

Reviews

New Book Chronicle

Robert Witcher

In memory of T.J. Wilkinson

In this edition of NBC, we undertake a 'survey of surveys', reviewing eight regional survey reports. We tour Greece, Cyprus, Tunisia, Israel and Jordan—before looking farther afield to Nevada and north-eastern China. The aim is to assess both the methods and contributions of the individual projects and to consider their different publication solutions and formats.

Shortly after completing the following text, we received news that Tony Wilkinson, our Durham colleague and friend, had passed away. Tony was an inspirational landscape archaeologist and a first-class field surveyor. He would no doubt have read and found much of interest in all of the survey volumes below; this edition of NBC is dedicated to his memory.

Messenia and Cyprus

RICHARD HOPE SIMPSON. *Mycenaean Messenia and the Kingdom of Pylos* (Prehistory Monograph 45). xviii+84 pages, 22 b&w illustrations, 5 tables. 2014. Philadelphia: INSTAP Academic; 978-1-931534-75-8 hardback £38.

IAN A. TODD. *Vasilikos Valley Project 12: the field survey of the Vasilikos Valley, volume III. Human settlement in the Vasilikos Valley* (Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 71: 12). xxx+252 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. 2013. Uppsala: Åströms; 978-91-7081-251-4 hardback €76.

In 1939, excavations at the so-called 'Palace of Nestor' in Messenia, Greece, revealed an archive of inscribed clay tablets. The deciphering of these Linear B texts in the early 1950s prompted interest in the extent and organisation of the Mycenaean 'Kingdom' of Pylos controlled from the Late Bronze Age palace. From this was born the University of Minnesota Messenia Expedition (UMME)—one of the pioneer Mediterranean surveys. The UMME focused on the identification of Bronze Age sites contemporary with the palace, evolving an interdisciplinary methodology and publishing a suite of ground-breaking volumes

and papers. Now, over 50 years after the original fieldwork, one of the UMME surveyors, RICHARD HOPE SIMPSON, presents *Mycenaean Messenia and the Kingdom of Pylos*. In this volume, he returns to a core motivation for the UMME—the relationship between the place names recorded in the Linear B tablets and the Bronze Age sites identified by archaeological survey.

The history of the UMME will be familiar to many, but Hope Simpson takes the opportunity to correct a number of misconceptions that have appeared in print over the decades. Successive UMME publications, plus ongoing work in the region by a number of other projects, have produced multiple datasets and numbering schemes, which are here reconciled with a 'Register' of sites and concordances. Hope Simpson then provides a district-by-district tour of the settlement archaeology, followed by a chronological overview of the Late Helladic period through to the destruction of the palace and abandonment of most sites across Messenia c. 1200 BC. Attention focuses on the Late Helladic IIIB (c. 1310–1210 BC), the period during which the Kingdom of Pylos was at its greatest extent and to which the Linear B archive relates. Hope Simpson reflects on the percentage of sites identified by the UMME, particularly those less than 1ha in size, suggesting that the survey may have recovered no more than 50% of larger sites and perhaps only 20% of smaller ones. In turn, he argues for a larger population than others have suggested—c. 50–60 000 during the Late Helladic IIIB—but, more importantly, that the larger sites mentioned in the tablets are the ones most likely to have been recognised by survey.

The core of the volume focuses on the reconstruction of the political and economic organisation of the kingdom's two provinces. For the Hither Province, for example, Hope Simpson works on the assumption that the tablets list the districts from north to south, reflecting the itinerary of officials on inspection tours.

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He then works through the textual, archaeological and topographical evidence to locate each district. The book concludes with a summary and epilogue, each comprising just a single paragraph, some nicely produced distribution maps and a selection of black and white plates.

The somewhat abrupt conclusion of the volume, without reflection on the significance of the hypothetical reconstruction presented, suggests that the integration of the textual and archaeological data is the ends not the means. This is, of course, entirely valid (and Hope Simpson articulates his awareness of the dangers involved), but one wonders about the implications not only for the nature of political authority within the Kingdom of Pylos—if, indeed, it was a kingdom—but also other Mycenaean polities and political economies of other periods and places. What was the relationship between population, territory, resources and power? Hope Simpson makes no claim to such wider ambitions and draws his remit tightly. Nonetheless, some concluding thoughts on the realisation of a core aim of one of the pioneer Mediterranean surveys would have been interesting. Omission notwithstanding, *Mycenaean Messenia* is a welcome contribution to the literature on Mycenaean society by one of the early innovators of Mediterranean survey.

Next, we head to Cyprus and another publication stemming from a long-running regional survey: *The Vasilikos Valley Project 12* by IAN TODD. As the title suggests, this is one in a series of volumes, the first dating back to 1986. The present volume is one of three dedicated to the project's field survey component: the first of these volumes, published in 2004, presented the survey background and site details; the second volume, as yet unpublished, will present the artefacts; the current volume is devoted to architectural features and a synthesis of settlement history.

The Vasilikos Valley runs south from the Troodos Mountains to the coast between Limassol and Larnaca. The survey, begun in 1976, focused on the village of Kalavassos. Just like the UMME, the original plan for full regional coverage was soon trimmed back to a more realistic undertaking, not least because resources were diverted to the excavation of sites threatened by road building. The objectives were to assess the location, date and density of settlement in a valley of no particular historical significance—it lay, for example, between the Iron Age kingdoms of Amathus and Kition—and to explore the evidence for

exchange and the exploitation of natural resources, in particular, copper.

Drawing together the survey and excavation data, Todd offers a chronological synthesis extending from the Aceramic Neolithic to the mid-twentieth century. As with the other surveys under review, there is significant variation in the visibility of periods. The Neolithic evidence is thin but supplemented by important excavations; the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age evidence is even thinner. By contrast, the Middle Bronze Age “presents an embarrassment of riches” (p. 90) with tombs and villages across the valley. During the Late Bronze Age, an urban settlement of c. 12ha developed at Ayios Dhimitrios; excavation here has identified administrative and industrial activities including oil production and copper smithing. In contrast to the contemporary situation in Messenia, Todd does not envisage Ayios Dhimitrios to be the seat of a mini-kingdom, but rather “something more akin to a mining town with a local governor who might, nevertheless, be in charge of olive oil production and the supervision of the payment of tithes and taxes by the local residents” (p. 95). Like the ‘Palace of Nestor’, however, the site was largely abandoned c. 1200 BC and there is no evidence for activity elsewhere in the valley during the subsequent period.

A recurring phenomenon in all of the reports under review is the long-term fluctuation of evidence for human activity, often with one or two particularly visible periods. The Vasilikos Valley is no exception: limited activity during the Early Iron Age was followed by a brief reprise in the Archaic period before a sharp reduction during Classical and Hellenistic times; renewed activity in the Early Roman period accelerated to a peak in Late Roman times, before declining sharply in the Byzantine era onwards.

A substantial section is devoted to comparisons with other surveys on Cyprus, drawing attention to the similarities as well as some notable differences from wider trends. This reveals periods during which settlement evidence is reduced across the island as a whole (e.g. in the third century AD) and others, such as the Mid and Late Bronze Ages, when settlement of the Vasilikos Valley is particularly well attested. The volume is completed with a generous selection of black and white plates.

Although the survey was a team effort—indeed, there are lengthy quotations of the work of collaborators and specialists—the volume feels very personal.

Todd's determination to maintain the survey's momentum, sometimes single-handed, and to bring it to publication is reflected in his fascination for every aspect of the valley's past—twentieth-century railways and all—and in his concern about the rapidity with which the archaeological record is disappearing as a result of development. The extended duration of the project has made these changes all the more apparent.

Tunisia and Israel

MARIETTE DE VOS RAAIJMAKERS & REDHA ATTOUI. *Rus Africum, tome I. Le paysage rural antique autour de Dougga et Téboursouk: cartographie, relevés et chronologie des établissements* (Bibliotheca Archaeologica 30). 413 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations, and tables, CD. 2013. Bari: Edipuglia; 978-88-7228-703-3 paperback €70.

MARIETTE DE VOS RAAIJMAKERS, REDHA ATTOUI & ALESSANDRO BATTISTI. *Rus Africum, tome II. Le paysage rural antique autour de Dougga: l'aqueduc Aïn Hammam-Thugga, cartographie et relevés* (Bibliotheca Archaeologica 34). 300 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations, and foldouts. 2013. Bari: Edipuglia; 978-88-7228-728-6 paperback €70.

SHIMON DAR. *Rural settlements on Mount Carmel in Antiquity*. 2014. 198 pages, 208 colour and b&w illustrations. Oxford: Archaeopress; 978-1-905739-87-5 paperback £33.



A very different type of publication is *Rus Africum*. These two volumes document a survey around the Roman town of Dougga (*Thugga*) in northern Tunisia, undertaken between 1994 and 2000 and

2008 to 2012. Volume 1 presents an inventory of over 500 sites and Volume 2 focuses on an 11km aqueduct, which includes a number of monumental bridges. The inventory presents extensive detail for every site and each is cross-referenced to colour distribution maps—easily the most attractive and informative of any in the reports under review. Volume 1 also includes 171 detailed site plans and a selection of colour plates; a CD contains 2785 further images. Volume 2 adopts the same format for each component of the aqueduct, although the bulk

of the volume comprises hundreds of stunning colour and black and white photographs, many reproduced to fill the A4 format.

The richness of the material is astonishing. Those seeking scraps of diagnostic pottery in less well-preserved landscapes might well feel a pang of envy. The presentation of the sites, however, is not accompanied by detail of the survey's aims and methods, or interpretation of the results or broader significance. Indeed, apart from a page-and-a-half foreword, there is no contextual information at all. In this regard, the backcover blurb provides more insight than the contents (e.g. that the survey covered 371km²; that it located 17 villages, 189 farms, 91 funerary sites and 8 fortified sites; and that it presents 151 previously unpublished inscriptions). Passing reference is made to nine "d'autres études préliminaires" (p. 6), but there is no guidance as to what information might be found in which publications. Several of the volumes under review form part of a larger publication series and primary data and interpretations are often published separately; what is perplexing here is the lack of explanation as to how the *Rus Africum* volumes relate to the project's broader publication programme.

On the basis of these volumes in isolation, it is not possible to say much about overall trends. The *tableaux chronologiques* make clear the limited evidence for prehistoric, Libyo-Punic and even Roman republican activity. The evidence expands noticeably during the first three centuries AD, and continues to grow more modestly through the later Roman, Vandal and Byzantine periods before dropping sharply by the eighth century AD. The wide distribution of presses indicates large-scale olive oil production and the wealth of epigraphic data attests the high standard of funerary commemoration; there are also boundary markers, honorary inscriptions, and three copies of the *lex Hadriana* (a law encouraging tenants to occupy vacant land in return for securities). In making available the primary data, these volumes constitute an invaluable resource. To find out what it all means, readers will need to seek out the project's other publications; inspired by what they find in these volumes, many will be eager to do so.

A book that shares similarities with *Rus Africum* is *Rural settlements on Mount Carmel in Antiquity* by SHIMON DAR. It derives from long-term work, as part of the Bar-Ilan University expedition, to document settlement from the Persian to Byzantine periods on Mount Carmel in northern Israel. The volume

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presents surveys of 10 sites, each illustrated with plans and large photographs, many in colour. Two brief chapters summarise settlement patterns and economic organisation; an oddly entitled summary—‘The historical background of the Mt. Carmel settlements’—concludes the volume. Otherwise, contextual information is limited, for example, there is no rationale for the site selection and only brief suggestion as to how they relate to other settlements on Mount Carmel.

The sites represent a range from farmhouse to ‘townlet’. Many demonstrate evidence for planning, with thoroughfares, public spaces and zones for craft and agricultural activities. All are tightly nucleated, either surrounded by defensive walls with gates and towers or arranged so as the outer house walls form a continuous barrier to the site’s exterior. Dar suggests that as the *pax Romana* “wasn’t a real peace” (p. 166), each settlement was obliged to attend to its own security. What is less clear is why the security situation (if this is what the ‘defensiveness’ of these sites connotes) should be so different from the contemporary situation elsewhere (e.g. *Thugga*); in fact, Dar later suggests that the “flourishing of settlements [...] in the Roman and Byzantine periods was a direct result of a stable economic structure” (p. 185). Indeed, like the hinterland of *Thugga*, Mount Carmel produced a substantial surplus for export. For example, the farmhouse at Horvat Dereg is associated with rock-cut wine presses; Dar estimates that the extensively terraced c. 200ha estate could produce 22 000 litres of wine per annum, well in excess of the needs of the site’s inhabitants.

While the individual sites are well described, historical settlement trends and wider contexts are only briefly discussed. As such the volume makes accessible—most of all through plans, photographs and artefact drawings—an indicative sample of Roman and Byzantine rural sites and provides an entry point into the more specialist literature.

Jordan

S. THOMAS PARKER & ANDREW M. SMITH III. *The Roman Aqaba Project final report. Volume 1: the regional environment and the regional survey* (ASOR Archaeological Report 19). xi+384 pages, 114 b&w illustrations, 35 tables. 2014. Boston (MA): American Schools of Oriental Research; 978-0-89-757042-8 hardback £65.

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PAULA KOUKI & MIKA LAVENTO. *Petra—the Mountain of Aaron. Finnish Archaeological Project in Jordan, volume III. The archaeological survey*. 413 pages, 192 colour and b&w illustrations. 2013. Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica; 978-951-653-400-1 hardback €125.

For the next two publications, we head to Jordan. In *The Roman Aqaba Project final report, volume 1*, PARKER & SMITH present the results of a three-season survey, starting in 1994, of the south-east Wadi ‘Araba. The survey forms part of a wider project concerning the Roman economy and long-running debate about whether it was ‘primitive’ or ‘modernist’. To address this question, Parker and team selected *Aila*, modern Aqaba, to conduct the first investigations of a Nabataean/Roman port on the Arabian coast of the Red Sea. Questions about the role of *Aila* in long-distance trade demanded not only excavations of the urban centre but also a survey of the port’s hinterland and trade route north to the Nabataean ‘capital’ at Petra. This volume reports the survey results; a second will document the urban excavations; and a third will focus on specialist studies and historical synthesis.

As with the other projects under review, the survey methods were adapted between seasons to maximise results in the face of diminishing resources. For example, transect sampling was reduced and targeted investigation based on the identification of features on aerial photographs was prioritised—a decision, Smith notes, with obvious consequences but also compatible with the project’s aims. The 330 sites located are detailed in the site catalogue.

One of the most visible periods is also the earliest documented—the Chalcolithic and transitional Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age. In addition to settlement sites, agricultural terracing and large-scale infrastructure for channelling and retaining floodwater also appear to date to this period; this activity may correlate with a moister regional climate. Evidence for Early Bronze Age activity is much less abundant, disappearing altogether during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. The evidence for Iron Age, Persian and Hellenistic activity is also minimal and there may even have been a hiatus in occupation.

It is only with the Nabataean/Early Roman period (late first century BC to AD 106) that evidence for widespread occupation and exploitation reappears including artefact scatters, roads, forts, structures and quarries. This burst of activity—or, at least, visible activity—is likely to be associated with the

Nabataeans' transition from nomadism to sedentism, although the exact date and scale of this shift is unclear. It was also during the late first century BC that *Aila* was founded on the coast, perhaps in response to competition from ports on Egypt's Red Sea coast. The concurrent development of *Aila* and settlement in the Wadi 'Araba—as far as Petra—is more than coincidental. Large-scale sedentary occupation, however, was short-lived and activity was reduced in the Late Roman period (here starting in the second century AD with the Roman annexation of the kingdom), though *Aila* itself took on greater prominence as the terminus of the *Via Nova Traiana*. By AD 300, a legion was based at *Aila*, but site numbers in the Wadi 'Araba were declining and visible activity through the late Byzantine, Ummayyad, Abbasid and later Islamic periods remained limited.

As one might expect of an ASOR Archaeological Report, this volume is produced to a high standard with excellent black and white photographs, crisp artefact drawings and clearly formatted text and tables; a few colour plates, to give a sense of the landscape, would have been a welcome addition. In contrast to the long-running Messenia and Vasilikos valley surveys, the Aqaba Project was planned, executed and published much more promptly, inevitably reflecting a less extended engagement with the landscape, but offering a more sharply focused result.

Staying in Jordan, *Petra—the Mountain of Aaron* by KOUKI and LAVENTO is a large format tome documenting a survey of the Jabal Hārūn—the summit of which some believe to be the burial site of Aaron, the brother of Moses. The study area lies between Petra and the central Wadi 'Araba (not far to the north of Parker and Smith's survey zone). The survey, conducted between 1997 and 2005, was conceived to investigate the hinterland of a Byzantine monastery on the Jabal Hārūn, the excavation of which is documented in the first two volumes of the series. Unsurprisingly, in light of the volumes already reviewed, the first fieldwork season indicated that the Byzantine period was not well represented across the wider landscape, but that there was extensive activity of Nabataean date. Consequently, the survey evolved to address longer-term settlement and landscape history, with particular attention to run-off agricultural systems and the relationship of the area to nearby Petra. The survey covered c. 5km², with additional extensive coverage of 6.5km². While much smaller than the other surveys reviewed here, the intensity of coverage,

however, is much higher, achieving 100% surface coverage. The volume is organised by categories of evidence with chapters, for example, on lithics, Nabataean to Early Islamic pottery, eleventh- to twentieth-century pottery, and glass.

Rainfall in the Jabal Hārūn is low and highly variable, making irrigation a necessity for agriculture. In this context, it is noted that almost half of all features documented by the survey are hydraulic structures for run-off cultivation. The majority are dams—some up to 4.5m in height and 50m in length—built across wadis to retain soils and to allow floodwaters to soak into the ground. The system along the Wadi as-Saddat, the largest and most complex mapped by the survey, comprises more than 40 dams. Dating these structures is difficult; pottery from adjacent sites points to a Nabataean construction. Regardless, there is evidence for multiple phases of reconstruction indicating use over extended periods of time.

The 'Summary and final remarks' largely recaps the earlier chapters rather than offering a synthetic overview. As the volume is organised by categories of evidence, rather than chronologically, it is not easy to discern the evolution of settlement and landscape use. Nonetheless, the extreme variability of activity over time (now familiar from the other volumes under review) is obvious: the Middle Bronze Age to Iron Age is completely missing while the Nabataean evidence is, again, dominant. There are also, however, some divergences from regional trends, notably the absence of prehistoric pottery. As in the hinterland of *Aila* in the southern Wadi 'Araba, the sudden burst of activity across the Jabal Hārūn during the Nabataean period coincides with urbanisation (i.e. Petra) and the need for more intensive cultivation; similarly, the late Roman period also demonstrates notable abatement of landscape activity.

The volume concludes with a catalogue of 189 sites, a selection of colour plates and a CD. *Petra—the Mountain of Aaron* is another handsome and well-produced volume (if slightly unwieldy in size). In concept and execution, it is much closer to *The Roman Aqaba Project* volume—self-contained, detailed and well contextualised—than the other reports under review, though perhaps as a result of the mismatch between the project's original objectives and reality on the ground, it lacks a strong core narrative. Nonetheless, the material provides a rich database that greatly improves understanding of regional settlement and economy, and the hinterland of Petra in particular.

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North-east China and Nevada

CHRISTIAN E. PETERSON, LU XUEMING, ROBERT D. DRENNAN & ZHU DA. *Hongshan regional organization in the upper Daling valley*. xvi+102 pages, 77 b&w illustrations, 1 table. 2014. Shenyang & Pittsburgh: Liaoning Province, Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology & Center for Comparative Archaeology, University of Pittsburgh; 978-1-877812-93-4 paperback.

KELLY MCGUIRE, WILLIAM HILDEBRANDT, AMY GILREATH, JEROME KING & JOHN BERG. *The prehistory of Gold Butte: a Virgin River hinterland, Clark County, Nevada* (UUP Anthropological Paper 127). xiii+240 pages, 106 b&w illustrations, 100 tables. 2013. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press; 978-1-60781-305-7 paperback \$50.



To put these Mediterranean examples into perspective, we turn to reports on surveys in China and Nevada. In *Hongshan regional organization in the upper Daling valley*, CHRISTIAN

PETERSON, LU XUEMING, ROBERT DRENNAN and ZHU DA document a survey centred on the Neolithic ceremonial site of Dongshanzui in the Liaoning province of north-eastern China. The research problem concerns the Hongshan period (c. 4500–3000 BC), knowledge of which is spatially uneven: excavation of monumental sites such as Dongshanzui is concentrated in one region while excavation of domestic settlement focuses on another. As a result, “a synthetic account of Hongshan society combining them is actually a risky patchwork of monumental evidence from the Hongshan core and household and community evidence from the more peripheral regions” (pp. 3–5). Were the monumental regions, for example, characterised by small residential—or even temporary—populations or, conversely, by larger populations with more complex political organisation? To address these issues, from 2009–2011, the project undertook a survey of 200km² in the monumental core area of the upper Daling valley.

The methodology chapter states the project “employed what is by now a relatively standard intensive, pedestrian, complete-coverage survey methodology” (p. 27). This does not reflect the reality

revealed by the other reports under review; indeed, the chapter outlines the most sophisticated field techniques of all those considered. Particular attention focuses on establishing standardised artefact densities for use as population proxies—and even absolute population estimates (this final step produces useful figures for discussion, but the multiplication factors needed further discussion). Small-scale excavations revealed semi-subterranean timber-framed, wattle-and-daub house structures; most were severely plough-truncated, although, as the authors note, this plays to the strength of surface survey. Both the quantity of material culture and the permanence of structures point to settlement stability and investment in place, with parallels to similar debates in Cyprus, Jordan and—as will be seen below—Nevada.

Focusing on the Hongshan period, artefact densities are used to define ‘local communities’, ranging from farmsteads to villages which are then grouped into ‘supra-regional communities’ or districts of a few tens of square kilometres and populations of a few hundred. How did these supra-local communities relate: did they simply share cultural traits or were they also politically and economically integrated? Based on similarities in territorial sizes and site types, as well as thinly populated ‘buffer’ zones, it is argued that “Hongshan culture was peppered with similar, repetitive, supra-local but still small-scale, politically autonomous, largely economically self-sufficient socio-political units” (p. 61) or ‘chiefdoms’. The surveyors conclude that there was little difference in population and settlement organisation between the Hongshan monumental core and peripheral areas. Both were characterised by dispersed farmsteads with a few larger settlements organised into chiefly polities.

The Hongshan period is well represented in the archaeological record; the subsequent Xiaohayuan period (c. 3000–2000 BC) is not. There appears to be catastrophic population decline, which some have attributed to climatic deterioration. The Daling surveyors, however, are more cautious and, as with the other surveys under review, are inclined to see the issue in relation to ceramic typologies.

Post-Hongshan settlement, from the Lower Xiajiadian to the Liao periods (c. 2000 BC–AD 1300), is subject to the same analytical techniques, demonstrating major changes in population and settlement organisation in relation to the wider historical geography of China. For example, settlement during the Zhanguo-Han period (c. 600 BC–AD 200), when the Daling valley was peripheral

to the centres of Chinese power, was rather limited. In contrast, the foundation of one of the Liao period (c. AD 200–1300) capitals, Zhongjing, just 75km to the north, corresponds to a dispersal of farmsteads; these were presumably engaged in intensive agricultural production to feed the city and fulfil tax demands.

Compared to *Petra—the Mountain of Aaron*, this is a slim volume; indeed, since it is bilingual throughout, with English and Chinese texts on facing pages, it is even slimmer than it first appears. In content, however, it is highly effective, deploying a simple but neatly formulated research problem and a coherent narrative linking methods, analysis and discussion. Whereas the other review volumes present colour photographs and CDs—respectively, expensive to reproduce and of uncertain technological longevity—*Hongshan regional organization* opts for an online solution, providing colour versions of the printed black and white illustrations plus an archive of digital data. Might the Internet be the logical, long-term home for much of the data produced by regional survey?

We complete our tour in Nevada, c. 100km north-east of Las Vegas. In *The prehistory of Gold Butte*, MCGUIRE, HILDEBRANDT, GILREATH, KING and BERG detail a survey of Gold Butte, a desert area bounded by the Virgin River to the north and west and by the Colorado River to the south. In response to concerns over growing recreational use, a systematic survey of this vast area (c. 1300km²) was undertaken between 2006 and 2008. A multi-stage methodology of stratified random sampling, followed by purposive investigations, identified 377 sites from a sampled area of c. 125km².

The authors adopt an approach based on human behavioural ecology to understand changing subsistence patterns and landscape use. For example, debate about the importance of maize cultivation in the river valleys during the Basketmaker (c. 350 BC–AD 800) and Puebloan periods (c. AD 800–1250) is approached through hypotheses about the exploitation of desert resources under alternative conditions: heavy dependence on agricultural production would limit the use of Gold Butte to the hunting of large game, especially longhorn sheep, and ‘high-ranked’ resources such as pinyon nuts; less reliance on domesticated plants should be reflected in more regular subsistence forays, making use of a wider range of plant and animal products such as agave and tortoise. Another debate concerns the Puebloan abandonment of the area c. AD 1250;

specifically, the authors question whether or not there was continuity between the settled Puebloans and the incoming hunter-gatherer Southern Paiute.

The results of the survey and test excavations indicate significant shifts in human exploitation. During the Paleo-Archaic (pre-5900 BC) and Archaic (c. 3500–2500 BC) periods, the area was occupied by residential family groups of foragers. During the Late Archaic (c. 2500–350 BC) and Basketmaker II (c. 350 BC–AD 400) periods, there was a shift away from residential exploitation to logistical forays from the river valleys—the use of tortoise and agave declines and activity refocuses on large-game hunting and the collection of pinyon. This is reflected in the high ratio of flaked stone tools to milling implements.

By Puebloan times (c. AD 800–1250), the much expanded population was heavily reliant on settled agriculture in the main river valleys. The radiocarbon, ceramic and lithic data all suggest that the intensity of land use at Gold Butte declined as the population of the valleys grew. In other words, in contrast to the Wadi ‘Araba and the Jabal Hārūn during the Nabataean period, settled Puebloan life led to a reduction in the exploitation of the periphery. Indeed, intensive cultivation may have precluded traditional activities, such as gathering agave. The main agave stands are some 25km from the Virgin River; as agave is harvested in spring, this created scheduling problems since labour was needed for planting and weeding closer to home.

Following the Puebloan collapse in c. AD 1250, the traditional narrative envisages the reoccupation of the depopulated region by the hunter-gatherer Southern Paiute sometime after AD 1300. This picture is transformed by recognition of Patayan material culture and rock art styles spanning c. AD 1000–1500. If correct, the Patayan may have overlapped with both the Puebloans and the incoming Southern Paiute, raising questions about interactions between these groups. The authors suggest that the association of Puebloan and Patayan pottery may indicate benign interaction; conversely, the lack of association between Patayan and Southern Paiute pottery may suggest more hostile relations. During the Southern Paiute phase there is a clear shift—reflected in the low ratio of flaked stone tools to milling implements—back to small, mobile residential groups, exploiting ‘lower-ranked’ resources such as agave and tortoise.

The prehistory of Gold Butte is another well-produced volume documenting a scrupulously planned and executed survey, with results and interpretations that

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transform understanding of both the study area and wider debates about South-western settlement and subsistence. Distinct from the other review books, the preface notes the origins of the volume as a series of 'technical reports' (for the US Bureau of Land Management). Their transformation into a research monograph is a clear success. Perhaps the only missing component is a reflection on how these results have fed back into the management of Gold Butte.

A survey of surveys

Reviewing this selection of survey reports identifies any number of similarities and differences. At heart—and in the field—they have all involved countless days walking across (mainly hot and arid!) landscapes and the collection of thousands of ceramic, lithic and other artefacts of often frustratingly limited diagnostic value. The research questions, however, are framed in significantly different ways, as are the methods for defining 'sites' and establishing regional samples and chronological frameworks (contrary to the methodological consensus assumed in *Hongshan regional organization*). Some of these survey reports reflect a lifetime's commitment to a particular landscape; others have been planned, executed and published within five years. Each project has also decided upon a different solution for what and how to publish its results. Perhaps surprisingly, CDs remain popular and only one of the surveys opts for an online solution.

Recurring themes include: hinterlands (the effects of cores on peripheries), agricultural and industrial activities (e.g. oil production, copper mining) and political organisation (including chiefdoms, kingdoms and empires). All of the surveys document a dramatic variation in the visibility of human activity over time, often with one period dominating the archaeological record and with other periods (sometimes immediately pre- or post-dating the dominant one) barely visible. Various explanations include collapse or abandonment (e.g. in response to climate change or invasion), changing subsistence bases (e.g. from cultivation to hunter-gathering) and problems with archaeological typologies (e.g. undiagnostic ceramics). What most clearly links these surveys, however, is perhaps the motif of impending loss. From Messenia and Cyprus to Jordan and Nevada, we find the same concerns about the threat of modern land use and development to the survival of the archaeological record. To be

sure, every generation perceives a last chance to record a past on the verge of disappearance. Yet whereas development may offer the excavator new opportunities to access archaeological stratigraphy (and sometimes even funding), the landscape surveyor is confronted by the more sustained but diffuse attrition of the fragile surface record. An alternative way of looking at the problem might be to ponder whether or not future surveys, 50 or 100 years hence, will be able to produce reports as rich and diverse as those under review here.

Books received

The list includes all books received between 1 November 2014 and 31 December 2014. 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*.

General

PETER BELLWOOD (ed.). *The global prehistory of human migration*. xvi+432 pages, numerous b&w figures. 2014. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell; 978-1-118-97059-1 paperback £29.99.

KATHERINE BOYLE, RYAN J. RABETT & CHRIS O. HUNT (ed.). *Living in the landscape: essays in honour of Graeme Barker*. xvi+363 pages, 126 colour and b&w illustrations, 28 tables. 2014. Cambridge: McDonald Institute & Oxbow; 978-1-902937-73-1 hardback £48.

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