

Reviews

New Book Chronicle

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Sardinia, Sicily and Malta

GARY WEBSTER. *The archaeology of Nuragic Sardinia* (Monographs in Mediterranean Archaeology 14). 2016. xvii+253 pages, 8 colour and 77 b&w illustrations. Sheffield: Equinox; 978-1-78179-135-6 hardback £60.

CARRIE L. SULOSKY WEAVER. *The bioarchaeology of Classical Kamarina: life and death in Greek Sicily*. 2016. xxv+338 pages, several b&w illustrations, 5 tables. Gainesville: University Press of Florida; 978-0-8130-6112-2 hardback \$84.95.

CLAUDIA SAGONA. *The archaeology of Malta: from the Neolithic through the Roman period*. 2015. xix+449 pages, 66 b&w illustrations, 5 tables. New York: Cambridge University Press; 978-1-107-00669-0 hardback £84.99.



In this issue's NBC, we undertake a journey, hopping between islands and ports from Sardinia to Sri Lanka, sampling recent books on ancient Mediterranean and Indian

Ocean archaeology. We start with *The archaeology of Nuragic Sardinia* by GARY WEBSTER, in which the author revisits his 1996 monograph, *A prehistory of Sardinia 2300–500 BC*. What has changed over the intervening two decades? The answer, it seems, is much, in terms both of evidence and approach. The most important of these changes concerns chronology, with many more radiocarbon dates now available and a consequent proliferation of new dating schemes. Webster observes the “impossibly chaotic impression” (p. xiv) that has resulted, and offers his own chronological framework spanning c. 2300–750 BC, from the Early Bronze Age (EBA) to the Early Iron Age (EIA). Another significant change is that Webster ends his narrative several centuries earlier than in his previous book, reflecting the great increase in work on the Phoenician and Punic periods, which now merit a separate account of their own (for

these periods on Malta, see below). As well as new evidence there are also new ideas, and Webster reflects honestly on the strengths and weaknesses of his earlier processual approach and duly places greater emphasis on issues such as agency, ethnicity and identity.

In relation to the latter, a significant question concerns what to call the people who lived in the “Free-standing, trunko-conical tower[s], measuring about 12m in diameter across the base with inward sloping walls made of massive stones [...] laid up without mortar to a flat circular roof” (p. 49)—otherwise known as nuragli. Webster reviews the many suggestions for the nomenclature of their inhabitants and opts for Nuragics and hence the derivative, Nur.

Chapter 1 provides a history of studies with a particular focus on the last two decades. The following chapters advance chronologically and are divided into thematic sections: chronology, settlement, mortuary practice, technology and economy (including subsistence and metallurgy), interaction and exchange, cult and religion, developments on neighbouring Corsica and synthetic discussion.

To set the scene, Chapter 2 summarises the (proto-Nuragic) EBA material. The evidence is skewed to the funerary realm, not least because several hundred ‘corridor-nuragli’ have now been re-dated to the Middle Bronze Age (MBA). Webster reviews questions such as whether the construction of megalithic tombs of the sort found across Western Europe indicates the arrival of new people or new ideas—a perennial theme in archaeology generally, and in island studies in particular. Webster emphasises the role of Corsica, as a stepping-stone to the mainland, in the analysis of Sardinian cultural developments of all periods. Other recurring questions include environmental crisis and social hierarchy.

Chapter 3 tackles the MBA, a period characterised by greater cultural homogeneity, including the construction of thousands of nuragli across the island. But what were these towers for and what do they signify about economic and social

organisation? With rarely more than 50m² of living space, the average nuraghe could accommodate a nucleated family plus a few animals, and Webster argues that they were farmsteads. Their distribution correlates with neither the best nor the worst agricultural land, indicating that the prime land was already occupied; nuraghi are therefore seen as an expansion of settlement into sub-optimal areas due to population growth. Their defensive form need not, as often argued, indicate growing insecurity or social inequality, and Webster puts less emphasis on the original motives for construction, and more on their significance for social reproduction. In relation to questions of interaction and insularity, we might note that the period during which we can “begin speaking of the emergence of a Nuragic identity” (p. 40) coincides with a reduction in the evidence for overseas connectivity.

By the Late Bronze Age (LBA), discussed in Chapter 4, some nuraghi had been extended and surrounded by villages of stone huts. Webster develops his previously published comparison with southern African *kraals*. Hence, the LBA nuraghe was a “large and perhaps polygynous household comprising, for example, compound head, wives, unmarried children, some prize animals, and perhaps dependents” (p. 109), and was indicative of “emergent social asymmetry” (p. 110). These developments equate to “what anthropologists traditionally refer to as chiefdoms” (p. 137).

The transition from the LBA to the EIA remains unclear. Most nuraghi continued to be occupied, but there was significant cultural disruption. The production of ceramics and metals increased in range and quantity, much of it oriented towards export. Sanctuaries and cult places were particular foci for metallurgical production and the exchange of Mediterranean goods. Webster also discerns the clearest expression of Nuragic identity: “The Nur were never more Nuragic than during the early IA” (p. 221). All of these developments are framed by interaction with and/or the presence of outsiders in the form of Phoenicians, Etruscans and others, and it is therefore unsurprising that some scholars of this period have turned to post-colonial approaches. Webster considers these but does not explicitly endorse or reject them.

The book concludes with a two-page postscript quoting Giovanni Lilliu, “the father of modern Sardinian archaeology” (p. 222). What is striking about Lilliu’s words, penned in 1963 to evoke a festival

at a Nuragic sanctuary, is how they strongly resemble recent post-processual or interpretive accounts much more than either the culture-historical or processual approaches that dominated Nuragic studies during the later twentieth century. The book itself is well produced and neatly packaged, although the cover image is disappointing given the subject matter. Within, there is abundant illustration. Some of the figures, especially the maps, are pixelated, but there are plenty of other well-reproduced drawings and photographs of the pottery and artefacts that underpin the terminology and chronology of Nuragic Sardinia.

Our next book, *The bioarchaeology of Classical Kamarina: life and death in Greek Sicily* by CARRIE SULOSKY WEAVER, shifts geographic location and scale, to focus on a single cemetery at one of the Greek colonies on the southern coast of Sicily. The history of Kamarina was, to put it mildly, eventful. Throughout the tumultuous period from the fifth to the third centuries BC, barely a generation passed during which the city was not razed or resettled, or its unfortunate inhabitants not slaughtered, sold into slavery, relocated or claimed by plague.

Following an overview of death and burial in the Greek world (Chapter 1), and an introduction to the archaeology of Kamarina (Chapter 2), four chapters present the results of an analysis of ‘Demographic attributes’, ‘State of health’, ‘Grave goods’ and ‘Ritualistic treatment of the deceased’. The first of these examines the skeletal evidence for data such as age, sex and stature; the preponderance of individuals in the young adult category is compatible with a “catastrophic mortality profile” (p. 112), and would certainly fit with the city’s documented history. The most sustained discussion in this chapter is reserved for non-metric traits, including the so-called ‘Etruscan upper lateral incisor’. Here, however, DNA sampling of two individuals with this feature suggests that it is associated with haplotypes widely shared across Europe, and therefore not indicative of specific ethnic background. In contrast, cranial measurements suggest that two individuals may have been of “sub-Saharan African descent” (p. 107). In the following chapter, focusing on health, various palaeopathologies point to possible cases of malaria, pituitary dwarfism and leukaemia, and to a whole variety of blunt- and sharp-force traumas.

Chapter 5 seeks patterning in the distribution of grave goods and correlations with the results of the skeletal analysis. Chapter 6 examines the different

grave types and their spatial organisation, noting that around one quarter were of the higher-status *a cappuccina* form (although this was far from an elite type of burial), and that flexed and multiple inhumations may indicate the presence of non-Greeks. Two individuals, pinned down by stones, suggest 'deviant' burials. The book concludes with a brief recap that restates the summaries of the individual chapters, which themselves largely repeat the contents of their respective sections.

Weaver's book is logically structured, the approach clearly explained and the material well contextualised in relation to the wider Greek world. The research questions are also timely and sound, but the data are clearly less than optimal. The skeletal sample derives from excavations in the early 1980s. For reasons not fully explained, of the 1007 burials excavated only 258 were available for study, although we are reassured that this is a random sample. Of the individual skeletons, only 5% were half or more complete, with the vast majority categorised as just "1–25% complete" (p. 8). As an extra challenge, the surface preservation was poor and the bones could not be washed. Photographs (e.g. figs 3.9 & 3.10) give an impression of the difficulties Weaver encountered. Unsurprisingly, as the research unfolds, the limitations of the dataset become apparent. Plans to identify certain traits (e.g. sex) are repeatedly thwarted by poor preservation. Similarly, the intended integrated analysis of the skeletal material with the grave goods is undermined because the original finds were unavailable for re-study. Might a less compromised dataset have permitted better results? As archaeologists we are used to dealing with imperfect data, yet the store cupboards of Italy are filled with more promising skeletons awaiting the sort of theoretically informed and integrated approach advocated here. Hopefully the dataset for Weaver's next project will be more generous with its secrets.

Next stop: Malta, and an addition to the 'Cambridge World Archaeology' series in which CLAUDIA SAGONA explores *The archaeology of Malta: from the Neolithic through the Roman period*. The long-term perspective of this ambitious synthesis spans six millennia from 'The first settlers and farmers' (Chapter 2) to 'Malta's place in the Roman world' (Chapter 8). Megalithic Malta is afforded plenty of attention, but the islands' iconic temples and tombs share the stage with 'Phoenician mariners, merchants and settlers' (Chapter 6) and peoples of the Punic (Chapter 7) and Roman periods.

Sagona begins with an overview of earlier studies of Malta's monuments and material culture. With the embarrassment of prehistoric riches on offer, it is hardly surprising that archaeologists only fully turned their attention to the Phoenician, Punic and Roman periods as recently as the 1990s. Given that the three chapters on these later periods, covering no more than 1500 years, fill just under half of the book, we can appreciate the scale of what has been previously overlooked.

Before that, however, Sagona begins with key questions about the date and identity of the first settlers on the islands (Chapter 2). The evidence for the Għar Dalam, Grey Skorba and Red Skorba periods is fragmentary and depends upon an inadequate number of radiocarbon samples. The latter situation, as Sagona notes, should be transformed by the FRAGSUS project (Fragility and Sustainability in the Restricted Island Environments of Malta), coordinated by former *Antiquity* editor Caroline Malone. This chapter, as throughout, is richly illustrated with drawings of artefacts, lithics and pottery, giving a good sense of the evolving range of styles.

Chapter 3 deals with 'The culture of the megalith builders', tackling late Neolithic domestic contexts and portable material culture, before turning to the so-called temples. The early and persistent use of this term belies their potential range of functions; for example, "as storehouses for mundane commodities such as food surpluses" (p. 74) and, following their construction, as "permanent focal points for ritual activities, gaining historical significance with every passing year and embodying social memory and ancestral connections to the land" (p. 76). As with Webster's discussion of recent thinking about nuraghi (above), analogical and singular interpretations of function (e.g. fortress, temple) have given way to an acceptance of multiple uses, and, similarly, more emphasis is placed on their enduring presence rather than explanation for their original construction. On developments in interpretation, Sagona is more forthright than Webster and clearly unconvinced by phenomenological forays. Other themes, more favourably reviewed, include shamanism, the use of hallucinogenic substances, and symbolism of the life cycle and the body.

The late Neolithic and early Bronze Age are addressed in Chapter 4, including the apparently orderly decommissioning of the temples and the question of whether Malta's population overstretched its

ecological limits. One of the most interesting sections of the book concerns Malta's much-discussed 'cart-ruts', multiple parallel grooves in the exposed bedrock. Having reviewed the evidence, Sagona argues that they are not ruts created by vehicles but rather field-furrows caused by ploughing. In turn, this impacts directly on the question of ecological overreach and economic decline. Sagona makes a convincing case that will no doubt be picked up and picked apart in equal measure.

Chapter 5 on 'The appearance of the axe-bearers' moves into the Bronze Age with "unmistakable signs of enduring indigenous practices set against a wave of unstoppable change" (p. 170); Chapter 6 addresses the effects of further intensified connectivity with the arrival of Phoenician settlers. The latter marks the transition from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age. Here, progress has clearly been slow, for it seems that a 1942 *Antiquity* article by John Ward-Perkins remains critical, although current excavations by an Italian team at the sanctuary of Tas-Silġ may soon change this. If new discoveries from that site do point to an early Phoenician presence, they will reinforce the importance of such cult places for Phoenician colonisation attested elsewhere (e.g. Webster, above). More generally, the presence of both imported Phoenician and indigenous Borg in-Nadur material culture at many sites of this date may point to hybrid practices.

The elusive Punic period is discussed in Chapter 7, where clues are sought within the settlement patterns and material culture of the subsequent Roman period. The historical sources are unambiguous about the existence of a Punic urban centre (Melita), but no archaeological evidence has yet been found, perhaps awaiting discovery beneath (Roman/modern) Mdina-Rabat or Żurrieq. The substantial Chapter 8 examines the Roman incorporation of the islands and the development of a unique provincial blend of Punic and Roman traits.

In the 'Closing remarks', Sagona summarises the long-term narrative. Notably absent is reference to such concepts as 'insularity' and 'connectivity', and there is only sparse use of generic terms such as 'isolation' and 'integration'. This reflects the volume as a whole, for Sagona offers no overarching theoretical or interpretive framework. Perhaps for a narrative spanning six millennia, the types and quantities of evidence were too diverse to be contained in this way; nonetheless, it is notable that there is no reference to such standards of Mediterranean studies as Braudel,

Horden and Purcell, or Broodbank. Instead, Sagona observes that "The challenge is to stand back and view the archipelago not in terms of its limitations but rather from the perspective of its strengths" (p. 296); the latter, it is implied, are to be found in the resilience and ingenuity of the Maltese population across time. This book will be welcomed by students and teachers alike for its balanced introduction and detailed synthesis of the evidence. In taking the long-view, it encompasses periods normally studied separately and allows for continuities to be perceived, even if it does not provide any overarching explanation for them.

Crete and Cyprus

JANE E. FRANCIS & ANNA KOUREMENOS (ed.). *Roman Crete: new perspectives*. 2016. x+278 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. Oxford & Havertown (PA): 978-1-78570-095-8 hardback £48.

JOHN LUND. *A study of the circulation of ceramics in Cyprus from the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD* (Gösta Enbom Monographs 5). 2015. 390 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 978-87-7124-450-2 hardback £49.69.



Next we travel to the eastern Mediterranean and *Roman Crete: new perspectives*, edited by JANE FRANCIS and ANNA KOUREMENOS (by strange coincidence, the volume is printed in Malta). This collection of 12 papers, plus Foreword, Introduction and Afterword, derives from a session at the Roman Archaeology Conference held in Frankfurt in 2012, and it offers a survey of the greatly expanded evidence base that has been collected since Ian Sanders's (1982) pioneering synthesis of the same name. The editors make no claim for any grand narrative or connecting theme. They are clear, however, that the 30 years of research since 1982 mean that Crete is now much better able to contribute to wider questions concerning cultural change and the economy.

The papers include three on ceramics. Baldwin Bowsky examines stamps on imported Italian *terra*

sigillata pottery, observing that after “a brief period of imitation and integration” (p. 32) during the first century AD, eastern and western Mediterranean potters began to develop “their own themes based on the original Italian concept” (p. 32; on this theme in Cyprus, see below). Turning to amphorae, Gallimore explores ‘Crete’s economic transformation in the late Roman Empire’. During the first to third centuries AD, Cretan wine amphorae were found across the northern Mediterranean and especially at Rome and its ports. The latter concentration may reflect Crete’s location on the route of the ships transporting grain from Egypt to Rome. Then, in the third century, these Cretan amphorae rapidly declined in number, leading to the suggestion of economic decline on Crete. Armed with new amphora typologies, however, Gallimore is now able to trace a major reorientation of Cretan exports north through the Aegean to the military frontier on the western shores of the Black Sea. This both restores the health of Crete’s late Roman export economy and provides a lesson on the influence of ceramic typologies on wider interpretations. In the third pottery paper, Yangaki reviews the current state of research on ceramics of the fourth to ninth centuries.

Among the other papers, Lippolis provides a detailed overview of the long-term Italian excavations at ‘Roman Gortyn: from Greek polis to provincial capital’, and Francis gathers the evidence for apiculture. A number of contributors address art historical and architectural themes, such as imperial sculpture and theatres; in contrast, a more scientific paper by Moody asks: ‘The Roman climate in the southwest Aegean: was it really different?’. She synthesises published climate and environment proxies for Crete and the southern Aegean, concluding that the period from 100 BC to AD 200 was “wet and warm and unparalleled for several thousand years” (p. 66). This situation broadly correlates with trends for the wider Mediterranean, but, importantly, Moody notes significant local variability and that “the influence of external socio-political forces on the region in the form of conquest and war seem to overwhelm any adaptations or reaction to climate change” (p. 67).

As already noted, nothing inherently unites these varied and interesting papers other than a focus on Crete during the Roman period *sensu lato*. This is not problematic in its own right, for the collection provides valuable up-to-date summaries for scholars

of the island. Moreover, many of the papers also link directly into much wider issues of economic and cultural connectivity, especially in relation to pottery studies.

Our next volume takes that topic of pottery from a Mediterranean island as its core theme. In *A study of the circulation of ceramics in Cyprus from the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD*, JOHN LUND provides a wide-ranging assessment of the cultural and economic significance of Hellenistic and Roman pottery from this island. The research continues a long tradition of Cypriot studies by Danish scholars, including several major surveys and excavations, and it is partly from these investigations, plus a number of museum collections, that Lund collates his large database for analysis.

The book, which moves back and forth between broader trends and very specific observations about individual wares, is split into 14 short chapters, giving the text a choppy feel. A possible explanation for this format is that Lund seeks to address all audiences; there is more basic material about general context and ceramic studies than needed by pottery specialists, but there is also more detail about the individual wares than the general reader is likely to want. The short and extensively footnoted chapters therefore allow specialist and layperson alike to dip in or out as required.

Chapters 2 and 3 provide overviews of Hellenistic and Roman Cyprus and Mediterranean ceramic studies respectively. Chapter 4 introduces ‘A regional approach’ and the problems of using data culled from diverse sources, especially in relation to spatial distribution. Chapter 5 deals with the surprisingly scant evidence for production (there are no known Hellenistic or Roman kilns), and Chapter 6 collates the equally sparse scientific clay analyses. Chapter 7, ‘Case studies’, forms the core of the volume, taking the ceramic wares in turn and discussing their forms, fabrics, surface treatments, contexts, dates and distributions. This is a substantial resource for scholars of Cypriot pottery and of Mediterranean pottery more generally.

In Chapters 8–13, Lund explores the dataset and its implications. He starts with distribution (Chapter 8), and identifies a series of ‘ceramic regions’ across the island, which he considers to be “embodiments of exchange systems” (p. 159). The circulation of pottery between Cyprus, the north-eastern Mediterranean (Cilicia and Syria especially) and the wider Mediterranean are assessed in Chapters 9

and 10 respectively. Emergent patterns include the significance of exchange with Egypt in the Hellenistic period (when the island was under Ptolemaic control) and the role of the provincial capital of Nea Paphos as the principal gateway for imports.

The following three chapters turn to economic history, production and consumption, and regionality. The first of these, Chapter 11, gives an overview of recent scholarship on ancient economic theory and explores how the Cypriot evidence contributes. A key question is whether the Mediterranean was an integrated economy—as suggested by the long-distance exchange of standardised products—or rather a series of interlocking local and regional markets. The evidence here shifts over time. Hence, Lund points (as does Baldwin Bowsky, *Roman Crete*) to a short-lived phase of “globalisation” (p. 220) in the first centuries BC/AD, when Cypriot consumers imported and imitated *terra sigillata* from the western Mediterranean, followed by the disappearance of red-slipped tableware production in Cyprus in the third century AD (perhaps mirroring the wider third-century shift in eastern Mediterranean economy discussed by Gallimore in *Roman Crete*). The early Roman market appears to have been more fully integrated than it was three centuries later.

Chapter 13 returns to the six ceramic regions of Hellenistic Cyprus—reduced to five in the Roman period—and asks how they can be explained. Lund considers ethnicity, political control and identity, before settling on regionality, defined by a looser sense of “collective self-awareness” (p. 236) as expressed through distinctive combinations of material culture.

The study of ceramics has never been the most glamorous of archaeology’s many specialisms. But here, Lund demonstrates what can be achieved. This is an account that is not driven by art-historical concerns or by metaconcepts such as urbanism, but rather by pots. For those thinking that this risks putting the cart before the horse, we need only think of the example above provided by Gallimore (*Roman Crete*). Moreover, although squarely focused on Cyprus, Lund’s perspective is never limited to its shores; this is very much Cyprus as a case study of wider cultural and economic phenomena, amply evidenced by the extensive and wide-ranging bibliography.

The book itself has been produced to the highest standards. The text is carefully laid out, and almost every page boasts several images,

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many in glorious colour and all beautifully reproduced. The distribution maps, although using an unintuitive selection of symbols to represent quantified assemblages, are as beautiful as they are informative.

Near East, Indian Ocean and beyond

JØRGEN CHRISTIAN MEYER, EIVIND HELDAAS SELAND & NILS ANFINSET (ed.). *Palmyrena: city, hinterland and caravan trade between Orient and Occident. Proceedings of the conference held in Athens, December 1–3, 2012*. 2016. vi+183 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. Oxford: Archaeopress; 978-1-78491-279-6 paperback £45

MARIE-FRANÇOISE BOUSSAC, JEAN-FRANÇOISE SALLES & JEAN-BAPTISTE YON (ed.). *Ports of the ancient Indian Ocean*. 2016. xi+559 pages, numerous b&w illustrations. Delhi: Primus; 978-93-84082-07-9 hardback £22.



Our next stop is neither an island nor a port, but the quintessential caravan city: Palmyra. Edited by MEYER, SELAND and ANFINSET, *Palmyrena: city, hinterland and caravan trade between Orient and Occident* presents a collection of papers derived from a joint Syrian-Norwegian project hosted by the University of Bergen.

The Introduction—dated June 2015—mentions that the project’s fieldwork was cut short in 2011 by the Syrian civil war. Of course, we now know that as those words were being written, Palmyra had just fallen under the control of the so-called Islamic State, leading to a tragic sequence of death and destruction. In such circumstances, it would be easy to believe that the past was a more civilised time, but this would, of course, overlook previous spasms of violence, not least those associated with Rome’s crushing of the short-lived, separatist Palmyrene Empire of the third century AD.

Likewise, modern observers often view ancient Palmyra’s vibrant culture as a hybrid of East and West. But, in their Introduction, the editors caution that

"it is highly improbable that [Palmyrenes] themselves considered their culture as hybrid between the Orient and Occident, which are modern Western concepts" (p. iii). Palmyrenes shared a 'collective self-awareness' (see Webster and Lund, above) and a cultural confidence that go somewhat towards explaining the strength and visibility of the Palmyrene diaspora across not one empire but two: the Roman and Parthian/Sasanian. The 16 papers divide into two groups: the first explores Palmyrenes 'abroad', and the second, larger group focuses on the city itself.

Among the first group, Gawlikowski considers the organisation of Palmyra's trade. He makes two key observations. First, that there is no evidence for the city's involvement in the overland 'Silk Road' to China; second, because the Egyptian ports on the Red Sea handled the Indian Ocean trade supplying Rome, Palmyra's involvement in the East, largely via the Persian Gulf, was primarily for the supply of Syria itself. Does that mean that the community of Palmyrenes at Rome was therefore not one of traders, but perhaps slaves or envoys? In his paper, Terpstra rejects such suggestions, arguing instead that this community, based as it was around Rome's harbours, was part of a 'trading diaspora' in the West. Terpstra and Gawlikowski do not cross-reference their conclusions, but they need not be incompatible if, for example, the Palmyrenes at Rome were general traders rather than specialists in importation from the East.

Other papers in this section include Źuchowska on exchange between China and the West. The evidence is sparse but includes Chinese (and Indian) silk fabrics from tombs at Palmyra; significantly, these silks depict scenes and motifs that are not typically Chinese and may therefore have been produced specifically for export. The rarity of Western imports to Han China is even more striking. There are, for example, no Roman coins, and this may reflect the fact that exchange was based on gifts and tribute. Yet cultural influences can be glimpsed, for example, through a series of locally made glass bowls from Guangxi that appear to reference Western vessel forms.

Among the papers on the city of Palmyra, Linck presents recent geophysical and remotely sensed surveys of the urban layout. Although more focused on the technology than the results, it gives a good sense of the otherwise poorly known Hellenistic city to the south of the main wadi, and adds a number of new features to the map of the Roman-period city to the north. Bührig discusses how movement around the latter city was intentionally directed

by colonnaded streets and monuments. Ertel and Poyer summarise recent excavations of a Roman courtyard house, including new data on glass vessels; meanwhile, Römer-Strehl examines the Seleucid, Roman and Mesopotamian stylistic influences on pottery in relation to the question of Palmyrene identity. Among a series of papers on funerary monuments and human remains, Saito reports on the excavation of a house-tomb preserved as a pile of stone blocks. 3D laser scanning has allowed the sequence of the structure's collapse to be tracked in detail and hence the original form of the monument to be fully reconstructed, inside and out. Given recent events, one could imagine that such techniques might now be usefully deployed on a much larger scale at Palmyra. Finally, topping and tailing the volume are papers that emphasise the economy of the Palmyra region: Hesse considers the evidence for pastoralists, specifically in relation to the Old Babylonian period, and Krzywinski and Krzywinski examine mud bricks for clues about 'Agriculture in Byzantine Palmyrena'.

The collection is well illustrated throughout, with many photographs in colour; there are also short abstracts. Given the international cast—Germany, Japan, Norway, Poland and Russia—it is inevitable that the *lingua franca* is English; a few malapropisms and typos aside, the text is good.

Our final volume takes us via the Red Sea and Persian Gulf into the Indian Ocean and beyond. Edited by BOUSSAC, SALLES and YON, *Ports of the ancient Indian Ocean* presents 24 papers from a project funded by the French National Agency for Research on the social and economic connections between Mediterranean and Indian Ocean societies. The volume is organised into four sections, although by the nature of the subject, there is inevitable crossover. The first focuses on the Red Sea, Arabia and the Persian Gulf; the second shifts to India; the third concerns 'Related areas: Sri Lanka, South-east Asia'; and a short final section deals with French archives.

There are far too many papers to namecheck, so a sample must suffice. The first section offers three papers on Egypt's Red Sea coast: two concern Pharaonic-era ports, while Tomber examines the Ptolemaic and Roman-period ports of Berenike and Myos Hormos. A striking observation is the estimated population at Late Roman Berenike, "500–1000 inhabitants" (p. 45), a figure thrown into relief by comparison with the 100 000 suggested for Palmyra (*Palmyrena*, p. iv). Another distinctive feature of Myos Hormos and Berenike is the importance of religious

structures (cf. Nuragic sanctuaries, above), especially given the rarity of other public buildings. Tomber also reviews the suggestion of (although finds no evidence for) the seasonal occupation of these ports.

Also in this section, Strauch summarises recent discoveries at the Hoq Cave on the island of Socotra. Here, inscriptions and symbols scratched and painted deep inside the cave include 193 Indian epigraphs by 117 different hands. There are also inscriptions in South Arabian, Aksumite, Greek and Bactrian, plus a Palmyrene text on a wooden tablet. Several individuals also name their hometowns, including Bharukaccha and Hastakavapra in western India. The dating is tentative, but several indicators point to the first to fifth centuries AD. The presence of this diversity of peoples is all the more significant for the observation that Socotra “was certainly not a hub in these trade networks, but rather at their edge” (p. 94).

Further east, on the Oman coast, lies Sumhuram (Moscha Limen). This port had been thought to be a foundation of the king of the Hadramawt, along with the better-known port of Qana’ on the Yemen coast, intended to connect the Arabian frankincense trade to the upsurge in East–West traffic during the first centuries AD. But recent work, summarised by Avanzini, shows that Sumhuram was founded two or more centuries earlier, forming a node in a precocious network connecting Berenike with Arikamedu on the Indian coast, well before Rome initiated links with the East; indeed, Roman merchants presumably built on this pre-existing network. Capturing the essence of this, and other ports, Avanzini observes: “If I were asked today to choose two adjectives to describe the port of Sumhuram I would say that it was at one and the same time a completely *isolated* settlement and a remarkably *cosmopolitan* one” (p. 113).

Moving to the Persian Gulf, Yon discusses the port of Spasini Charax, originally founded by Alexander the Great beside the Tigris in the kingdom of Mesene or Characene. This was the destination of the caravans from Palmyra—in effect, the city’s port to the East—but, as Yon notes, there were also many Palmyrenes trading to the East using the southern route via Egypt (see Gawlikowski in *Palmyrena*, above). Still in the Gulf, Salles examines the wider geography of harbours, including the site of ed-Dur, 40km from Dubai, which was active during the first couple of centuries AD. Here, there were neither residential structures nor port facilities, and the main evidence is a series of collective, subterranean tombs; Salles

suggests that ed-Dur was less like a port and more akin to a seasonal market or fair.

Moving to Godavaya on the southern coast of Sri Lanka, Bopearachchi *et al.* introduce ‘The oldest shipwreck in the Indian Ocean’. Compared with the Mediterranean, shipwrecks in Indian and Sri Lankan waters are almost unknown, so the Godavaya wreck is of particular significance. Preliminarily dated to between the second century BC and the first century AD, the ship, of traditional South Asian design, was carrying a cargo of stone objects, ceramic vessels, iron and copper bars and glass ingots; the planned collaborative project with the University of Texas A&M will be of great interest. The following paper by Kessler provides a broader context for the wreck, with a summary of the historical and archaeological evidence for the nearby port of Godavaya.

Still on Sri Lanka, Schenk and Weisshaar present excavations at Tissamaharama, a planned city founded c. 400 BC, with evidence for a ‘workmen’s quarter’ of wattle-and-daub houses with few imports, and a wealthier brick-built district with imported Indian finewares and Roman amphorae. Broadly contemporary with Tissamaharama, is the urban settlement, port and production centre of Khao Sam Kaeo on the Thai–Malay Peninsula, facing towards the South China Sea. The site developed on low hills above a river and, at first glance, the layout of the site (map 22.2) looks not dissimilar to archaic Rome; what it does not resemble is other contemporary Southeast Asian centres, such as the moated sites of Thailand. Here, Bellina argues for stronger cultural links with Indian cities far to the west. Excavation has revealed ‘indigenous’ and ‘foreign’ compounds with South Asian craft specialists producing objects tailored to the Southeast Asian market; these ‘Indianised’ artefacts eventually achieved a complexity and diversity not found in India itself.

This collection provides a fascinating insight into the range of work around the Red Sea, Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. Several of the chapters provide summaries of previously published material, but, juxtaposed with original contributions, these are no less valuable. Disappointingly, there is no introductory or concluding chapter to draw out some of the many emergent themes. As with Indian Ocean trade itself, we are presented with individuals and teams self-organising into a well-functioning system. There is a reasonable selection of illustrations, although I missed a ‘master map’

with which to appreciate the geographic scale and distribution of the case studies. Yet, as co-editor Salles notes, there is more to Indian Ocean trade than maps; more important is an approach which is “much more human and social beyond the tedious catalogue of vessels, merchandise, winds and currents” (p. 146).

Superficially, not much links Nuragic Sardinia with Early Historic Sri Lanka, and everything in between, but some common themes can be discerned. The connectivity of islands, ports and caravan cities comes through strongly—but in different ways. In the volumes on Sardinia and Malta, connectivity exists in tension with the insularity of whole populations; in *Ports of the ancient Indian Ocean*, coastal sites are hyperconnected, but seem isolated from their hinterlands. Ports, cities and colonies—widely labelled here as ‘cosmopolitan’—attracted people from far-flung lands, but connectivity did not lead to cultural homogenisation. Egyptians, Greeks, Palmyrenes, Phoenicians and Romans continued to use different languages and retained distinctive cultural practices. Indeed, connectivity may have sharpened such identities while, simultaneously, new mechanisms were found to accommodate these differences. And everywhere, through trade or political gift exchange, specialists learned what consumers wanted and tailored their products accordingly, from imitation red-slipped wares in Cyprus and ‘Indianising’ objects on the Malay peninsula, to the Western inspiration for glass vessels made in south-western China. Unsurprisingly, several of these books tentatively discern early globalisation (cf. Lund in *Circulation of ceramics in Cyprus* and Salles in *Ports of the ancient Indian Ocean*); more surprising is the limited reference to the ‘hot’ archaeological topic of networks. Regardless, although it would be an exaggeration to say that these books have more in common than divides them, they are certainly more connected than they first appear.

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Books received

This list includes all books received between 1 May 2016 and 30 June 2016. Those featuring at the beginning of New Book Chronicle have not been duplicated in this list. The listing of a book in this chronicle does not preclude its subsequent review in *Antiquity*.

General

DON BROTHWELL. *A faith in archaeological science: reflections on a life*. 2016. vi+226 pages, 7 colour and numerous b&w illustrations. Oxford: Archaeopress; 978-1-78491-301-4 paperback £30.

ZOË CROSSLAND & ROSEMARY A. JOYCE (ed.). *Disturbing bodies: perspectives on forensic anthropology*. 2015. viii+234 pages, 1 table. Santa Fe (NM): School for Advanced Research; 978-1-938645-55-6 paperback \$39.95.

H. THOMAS FOSTER II, LISA M. PACIULLI & DAVID J. GOLDSTEIN (ed.). *Viewing the future in the past: historical ecology applications to environmental issues*. 2016. viii+186 pages, 37 b&w illustrations. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press; 978-1-61117-586-8 hardback \$34.95.

RUNE FREDERIKSEN, SILKE MUTH, PETER SCHNEIDER & MIKE SCHNELLE (ed.). *Focus on fortifications* (Monographs of the Danish Institute at Athens 18). 2016. viii+732 pages, numerous b&w illustrations. Oxford & Havertown (PA): Oxbow; 978-1-78570-131-3 hardback £70.

CHARLES FRENCH. *A handbook of gearchaeological approaches to settlement sites and landscapes*. 2015. x+118 pages, several b&w illustrations. Oxford & Havertown (PA): Oxbow; 978-1-78570-091-0 paperback £16.95.

KAREN HARDY & LUCY KUBIAK-MARTENS (ed.). *Wild harvest: plants in the hominin and pre-agrarian human worlds*. 2016. ix+372 pages, several b&w illustrations, tables. Oxford & Havertown (PA): Oxbow; 978-1-78570-123-8 paperback £30.

ROBERT HENSEY & MARION DOWD (ed.). *The archaeology of darkness*. 2016. xiv+143 pages, several b&w illustrations. Oxford & Havertown (PA): Oxbow; 978-1-78570-191-7 paperback £32.

ALICE BECK KEHOE. *Traveling prehistoric seas: critical thinking on ancient transoceanic voyages*. 2016. 216 pages, several b&w illustrations. Walnut Creek (CA): Left Coast; 978-1-62958-067-8 paperback £18.99.

SILKE MUTH, PETER SCHNEIDER, MIKE SCHNELLE & PETER DE STAEBLER (ed.). *Ancient fortifications: a compendium of theory and practice*. 2016. xv+420 pages, several b&w illustrations, tables. Oxford & Havertown (PA): Oxbow; 978-1-78570-139-9 hardback \$88.

ERIN THOMPSON. *Possession: the curious history of private collectors from antiquity to the present*. 2015. vii+224 pages, several b&w illustrations. New Haven (CT) & London: Yale University Press; 978-0-300-20852-8 hardback \$30.

European pre- and protohistory

GÉRALDINE DELLEY. *Au-delà des chronologies. Des origines du radiocarbone et de la dendrochronologie à leur intégration dans les recherches lacustres suisses* (Archéologie neuchâteloise 53). 2015. 280 pages, 72 b&w illustrations. Hauteville: Archéologie neuchâteloise; 978-2-940347-57-5 paperback CHF 50.

MARIE-PIERRE KOENIG (ed.). *Le gisement de Crévéchamps (Lorraine). Du néolithique à l'époque romaine dans la vallée de la Moselle*. 2016. 466 pages, numerous b&w illustrations, tables. Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme; 978-2-7351-2081-9 paperback €55.

ANNE LEHOËRFF. *Préhistoires d'Europe. De Néandertal à Vercingétorix*. 2016. 606 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. Paris: Belin; 978-2-7011-5983-6 paperback €43.

Mediterranean archaeology

HOLGER BAITINGER (ed.). *Material culture and identity between the Mediterranean world and Central Europe* (RGZM—Tagungen, Band 27). 2016. x+291 pages, 214 b&w illustrations. Mainz: Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum; 978-3-88467-262-4 paperback €40.

FRANCO DE ANGELIS. *Archaic and Classical Greek Sicily: a social and economic history*. 2016. xviii+437 pages, 44 b&w illustrations, 10 tables. New York: Oxford University Press; 978-0-19-517047-4 hardback £55.

COLIN RENFREW, OLGA PHILANIOTOU, NEIL BRODIE, GIORGOS GAVALAS & MICHAEL BOYD (ed.). *Kavos and the special deposits: the sanctuary on Keros and the origins of Aegean ritual*. 2016. xxx+614 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations, tables. Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research; 978-1-902937-70-0 hardback £64.

MICHELA SPATARO & ALEXANDRA VILLING (ed.). *Ceramics, cuisine and culture: the archaeology and science of kitchen pottery in the ancient Mediterranean world*. 2015. viii+278 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. Oxford & Havertown (PA): Oxbow; 978-1-78297-947-0 hardback £50.

The Classical and Roman worlds

ALLISON GLAZEBROOK & BARBARA TSAKIRGIS (ed.). *Houses of ill repute: the archaeology of brothels, houses, and taverns in the Greek world*. 2016. viii+256 pages, 59 b&w illustrations. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press; 978-0-8122-4756-5 hardback £45.50.

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EDUARDO KAVANAGH. *Estandartes militares en la Roma antigua: tipos, simbología y función* (Anejos de Gladius 16). 2015. 633 pages, numerous b&w illustrations, CD-ROM. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas & Polifemo; 978-84-00-10021-6 paperback €57.69.

RALPH ROSEN. *Making mockery: the poetics of ancient satire*. 2016 (first published 2007). xiii+294 pages. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press; 978-0-19-538595-3 paperback £25.99.

THELMA K. THOMAS (ed.). *Designing identity: the power of textiles in Late Antiquity*. 2016. 160 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. Oxford & Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press; 978-0-691-16942-2 paperback £22.95.

Anatolia, Levant, Middle East

JOHN MACGINNIS, DICK WICKE & TINA GREENFIELD (ed.). *The provincial archaeology of the Assyrian Empire*. 2016. xviii+390 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations, and tables. Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research; 978-1-902937-74-8 hardback £80.

PHILIPP NIEWÖHNER. *Milet. Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen seit dem Jahr 1899*. 2016. xvii+411 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. Berlin: de Gruyter; 978-3-11-041688-6 hardback £142.99.

Asia

ALOK KUMAR KANUNGO. *Mapping Indo-Pacific beads vis-à-vis Papanaidupet*. 2016. xii+92 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. New Delhi: Aryan; 978-8173055478 hardback \$45.

K. PADDAYYA. *Revitalizing Indian archaeology: further theoretical essays*. 2016. xxxi+803 pages (2 volumes), numerous b&w illustrations. New Delhi: Aryan; 978-81-7305-558-4 hardback.

VLADIMIR V. PITUL'KO & ELENA YU. PAVLOVA (translated by RICHARD L. BLAND). *Geoarchaeology and radiocarbon chronology of Stone Age northeast Asia*. 2016. xv+222 pages, 10 b&w illustrations. College Station: Texas A&M University Press; 978-1-62349-330-1 hardback \$60.

Africa and Egypt

CHRISTELLE ALVAREZ, ARTO BELEKDIANIAN, ANN-KATRIN GILL & SOLÈNE KLEIN (ed.). *Current research in Egyptology 2015: Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Symposium*. 2016. xx+140 pages. Oxford & Havertown (PA): Oxbow; 978-1-78570-363-8 paperback \$55.

JAMES C.R. GILL. *Dakhleh Oasis and the Western Desert of Egypt under the Ptolemies* (Dakhleh Oasis Project Monograph 17). 2016. xviii+483 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations, and tables. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78570-135-1 hardback £75.

Americas and Oceania

JOSÉ M. CAPRILES & NICHOLAS TRIPCEVICH (ed.). *The archaeology of Andean pastoralism*. 2016. 280 pages, numerous b&w illustrations, 25 tables. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press; 978-0-8263-5702-1 hardback \$85.

ANANDA COHEN SUAREZ. *Heaven, hell, and everything in between: murals of the colonial Andes*. 2016. xi+274 pages, 25 colour and 49 b&w illustrations. Austin: University of Texas Press; 978-1-4773-0954-4 paperback \$90.

EMILIANO GALLAGA & MARC G. BLAINY (ed.). *Manufactured light: mirrors in the Mesoamerican realm*. 2016. xi+324 pages, numerous b&w illustrations, 5 tables. Boulder: University Press of Colorado; 978-1-60732-407-2 hardback \$65.

CYNTHIA L. HERHAHN & ANN F. RAMENOFSKY (ed.). *Exploring cause and explanation: historical ecology, demography, and movement in the American Southwest*. 2016. xvi+398 pages, 51 b&w illustrations. Boulder: University Press of Colorado; 978-1-60732-472-0 hardback \$65.

ADAM KING (ed.). *Archaeology in South Carolina: exploring the hidden heritage of the Palmetto State*. 2016. xviii+249 pages, 38 colour and 103 b&w illustrations. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press; 978-1-61117-608-7 hardback \$39.99.

HELENE MARTINSSON-WALLIN. *Samoa archaeology and cultural heritage: monuments and people, memory and history*. 2016. x+188 pages, numerous b&w illustrations. Oxford: Archaeopress; 978-1-78491-309-0 paperback £34.

PRUDENCE M. RICE & DON S. RICE. *Ixlú: a contested Maya entrepôt in Petén, Guatemala* (Memoirs in Latin American Archaeology 23). 2016. xvi+97 pages, numerous b&w illustrations. Pittsburgh (PA): University of Pittsburgh Center for Comparative Archaeology & Museo Popol Vuh, Universidad Francisco Marroquín; 978-1-877812-94-1 paperback \$22.

LAURA RIVAL. *Huaorani transformations in twenty-first-century Ecuador: treks into the future of time*. 2016. 344 pages, several b&w illustrations. Tucson: University Press of Arizona; 978-0-8165-0119-9 hardback \$65.

Britain and Ireland

LESLEY DUNWOODIE, CHIZ HARDWARD & KEN PITTS. *An early Roman fort and urban development on Londinium's eastern hill: excavations at Plantation Place, City of London, 1997–2003* (MOLA Monograph 65). 2016. xvii+263 pages, 180 colour and b&w illustrations, 27 tables, CD-ROM. London: Museum of London Archaeology; 978-1-907586-32-3 hardback £30.

GAVIN GLOVER, PAUL FLINTOFF & RICHARD MOORE (ed.). *A mershy contree called Holderness: excavations on the route of a national grid pipeline in Holderness, East Yorkshire*. 2016. xii+286 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. Oxford: Archaeopress; 978-1-78491-313-7 paperback £40.

DAVID MILES. *The tale of the axe. How the Neolithic revolution shaped Britain*. 2016. 426 pages, 20 colour and 50 b&w illustrations. London: Thames & Hudson; 978-0-500-05186-3 hardback \$29.95.

ROGER S.O. TOMLIN. *Roman London's first voices: writing tablets from the Bloomberg excavations, 2010–14* (MOLA Monograph 72). 2016. xv+309 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations. London: Museum of London Archaeology; 978-1-907586-40-8 hardback £32.