Ivana Fiore and Francesca Lugli (Eds.). *Dogs, Past and Present: An Interdisciplinary Perspective, Archaeopress Archaeology 2023*

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*Dogs, Past and Present: An Interdisciplinary Perspective* (Fiore/Lugli 2023; Fig. 1) is a thoughtfully curated anthology that features scholarly contributions from a spectrum of academic disciplines. Its primary objective is to offer a comprehensive exploration of the historical significance of dogs and their complex relationship with humans.

This book originates from the *Dogs, Past and Present: An Interdisciplinary Perspective* conference organized by the editors, Ivana Fiore and Francesca Lugli, and promoted by the Italian Association for Ethnoarchaeology. The conference was held at *Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche* [tr. the Italian National Scientific Council] and *Sapienza University* in Rome in November 2018, offering a fertile ground for scholars to convene and engage in deciphering the intricate (pre-) historical and contemporary significance of dogs in human societies. This collective endeavour has been instrumental in consolidating and synthesizing knowledge from diverse academic disciplines and promoting an up-to-date comprehensive understanding of the influential role dogs have played throughout history. The editors have to be commended also for their role in fostering the exchange of ideas and opinions during the conference, which is something that certainly has enriched the breadth of the papers and also, more generally, the points of view of the participants. Nowadays, conferences that bridge disciplinary boundaries with a specific theme are less frequent, with negative repercussions on bridging gaps between disciplines.

The book is divided into six sections. The first two (Dog Genetics, Microtomography and Morphometric Technics; Wolf Versus Dog) include papers showcasing up-to-date techniques to approach the zooarchaeological record related to (pre-) historical dogs. This part of the book tackles key inquiries surrounding the origins of human relations with dogs, examining the when, where, how and why of this intricate process. Section 3 (Dogs through Time: Role, Task and Position) and section 4 (Archaeological and Ar...
chaeozoological Cases) include a variety of case studies focused on ethnography and archaeology, from different chronological and geographical contexts, highlighting the profound connection between humans and dogs in urban, rural and funerary contexts throughout the ages. Finally, section 5 (Representation of Dogs in Different Contexts) and section 6 (Dogs: Myth and Symbolism) delve into artistic and iconographic representations of dogs on various artefacts, navigating the tricky grounds of beliefs and myths. In other words, these final sections illuminate the symbolic role of dogs in a wide array of societies. The central theme of the anthology, however, is the captivating and enduring topic of dog domestication with its remarkable success in prehistoric times. For many years, scholars from diverse disciplines have been actively involved in unravelling this theme, however, there is a noticeable lack of substantial knowledge exchange among these different approaches. In this respect, *Dogs, Past and Present* acts as a pioneer in bridging these gaps, offering a unique platform devoted entirely to exploring the multi-dimensional roles that dogs have played in our shared history.

In recent years, interdisciplinary approaches have gained significant traction in various fields, including archaeology. This approach acknowledges that complex problems often require synthesizing and harmonizing concepts and practices from different disciplines to provide a more comprehensive understanding. Despite its title, *Dogs, Past and Present: An Interdisciplinary Perspective* is rather a multidisciplinary collection of coherently assembled papers, some of which are truly interdisciplinary. *Dogs, Past and Present* features contributions from the field of both hard (biology, chemistry) and soft (history, archaeology, anthropology) sciences. In today’s academic landscape, where specialized scientific articles are predominantly favoured due to shorter time for publication, indexing and impact factors and rigorous peer review, multidisciplinary anthologies that include such a broad array of approaches are less common. Nevertheless, *Dogs, Past and Present* stems from a recognition of the necessity of adopting a multidisciplinary approach to grasp the multifaceted impact of dogs on the history of humankind, and the book is therefore a clear example of the editors’ efforts in curating diverse contributions from multiple experts across various disciplines, forming a cohesive and insightful narrative.

Overall, this pioneering work in the realm of dog studies serves as an exemplar of academic synergy and innovation, advocating for collaborative research and signalling the potential resurgence of comprehensive, multidisciplinary endeavours in scholarly circles.

**References**


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