



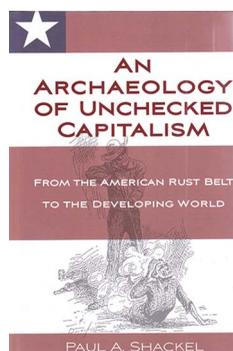
New Book Chronicle

Claire Nesbitt

The numerous review volumes that the *Antiquity* office receives encompass a diverse range of archaeological research and a broad chronological and geographic spread. NBC represents a small selection of the varied new volumes that pass across my desk. In this issue we are taken from the well-preserved Early Neolithic fabrics of the cave of Murciélagos, via the sugar plantations of Yucatán, to the ruins of Coventry Cathedral, which stand shoulder to shoulder with its modern successor. The diversity of archaeological study never fails to astound us, and once again the volumes under review emphasise the ways in which archaeological evidence has so much to offer our study of humanity by pushing the orthodox boundaries of what archaeology is and what it seeks to achieve.

PAUL A. SHACKEL. 2019. *An archaeology of unchecked capitalism: from the American rust belt to the developing world*. New York: Berghahn; 978-1-78920-547-3 hardback £99.

JOHN ROBERT GUST & JENNIFER P. MATHEWS. 2020. *Sugarcane and rum: the bittersweet history of labor and life on the Yucatán Peninsula*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press; 978-0-8165-3888-1 paperback \$29.95.



Archaeology of the modern world has been an increasingly fruitful area of research, and our first two volumes examine how archaeology reveals the legacy of capitalist exploitation. Paul Shackel's book considers the historical archaeology of industrial capitalism in nineteenth-century America. It demonstrates the power of archaeology to recover lost memories and to create landscapes of counter memory in places where politically it has been convenient to expunge the memory of disasters and the treatment of immigrant communities. Focusing on the nineteenth-century anthracite coal mining heritage of north-eastern Pennsylvania and the exploitation and massacre of immigrant miners associated with it, Shackel shines

a light on the consequences of unchecked capitalism and the need to recognise that these atrocities are not limited to the past, but continue to be played out in developing countries today.

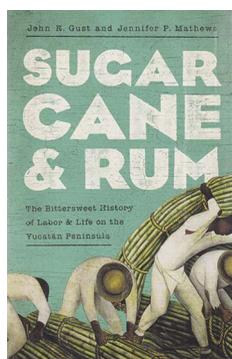
The volume divides broadly into two, with the first part focusing on the industrial remains of north-eastern Pennsylvania, detailing the exploitation of immigrant communities and the intergenerational stress that has left a legacy of poverty and structural violence. Shackel draws on both historical and archaeological evidence in different ways to provide complementary insights into the story of exploited labourers. Historical research reveals the institutionalised racism evident in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century

government documents (Chapter 1). The discrimination permeated all levels of the industry from official legislation—an anti-immigrant act passed in 1889 which required that workers demonstrate two years' experience of mining and pass an exam written in English to be certified as miners—to the *Dictionary of races or peoples* (U.S. Senate 1911), with its constructed hierarchy of race. Archaeology exposes the impact of a racialised society on the daily lives of immigrant workers (Chapter 2). Coal operators allocated the poorest land to immigrant families; the housing was substandard with poor sanitation. Faunal remains suggest that families lived on the cheapest cuts of meat (cow's head, chuck primal cut, sheep or goat shank), and that maintaining gardens to grow food was necessary to supplement their diet. The area was subject to subsidence and sink holes and, given known current levels of air pollution in coal-mining areas, the immigrant community in these patch towns (coal-mining towns established by the employers) must have lived with very poor air quality.

Many discussions of nineteenth-century poverty leave the problem in the past, but in Chapter 3 Shackel considers how the legacy of the coal barons continues to affect the local population with polluted landscapes and water sources, destroyed vegetation and a generally toxic landscape. This chapter also reveals how intergenerational stress dating to the initial arrival of Southern and Eastern European immigrants generated poor health outcomes for the present local generation. This is borne out in archaeological research, oral histories, literature and epigenetic studies. Perhaps the most damning conclusion is that “the racialization of the new immigrant population over a century ago justified these conditions and led to a form of structural violence that impacts the present-day community” (p. 49).

Where the first part of the volume focuses on the historical consequences of unchecked capitalism for a single region (north-eastern Pennsylvania), the second part warns against the long-term impacts at national and international scales. Chapter 4 details the shift in the production of textiles from the American South to the Northern Mariana Islands in Micronesia, which became a U.S. commonwealth in 1975. The exemptions from several U.S. laws, including the minimum wage provision and the Fair Labor and Standards Act, meant that manufacturers could exploit workers, avoid import tax and yet still advertise their garments as ‘made in America’.

Drawing parallels between nineteenth-century industrial Pennsylvania and exploited labourers in modern Bangladesh, South Africa and Turkey, Shackel highlights the social injustice that has been allowed to continue and asks us to confront the uncomfortable reality that these atrocities are ongoing. As consumers we drive the pursuit of cheaper production that fuels unorganised labour and poor working conditions, in that “The greed to produce more at the expense of human life and welfare led to fatal tragedies in the past. In developing countries today these conditions persist” (p. 109). This is an important and insightful book that demonstrates how social injustice is perpetuated in the legacy of exploitation in the past and our failure to protect developing nations from the same fate in the present.



The next volume shifts the focus farther south, to Mexico, as John Gust and Jennifer Mathews explore the impact of the sugarcane and rum industries on the people of the Yucatán Peninsula. Chapter 1 of *Sugarcane and rum* charts the growth of the global love affair with sugar and details the beginnings of sugar cultivation in the Americas in the sixteenth century. Molasses and sugarcane juice, by-products of the sugar refining process, soon became profitable as basic ingredients for rum. While molasses could be exported, sugarcane juice, also used in rum production, had a short shelf-life and needed to be processed quickly, which led to sugar plantations becoming three-fold operations combining farm, factory and distillery. The first

established, though short-lived, sugarcane plantation in Yucatán is recorded as that of conquistador Francisco de Montejo in the 1530s. Until later in the sixteenth century, however, the industry was limited by labour shortages. Like other colonial industries, the sugar trade relied heavily on slave labour and formed part of a 'triangular trade' that exported molasses to New England for rum production, rum to Africa to trade for slaves, and slaves to the Caribbean and South America to grow the sugar for molasses.

In Chapter 2 the sugar production in Yucatán is compared with that of the rest of the Americas, beginning with the various definitions of labour as indentured servitude, chattel slavery or debt peonage. Unlike the large-scale corporate estates of the rest of the Americas, the nineteenth-century farms in the Yucatán Peninsula were 'haciendas', agricultural estates supplying a small-scale market, run by a dependent labour force—usually debt peons who worked to repay loans, the majority of whom were Maya—overseen by an owner.

Chapter 3 recounts the gradual impoverishment of the Maya peoples, which culminated in the Caste War (1847–1901). Charting the history of the Mexican revolution, the end of debt peonage and agrarian reform, this chapter investigates how the Indigenous workers were disenfranchised by the political system of the Yucatán Peninsula and discusses the choice of the Maya people to become indebted peons rather than taking other limited and bleak options.

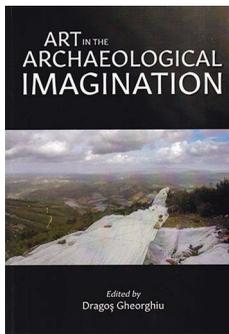
The archaeological fieldwork undertaken at the Xuxub Sugar House and San Eusebio is presented in Chapter 4. The survey and excavation at Xuxub revealed the sugar-milling area, refining building and probable fermentation tank, but locating the workers' accommodation proved difficult. Despite surface scatters of artefacts and some small anomalies in phosphate concentrations in the soil that could be representative of human or animal activity, no evidence of structures or shelters was found. The San Eusebio site revealed larger and higher-quality structures than those at Xuxub, including a significant smokestack that remains upstanding. As at Xuxub, however, no evidence for workers' housing was discovered. The evidence leads Gust and Mathews to conclude that workers lived in accommodation so ephemeral that it left no trace.

Like Shackel's book, this volume is unusual in that it considers the development of the region through to the modern day and the ways in which this heritage is presented, with Chapter 5 examining the impact of alcohol through the post-colonial period and the rise of the 'cantina'. This chapter details the effect of the cantinas on women, both those who made a living in them and the wives of the men who frequented them. The research reveals that rum and other alcohol continued to have negative social and economic effects on the Yucatán Peninsula throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century. Increased

tourism in Yucatán has created a divided peninsula. While the city of Mérida reveals to the visitor “the remnants of a system that built Yucatán into one of Mexico’s richest regions on the backs of the poor and sustains the social hierarchy that has disadvantaged the Yucatec Maya for centuries” (p. 114), the resort city of Cancún provides a sanitised tourist experience where holidaymakers need not be troubled by the still evident social injustice of the colonial past. Gust and Mathews’s volume reveals not only the heritage of exploitation in this region, but also the legacy of the sugar and rum industry in modern Yucatán.

Reimagining the archaeological past

DRAGOS GHEORGHU (ed.). 2020. *Art in the archaeological imagination*. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78925-352-8 paperback £36.



Another volume taking a somewhat unusual approach to archaeology, this time by trying to access the mind of the prehistoric artist, is *Art in the archaeological imagination*. Together with eight international contributors, Dragos Gheorghiu explores archaeology as experiential. Papers in the volume show how the study of archaeological art need not be a simple identification of material culture, but, as a creative process, archaeology can lead us towards interpretation of the mental experience of creativity. The volume divides informally and neatly into three themes: “imagining the art of the past as a magic and emotive experience” (p. 3), which focuses on

ways of approaching art from the archaeological record and considers the subjectivity and emotive nature of the process; “experimentation and experience as forms of art” (p. 3), considering the advantages of experimental archaeology and phenomenological approaches to experiencing the past; and “the exploration of the act of creation” (p. 4), which asks how archaeology can define the creative act and whether it can reimagine the prehistoric artist.

After a brief introduction by the editor, the volume launches with Roberta Robin Dods’s chapter that deals with ‘the magic of being’. In helping us to grapple with how far we can hope to understand the conscious mind of the pre-literate past, Dods covers a vast and impressive range of evolutionary and metaphysical theory, taking us from the *qbit* to Schrödinger’s cat via cortical neurons and Dirac’s equation in just 15 pages. At the core of the chapter, however, is the struggle to find the “intersubjective space” (p. 20) between the makers of an artefact and the archaeologist interpreting it. Dods introduces plenty of challenges for us to contemplate in our quest to understand the artists of the past.

Torill Christine Lindstrøm (Chapter 2) presents perspectives on aesthetics, establishing a set of “objective criteria for subjective evaluations of aesthetics” (p. 25). Lindstrøm begins from the premise that while beauty is subjective it is still possible for people to recognise the artistic value of a range of material culture, despite perhaps not finding it beautiful themselves. If this idea is accepted, are there objective criteria that determine aesthetics? Discussion of Plato’s interactionism married with modern cognitive psychology leads Lindstrøm to the answer—“perceptual

fluency” (p. 29); this means that the easier it is for a person to perceive an object—hold it, see it, consider it—the more likely they will regard it as aesthetic. This becomes the basis for the author’s objective criteria for subjective evaluations. The criteria are tested using two objects, a bifacial stone tool from Blombos Cave in South Africa and a fifth-century AD brooch from Kvåle in Sogn, Norway. Lindstrøm concludes that the elaborate, over-determined nature of the objects, which encapsulates all that is implicitly understood in the societies who created them, made them aesthetic to their original creators. It seems that it is that same complexity of manufacture—encoding their significance in their appearance—that allows us to recognise their aesthetic value too.

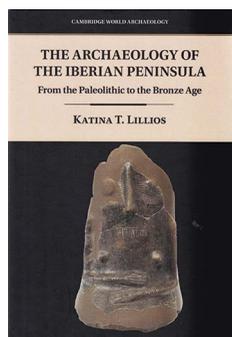
Timothy Darvill and Elizabeth Poraj-Wilczynska (Chapter 5) consider new ways of understanding archaeological landscapes as they use works of art created by Poraj-Wilczynska to question conventional perspectives on landscape. The authors find that sensory and immersive experiences can provide a temporal link between archaeologists and the builders of past landscapes (in this case, Belas Knap in Gloucestershire, UK) and allow engagement with agency and emotion in the past.

The findings of *Art in the archaeological imagination* are nicely summed up by Lindstrøm:

In an explorative, artistic mode, but still within a scientific sober mode, we should try to reach out for the psychological factors, the cognitions, sentiments, and emotions of the persons behind the objects—those who produced and used the artful, aesthetic artefacts (p. 41).

The Iberian world

KATINA T. LILLIOS. 2019. *The archaeology of the Iberian Peninsula: from the Paleolithic to the Bronze Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 978-1-10-711334-3 hardback £75.



Katina Lillios’s book answers a need for a broad synthesis of the pre-historic archaeology of the Iberian Peninsula. Beginning with the earliest Iberian settlers in the Lower Palaeolithic (1.4 mya), the volume charts the fortunes of the Neanderthals and the first Modern Humans, the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers who left their mark in the rock art of the La Braña-Arintero Caves, the Neolithic peoples who expanded interregional contact and the Copper and Bronze Age societies. The vast period covered in the volume necessitates summary treatment of the material, but nonetheless the book has been carefully planned to offer a detailed overview of the archaeology

of this important European region.

The introduction sets out clearly the aims of the book and its scope. The volume tells the story of the archaeological record from three perspectives: that of the archaeologists and their work to analyse and preserve sites; the archaeological remains and how we understand them; and the relationship between the Iberian past and modern Spanish and Portuguese societies. Throughout the volume, Lillios highlights the factors that have shaped the history of the peninsula including its environment—the diverse climates and topography, metal-rich geology and

coastal resources. The introduction also identifies the ways in which the more recent political landscape has impacted on archaeology and cultural heritage in Portugal and Spain.

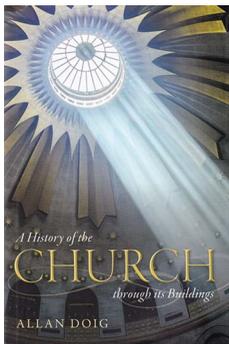
Acknowledging the problematic nature of interpreting 1 000 000 years of hominin activity through a little over 100 sites, Chapter 2 discusses what we can ascertain from the evidence of life in the Lower Palaeolithic. The book highlights the key finds from this region, including the Pleistocene sites of the Sierra de Atapuerca—especially Gran Dolina; and Neanderthal remains from Murcia, particularly the discovery of a Modern Human child at Lapedo, which provides some of the earliest evidence to suggest Neanderthals and Modern Humans interbred.

Chapter 4 charts the shifts in the relations between people, landscape, animals and objects, and traces the adoption of farming across the Iberian Peninsula through four regions: the Mediterranean coast; the interior; the Vasco-Cantabrian coast; and the western façade (Galicia and Portugal). Supported by high-quality illustrations, the chapter considers the material culture associated with the Early Neolithic including the remarkably well-preserved baskets, sandals and textiles from the cave of Murciélagos. Early ceramics, menhirs, burial practices and rock art are also addressed. The chapter concludes with reflections on the latest developments in debates surrounding the Early Neolithic of Iberia and the demographic changes and new technologies that accompanied it.

In the concluding chapter, Lillios brings together the themes that emerge from the volume: mobilities; taxonomies; beyond the state; memories, landscapes and histories; violence; and gender, age and power. The author considers these themes and poses questions that may inform future research agendas. Lillios concludes by calling for research collaboration that crosses modern political and geographic borders, and possible incentivisation to promote this future collaboration. This is an excellent and eminently readable volume that fulfils its aim to provide a synthesis of the state of the field.

The architecture of faith

ALLAN DOIG. 2020. *A history of the church through its buildings*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 978-0-19-957536-7 hardback £30.



Allan Doig's volume adds to the body of work that aims to read the history of the church through the fabric of its buildings. All buildings retain in their material structure the story of their construction and use, but churches in particular can reveal social relationships, political affinities, liturgical rites and, most importantly, the architecture of faith.

Doig traces the history of Christianity through 12 case studies of renowned buildings around the world. Beginning with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the reader is taken on a journey through Old St Peter's Basilica, Rome; Hagia Sophia, Istanbul; the Cathedral of the Dormition, Moscow; Charlemagne's Church of the Holy Mother of God at Aachen; the Abbey of Saint-Denis, Paris; God's House at Ewelme, Oxfordshire; the

Cathedral at Cordoba; Renaissance St Peter's Basilica and the church of Sant'Ignazio, Rome; the Crimean Memorial Church, Istanbul; and finally, Coventry Cathedral, UK.

The journey begins in Jerusalem, at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Chapter 1), a site widely believed in the Christian tradition to stand at the location close to Golgotha (or Calvary), where Christ was crucified, and over the site of the tomb in which the body was placed. The original church (which replaced a second-century AD pagan temple) was built by the Emperor Constantine in AD 335, although little of that building survives. Construction of the present church building was completed in the 1160s.

Following two chapters devoted to the great churches of the Roman imperial capitals Rome (Chapter 2) and Istanbul (Chapter 3), Chapter 4 charts the development of Russian Orthodox Christianity through the Cathedral of the Dormition in the Moscow Kremlin. Begun in 1475 as Moscow was rising in dominance, the cathedral became the site for the coronation of tsars, the burial of metropolitans and patriarchs. Although modelled after St Sophia in Kiev and St Sophia in Novgorod (imitation of existing buildings was a common practice in the medieval world), the cathedral has been altered through the centuries, and Doig records the fortunes of the building through the Russian revolution, when it was converted to a museum, and to the present day.

The changing pattern of patronage and the emphasis on atonement is considered in Chapter 7, which focuses not on an imperial but a charitable foundation—the Foundation of God's House in the English village of Ewelme. Founded in the fifteenth century by Alice Chaucer, the granddaughter of poet and author Geoffrey Chaucer, the foundation was an almshouse, a school and chantry chapel. One of many aristocratic foundations designed in part to ensure swift passage of the benefactor's soul through purgatory. The final chapter brings the reader into the twentieth century through the case study of Coventry Cathedral, which was destroyed in the Blitz of 1940 and rebuilt in a modern style whilst retaining the ruins of the old cathedral as a memorial.

The performative nature of Christianity imbues the fabric of church buildings with the story of their use and transforms these architectural spaces into 'places' that had significance and became temporal loci for pilgrims and generations of worshippers who re-enacted the liturgical rites passed down over centuries. The architecture of churches provides a tangible connection between the worshipper and the spiritual past. So powerful can the connotations of these structures and their location be that many were and, in some cases remain, contested places. Doig's volume engages with a broad geographic range of key buildings and provides an accessible history of Christianity, engagingly told through its monuments and architecture.

These volumes are disparate in terms of their geographic and chronological focus, but together they reflect a vibrant range of archaeological research, and, refreshingly, most engage with the reception of archaeology and the presentation of heritage in the present as a fundamentally important part of the process of archaeology.

References

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dictionary of races or people. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Books received

This list includes all books received between 1 January 2021 and 28 February 2021. 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 Classical world

BJÖRN FORSÉN (ed.). *Thesprotia expedition IV: region transformed by empire*. 2019. Helsinki: Suomen Ateenan-Instituutin säätiö; 978-952-68500-4-7 paperback €35.

GUNNAR AF HÄLLSTRÖM (ed.). *Apologists and Athens: early Christianity meets ancient Greek thinking*.

2020. Helsinki: Suomen Ateenan-Instituutin säätiö; 978-952-68500-5-4 paperback €20.

MANFRED KLINKOTT. *Das Fundament des Pergamonaltars und die Aufnahme seiner Fassadenfragmente*. 2020. Berlin: De Gruyter; 978-3-11-059814-8 hardback £109.

Anatolia, Levant and the Middle East

ARIANE THOMAS & TIMOTHY POTTS (ed.). *Mesopotamia: civilization begins*. 2020. Los

Angeles (CA): Getty; 978-1-60606-649-2 hardback £50.

Byzantine, early medieval and medieval

ANNET NIEUWHOF (ed.). *The excavations at Wijnaldum. Volume 2: handmade and wheel-thrown pottery of the first millennium AD*.

2020. Groningen: Barkhuis; 978-949319-410-6 hardback €44.95.

European pre- and protohistory

MARKOLF BRUMLICH, MICHAEL MEYER & ENRICO LEHNHARDT (ed.). *The coming of iron: the beginnings of iron smelting in Central Europe. Proceedings of the International Conference Freie Universität Berlin, Excellence Cluster 264 Topoi, 19–21 October 2017*. 2020. Rahden-Westfalen: VML; 978-3-89646-528-3 hardback €59.80.

MELANIE GILES. *Bog bodies: face to face with the past*. 2020. Manchester: Manchester University Press; 978-1-5261-5019-6 eBook Open Access.

DANIEL GROß, HARALD LÜBKE, JOHN MEADOWS & DETLEF JANTZEN (ed.). *Working at the sharp end: from bone and antler to Early Mesolithic life in Northern Europe*. 2020. Kiel: Wachholtz; 978-3-529-01861-9 Open Access.

Mediterranean archaeology

DEREK B. COUNTS, ERIN WALCEK AVERETT, KEVIN GARSTKI & MICHAEL TOUMAZOU. *Visualizing votive practice: exploring limestone and terracotta sculpture from Athienou-Malloura*

through 3D models. 2020. Grand Forks: University of North Dakota; 978-1-7345068-7-7 eBook Open Access.

The Roman world

GUY DE LA BÉDOYÈRE. *Gladius: the world of the Roman soldier*. 2020. Chicago (IL): University of

Chicago Press; 978-0-226-75023-1 paperback \$30.

General

ANNA L. BOOZER, BLEDA S. DÜRING & BRADLEY J. PARKER (ed.). *Archaeologies of empire: local participants and imperial trajectories*. 2020. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press; 978-0-8263-6175-2 paperback \$39.95.

CLIVE GAMBLE. *Making deep history: zeal, perseverance, and the time revolution of 1859*.

2021. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 978-0-19-887069-2 hardback £25.

JAN VAN DER DUSSEN. *History as a science: the philosophy of R.G. Collingwood* (2nd edition). 2020. Leiden: Brill; 978-90-04-42492-0 hardback €160.

Heritage, conservation and museums

AARON TUGENDHAFT. *The idols of ISIS: from Assyria to the internet*. 2020. Chicago (IL): University of

Chicago Press; 978-0-226-73756-0 paperback \$18.