



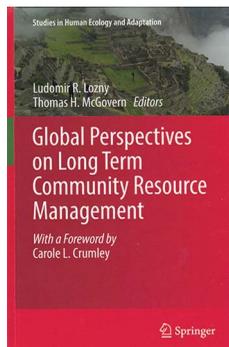
## New Book Chronicle

Claire Nesbitt

*“What can archaeology do for justice, peace, community and the Earth?” (Little 2009: 115)*

Barbara Little’s ambitious question challenged archaeology to demonstrate that it was not an indulgent discipline with little to offer the modern world, but rather that archaeology has real benefits to offer society. This NBC features several books that answer Little’s call to arms in different ways. Over the last 20 years, public engagement in archaeology has become more prevalent and its benefits—both to the field and the public—are increasingly recognised. We begin with two volumes that consider how communities might benefit from that engagement with archaeology and the transformation that has taken place in heritage practice and management in recent decades.

LUDOMIR R. LOZNY & THOMAS H. MCGOVERN (ed.). 2019. *Global perspectives on long term community resource management*. Cham: Springer; 978-3-030-15799-9 hardback €104.



The ‘tragedy of the commons’ was first explored by Garrett Hardin (1968) who coined the term to describe a scenario whereby individual users deplete common resources and produce a negative effect on the community at large. *Global perspectives on long term community resource management* revisits the ‘tragedy of the commons’ in what Carole Crumley describes in her foreword as “a broad and sophisticated update” (p. vi). Ludomir Lozny and Thomas McGovern have marshalled 12 chapters, written by authors from a range of disciplines, detailing case studies that consider contemporary and historic management of communal-level resources. The case studies open with James Acheson’s theoretical update on approaches to the commons.

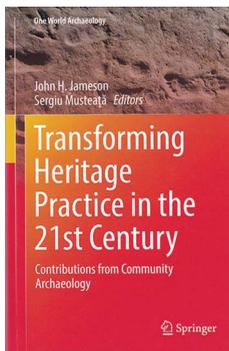
Acheson challenges Hardin’s coercive solution to the problem and identifies the key issue with that model as its inability to operate cross-culturally. Through a consideration of economic theory, changes in the conception of property rights and theories of cooperation, Acheson concludes that “some societies have been able to solve commons problems at a local level by democratic means” (p. 10).

In their intriguingly titled chapter, ‘Trolls, water, time, and community’, Ragnhildur Sigurðardóttir and her co-authors consider resource management in a lake basin in northern Iceland. The paper details an integrated human-environmental study, which included geoscience, archaeology, environmental and climate history, environmental humanities and traditional local knowledge. Sigurðardóttir *et al.* use the legend of Kráka the troll woman to demonstrate how traditional knowledge of land management has underpinned long-term

community cooperation to protect their resources from changing climate and geomorphology. The authors conclude that “the myth was a device that united people by asserting a common goal in a common landscape. In doing so it transcended the fact of boundaries, private land, and separate households” (p. 96), reinforcing Acheson’s claims that peaceable collective cultural landscape and heritage management is possible.

As Lozny and McGovern state in their introduction, the success or failure of communal-level resource management hinges on complex interactions between local, regional and global political, economic and environmental forces. This volume demonstrates that these changes have recurring patterns and trajectories. The authors of the studies in this volume advocate a pro-active approach to ecological stresses that mitigate against disasters rather than reacting to them. Lozny and McGovern’s volume offers a welcome hope for the ability of societies to cooperate successfully to manage communal resources. Overturning Hardin’s sentiment, they present “the ‘joy of the commons’, an approach to argue that cognitive (generosity) and practical (cooperation) attributes govern collective action to mitigate risk and sustain communal wellbeing” (p. 8). The papers in this volume reflect how the concept of ‘commons’ is re-emerging in many parts of the world as a cross-disciplinary way of integrating heritage management. All in all, this represents an uplifting read that presents positive solutions to resource management in the future.

JOHN H. JAMESON & SERGIU MUSTEAȚĂ (ed.). 2019. *Transforming heritage practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Cham: Springer; 978-3-030-14326-8 hardback €94.



*Transforming heritage practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century* takes the view that communities and professionals have much to learn from each other. Presented in light of the move from what the authors term the ‘expert approach’ prevalent in the twentieth century to a more recent ‘people-centred’ approach, this volume considers archaeological and heritage projects that have public engagement and community involvement at all stages of the project and its planning. The volume boasts 60 international contributors and is divided into three parts that deal with ‘Community archaeology at the intersections of heritage and community’, ‘Catalysts for inclusive heritage at cultural landscapes and parks’ and ‘Catalysts for inclusive heritage in new knowledge creation and innovation’, respectively.

In the introduction, John Jameson outlines the focus of the volume, including what happens when archaeological, heritage and community interests converge. Jameson emphasises the importance of multivocalities and power-sharing, the creation of new narratives, authorised heritage discourses and elitism, and how to develop participatory relationships that can be catalysts for inclusive heritage. The three parts of the volume then go on to investigate their respective subjects through case studies from a geographically diverse range of projects.

Sergiu Musteață suggests that there is an important difference between ‘public archaeology’ and ‘community archaeology’, whereby public archaeology represents the

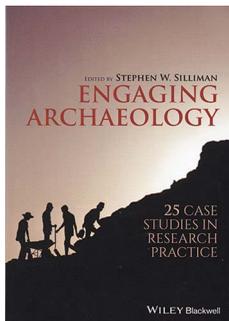
dissemination of archaeological research to a wider public audience, and community archaeology is “archaeology by the people for the people” (p. 45). Using the case study of Soroca Fortress in Moldova, Musteață charts the public response to the project and the sometimes difficult interactions between archaeologists and the public. The conclusion is that local communities are receptive to involvement in archaeological projects and that more workshops and opportunities for engagement are therefore necessary. Musteață feels that projects dealing with archaeological heritage should always have community representation, believing that “for efficient collaboration and heritage protection, only through cooperation can we educate and empower real democratic society” (p. 45).

Heather Sebire sets out to demonstrate that “the quality of archaeology is better when volunteers, local people and anyone who is an interested amateur contribute to it alongside anyone who works in the profession” (p. 415). Using several case studies to support her argument, she shows how alternative forms of participation can address different aspects of engagement. Sebire advocates inclusion for everyone and a voice for all members of society because “peoples’ lives are enriched by participation and having a voice in their historic environment” (p. 428).

Uzi Baram’s paper looks at how heritage practices in Florida are being transformed by public archaeology that embeds archaeology in communities, rather than simply involving the community in archaeology at a superficial level. Baram considers how the ‘Looking for Angola’ project, which sought the location of a first settlement in the region, led to a community thinking through issues of race and identity, freedom and slavery, hidden histories and historical amnesia, to create a productive model for heritage practice.

Collectively, the papers in the volume highlight that public involvement has a two-way benefit and that increased stakeholder involvement, and power-sharing mechanisms that encourage greater participation by lay people, benefit archaeology and heritage practice in multiple ways.

STEPHEN W. SILLIMAN (ed.). 2018. *Engaging archaeology: 25 case studies in research practice*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell; 978-1-119-24050-1 paperback £27.50.



If the above volumes offer ways of integrating communities into heritage research production, the next book examines how research is really produced. Designed as an antidote to the polished research paper that glosses over the pain of its production, *Engaging archaeology* provides honest and gritty accounts of “how archaeologists actually do research” (p. 1). In refreshingly candid narratives, 31 contributors share their experiences of archaeological research in 25 engaging case studies.

Opening her chapter with an erudite project mission statement, Elizabeth Arkush goes on to present two versions of her project on Pre-Columbian Andean hillforts. The first section of the chapter offers the official version of

the hillfort project, a seamless description of a well-executed fieldwork season and its results, outlining the inspiration for the project, its evolution and the theory and interpretation. Next comes the uncut version; in this section, Arkush writes honestly about the difficulties of the fieldwork. She reveals the real motivations for her choice of fieldwork and the competing demands on her time, including the natural desire to spend time with her husband and young baby, which made the time away from home more challenging. In a final section that reflects on what might have been done differently, Arkush considers the roles of difficulty, convenience, connections, developing ideas and just plain luck in the evolution of projects and fieldwork.

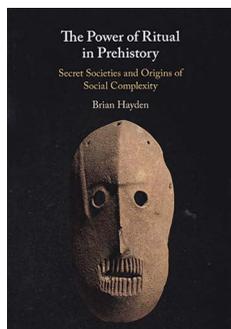
Tadhg O’Keeffe explores the problem of archaeological sites and monuments that are considered “‘done’ in the sense that historical and archaeological research has been published” (p. 171), but also in the sense that the results are considered unassailable. Using Trim Castle near Dublin, Ireland, as a case study, O’Keeffe considers how the canonised reports on such monuments need not be considered the final word, nor the site considered off limits, but rather that all sites, even iconic ones, “‘belong’ to all researchers who are interested in them” (p. 171). Viewing the castle through the separate lenses of history, archaeology and scholarship, O’Keeffe notes that while the monograph on the site is about the history of the monument, it is also a part of that history. It has, after all, shaped the visitor experience of the castle, both in terms of how it is understood and how it is experienced. In that sense, the author sees the monograph itself as an agent of stasis, holding the site in the moment of its interpretation. He also advocates a flexible approach to the formation of research questions, which are sometimes discovered by first stumbling over the answer. Finally, O’Keeffe recommends courage, “to be a researcher of consequence is to enter fearlessly into a contract with posterity” (p. 176), leaving the reader and any aspiring researchers with the important advice that all ideas are inevitably superseded, and that we should become more comfortable with this fact.

In her chapter on archaeological projects in India, Uzma Rizvi offers an insight on the importance of being self-reflexive when working in social and cultural spaces. Rizvi discusses the importance of decolonising archaeological research and fieldwork and how community engagement has proved effective at dismantling power structures. She reminds us that any archaeological project has the potential to reiterate oppressive structures and challenges us to ensure that our projects do not add to the inequity of systems.

This volume is a refreshing read for all archaeological researchers, and a must for those just beginning their archaeological careers. It is a book I wish I had been able to read sooner. The case studies are fascinating in themselves, but, accompanied by the less frequently shared experiences of the researchers—both the highs and lows—their value is increased. Authors offer advice on how to enjoy the process of research, rather than its culmination in print (Anna Agbe-Davies), and the importance of drinking tea and shifting methodologies in dismantling the colonial power structures upon which an archaeologist may stand (Uzma Rizvi). The message that echoes throughout the volume is to remain flexible and learn how to value failure, for the experience of the archaeologist, as Arkush states, “is always getting it wrong, but a little less wrong than before” (p. 22).

## Power and ritual in prehistory

BRIAN HAYDEN. 2018. *The power of ritual in prehistory: secret societies and origins of social complexity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 978-1-10-857207-1 hardback £90.



Brian Hayden's book aims to situate ethnographic accounts of secret societies in prehistory within archaeological consciousness in a way that has so far been largely absent, and to highlight the roles of such societies in a socio-political and religious context. These societies generally used supernatural justification to elicit surplus resources from the community, thereby increasing their own wealth and power. Hayden is interested in the power that secret societies wielded in the past, which allowed them to demand the gruelling inauguration or participation rituals that are revealed. As Hayden correctly states, "reading the early ethnographic descriptions is not always for the faint of

heart" (p. 2). Threats to authority, dissent or trespassing on the secret activities of these societies often appear to have resulted in violence or death.

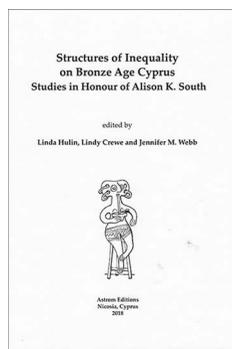
The book is divided into three sections dealing with ethnographic case studies from 'The New World', 'The Old World' and their 'Implications for archaeology', respectively. The volume is designed so that sections and chapters are self-contained for those who wish to dip in and out, but the compelling prose invites reading of the volume in full. In Chapter 1, Hayden outlines the background to research on secret societies and details the key reasons why archaeologists should be interested in their development and role in society. This chapter discusses how secret societies are defined and identified archaeologically, and their role in emerging complexity within societies. Parts I and II contain detailed in-depth analysis of ethnographic accounts of secret societies in communities across the Americas, Oceania and Africa, with the core features of each society presented in a summary box. The structure of the book is carefully planned so that readers can peruse an overview of the chapter that summarises the key themes and observations before deciding which sections of the chapter to mine for further detail. Part III reflects on the archaeological implications of these societies and suggests that the secret society model might usefully be applied to a variety of archaeological situations.

Hayden considers the core features of secret societies and finds recurring themes around the world. These include wealth acquisition; a close connection to politics—in that those in the highest ranks of secret societies frequently also held the highest ranks in the wider community, such as chiefly offices; a professed ideology to justify terror and violence; communal benefits or threats; exclusivity in terms of cost of membership; and the alleged possession of knowledge of how to commune with or control supernatural powers or spirits.

Hayden's concluding chapter reviews what he considers to be the most important features of the secret societies, including: political influence, terror, use of ecstasy, binding members, exclusivity and promotion of self-interest. The volume presents a detailed examination of the power of belief and ritual and how it has been used to control societies. The culmination of Hayden's research leads him to the conclusion that "secret societies created the foundations

from which the world religions of the past three millennia emerged” (p. 372). Hayden’s thesis is a provocative one, and will no doubt stimulate debate among archaeologists.

LINDA HULIN, LINDY CREWE & JENNIFER M. WEBB (ed.). 2018. *Structures of inequality on Bronze Age Cyprus: studies in honour of Alison K. South* (Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology and Literature PB 187). Nicosia: Astrom; 978-9925-7455-0-0 hardback €48.



The theme of social inequality continues in our next volume, *Structures of inequality on Bronze Age Cyprus: studies in honour of Alison K. South*, which celebrates South’s work at Kalavassos, Ayios Dhimitrios, Cyprus, a site that revealed important evidence for social complexity in the Late Bronze Age. A collection of 18 papers by 21 international contributors considers the emergence of complexity in the politics and economies of Cypriot societies from the Chalcolithic to the Late Bronze Age, and with it the appearance of inequality. Although inequality is not an inevitable result of complexity, the two phenomena are often found together as Bernard Knapp discusses in his chapter on how wealth, inequality and complexity

are evident in mortuary practices at Kalavassos, Ayios Dhimitrios. Focusing on the four richest tombs at Ayios Dhimitrios, Knapp discovers a link between the highest value grave goods and the most significant symbolic objects, suggesting the existence of a social hierarchy. He concludes that “the adoption of specific and exclusionary mortuary practices underscored the reality of social differentiation and the unequal accumulation of power by an elite group” (p. 17).

Sturt Manning and Kevin Fisher, meanwhile, go in search of the peasant population of Late Bronze Age Cyprus. With the focus of research at Ayios Dhimitrios naturally falling on the elite north-east quarter, Manning and Fisher are eager to discover where and how the ordinary people lived, and how they interacted with the social elite. The focus here is not on the rural poor, but rather those that lived side by side with the wealthy in the immediate vicinity of Ayios Dhimitrios. To avoid the pejorative connotations of the moniker ‘peasant’, the authors qualify that they are considering the 90+ percentage of the population that are not the elite. The results reveal that in fact most of the rural agricultural workers lived at Ayios Dhimitrios, meaning that the population employed in the urban area were a minority. This leads to a view of Late Bronze Age Cypriot society as corporate, which shifts the nature of power relations away from a divide between a ruling urban elite and a rural peasant class, and towards a close community where those in power would need to foster good relationships with their neighbours.

In an attempt to understand how the elite became the elite, Priscilla Keswani presents ‘On the relationship between modes of agricultural production and social inequality in Bronze Age Kalavassos: a theoretical essay’. Considering household inequalities in the areas of live-stock management and olive production, Keswani convincingly challenges the model that towns and elite domination in Late Bronze Age Cyprus were a result of the growing copper

industry and expansion in Mediterranean trade. While acknowledging the importance of these factors in Late Bronze Age Cyprus generally, she argues that in the Vasilikos Valley, as well as other parts of the island, the rise of the elite was related to “descent group inequalities” (p. 139), which emerged as a result of certain families successfully accumulating agricultural assets.

Despite the focus on Cyprus, this book has much to offer in terms of broader understandings of social complexity and inequality. Editors Linda Hulin, Lindy Crewe and Jennifer Webb have curated a volume that takes a bottom-up view of structures of inequality, to understand how and why “individuals come to cede their autonomy to others and power shifts from the power to organise (essentially a social power) to power over the organisation (essentially a political one)” (p. vii).

Returning to Little’s challenge, to what extent do these volumes suggest that archaeology has much to offer society? They reveal, once again, how archaeology can contribute to successful models of communal resource management, and can foster inclusivity and wellbeing in communities that engage in archaeological projects. Moreover, research on past societies informs contemporary understandings of social processes and systems of control, and archaeology can act in reparation for its colonial past. The benefits are perhaps best summed up by Little herself: “The study of archaeology has the potential to teach about the contingency of all human endeavour. As we expand our view of the past to include the struggles, successes, and failures of all peoples from all times and situations, our wisdom—and compassion—ought also to expand” (Little 2002: 16).

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<https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03376772>

## Books received

This list includes all books received between 1 May 2020 and 30 June 2020. Those featuring at the beginning of New Book Chronicle have, however, not been duplicated in this list. The listing of a book in this chronicle does not preclude its subsequent review in *Antiquity*.

### The Roman world

- DAVID J. BREEZE & WILLIAM S. HANSON (ed.). *The Antonine Wall: papers in honour of Professor Lawrence Keppie*. 2020. Oxford: Archaeopress; 978-1-78969-450-5 paperback \$48.
- EMANUELE INTAGLIATA, SIMON J. BARKER & CHRISTOPHER COURAULT (ed.). *City walls in Late Antiquity: an empire-wide perspective*. 2020. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78925-364-1 hardback \$90.
- JANKA ISTENIČ. *Roman military equipment from the River Ljubljanica: typology, chronology and technology* (Katalogi in Monografije 43). 2019. Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije; 978-961-6981-35-4 hardback €58.

CHARLES W. KING. *The ancient Roman afterlife: Di Manes, belief, and the cult of the dead*. 2020.

Austin: University of Texas Press; 978-1-4773-2020-4 hardback \$55.

## Africa and Egypt

CORISANDE FENWICK. *Early Islamic North Africa: a new perspective*. 2020. London: Bloomsbury; 978-1-35007-518-4 eBook \$19.40.

JOHN J. SHEA. *Prehistoric stone tools of Eastern Africa: a guide*. 2020. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 978-1-108-42443-1 hardback \$110.

## Asia

JOYCE C. WHITE & ELIZABETH G. HAMILTON (ed.). *Ban Chiang, northeast Thailand: volume 2C: the metal remains in regional context*. 2020.

Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press; 978-1-931707-93-0 hardback £56.

## Britain and Ireland

H.R. HURST. *Gloucester: the Roman Forum and post-Roman sequence at the city centre*. 2020. Gloucester: Gloucester Archaeological

Publications; 978-0-948386-02-2 paperback £25.

## Byzantine, early medieval and medieval

LENNY SALVAGNO. *The neglected goat: a new method to assess the role of the goat in the English Middle Ages*. 2020. Oxford: Archaeopress; 978-1-7896-9629-5 paperback \$168.

EBERHARD W. SAUER. *Dariali: the 'Caspian Gates' in the Caucasus from Antiquity to the age of the Huns and the Middle Ages: the Joint Georgian-British Dariali Gorge excavations & surveys of 2013–2016*,

*volume 1*. 2020. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78925-193-7 eBook £30.

EBERHARD W. SAUER. *Dariali: the 'Caspian Gates' in the Caucasus from Antiquity to the age of the Huns and the Middle Ages: the Joint Georgian-British Dariali Gorge excavations & surveys of 2013–2016*, *volume 2*. 2020. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78925-193-7 eBook £30.

## Historical archaeology

SALLY FOSTER & SIAN JONES. *My life as a replica: St John's Cross, Iona*. 2020. Oxford:

Windgather & Oxbow; 978-1-9111-8859-9 eBook £17.

## Method

MARK D. MCCOY. *Maps for time travelers: how archaeologists use technology to bring us closer to the*

*past*. 2020. Oakland: University of California Press; 978-0-5203-0316-4 eBook £23.