

Welcome to Volume 20 of PIA, which once again contains an interesting mix of papers from both established scholars and up and coming graduate students. We begin the volume with a Forum discussing the sensitive issue of the merits of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) and the Treasure Act. We would like to thank David Gill for accepting our invitation to write the lead article, something which unavoidably exposes him to ‘fire’ in regard to such a polarised issue. The Forum aims to discuss all sides of the issue, and the respondents to Gill’s article have presented very well argued papers from a range of positions, all of which force the reader to carefully evaluate his or her position. Some might think that things get a bit overheated in places, but this demonstrates exactly why the debate is so important. People have very strong and contrary opinions in this area, with few other outlets for engagement, and we hope that we have succeeded in allowing some important issues to be brought out more into the open.

With an extraordinarily wide-ranging and successful career that has encompassed academia, business and museum management, Dominic Tweddle offers valuable insights into how museums should best deal with the current funding cuts, and whether students should take the situation into account when planning their studies and careers in the Interview.

The topic of the antiquities trade is picked up again among the Research Papers, where Gustafsson looks at this from a wider angle, seeking to introduce the concept of the subaltern in relation to the objects traded. Perego looks at magic in the prehistory of the Veneto, and offers a valuable way forward in the study of burials containing items such as amulets. Hubschmann looks thought-provokingly at how identity is (and is not) manifested in the archaeological record of the Nile Valley, and Christidou discusses useful ways of analysing museum visitor motivations based on behavioural observations.

The Short Reports section contains a wide range of papers, with Wright and Pohl focussing on Medieval smithing and trade respectively, while Kaye *et al.* present the results of their fieldwork in the West Indies, with interesting points on the benefits and pitfalls of Ground Penetrating Radar use. Mazzone highlights the wealth of information that even the smallest artefacts in museum collections can convey in his study of a clay knife in the Petrie Museum, and Duke *et al.*’s preliminary report on excavations at the site of Ban Non Wat in Thailand is a welcome addition from that region.

That South-East Asia is a neglected area of study in the UK (as is South Asia), is a point also brought up by Balbaligo in her review of Bellina *et al.*’s book commemorating Ian Glover’s work in the region. This is accompanied by Iacono’s critique of Vianello’s book on the Late Bronze Age Western Mediterranean, and Iverson’s review of Bolger and Maguire’s volume on pre-state communities in the ancient Near East. Two excellent exhibitions are reviewed: Vomvyla describes the colourful *Eros* exhibition which was at the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens this year, and Wren provides details of the ambitious and successful Buckinghamshire County Museum *Human* exhibition. The

volume is rounded out by critical assessments of the 2010 International Symposium on Archaeometry by Fillery-Travis, and TAG 2009 by Gordon.

We hope you enjoy this volume, and we also encourage readers to continue the discussion and debate of all of the topics it contains, by using the web sharing features, making online comments on articles and contacting the authors with feedback.

Brian Hole,
PIA Editor (acting)

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