

were cheap, and then claims that there was a large body of specialist artists satisfying the demand created by these low prices. Various monuments are signalled as made for not very wealthy patrons. These include the stele of Euktitos, described simply as small and said to indicate that he was 'clearly not a member of the elite' (p.151). That is undoubtedly true, but the fact that the stele is inscribed with a verse epigram, and that the inscribed letters are deeply cut and almost monumental, suggests that this was actually a man whose commemorators were in a position to produce a striking monument. It is a monument that contrasts sharply with the monument of Mannes the Phrygian wood-cutter, whom Hochscheid proceeds to mention. Mannes too has an epigram, but one that is miswritten and unmetrical. Here was an attempt by a man's friends to produce for one who had died in war a suitable memorial, but who could not access writers or inscribers of adequate skill – we are here beyond the limits of the work of 'professional sculptors and the network of artists and support personnel contributing to their production' (p.152). It is precisely by putting these items into context that we see just how far outside the normal they are, but Hochscheid fails ever to look closely enough at the examples cited or indeed at the bigger picture. The paper is built on a false dichotomy and a massively inadequate sample of material.

Unwittingly, this collection tells us a lot about context. The best papers show that a well-defined question can be definitively answered by re-establishing the appropriate context (so Wescoat and Levitan), and that thinking hard about what is found in a particular context can illuminate questions that extend beyond the understanding of that context to understanding what created the conditions in which those materials could come together in that place (so Carmen Sánchez Fernández and to some extent Eleni Manakidou and Sally Waite). But many papers show how limited can be the information derived from find context, and some show how dangerous can be assertions about context that are based on inadequate investigation of the evidence (material and textual).

ROBIN OSBORNE  
FACULTY OF CLASSICS  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
ro225@cam.ac.uk

**Lisa Nevett (ed.). *Theoretical approaches to the archaeology of ancient Greece: manipulating material culture*. pp. 338, b/w illustrations. 2018. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. ISBN 978-0-47213-023-8 cased \$85.**

What is 'archaeology', and how is 'theory' relevant to it? We might reasonably have thought we could now answer this question coherently for students wrestling with it (or that we had at least thoroughly discussed the topic in the publications of the last four decades; I cite a relevant few, not very recent, Anglo-Saxon examples here)<sup>1</sup>. In particular, most scholars have accepted 'archaeology' or 'archaeological methodology' (the application of a theory-informed, systematic and explicit query and interpretative framework to the recovery/analysis of a numerically and contextually representative set of data) as the most productive, balanced means of researching the material culture of the past in any quantity or diversity, where the aims are reconstructive, illuminative and interpretative, – especially when the ancient past is concerned. Yet this book, a collection of papers from a conference, throws up very basic related questions, not through direct intent but through a mixture of implied and stated definitions/approaches to both archaeology and theory in its thirteen main papers (excluding a ten-page introduction text by the editor (pp 1-15) and 3.5 pages each of response/commentary by L. Foxhall and Z. Archibald (pp 297-307). This suggests some dissociation from the current state of archaeological scholarship on the ancient past as outlined above. The papers are only very loosely tied together in purpose and effect, despite the insertion of linking subheadings as follows: 'Disciplinary Context', 'Artifacts', 'Civic and Religious Landscapes' and 'Funerary Landscapes'. Perhaps as a result, the volume's introduction and short response chapters pick out/describe papers in a somewhat desultory manner without being able to pinpoint exactly how the book contributes forcefully or as a whole to how we should think about 'Classical Archaeology' and its relationship to theory today. The somewhat random mix of expertise and approach may be explained by some reliance on personal connections in building contributions: a number of authors are linked by work within an existing field team or institution, including as past students of other authors. Though in some circumstances such links might give rise to a coherent and/or innovatory set of thoughts/perspectives, this is not the case here.

<sup>1</sup> See also Haggis 2018.

Which definitions come into question, then? Well, 'Ancient Greece', as the chronological field of which the volume is intended to approach the 'archaeology', is defined by the editor in the first chapter as the period starting c. 1000 BC and extending through the whole first millennium. Quite apart from the arbitrary nature of that date (almost bisecting the Iron Age as currently recognised<sup>2</sup>; in fact, none of the papers actually consider material dating before 800 BC) the selection of that date is problematic because several papers (e.g. Stone's useful if predictable-result survey of journal publications, pp 15-40) show that the greatest and most productive application to date of *archaeological* theory and methodology (as well as the use of other fields of theory *within those*) in the field of ancient Greece/ the Aegean has been with reference to the period 3000-700 BC - covering a much longer timespan, range of material culture and depth/range of social, economic and political change. Choosing the more weakly-covered period should surely intend/invite/necessitate discussion of why it has been weakly covered. In this process, evaluation would be required of the related long-established scholarly and political tradition that first-millennium Greece represents a pinnacle of human achievement needing to be separated, privileged and focused on in teaching, research and appreciation (albeit within disparate fields including textual studies, art history and history). Yet this is not the frame of the discussion here. Instead, the volume apparently expects to show that theory-linked approaches similar to those regularly used for earlier periods in the Aegean (usually within an archaeological context) *are* in fact being effectively applied in this field. With this aim, Nevett as editor encourages/allows authors to identify and discuss *any part* of her self-defined period, and *any kind* of material culture, to which *any kind* of abstract 'theory' has recently been/ may be applied here ('theoretical approaches'). The problem is that if we are talking about ancient material culture in quantity (the potential inherent in data quantity is often highlighted in the volume as an opportunity) then *archaeological theory and methodology (given the overwhelmingly strong background of general scholarship) are indispensable as a primary approach*. All types of cultural theory are not equal and cannot be applied piecemeal. Some papers (e.g. Salminen (pursuance of limited 'identity' approaches to a famous Macedonian tomb (Vergina II)); Smyrniaios (a very simple and restricted 'shape study' of Attic Geometric pottery); Small (a vague and somewhat processually-tinged

argument for more comparison between Maya and Classical Greek states) ;and Hofmann and Attula (arguing for a dynamic and open-ended approach, non-dichotomously structured, to investigating culture interaction in Archaic south Italy, without any detail on how that should proceed)) introduce the selected aspects of cultural theory and the material they want to apply to them to upfront, understanding the importance of explicitness and reflexivity. But all the above, and some of the others, tend to do this in a naively explanatory, often platitudinous way, apparently assuming readers have no background in archaeology, history, cultural studies or anthropology, though it is unlikely many such individuals will be reading this book. For me, these tendencies say more about the authors' stage on the journey to updating or 'awakening' approaches to the Classical cultural record. In contrast to their eagerness to use complex theory, these contributions usually over-simplify and decontextualise the complex *data* they address (even within the natural confines of a conference paper). At the same time they sometimes rely on specialised in-field terminologies, chronologies and assumptions: these, rather than the nature of the theory they are trying to use, may prove obstacles for readers and again hint that the authors have been fully immersed in the status quo and background of traditional Classical archaeology. The kinds of cultural/social theory the authors wish to apply (identity theory, burial theory, spatial theory) are often selected with very limited justification for their particular use in these cases (beyond a personal interest, the general purpose of a 'fresh approach' or the chance to illuminate 'other sides' of the data). There is usually little discussion of their relation to wider material context, or to archaeological theory and methodology generally. It is as though a buffet table marked 'social and cultural theory - all sorts' were set out for consideration and scholars of the Classical world invited to select whichever 'sauce' interests them, to apply to whatever dish of material culture they can get hold of (this plateful is often random or limited; sometimes self-limited - e.g. for Whitley (below) the earliest alphabetic texts; for Çakmak, naked female representations on bullae from the particular site of Tell Kedesh; for Smyrniaios, a small group of pots accidentally held by the British School at Athens). In many cases assemblages are selected, then the authors look around to see what kind of theory (of any kind) could bring out useful aspects of thinking about the items they are interested in/can access data about. Not a crime - but not archaeology as currently understood, and certainly not making use of the carefully developed body of archaeological

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Whitley 2001; Wallace 2010.

theory and methodology. This is not, of course, to argue against freedom to use all theory frameworks of interest in studying ('manipulating') ancient culture. But on basic matters of methodology, statistical treatment, representativeness, and context evaluation when treating cultural remains of the past, archaeological theory is key, and since this already been argued many times, missing this point is problematic. Detailed regard to cross-material, cross-cultural, regional and chronological context (including the social and cultural context of the researchers) to reconstruct the past<sup>3</sup> and to recognition of the established notion that all data are theory-laden<sup>4</sup> and thus that the original *context of recovery or selection* of ancient material, as well as its analysis or interpretation, need an explicit theoretical framework, are essential - but missing in many contributions.

Among the papers standing out are those, as one might expect, by established scholars in their disciplines who have already produced a meaningful and focused body of work, and who are musing on how theory informs their scholarship: Lynch discusses representations on Attic ceramics in terms of reading and representation, including a useful tabulation of all the ways we can conceptualise the producers and consumers of ancient art, and a consideration of how modern theories of art's reception and intentionality might make us question orthodoxies in Classical art/archaeology. Martin's paper on how ethnicity was represented and read on a single Sidonian fourth-century sarcophagus, though suffering from some of the naivety and over-explanation regarding theoretically-informed archaeology described above, also uses aspects of art theory. Whitley, writing on the ways texts and script functioned visually and socially in the early days of the alphabet in Greece, challenges some rationalist or evolutionist narratives in Classical archaeology. Even here, though, lack of space/inclination to consider wider context limits insight on why the foremost production and pottery trade areas in the Aegean might have used script in particularly intensive ways as a visual signifier on pots while others did not. Recognising this context would have avoided some of the polarised assumptions about areas like Crete which Whitley makes from negative evidence of this type. Paga usefully explicates and illuminates the *habitus* created by the development of civic structures in Athens. Scott illustrates and interprets the way the Pan cult developed spatially and perceptually in Athens; Agelidis investigates how processive topography worked in Classical

Athens - both papers ironically mainly using textual accounts and the secondary processed results of archaeological research or received knowledge, rather than closely investigated and mapped archaeological data, to reconstruct the use of space. There are no topographical maps of the landscapes involved in either paper and we are still a long way from relevant theory-informed archaeological methodologies such as landscape phenomenology.<sup>5</sup> Some of these might have been better as journal papers: they do not form a forceful or linked whole within this volume, partly because few engage in self-conscious disciplinary reflection of the ambitious scope required. Overall, the focus on Athens and Athenian items (5 of the 13 papers), on sculpture, and on iconography - themes very typically over-targeted in Classical archaeology and much critiqued in recent reflections on it<sup>6</sup> is not remedied, nor are well-established remedies (e.g. use of survey data from wider Aegean areas) discussed (issues of context, and the need to seek context, are again relevant here). In general, too, the level at which the volume challenges or informs traditional approaches and assumptions in Classics/Classical Archaeology is remarkably low - we can surely now take as 'straw men' the notions e.g. that female images of the same type in Greek-world ceremonial contexts represent a single well-defined deity such as Aphrodite; that no theory or context has yet been applied to burials in Sicily; that Greek and Persian personal imagery represents a standard, real unvarying concept/expression of ethnicity; that shapes of pots are unimportant, while decoration is all; that the alphabet was taken up in Greece because it was required for the writing down of laws. The implication that many Classicists or Classical archaeologists today would take these ideas unexamined is I think false. One can see the asserted need to challenge such 'assumptions' as again representing an early stage in 'awakenings' - or more cynically as consciously structuring claims to disciplinary innovation on the part of the authors.

In the summary chapters by Nevett, Foxhall and Archibald, the contribution either to research perspectives or to guidance for student readers seems slight: much more stirring, considered and thoughtful analyses have been given in volumes of the past twenty, even thirty years. Like some others in the volume by advanced scholars these chapters give the impression of parsimony (e.g. Ault, who notionally addresses the impact of German form-based scholarship on architecture, specifically *Haus und Stadt in klassische Griechenland*,

<sup>3</sup> Hodder 1987; 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Shanks and Tilley 1987.

<sup>5</sup> e.g. Tilley 1987.

<sup>6</sup> e.g. Morris 1994; 1997.

to the interpretation of the Classical record, but ends up mainly talking about Iron Age Zagora, or Small: see above). Perhaps the authors had limited time or energy to contribute. What strikes one also is how few authors (except the editor and Archibald at Olynthos, data from which site are not discussed here, and Whitley at Praisos, again work not discussed here), are currently engaging actively with primary retrieval or study of material culture of this period and using theory to frame this work (or even imagining how they might, through secondary study and argument, assist others who are doing primary work to frame their research projects). Perhaps this explains why the volume fails to illustrate and direct opportunities in the field going forward. It might, for example, have looked explicitly at the value of regional studies, including the framing and the long-term results of the vaunted use of survey methodology and related theory in Classical landscapes and their economies.<sup>7</sup> As well as looking at ancient texts 'archaeologically' as Whitley tries to do, it might have addressed the ways in which the latest developments in linguistics and cultural theory can help frame Greek textual studies and their relationship to the study of other aspects of ancient culture. It could have paid special attention to recent anthropological and historical work on colonisation as a concept and process to analyse treatments of identity and ethnicity, consumption and material studies as they affect and structure Classical archaeology, including its links to the study of ancient texts. Established and sophisticated contributors like Antonaccio, Malkin, Hamilakis, Morgan, and Hodos (many of them referenced here) could have made major reflective contributions including on the reception of Classical culture in both modern society and the academy and how this currently affects its treatment as archaeological data. Links into, as well as contrasts with, the way earlier periods in the Greek world are being researched, and the potential integration of research methods across inclusive time periods, could have formed a major and novel focus. I name only a few areas that would have interested me and, I think, many other students and scholars (though they have been treated before, an update in one tightly linked-up volume could pull them together in a valuable and thought-provoking way). My overall feeling is that this is a very slight addition to a Classical scholar's bookshelf, and no landmark. On the plus side, there remains room for a research retrospective/landmarking volume on how the application of archaeological theory/methodology, stands today in Classical archaeology.

This would need definition and understanding of theory-informed archaeological research as a contextual, quantitative discipline, where rich varieties of interpretative theory can be applied productively only on a basis of sound, theory-framed data recovery. Sadly, of course, much of the material culture currently preserved on Greek sites and in museums was not recovered in this kind of context and is difficult to address within it. However, applying random theory to randomly selected bits of it because of these are of interest or high-profile (or simply available) will not get us much further forward.

SARO WALLACE

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF  
MANCHESTER  
saro.wallace@manchester.ac.uk

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<sup>7</sup> E.g. Alcock and Cherry 1999.



**Dimitrios Yatromanolakis (ed.). *Epigraphy of Art: Ancient Greek Vase-Inscriptions and Vase-Paintings*. pp. xiii + 205. 121 colour and b/w illustrations. 2016. Oxford: Archaeopress. ISBN 978 1 78491 487 5 e-Pdf £15, paperback £36.**

The preface of this collection of papers sets out its aim as ‘foregrounding the urgency of establishing a thorough and epigraphically accurate database of ancient Greek vase-inscriptions’ (p.xi), and proceeds, after some general remarks about what gets inscribed, to the cautionary tale of the pyxis in the Metropolitan Museum on which the label for one of the figures, which reads εὐνομία, had been misread ἀπονία. Actually what follows is a miscellany of papers on writing on pots, apparently written in isolation (there is no cross-referencing), which make no case for a new database other than by showing that writing on pots can be interesting. The ten papers (eight by male authors, two by female) are divided between five on Attic pots, supposedly united by their interest in methodology, two on Apulian pots, and three further papers on Attic pots (and in one case also Corinthian pots) supposedly united by their interest in placement. The uselessness of the index is well signalled by the fact that while it has entries for ‘markedness’ and for ‘pictorial sounds’ (entries in which all the page references are to the editor’s own opening chapter), it has no entry for ‘nonsense inscriptions’, although there are major independent discussions of ‘nonsense inscriptions’ in chapter 1 as well as in chapter 5, which is devoted to them, and further comment elsewhere (e.g. in chapter 8). This collection of papers is not a book.

The first, and by some 25% the longest, paper is by the editor and addresses the relationship between what is written on pots and sound (it starts with three rather gratuitous examples of inscriptions which have nothing to do with sound, included to show that some inscriptions are unproblematic to understand – just one of several indications that this would have been a better paper had someone edited the editor). The first example of writing relevant to sound is a Tyrrhenian amphora ascribed to the Prometheus Painter showing a running warrior between two cocks holding out a lyre in each hand with ‘λυρὰ εἰμι’ written next to them. Yatromanolakis concludes that Beazley was right to be puzzled by this, and the best he can do is note that ‘The whole image playfully conveys a feeling (expressed by ordinary craftsmen, outside the heroic world of archaic epic and lyric) that problematizes the familiar ideologies of the Iliadic warriors’. The

second section of the paper is devoted to how Greek expresses sounds (we have seven pages on which pots do not figure), and turns to inscriptions which have often been regarded as nonsense but which express recognisable sound values – so a black-figure hydria with lots of λε-, λeo-, λει-, λι-, λες syllables and showing HerakLES and a LION – and to words or sequences of letters that can be vocalised that ‘spill out of’ the mouths of figures. Yatromanolakis notes in particular the use of vo and ve of lo and le to express vocalised sounds. He ends his chapter with a discussion of the plain cup in Athens (NM 1104), signed by Exekias as potter on one side and with the letters ενεοινοιοιεν on the other, and argues that if one allows for haplography there are actually a large number of ways in which these letters can be construed to make sense. There is much to provoke thought in this chapter, though readers will end up quite bemused about what exactly the methodology being recommended is.

The second and third chapters explore use of *kalos* names (without cross-reference between the chapters). Thomas Mannack examines late sixth-century cups bearing the inscription *Hipparchos kalos*. He notes that this inscription was particularly popular with the painter Epiktetos, who is responsible for 15 of the 21 late sixth-century vessels (15 of them cups) bearing this inscription (there is also one mid fifth-century skyphos showing the Tyrannicides and bearing this inscription). Mannack explores connections with what he calls ‘aristocratic themes such as warriors, athletes and symposia’ but one must doubt whether fighting as hoplite, participating in the gymnasium or drinking in company were restricted to ‘aristocrats’ (if such a term can be applied to Athens). He concludes by comparing the use of the name Hipparchos by painters to their use of the names of other painters (e.g. Smikros). Guy Hedreen in the following chapter looks at *kale* inscriptions, and is particularly concerned to question the idea that *kale* names refer to contemporary Athenian prostitutes. He notes that tag-*kale* can be applied to mythical figures or indeed the goddess Aphrodite, and argues that the name Epilyke is an invention based on the name Epilykos used by the potter-painter who also signs as Skythes, that the name Korone is so widely used as a typical prostitute name that it is unlikely to refer to a particular prostitute, and that Rhodopis is used as the name of a ‘nymph’ associated with Dionysos, rather than as a prostitute name. He examines the names given to women in fountain-house scenes and argues that they fit poorly with names known to have belonged to women in Athens and should rather be seen as invented names, comparing the names given to ‘silens and