European Journal of Archaeology 23 (3) 2020, 327–329

Editorial

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I am writing this editorial from my living room rather than my departmental office. It is a cool autumn afternoon in southern Australia, and, like many of you in the northern hemisphere, we have been locked down for months to mitigate the spread of the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. Hopefully, by the time this issue is published, some of those strictures will be easing and we'll have a better sense of what the world on the other side will look like. Typically, the *EJA* editorial is all business, but it feels strange not to acknowledge the global pandemic and its impacts on us and our field. Our first concern must, of course, be the protection of the vulnerable and the support of the sick—many of whom are our friends, family, and colleagues. Archaeologists and heritage professionals rarely think of themselves as critical workers, but colleagues in many countries never stopped working because construction sites remained active and emergency works, including responding to damage from the Zagreb earthquake, had to be undertaken. Research excavation—and conference travel—may have screeched to a halt, but archaeological fieldwork and analysis continues.

A real challenge of the near future is determining how to support professional archaeologists and maintain safe workplaces for all heritage employees. One solution, perhaps a timely one, is the increasingly vocal movement to unionize archaeology. Certainly, the immense power of solidarity—between neighbours, generations, academic communities, professional associations, etc.—seems to be one key lesson many are learning during this crisis. There is not much an archaeology journal can do in terms of solidarity, but as an initial offering and in recognition of the extra pressures many of us are under at the moment, as editor, I can promise flexibility with deadlines for submitting authors and reviewers. We already pride ourselves on open dialogue between the editorial team and contributors, but I want to reiterate that anyone thinking of submitting a paper or interested in acting as a peer reviewer is welcome to get in touch and chat. I am also very open to suggestions about how the *EJA* can support authors, reviewers, and other members of our community as this crisis unfolds. I encourage members with thoughts to email me at ejaeditor@e-a-a.org.

This is the third issue of the *European Journal of Archaeology* (*EJA*) for 2020. The six articles included in this issue share an interest in using new methods or interpretive approaches to understand well-known archaeological assemblages and patterns in the landscape. Although *EJA* is best known for prehistoric publications, this issue has a much more recent focus: three articles are concerned with Medieval material, one with Roman technology and one with early modern landscapes. The editorial team has been working hard for years to expand our coverage of these periods, so I am particularly pleased with the group of articles published here. This issue also includes nine book

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doi:10.1017/eaa.2020.26

https://doi.org/10.1017/eaa.2020.26 Published online by Cambridge University Press

reviews spanning the Palaeolithic to the present and covering material from the Eastern Mediterranean to the Viking world.

In the only prehistoric research article included in this issue, Marta Díaz-Zorita Bonilla and colleagues present the complex and fragmented human remains from Ditch 5 at Marroquíes, a large ditched enclosure dated to the 3rd millennium BC. To make sense of this material, they apply what is now becoming a standard mix of bioarchaeology, isotopic studies, taphonomy, and Bayesian modelling of radiocarbon dates. They suggest that the human remains studied here likely circulated for a time before being carefully selected for re-deposition in Ditch 5, probably as part of a well understood local ritual. They interpret this activity through the lens of funerary practices designed to shift a person from life to death—a process which may take a considerable amount of time—and link it to a more relational form of identity, where human remains, animal remains, and objects are more alike than not.

Continuing the theme of long and complex deposition processes, Rob Sand and Elise Marlière present the varied life histories of wooden barrels during the Roman Empire. They use an explicitly biographical approach to explore the information available about production, use, re-use and recycling in the barrel pieces recovered from Vindolanda. They identify a pattern of repeated re-working of imported barrels, mostly for large tubs, but also potentially for a wide range of other objects. In doing so, they bring to the forefront the role these largely disregarded, mundane objects played, not just containers for valued imports, but as important sources of raw material in their own right. This article provides a lovingly detailed reminder of the rich material texture and complex practices of the ancient world that are often hard to see or overlooked.

Ben Pears and colleagues offer an incisive example of the novel results that emerge from interdisciplinary research, in this case a combination of geomorphological and toponymic studies. They explore three British places with the Old English term **wæsse* in their name, linking them to rivers prone to flooding, and, through historic and geomorphological analysis, connect these to localized flooding events at these sites during the later first millennium AD. Among the interesting results of this research, the authors quite rightly point out that their study highlights how early medieval people perceived the movement and behaviour of the rivers they lived near which might offer insight into settlement patterns, the construction of infrastructure (such as weirs and mills), and past people's own understanding of the changing environment.

Remaining in early Medieval Europe, Emma Claire Brownlee explores shifts in the funerary rites of the sixth to eighth centuries AD through the lens of the changing perception of corpses. She argues we must look beyond grave goods and grave architecture to consider the role of the cadaver in rituals that moved a person from life to death. Brownlee uses regional patterns and detailed case studies to suggest that changes in quantity, type, and placement of grave goods indicate a reduction in the corpse's personhood over time, perhaps reflecting Christian theology regarding the duality of soul and body. This interesting, high-quality study won the EAA's Student Essay Prize in 2017, and we are pleased to publish it here.

Medieval material is also the focus of Luise Ørsted Brandt and colleagues' article. They analyse parts of leather shoes recovered from Danish Viking and Medieval urban sites by ZooMS and suggest that shoemakers and leatherworkers used different leathers for different shoe elements based on the physical properties of different animals' skins. This was obviously a specialized technology practiced by experts in urban locales,

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although whether this is also the case in rural settlements of the period is unresolved. Additionally, this article illustrates (yet again) the power of this emerging, minimally destructive method, and I am excited to see what we learn about the past as it becomes more widespread.

The final research article in this issue is Michael Given's lyrical comparison of cyclical, seasonal transhumance and landscape patterns in early modern Scotland and Cyprus. Building heavily on the wider mobilities literature, Given offers a relational model of seasonal mobility which emphasizes the relationships between humans and non-humans, topography and temporality, in shaping seasonal practices, including transhumance. He argues that centring mobility forces us to recognize otherwise marginal places—upland pastures, shielings, routeways—as key nodes linking people to animals to place and time.

Our reviews section this issue is quite diverse. Hussain, in a slightly-longer-than-normal essay, considers a collection of papers edited by Porr and Matthews that aims to decolonize human origins research. Although he deems some chapters stronger than others, overall, he finds this volume to represent a powerful and important first step towards a more nuanced and considered understanding of the deep human past. Vybornov and Stavitsky, Botić, and Jiménez-Jáimez, respectively, offer largely positive reviews of three volumes focussed on regional eastern European Neolithics—concerning the Mari Volga region, the Lengyel culture in Trans-Danubia, and eastern European rondels. The latest edition of the Knossos tablets monograph, an edited volume on colonial interactions in the Greek sphere and one on Greek heritage management in times of crisis all come in for qualified praise. Burke offers strong praise for a new guide to ceramic analysis based in francophone technology studies as does Cartwright for an edited volume on Viking craft.

If you are interested in submitting an article on any aspect of European archaeology, or have recently published a book that you would like us to review, do please get in touch with a member of our editorial team or visit us on https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/european-journal-of-archaeology

The Reviews team is also actively to increase the pool of potential book reviewers. If you would like to be considered to review for *EJA*, please e-mail Marta and Maria at ejareviews@e-a-a.org and ejaassistreviews@e-a-a.org with a brief list of your topics of interest and a short CV attached. Advanced postgraduate students as well as those who have completed their PhD are able to review for *EJA*. Proposals to review specific books are considered, provided that they are relevant to the *EJA*'s mission.

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