



Editors:
Jaime Almansa Sánchez & Elena Papagiannopoulou



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Online Journal in Public Archaeology

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EDITORIAL

Consolidating the model

Jaime ALMANSA SÁNCHEZ, Editor

Elena PAPAGIANNOPOULOU, Editor

As we are about to bid farewell to 2015, we must admit that this past year has been interesting regarding the academic publishing sector. In September 2014 we presented a poster at the EAA Meeting in Istanbul to celebrate our journal's first five years. One of the points highlighted in our poster was our commitment to provide a completely free service to both authors and readers. This academic publishing model is by no means innovative. It has been established in Spanish archaeology since 1998 with *ArqueoWeb* and, during the past few years, most institutional journals have been uploaded under the OJS (Open Journal Systems) platform. In the case of public institutions, Open Access is understood as part of their academic responsibilities and its standard costs are incorporated in the general budget for publications. In our case, JAS Arqueología S.L.U. supports the small material costs of the journal, while our team works voluntarily for the project.

Then, is *AP Journal* a loss-making endeavour? Of course it is. With zero returns it is practically impossible to make any money. The point, however, is not making profit but sharing public archaeology, and this is what distinguishes us from any other editorial. Once the web hosting service is paid, the material costs of the journal are less than 100€ per year, which is affordable for the company if donations to the journal are low. However, the financial costs are only one part of the equation. The other critical part is the time spent and effort put into the whole project. Obviously, we all have

other work—and life—related commitments and responsibilities, but still we are willing to commit to the project in our spare time, although the latter is sometimes hard to find. We (Elena and Jaime), as founders and editors of the journal, have the responsibility to do it, but should thank again (and always) the rest of the team for their hard work and for sticking with us. Together we spend several dozens of hours handling and copyediting papers, communicating with authors, reviewers and publishers, managing our social media, holding online meetings, producing each volume, and publishing content that is steadily increasing and getting better.

In March 2015 we submitted an application to be considered for inclusion in Scopus, just to try and see what would happen. Up to now, the application status is still “Submission received” (i.e. the first out of seven steps). Meanwhile, Latindex (from UNAM, Mexico) listed us with 32 out of 36 criteria¹ met in less than a week and ISOC (from CSIC, Spain) did so in two days. It is a pity that only ISI (Thomson-Reuters) and Scopus (Elsevier) are valuable for the academic system, but we do not care about our submission’s outcome or its timing as we firmly believe that the value of the journal must be measured by our readers and authors, and that the peer-review system is a first step to ensure its quality. The real challenge, however, is to survive (and thrive) in an environment where internet journals are still undervalued and authors prefer to publish in indexed journals to increase their h-index (which deserves its own editorial). If one day Scopus decides to include us, we can be sure of one thing: the number of papers received would increase exponentially in weeks. Hopefully this entire model will have collapsed by then and we want to be part of the reform.

1 Two of the criteria do not apply to us, as they are meant for Spanish/Portuguese publications that should offer Abstract and Keywords in two languages. A third one will be readily met, starting with this volume (i.e. adding dates for reception and acceptance of papers), and the fourth, technical criterion will be addressed as soon as we find a way to include it, as it will also be useful for other repositories and search engines.

We said it has been an interesting year for the academic publishing world, also because Maney Publishing has been acquired by Taylor and Francis Group. As you probably know, Maney was the publisher of the journals *Public Archaeology* and *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage*. As a result, the annual subscription fee for both journals recently rose from 188€ to 236€. We are worried because the rising costs of journal subscriptions are another example of how academic research and publishing is still extremely commoditized. Nevertheless, we sincerely hope they carry on with quality content for those who can afford a subscription. For those of us who are not linked to an academic institution with funds to pay subscriptions, affordable prices and Open Access are the only ways to access research. This is why we want to consolidate our model and be an alternative to the market. This is why we kindly invite you to take part in this quest and enjoy the benefits of publishing in open online journals like ours. We will only state one: everybody can read you.

Regarding the current volume and its contents, this year we had a slight change of plans: due to recent events and other internal issues, we took the decision to postpone the third part of our looting forum for next year. At present it is our pleasure to bring you a collection of papers that we believe you will find useful. Volume 5 opens with a research article, signed by Festo Gabriel, in which the author examines local communities' perceptions of archaeology and cultural heritage resources in the Mtwara region of Tanzania. The paper is revealing as to the chasm between local communities views and conventional practice, which combined with the lack of community involvement in heritage management can have repercussions for the protection of cultural heritage. Indeed, community involvement is key to effective heritage management and a holistic approach from which local communities can benefit is the only ethical and sustainable path. In our second article, Alicja Piślewska explores the relationship between archaeology and society in Poland, providing an overview of the latter throughout the 20th century, discussing public participation

while giving a detailed account of the role of archaeological museums, festivals, re-enactments, and reconstructed sites, and closing with a critical discussion on digital public archaeology. Next, Johan Normark examines the 2012-phenomenon, presenting his personal experience in dealing with it as an academic blogger, and provides a critical discussion on the ways archaeologists tackle fringe 'archaeologies' through traditional and social media. Our fourth paper takes us to present day Albania. The authors of this research paper, Francesco Iacono and Klejd L. Këlliçi, study the public perception of the material heritage of the country's recent dictatorial past and discuss how, in the case under study, notions of 'difficult heritage' can be problematic if often neglected aspects other than trauma are not taken into account. In our final article, signed by Colleen Morgan, 'punk archaeology' and the relation of archaeology with DIY practices and anarchy are under investigation.

There is a common thread running through most of this volume's articles. Public perceptions of archaeology and cultural heritage should be seriously taken into account, if increasing the public's involvement and engagement with the past when practicing public archaeology is a priority. Bridging the gap between society's needs and conventional practice is not only still relevant today in numerous contexts but also of utmost importance.

In this volume you will also find our regular *Points of You* article. Helen Stefanopoulos reflects on why alternative and more inclusive approaches to archaeological heritage management in Greece should be adopted and points out the necessity of re-evaluating existing policies. Finally, we are pleased to also share with you a series of book reviews, representing some of the most interesting publications of the last couple of years and covering most of the topics that pertain to public archaeology, from illicit trade of antiquities to popular representations of the past, and from theoretical approaches to management and community engagement. We are doing our best to provide what we consider

to be an essential tool for the critical analysis of current trends in the field and would like to remind you that we are waiting to review your titles in the future. As for the blog, we would like to remind you that we regularly publish reviews of events as well as links to Open Access theses. Remember, you can send us the link to yours and we will be happy to share it.

This year we participated for the first time in the Day of Archaeology, an important digital public archaeology project that grows each year, with a post by Elena (<http://www.dayofarchaeology.com/ap-journal-its-journey-and-my-day-of-archaeology/>). Hopefully we will get more involved in the coming years and encourage you to do so too.

There are different approaches to public archaeology in different countries, but with public archaeology slowly shifting away from the definition debate towards a more reflective and critical outlook and discussion of both theory and practice, we feel optimistic that true progress can be achieved. We want to be part of this, and we want to do it with you. Last but not least, we wish to make a few announcements:

1. Call for Debate:

We welcome guest blog posts on a wide range of topics related to public archaeology as well as event reviews. You can send your posts in a Word document with image files attached to our email. We also encourage your feedback and comments, after visiting our blog, as well as discussion via our other social media (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, Google+). If you have any specific topic in mind that you want to write about, we are open to suggestions.

2. Call for Papers:

Volume 6 will be published in 2016. The deadline for submissions is 31 March 2016. As the number of papers submitted is steadily increasing, we wish to receive papers for our next volume as soon as possible so that there will be enough time to get things done

in a timely, consistent manner. For more information about the submission procedure, please visit our website. In case you have any questions or doubts, please feel free to contact us.

3. Call for Special Issue Proposals:

We invite guest editor proposals from those who wish to discuss particular topics and areas of research that fall within the aims and scopes of the journal. Special issues provide a great opportunity to review a specific topic, examine aspects that remain unaddressed, discuss, suggest and develop novel approaches, and encourage new research models. Feel free to contact us for guidance on preparing your proposal.

4. Call for Donations:

As previously mentioned JAS Arqueología will continue to take care of and publish this journal for as long as it exists. The philosophy of this journal—and of its editors—is to provide the widest access at no cost for both authors and readers. AP is—and will remain—a free-access and not-for-profit journal, thus, sustainability is always an issue. Keeping the journal an open-access and ad-free publication means its future depends on your support. So if you find any stimulation in AP Journal, please consider a modest donation. We will be grateful for your support and donations, no matter how small the amount, make a big difference.

At this point, we should warmly thank and express our gratitude to our donors. Should you wish to support AP Journal, you can do so either directly or indirectly, by buying a hard copy of any of the existing volumes:

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Editors:

Jaime Almansa Sánchez & Elena Papagiannopoulou

Email: almansasanchez@gmail.com

Assistant editors:

Amanda Erickson Harvey

Kaitlyn T. Goss

Reviews editor:

Alexandra Ion

Assistant production editor:

Alejandra Galmés Alba

Edited by:

JAS Arqueología S.L.U.

Website: www.jasarqueologia.es

Email: jasarqueologia@gmail.com

Address: Plaza de Mondariz, 6, 28029 - Madrid (Spain)

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