Hagdud, Southern Levant (right) 47
21 T-shaped statues from Göbekli Tepe, Turkey, with animal reliefs 48
22 The figures from ‘Ain Ghazal, Jordan 49
23 Vinča figurine, Vinča Serbia 51
24 Scaloria Cave, Italy: cut marks on a child’s collarbone made with a stone tool attest rites of defleshing bodies 52
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figures</th>
<th>25</th>
<th>26</th>
<th>27</th>
<th>28</th>
<th>29</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>31</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>33</th>
<th>34</th>
<th>35</th>
<th>36</th>
<th>37</th>
<th>38</th>
<th>39</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>41</th>
<th>42</th>
<th>43</th>
<th>44</th>
<th>45</th>
<th>46</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Aiterhofen, Germany: LBK burial</td>
<td>Balkan and Mediterranean Neolithic figurines. a) Franchthi Cave, Greece; b) Hamangia, Romania; c) Cucuteni/Tripolye, Romania; d) Rendina, Southern Italy; e) Catignano, Italy</td>
<td>Neolithic cave art. a) Porto Badisco, Italy, males in a hunting scene; b) Levantine art, Spain, hunting scene</td>
<td>Balkan and Mediterranean Neolithic figurines: a) and b) figurines from Links of Noltland, Orkney; c) figurine from Ness of Brodgar, Orkney; d) the Dagenham ‘idol’, Essex; e) the Sweet Track ‘god-dolly’, Somerset</td>
<td>Map of sites mentioned in Chapter 4</td>
<td>Fourth millennium BC burials: a) collective rock-cut tomb, Rinaldone group, Central Italy; b) megalithic chambered tomb, Hazleton North, England, south chamber</td>
<td>Assemblage of material culture associated with ‘Battle Axe’ group grave, Denmark</td>
<td>The human figure in rock art: a) anthropomorphic image of breasts from Tressé megalithic tomb, Brittany; b) female imagery from Razet 28, megalithic tomb in the Paris Basin, France; c) weaponry from Valsamonna, Italy; d) ploughing at Mount Bego, France; e) males, weapons and boats at Tanum, Sweden</td>
<td>Statue-stelae: a) Southern Italy (female); b) Alto Adige (male); c) Alto Adige (female); d) Lunigiana (male); e) Lunigiana (female); f) Southern France (female); g) Spain (male)</td>
<td>Weapons, 3000–2000 BC: a) battle-axe, Scotland; b) statue-stela with bow, Sion, Switzerland; c) copper Remedello dagger, Italy; d) flint dagger, Denmark; e) barbed and tanged flint arrowheads; f) a reconstruction of an Irish Type Cotton Halberd</td>
<td>Weapons in the life cycle of males</td>
<td>Reconstruction of Bronze Age warrior</td>
<td>Large, shining metal ornament, hung from a woman’s belt (Denmark, Middle Bronze Age)</td>
<td>Women’s dress in various Bronze Age groups: a) hair decoration; b) leg ornaments that restrict movement; c) display of ornaments on women’s bodies</td>
<td>Women’s ornaments through the life cycle</td>
<td>Ötzi, the reconstruction</td>
<td>Close-up of Ötzi’s tattoos: a) tattoo on right knee; b) tattoos on back</td>
<td>Mediating different approaches to the body in the third millennium BC Alps: a) Valsamonna stelae in context (Ossimo, Borno); b) Valsamonna stelae detail; c) Sion reconstruction drawings showing the first phase of use of the monument; d) Sion reconstruction drawing of the second phase of use of the monument</td>
<td>Gendered pots from Bronze Age Hungary</td>
<td>Grave stela of Eupheros, Kerameikos cemetery, Athens, ca. 430 BC</td>
<td>Archaic sculpture: a) kouros from Tenea, ca. 550 BC; b) the ‘Peplos kore’, Acropolis, Athens, late sixth century BC</td>
<td>Classical sculpture: a) later copy of the Doryphoros of Polykleitos, ca. 440 BC; b) grave marker, Athens, early fourth century BC; c) Dexileos stela, Kerameikos, Athens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figures

47 Archaic and Classical pottery: a) Geometric amphora, c. 700 BC; note schematic human figures on neck; b) Archaic black-figure vase; c) Classical red-figure vase; d) Athenian cylindrical cosmetics jar (lekythos) with painted figures on white background 105

48 Woman on funerary stela 107

49 The ‘Tyrannicides’ 109

50 Charon the ferryman, shown on a lekythos intended for death rituals 111

51 Hybrids: a) Minotaur; b) Sphinx; c) Satyr 111

52 Grotesque anti-bodies: a) clay figurine; b) satirical actor depicted on pottery 113

53 Votives: leg dedicated to Aesclepius 115

54 Praxiteles’ Aphrodite of Knidos 119

55 Armed men: cavalry and hoplites. a) North Frieze, Block XLII, Parthenon; b) Frieze from the Nereid Monument 119

56 Herms: a) marble herm from Siphnos, late Archaic; b) herm on red-figure vase 121

57 Etruscan body imagery: a) men and women dining, Etruscan frieze; b) Etruscan women in a ‘dressing scene’, engraved bronze mirror 123

58 Human statue around the edges of the Greek world: a) Lunigiana stela, Liguria, northern Italy; b) Capestrano ‘warrior’, east-central Italy; c) Daunian stela, Puglia, south-eastern Italy; d) Monte Prama, Sardinia; e) Hirschlanden, Germany 124

59 The Central Mediterranean and surrounding areas, showing locations of statuary traditions referred to in the text 125

60 Pilgrims. Stained glass window, shrine of St. Thomas, Canterbury Cathedral 131

61 The perfect body of theology: Jesus (twelfth century, Italy) 133

62 Death in the medieval world: a) St. John’s College, Cambridge: medieval burials (fourteenth century); b) the transience of worldly vanity 134

63 The divine body as the earth: God outside the world looking in, the Divine Spirit as a circle of fire enveloping the world and Christ’s perfect body at the earthly centre. Thirteenth century illustration of Hildegard of Bingen’s Liber divinorum operum 135

64 Sufferers praying for miracle of healing, shrine of St. Thomas, Canterbury Cathedral 136

65 The reliquary’s outward magnificence manifested the spiritual brilliance of its contents. Reliquary of St. Eustace 136

66 The Seven Deadly Sins, Hieronymous Bosch 137

67 The humoural system 139

68 ‘Vein man’ diagram illustrating where to bleed a patient for specific conditions 139

69 Therapies: Uroscopy. Paris, fifteenth century 141

70 ‘Work in August’, stained glass roundel 143

71 Medieval sexuality, Bodleian Library 143

72 Bodily practices: a) musicians, fourteenth century England, Luttrell Psalter; b) hunting, fourteenth century England, Smithfield Psalter 143

73 The vital body as a political resource: a) Charles VI receiving English ambassadors, manuscript of Froissart; b) bishop’s robe; c) the metallized body of the knight 145
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figures</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Christ leading the dead out of Purgatory in the Harrowing of Hell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>a) Individuation in the body: the ‘Ten Ages of Man’; b) through f) pictures of various Canterbury pilgrims: b) Miller; c) Wife of Bath; d) Friar; e) Nun’s Priest; f) Second Nun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Medieval multimodalities of the body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>Psalter Map, cosmological geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Psalter Map, detail showing ‘monstrous races’ at margins of the earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Sheela Na Gig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Nun picking penises from a treec. Mss. of Roman de la Rose, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Architectural grotesques: a) grotesque corbel; b) ceiling boss, Norwich Cathedral; c) misercord (church seat) with carved grotesque pulling face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Grotesque marginalia, Macclesfield Psalter: a) knight jousting with snail; b) ape mimicking doctor performing uroscopy; c) man urinating into a bowl held by a grotesque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Cuxa monastery cloister, France: carving of grotesque monster consuming a human head-first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Summer: the body as microcosm in the seventeenth century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Part of the title page of Hobbes' Leviathan (1651)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Vesalian image showing female genitalia as an inversion of male genitalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>Seventeenth century death, theological and social: a) memento mori inscription, Norwich Cathedral; b) memorial to a Jacobean noblewoman with long biographical inscription, Salisbury Cathedral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>The circulation of blood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>Vesalian image drawing explicitly on classical statuary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Nineteenth century graves protected from potential robbing by ‘resurrectionists’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Autopsied and reassembled body from Barton on Humber (c. 1800)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>Patent for the design of a prosthetic leg by William Edward Newton, 1857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>Phrenological model showing where in the skull various mental faculties were supposedly located</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Representations of known people: a) medieval: bust of Princess Marie de France, fourteenth century; b) early Renaissance: Domenico Ghirlandaio, ‘Portrait of a Woman’ (ca. 1487); c) Early Modern: self-portrait, Rembrandt, 1660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Surveillance and bodily routine: Bentham’s ‘panopticon’ design for model prisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>The treadmill in a Victorian prison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Machines and bodies. a) and b) images of nineteenth century factory workers in the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>Nineteenth century ‘scientific’ techniques and racial classification: a) craniometer and skull measurement techniques; b) the unilinear scale of human races and lower relatives according to Nott and Gliddon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>A next-generation prosthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Some of the multiple bodies of scanning technologies: a) DNA fingerprints; b) X-ray; c) computerised tomography (CT) scan; d) mammogram; e) self-portrait of Umberto Boccioni, 1910</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figures

101 Multi-scalar analysis of the body in history 223
102 Black-boxing and scales of analysis: Praxiteles’ Aphrodite of Knidos 223
103 The multi-scalar history of the Aphrodite of Knidos 225
104 Historical remapping between practices and modes of understanding 227
105 Marc Quinn’s portraits of Sir John Sulston: a) sample of his DNA in agar jelly; b) photograph 233
Plates

Colour plates follow page 122.

I Mesolithic burial at Vedbaek, Denmark, ca. 5000 BC
II A Bronze Age cremation, Pitten, Austria, ca. 1600 BC
III Kerameikos, Athens, ca. 430 BC. A family conducts a burial rite outside the Dipylon Gate while the life of the city passes around them
IV Canterbury, England, fourteenth century AD. A group of pilgrims to the shrine of St. Thomas makes their way through the city
V Hanging a criminal, Tyburn, London, ca. 1750 AD
VI Gallery of historical images, part 1
   A. ‘Lion man’ figurine, Hohlenstein Stadel, Germany, Upper Palaeolithic
   B. ‘Venus’ of Hohlestein Fels, Germany, Upper Palaeolithic
   C. Neolithic female figurine, Vinča, Serbia, fifth millennium BC
   D. Neolithic house-figurine, Macedonia, fifth millennium BC
   E. Statue-stela, Lunigiana, Italy, late third–early second millennium BC
   F. Figurine, Romania, Bronze Age, late second millennium BC
   G. Rock art, Tanum, Sweden, Bronze Age, late second millennium BC
   H. Golden death mask, Mycenae, Greece, Bronze Age, mid-second millennium BC
VII Gallery of historical images, part 2
   A. The ‘Doryphoros’ (‘Spear-bearer’) sculpture, Classical Greece, late fifth century BC
   B. Red figure pyxis, 440–415 BC
   C. Red figure psykter, c. 500–470 BC
   D. Women mourning a dead body in front of a funerary stela, white-ground lekythos, Athens, c. 435–425 BC
   E. A demon and an angel fight for the soul (portrayed as an infant) escaping from the dead body
   F. A ‘Zodiac Man’ from medieval science
   G. A ‘gryllus’: a monstrous composite of body parts
   H. The medieval Everyman as pilgrim: Chaucer
VIII Gallery of historical images, part 3
   A. Rembrandt’s ‘Anatomy lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp’
   B. Early Modern memorial
   C. The ‘Hand of Glory’
   D. ‘Racial’ classification
   E. MRI scan
   F. Treadmills
   G. ‘Sindy’ doll
   H. The DNA model
Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Historical theorizations of the ‘origins’ of the ‘modern body’ in Western Europe</th>
<th>page 24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The body in the agricultural transition in the Near East</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chronological framework for later European prehistory</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chronology and social developments in later prehistoric Europe</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sets of representations including anthropomorphic images in prehistoric European rock art and megalithic art</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Classical Greece: the chronological framework</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Theological dualisms</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Key dates in the Early Modern period</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contributors

Dušan Borić is Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Cardiff. He specialises in the prehistory of Europe and the Near East, particularly the interactions between foragers and farmers, and archaeological theory, especially issues of the body and memory.

Jessica Hughes is Lecturer in Classical Studies at the Open University. Her research focuses on the role of material culture, including votive deposits, in the ancient world especially in Greece and Rome. She is also interested in the reception of this material in later periods.

Maryon McDonald is Fellow in Social Anthropology at Robinson College, University of Cambridge. Her research focuses on the anthropology of Europe especially medical anthropology. She has studied the ethics of transplantation, and the role of regulation, in detail.

Preston Miracle is Senior Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Cambridge. His research focuses on, amongst other areas, the role of consumption and feasting in the past, particularly in the Mesolithic and the way humans dealt with environmental change at the end of the last ice age.

Robin Osborne is Professor of Ancient History at the University of Cambridge. He has published extensively on the ancient world. His research examines the representation of life in Greece, the development of art and the manner in which bodies were depicted on material culture.

Katharina Rebay-Salisbury is a Post-Doctoral Research Associate at the University of Leicester. She is a specialist in the Bronze and Iron Ages of Central Europe, and her research focuses on the movement of ideas through networks in this period, alongside changing understandings of the human body.

Marie Louise Stig Sørensen is Reader in Archaeology at the University of Cambridge. An expert in the Bronze Age, she has focused on the way in which gender played a crucial role in this period, as well as examining the importance of heritage in today’s society.

Simon Stoddart is Senior Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Cambridge. His research focuses on Iron Age Europe, and in particular on
Italy and the Etruscans. He has also conducted extensive excavations on Neolithic sites in Malta.

**Marilyn Strathern** is Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. Her research has bridged anthropology in Melanesia and Europe, incorporating issues of personhood, gender, bioethics and intellectual property.

**Sarah Tarlow** is Professor of Archaeology at the University of Leicester. Her research focuses on post-medieval Europe, and in particular the changing ways of thinking about and relating to dead bodies. She is also a specialist in archaeological theory, and has led the way in considerations of emotion in past contexts.
Acknowledgments

Books, like bodies, are the product of many hands. First and foremost, we are very grateful to the Leverhulme Trust for supporting the Leverhulme Research Programme ‘Changing Beliefs of the Human Body’ (2005–2010), which underwrote the research upon which this book was based and the writing process itself.

Besides our colleagues in the research program who have helped to co-author parts of this volume, we are grateful for the collaboration of Annia Cherryson, Zoe Crossland, Ben Davenport, Anna Evans, Sara Harrop, Alex Hemming and Sheila Kohring. We are indebted to Marilyn Strathern for contributing the epilogue. We also thank John Davis, Lin Foxhall and Alison Whittle for their critical input to the research programme. We are especially grateful to Helen Foxhall-Forbes and Craig Cessford for guidance and discussion on medieval things, and to Lin Foxhall for comments on Chapter 5. At the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Anite Herle, Amiia Salmond, Mark Elliott and Rebecca Empson put together a stunning exhibition related to this project, and it has been stimulating to collaborate with them. Many people have offered thoughtful discussions on the vast array of topics covered in this book, or gone beyond the call of duty in supplying images or unpublished materials. No doubt we have forgotten many, but we would still like to thank Pwyll ap Stifin, Karina Croucher, Andrea Dolfini, Chris Fowler and Dani Hofmann. Starr Farr, Johanna Farr, Nicholas Robb and Ellie Rowley-Conwy have also supported the writing of this book in innumerable ways.

For kind and generous help in illustrating the book, we would like to thank not only the institutions listed in the picture credits but also many individuals, including Craig Alexander, Biancama Aranguren, Douglass Bailey, Wendy Brown, Nick Card, Craig Cessford, Andrew Cochrane, Sylvia Codreanu-Windauer, John Coles, Sean Conlon, Bradley Cook, John Donaldson, Annette Faux, Francesco Fedele, David Fontijn, Chris Fowler, Alain Gallay, Clive Gamble, Martyn Gorman, Leore Grosman, Imogen Gunn, Veronika Holzer, Vedia Izzet, Lila Janik, Anne King, Ian Kuijt, Daria Lanzuolo, Maria Malina, Monica Miari, Irena Kolistrkoska Nasteva, Olga Nvoseltseva, Ronan O’Flaherty, Nona Palincas, Hamish Park, Sandy Paul, Ben Roberts, Chris Roberts, Mary Robertson, Warwick Rodwell, Gary Rolleston, Ian Russell, Klaus Schmidt, Elizabeth Shee Twohig, Danielle Stordeur, Laurie Talalay and Matthew Van Doren. Vicki Herring did an excellent
Acknowledgments

job of drawing many figures, sometimes on short notice, and we are very grateful to her for her help. We would like to acknowledge our debt of gratitude to Aaron Watson who drew the colour reconstructions for Plates I–V. Working with Aaron was a truly collaborative experience that allowed us to think differently about the vignettes we were writing, and the body worlds we were describing. His talent and hard work have undoubtedly enriched the book.

For important administrative support at Cambridge University, we would like to thank the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, the Faculty of Classics, and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. The McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research provided us with project space and much organizational support as well as subvention for figures, and our colleagues in the Department of Archaeology kindly put up with rotating staff as project members cycled in and out of research leave. We are also grateful to the School of Archaeology and Ancient History at the University of Leicester.

People, like books, are the products of many hands. We would like to dedicate this book to our colleagues, and to my parents Ernest and Sylvia Robb (JR), and to my inspirational great-aunt, Dr Madeline Jones (OJTH).
Preface

Every book has a story behind it. This book originated in a five-year (2005–2009) research project coordinated at Cambridge University by John Robb and involving all the contributors; Oliver J. T. Harris joined the project in 2007 to work with John on synthesizing and contextualizing the research, and to co-edit this monograph. This project, a research programme funded by the Leverhulme Trust and titled ‘Changing Beliefs of the Human Body’, was intended to answer a deceptively simple question: Why and how did bodily understandings and practices change through history? As case studies we had five parallel projects, situated within the general trajectory of the European past. Each one examined change in how humans understood and experienced their body at a particular moment in European history: from the Late Upper Palaeolithic through the beginnings of farming, from the Copper Age through the Late Bronze Age, during the Classical period, between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries AD, and in the contemporary world of medical practice. The idea was to coordinate substantial original research on each of these to come up with a genuine cross-cultural answer to the question of changing beliefs. We felt a very broad comparative study would allow us to see how the process of change reflects social conditions better than a study focusing upon a single time and place. The body forms an excellent ground for such a comparative study: on the one hand, it provides a certain set of existential challenges such as birth, growth, identity and death which all societies have to deal with; on the other hand, there is huge variation ethnographically, historically and archaeologically in how people in different groups have understood their bodies. It is also the subject of some of the most important theoretical work in the humanities and social sciences.

Although this book began as an answer to the question of why beliefs change, it took on a life of its own. Our five studies grew into six as we added a discussion of the Medieval period. Although we still insist we are not trying to write a universal history of the body in Europe – surely an impossible goal if ever there was one – we have tried to trace the historical connections between the moments upon which we focus. It probably goes without saying that we have had to be extremely selective in our coverage; one could fill a volume this size entirely with just the bibliography of works on the body alone! We should also emphasize that, although the body looks more and more alien the further back in time we go, our story should not
be understood as a simple, unidirectional evolutionary sequence in which one starts from an elemental or universal humanity, a Palaeolithic Everyperson, and gradually layers on the civilised graces of Us. Every culture, every historical moment is different and has its own particularity. In some ways twenty-first-century bodies may be more like Palaeolithic ones than they are like Classical or medieval ones. Appreciating and understanding these particularities is our goal.

There is an old joke that defines a camel as a horse designed by a committee. Given the original structure of our research programme, we faced important choices in designing this book. Given how widely the individual research projects varied in what they studied and especially in their disciplinary traditions for studying it, an edited volume in which each project reported its own results separately would not have provided a coherent answer to questions of historical process and change. Yet simply writing the book on our own would neither acknowledge fairly how much we have learned from our colleagues nor provide specialist control over accuracy and a guarantee that we treat each period reasonably. Hence we have taken a middle route. The original specialist research carried out within the project forms part of each chapter, but we write freely around it to provide a larger framework and to cover other material. The text, with the exception of the epilogue, has been written almost entirely by the two authors, but we do so with guidance from our specialist colleagues, who hopefully have kept us within the limits of the thinkable for each of their own fields as well as providing valuable discussion of the overall opus. Yet, because we are asking questions which are often never posed within each discipline, we reach interpretations our colleagues might not have come to on their own (and, occasionally, with which they may disagree). The unusual form of authorship we have devised (and for which we apologize in advance to bibliographers) is intended to recognize this modus operandi. We hope the result is a horse rather than a camel.

John Robb and Oliver J. T. Harris, Cambridge and Leicester, July 2012

NOTE

1. All chapters were collaboratively written; the order of authors listed for each chapter is alphabetical.