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Editorial

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I am once again writing this editorial from the field – though in this instance 'the field' means an archive of brown boxes full of artefacts in a small office in Cornwall. Archaeology is a varied profession and one that requires a range of skills, interests, and collaborators. Moreover, it is a field that spans a range of professional realities, encompassing universities, public-facing institutions, government, and private industry. This issue of *EJA* reflects that disciplinary diversity. We feature six research articles and three reviews. The articles bring us from prehistory to the present and emphatically underscore the diversity of expertise and experience needed to make sense of the archaeological record. The reviews are equally diverse, comprizing a book of essays on prehistoric and protohistoric Cyprus, a monograph on the heritage of medieval monasticism, and a new approach to the archaeology of urban spaces.

The issue begins with Deter-Wolf and colleagues' experimental approach to the technology of chalcolithic tattooing, specifically Ötzi's famous tattoos. Through a meticulous synthesis of archaeological and ethnohistoric data along with careful experimental reconstruction by expert practitioners, they test various traditional tattooing techniques before determining that single-point punctures were used to make Ötzi's marks rather than the previously hypothesized incision method. Of note, this research project succeeds entirely because of the close collaboration of a research team spanning professional and academic archaeology, as well as highly specialized professional tattooists and traditional knowledge holders. For my fellow tattoo enthusiasts, you should absolutely look up the Instagram profiles of co-authors Riday and Sialuk Jacobsen who are both astounding artists.

Moving west, Chapon and colleagues offer a close scientific analysis of a collection of vitreous objects from Cerro de San Vicente in Salamanca in central Iberia to develop insights about cross-Mediterranean contacts. Their analyses suggest the fifteen objects—one glass paste fragment and fourteen faience items—found in an early first millennium BC context find their closest parallels, both in material and in form, to glass and faience from mid-second millennium Tell el-Amarna in Middle Egypt. They make the compelling case that this assemblage consists not simply valuable imports, but was knowingly curated with at least some of the original Hathoric associations retained, even in distant Iberia.

Shifting our attention far to the north and the early medieval period, Sæbø examines the distribution and construction of funerary mounds in Sør-Fron, a peripheral region within Norway. Although traditionally interpreted as evidence for a local chiefly dynasty, the mounds are numerous and densely distributed, not localized around any evident centre of power. Moreover, artefacts retrieved from antiquarian excavations of these

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mounds had associations with hunting and farming, rather than elite power. To explain these data, Sæbø argues that extensive mound building activities demonstrate a major social investment in collective action and cooperative organization and that the Sør-Fron mounds in particular may reflect a localized resistance to external coercive rule and christianization. To paraphrase the well-known anarchist slogan: no (monotheistic) gods, no (Viking) masters.

Staying in northern Europe, Pears and colleagues present a geoarchaeological study of lynchets in Britain and the Low Countries in order to develop a better understanding of their age, form, and function over time. Through the careful layering of a variety of environmental data, they are able to draw out fine details of the use and maintenance of these agricultural features over millennia. Lynchet systems enhanced the agricultural capacity of associated fields and remained in use, in some cases, from prehistory up to the eighteenth century. Indeed, Pears and colleagues note that all the medieval lychets in their study area had prehistoric origins. Here, we see a beautifully detailed case study of long term continuity with potential for enhancing agricultural resilience in the present and near future.

Jumping forward in time, Albarella and Anicetti look across archaeological and literary data to try and elucidate the evidence for and practice of ritualized deer 'unmaking' in medieval Europe. They draw the concept of 'unmaking', the ritualized hunting, killing, and butchery of (primarily red or fallow) deer, from a number of medieval texts and compare these narratives to a series of high-status sites in England, France, and Italy with large corpora of deer bones. Their evidence is mixed, with some regions offering considerable evidence for a systematic dismemberment and distribution of deer carcasses whereas others offer no or only ambiguous evidence for these practices. They conclude with a call to arms for more and more interdisciplinary zooarchaeological research on medieval sites and practices.

In the final research article in this issue, Axelsen and Fredriksen explore the affordances of data gathered by metal detectorists and the various practices and systems that shape them. These data are messy, not just by dint of being gathered by a select group of members of the public in the course of hobby activities, but also because the databases in which they are collected grew 'organically' and so data entry and so entries are non-standardized, may be idiosyncratic, and are typically messy. Nevertheless, Axelsen and Fredriksen argue that as long as the very humanness of these data are taken into account, they can be used not just to study the past, but to gain a better understanding of collections and museum-based work in the present.

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