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EDITORIAL

The format of this Debates issue is shaped by a legacy of papers originally submitted for the recent issue (48/2) on Collection edited by Nyree Finlay. The theme proved highly popular, with numerous quality submissions on diverse themes, as one might expect for such a widespread activity. As a result, an editorial decision was taken to accept some of these for inclusion in this issue, particularly when authors presented a counterpoint argument, or opened up a new line of debate. In addition to these, two response articles appear here, one responding to the Collections volume in its entirety; and another comprising a specific response to the legacy and future of archaeologically-derived collections of human remains in the UK. These articles are complemented by contributions dealing with perceptions of contested heritage. These use qualitative insights, gathered from both the public and heritage practitioners, to pose powerful questions about how archaeologists in the present handle and manage heritage in the face of its destruction and in terms of a future vision for its protection; remarkably tough problems for public and professionals alike to deal with. Taken together, therefore, in the first section, contributors share reflective concerns with regards to how we 'handle' heritage and collections in the present worldwide, and how we curate and care for collections and monuments now and for the future, in terms of maintaining and enabling knowledge and access for current and future generations. The emphasis here is on a need for innovation in how we curate and present heritage, so that we keep pace with methodological advances, changing public consciousness, opinion and value, and capitalising on the opportunities that new media provide for broadening access.

In 'Archaeologically derived human remains in England: legacy and future' Redfern and Clegg address the problematic issue of the collection and retention of human remains specifically for research purposes. Focussing very much on the future, they deal routinely with issues of repatriation and reburial of human remains, and with the considerable ethical and practical considerations that surround this. They emphasise the rise in the number of curated collections of human remains that have arisen as a result of developer-funded archaeology, and the existing rules or standards relevant to museums, contractor units and universities but which vary between these institutional types. This is not simply a cross-institutional difference either: even within a single sector, different repositories vary in how they allow research access to their collections. Redfern and Clegg also focus on the differences in how human remains from both prehistoric and historic period can be treated, and the particular challenges raised by human remains collections where living relatives can still be traced. While the public do expect to see human remains on display, they also have strong concerns about respectful treatment and presentation which need to be negotiated. The increasing use of social media and digital technologies in heritage outreach thus presents both a serious challenge, but also opportunities which are not necessarily

straightforward. The authors point to how advances in bioarchaeological techniques are revealing increasingly nuanced information, which is often of such detail that it can furnish information that in a modern-day scenario could be construed as highly personal. Thus when the identity of a deceased individual is known, or if the subject is an individual with living relatives, the curator is increasingly in an invidious position. Future concern for retaining samples and bio-banking information is raised, along with a call for recognition and consideration of how the ethics and protocols currently in place are rapidly being out-dated by advances in analytical techniques, but are also changing public engagement and interest.

By response to Redfern and Clegg, Malin Holst, a commercial osteoarchaeologist and academic, captures the modern tensions between developer-funded and scientific research on human remains, and raises significant but differing issues. She argues that the modern situation, in which the issue of reburial of archaeologically derived human remains is decided on a case by case basis, may result in the loss of information, especially when cost-saving may be prominent in the decision if made by a developer or landowner. Funding cuts to museums also mean there is less space and resources for the long-term housing of collections. While Redfern and Clegg suggest that bio banks may provide one possible answer to this problem, Holst points to the rapid development of techniques in bioarchaeology, and how the human remains that are being curated may not reflect or support the needs of new advanced techniques that will surely emerge in the years ahead. In sum, further discussion is needed at a national level in the UK (and one assumes, internationally) and a better plan for the future is needed. There is a possibility of a win-win in collaboration between curator and researcher, if each can respect the constraints and pressures of the other and reflect these in dialogue. A final important point is that inclusivity can be beneficial. The success of the Fewston project is used here as an example of how involving the living community in the process of research and decision making regarding the discovery, research and eventual curation or reburial of human remains can have multiple positive outcomes.

The debate between Redfern, Clegg and Holst, raises three important issues of broader relevance to the articles in this volume: the involvement of wider communities in heritage research; the need to think ahead in terms of how we manage and harness the benefits of new analytical technologies and increasingly diversifying social media; and the need to envisage future challenges for heritage and to work towards them in an informed and directed manner, rather than simply 'curate for future generations'. In 'Collection as (Re)assemblage: refreshing museum archaeology' Wingfield argues for the need to rethink the role of museums, and particularly to take inspiration from the 19th-century focus on collections, which resulted in the formation of fundamental disciplinary frameworks for professional archaeology. The anxieties raised by Redfern and Clegg around the display of human remains and changing popular engagement strategies, feed into Wingfield's case, and he asks us to reconsider our frequent notion of the the role of museums simply as

static ‘repositories’. He argues instead that museums should capitalise upon the advent of electronic media to reconfigure and refresh their roles, remaking collections into something far more dynamic for the public and more relevant to archaeological practice. In ‘Community outreach, digital heritage and private collections: a case study from the North American Great Plains’, Matthew Douglass and co-authors further make a case for involving the public in research. The background context to their argument is the looting of sites and illegal gathering of artefacts. They show how - rather than simply prohibiting collection from protected sites - a collaborative community project can result in new findings and a far more productive and mutually beneficial relationship between ‘expert’ and ‘collector’. Their ‘road-shows’ provide opportunities for collectors to bring their artefacts to experts for identification and recording, something which occurs informally and randomly in many countries, but which would benefit from further development. In many ways this parallels the success of several European countries in handling the issue of metal-detecting, by means of national sponsored schemes aimed at encouraging collectors to bring their finds in to various institutions, not for surrender, but for identification and recording, in a way that is beneficial to both collector and heritage community. On the Great Plains, Nebraska, the involvement of the collector is key in the process of recording. Furthermore, by introducing collectors to techniques such as 3-D modelling of artefacts using photogrammetric techniques, the authors are not just capturing new information, but are sharing new skill-sets with the wider community. Their use of ‘road shows’ to provide an event as a point of contact with collector communities is obviously a successful model, like the Fewston Project, demonstrating how proactive engagement can bring benefits for both the academic and the public and collector communities.

Public engagement, however, can produce mixed results. In an important paper on the impacts of replica heritage and public engagement and response, Zena Kamesh in ‘Postcard to Palmyra’: bringing the public into debates over post-conflict reconstruction in the Middle East’ uses unique insights gained from the public, via a qualitative study, of the perceptions and impact felt by visitors to Trafalgar Square, London in 2015, during the course of three days during which an installation was in place comprising a precise, laser-cut replica of Palmyra’s Triumphal Arch , a famous monument that has sadly fallen victim to the on-going Syrian conflict. Although focussed on a very contemporary study, Kamash underscores the long-held and emotive nature of ancient places and ruins, and through the public’s responses shows how reproduction and display can, even with the best intentions, still chime for some with the old imperialist fascination and concern with the ancient world, and past traditions of appropriating antiquity to enrich the imperial aspirations of the present. There is an underlying point here about the way heritage is not invariably comfortable, and how reconstructing heritage that has been destroyed in conflict may carry mixed messages to its audiences. Finally the risks in dislocation heritage, especially heritage under threat, from the broader human narrative, are emphatic here in some of the responses revealed through Kamesh’s study.

While Kamesh outlines the need to both engage the public and also measure and explore public engagement with and response to heritage, the final article in this section again underlines, as the debate on human remains and on reconfiguring the role of museums also emphasise, that more thought is needed on heritage in the future. At the heart of a short but powerful study by Hōberg and co-authors drawing on qualitative responses from the professional heritage community in Scandinavia, is the revelation that although much of our heritage establishment is in place to preserve heritage 'for future generations', much thinking is 'future-static', with little critical engagement by agencies and individuals on what threats or concerns might be relevant to heritage in the future, or on the question of the changing perceptions of heritage that are almost certain to come with each new generation. While an answer is not presented here, a debate is invited on thinking about heritage in the future rather than the present, and the need to break through the hold on the current mentality of 'preservation at all costs'. This ties in with growing concerns worldwide for handling heritage protection in areas where urban and economic growth are exponential, with the need for sustainable programmes of protection, flexible enough to cope in the present and future with the challenges and perceptions two or three generations or more from now. It feeds too into the discussion on bio-banks and the preservation of skeletal remains in accessible ways, to facilitate future research. Together, the articles in this first section, in one way or another call for archaeologists and heritage practitioners to look to the future and conceive now of what challenges might be coming. They also reveal the increasing nature of public engagement and its positives, showing that co-productive research can bring benefits but also help educate non-academics about heritage and present and future challenges.

In the second part of the issue, articles engage debates on an array of topics ranging widely in temporal and geographic terms. In all cases, however, new perspectives on established topics are proposed, and articles counter traditional schools of thought. The challenging of traditional paradigms begins as we step into a debate on mobility and sedentism in the Mid Upper Palaeolithic by Aurélien Simonet. Evidence for more centralised subsistence patterns are suggested from the abundant Gravettian archaeology of the Grotte du Pape, Brassempouy, France, which extends over several hundred square metres. As with other 'supersites' of contemporary groups in Central and Eastern Europe with whom the French Gravettian shares several characteristics, Simonet argues on the basis of artefactual abundance and the numerous distant sources which provided stone for knapped tools that Brassempouy acted as a residential 'base camp' from which a semi-sedentary form of territorial occupation saw special task groups ranging widely in the landscape. Simonet is asking us to think in more complex ways about how hominids operated in response to different environs and resource zones at this early phase of the Upper Palaeolithic.

Reconceiving human mobility and connections in the past is a theme relevant to all timeframes and geographies. And in broad terms, Ben Jervis, in an exploration of relations between local and global processes in medieval Europe, also asks us to reconceive ideas of

connectivity between medieval populations. In trying to capture the multi-scalar nature of production and exchange within medieval societies he introduces 'assemblage theory' as a way of rethinking established large-scale networks or mercantile endeavours via the network or multitude of smaller interactions of which they were composed. Similarly, he asks us to consider the idea of multiple small-world systems connected and interacting through individual processes of production and exchange. These are powerful ideas, relevant to reframing how medieval communities were connected and might operate within local to 'global' contexts. In contrast to Simonet, Jervis' rethinking of trade and commerce challenges us to move beyond simple traditional ideas of individual specialist and mobile groups such as merchants and traders comprising the dominating and connecting force, and instead asks us to rethinking the agency of all producers and consumers within the exchange system.

Human and material connections are also the focus of Susanna Harris' exploration of Etruscan textiles. She too asks us to rethink these connections by examining textiles from central and northern Italy in the first millennium BC, and concentrating on their desirability in Etruscan society. She offers a complex scene in which the value of things is investigated in terms of how people desired objects and materials. Such an approach allows the archaeologist to reconsider the sensory framework of objects, and collapse the traditional temporal boundaries we use to categorise artefacts. By exploring the multi-facetted nature of valuing results in the ability to see objects, or in this case textiles, as mutable, changing in value and meaning according to time, place, age, ownership, and biography.

Interconnectivity can also give rise to innovation, and in Li Chen's consideration of Han Dynasty stone-carved tombs external connections and influences are argued to be central to the changing architecture and form of a specific genre of funerary architecture found in Central China. Once again, the traditional viewpoint that the stone-carved tomb tradition was an insular development in Central China, is challenged. Instead it is suggested that Classical influences were at work, transmitted via political and social interactions with the Classical world and with neighbouring regions like Crimea. Chen argues for hybridity in these designs, representing more than merely borrowing, but instead a subtle and overt, use of architectural and design element s as well as stone technology, led to a new hybrid desired form of elaborate funerary monument.

Connections - in this case within and between academic communities – also form the basis of the debate over the origin of the concept of the *châine opératoire* in the anthropology and archaeology of technology. In the *History of Archaeology* themed issue (49/2) Christophe Delage examines what he regards as the 'official' history of the development of the concept, and particularly the central role of the Paris-based archaeologist André Leroi-Gourhan in its conception. Delage argued that this role has been exaggerated at the expense of a number of researchers who were developing the concept alongside, and in contact with, Leroi-Gourhan. In this issue the debate continues. In response, Françoise Audouze and colleagues provide a robust denial that there exists any

‘official history’ of the issue, arguing that Leroi-Gourhan was responsible for the innovation itself, but not for its subsequent dissemination, and they add considerable nuance and detail to the historiography of this topic, which is further enhanced by Delage’s final response in which he defends his view that the concept was created not by a single man but by many researchers.

In the final contribution, John McNabb offers a critical perspective on the connections that resulted in the conception of the Lower Palaeolithic in the Victorian period. In many ways his contribution diverges rom the other articles here in terms both of its time frame and its reflective historiographic basis. His lens is very specific, focussing on the writing of Arthur Conan Doyle in its wider Victorian English context, yet despite this his conclusions have broad implications, revealing how conceptual ideas of heredity, atavism and inherited criminality were fully embedded in main stream popular culture and writing in Victorian England. McNabb also points to the need for critical self-reflection in archaeology and in terms of heritage studies. Here in the past an anthropologically contested space was appropriated within Doyle’s crime writing and science fiction, and was broadly harnessed to more endemic general fears that the past might continue to influence and shape the present. This view seems especially resonant in the modern moment when, as the debates in this issue underline, there is an increasingly urgent need to conceive of the threats, impacts, perceptions and challenges that may exist in the future for heritage and collections. We as archaeologists spend our time researching the past in our contemporary moment, but we may perhaps need to become as solicitous about critical future thinking on our subject area in global terms, as we are about critiquing archaeological method and thought in the past.