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Editorial

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Welcome to the second issue of the *European Journal of Archaeology* (*EJA*) for 2019. In this issue, we present six articles, four of which span the archaeology of Europe from the Upper Palaeolithic through to the Second World War and two of which reflect on the responsibilities and practice of the discipline in the present. Despite these divergent periods and topics, it is worth noting that three of the four archaeological articles touch on themes of conflict and violence while two engage with mark-making, art and identity. We also present seven book reviews covering archaeological method and theory, archaeological heritage, and new research on European prehistoric and Roman archaeology.

We start this issue with a discussion of the earliest evidence for portable figurative art in the Iberian peninsula. Blanca Ochoa and colleagues develop a close study of three engraved zoomorphic figures from northern Spain (two from Cantabria, one from Basque Country) which they suggest should be dated to the Gravettian period based on a careful re-examination of the motifs and engraving style, as well as the lithic assemblages, available radiocarbon dates, and stratigraphy of their find contexts. Aside from offering an early date of 30–28 ka cal bp for these pieces, Ochoa and colleagues also suggest that parietal art and portable art may have served different purposes during this period, leading to the scarcity of the latter in Upper Palaeolithic Iberia. Certainly, following the authors' own comments, this is an area of research which would merit further attention, both from prehistoric art specialists and from those working to better date and sequence Upper Palaeolithic sites.

Remaining in Iberia but jumping forwards in time to the Iron Age, Berrocal-Rangel and colleagues present an analysis of vitrified rampart walls, a phenomenon recognised from around protohistoric Europe. Through an examination of 10 cases of vitrification in the ramparts of Iron Age forts of Iberia, they suggest that several different scenarios lay behind the episodes of burning that led to vitrification, including: conflict; intentional fire-setting linked to aesthetics or ritual; accidental fires; and building techniques requiring very hard, fired stones. As their research clearly shows, this is a complex phenomenon and one that has the potential to illuminate not just the final phases of occupation at these sites, but elements of their construction, occupation and perception by the people who built and occupied them.

Developing this theme of conflict archaeology, Clara Alfsdotter and Anna Kjellström's article presents an osteological analysis of the Migration period massacre victims excavated at Sandby Borg in eastern Sweden. Several seasons of excavation at this ringfort site have revealed a number of human skeletons with various traces of complex pathology. The osteological results paint a grim picture of interpersonal violence, probably enacted during a raid or other coordinated attack on the Sandby Borg community.

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Alfsdotter and Kjellström suggest that this localised and extreme violence might have resulted from feuding or other power struggles between communities during a particularly turbulent historical moment. The results of each new analysis of the material excavated at Sandby Borg are striking, and we look forward to learning more about this remarkable site and the people who lived (and died) there.

Our final archaeological narrative in this issue also explores the identities of people engaged in violent warfare, this time soldiers and forced labourers in German-occupied Alderney during World War II. Caroline Sturdy Colls and colleagues take a strikingly original approach to the archaeology of recent conflict, by looking for traces of individual people—both Nazi occupiers and their prisoners—in the marks and graffiti they left on the walls of fortifications, barracks and labourers' camps. This article serves as a poignant illustration of the ways archaeological methodologies can give insight into the lives of the many nameless individuals whose lives were marked by or lost during the Second World War.

The role and responsibilities of European archaeologists, particularly with regard to the political impact of archaeological data and narratives informed by them are the subject of our next article. Popa argues strongly that archaeologists have a duty to use our work and platforms to engage with the challenges of the present, in this case to support and strengthen the European project through the construction of shared pasts. The concerns raised by Popa are certainly common among the wider EAA membership, and—although not related to this particular contribution—we feel it pertinent to point out that the *EJA* will be sponsoring a session at the 2019 EAA meeting in Bern on the topic of 'Populism, identity politics and the archaeology of Europe'.

The final article in this issue also looks at the place of archaeology and archaeologists in the present, in this case providing an important historical overview of the professional archaeology sector in Italy. Roberto Knobloch surveys the state of the field since the Valetta Convention and identifies archaeology as existing in a rather uncomfortable, and probably unsustainable, liminal place between private enterprise and the public service. Especially as he comments on the disjuncture between the academic training provided in universities and the practical skills needed to practice professionally, Knobloch echoes concerns common to the archaeological profession from Austria to Australia. On this front and others, we are sympathetic to his observations but feel his call to arms might be more meaningfully directed at the European archaeology community as a whole. The problems in pay, training and professional identity discussed by Knobloch are not unique to Italy.

In our reviews section, we begin with praise for an extended discussion of the nature of archaeological knowledge and its production, written by Staša Babić—one of the key thinkers on archaeological theory from the Balkans. We then turn to a timely collection of papers dealing with cultural heritage in the content of contemporary migrations. Mixed opinions are expressed on a new volume on animal disease in archaeology, while a collection of papers on the landscape archaeology of the South Caucasus (Georgia and Armenia in particular) is welcomed. Commentaries then follow on two books of interest to prehistorians: one on the transmission/appropriation of secondary animal products and metallurgy in prehistoric Eurasia; the other presenting the results of a major excavation project at the Neolithic settlement and burial site of Vignely 'La Porte aux Berges' in the Paris Basin. We then end with a recommendation to read Miranda Aldhouse-Green's latest book on the gods and rituals of Roman Britain.

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