

EDITORIAL

Book Reviews Editorial Statement

The scholarly review of books has remained an indispensable part of the *AJA* since its inception. The inaugural issue of the *Journal*, published as the *American Journal of Archaeology and of the History of the Fine Arts* in 1885, included a section called Reviews and Notices of Books and featured reviews of two monographs: Wright's *The Empire of the Hittites* (New York 1884), reviewed by Francis Brown, and Reinach's *Manuel de philologie classique* (Paris 1884), reviewed by Charles Eliot Norton. In 1897, Harold N. Fowler compiled a Bibliography of Current Archaeological Literature for volume 1 of the newly minted *American Journal of Archaeology*, which provided a list (some of it annotated) of recent publications—a section of the *Journal* that eventually evolved into the present Books Received. The 1920s witnessed the first dedicated section in the *Journal* for book reviews (*AJA* 29 [1925] 191–95), and the masthead of the first issue of volume 30 (1926) listed Kate McKnight Elderkin as Associate Editor for Book Reviews. During the second and third quarters of the 20th century, scholars such as Edith Hall Dohan, Dorothy Hannah Cox, Dietrich von Bothmer, Dorothy Kent Hill, and Patricia Boulter served as editors for book reviews. More recently, the position has been ably filled by Karen D. Vitelli (1980–1982), Warren G. Moon (1983–1984), Stephen L. Dyson (1985–1994), Susan Alcock and John Cherry (1995–1998), Paul Rehak and John G. Younger (1999–2003), Younger (2004–2007), and Rebecca Schindler and Pedar Foss (2008–2011). As we assume the editorship of book reviews for the *AJA*, we are indeed humbled to join such an illustrious list, and we take this moment to acknowledge the high standard the previous editors have set.

Archaeological publication has transformed during the *AJA*'s long and distinguished career, most notably in the last two decades with the development and expansion of digital technologies, and the *Journal* has responded to these various shifts in the landscape. Foss and Schindler noted in their editorial statement (*AJA* 112 [2008] 353) that, although a paradigm shift from traditional print publication of scholarly research to online forums has yet to be realized fully in archaeology, the need to make scholarly output accessible through electronic dissemination remains a pressing concern. Even as e-books, websites, and online journals

continue to establish themselves as credible sources for primary research, data archiving, and publication, the humanities struggle to reconcile a perceived inequality between online and print research. Yet they increasingly demand unfettered access to electronic archives of print articles and books, as well as recently published material in the same media. Under the leadership of its editors, the *AJA* has taken significant steps not only to engage this dialogue but also to advance it with innovative changes to the *AJA*'s traditional print platform, while simultaneously insisting on the maintenance of the *Journal*'s impeccable reputation for quality and breadth. For example, the recent announcement (*AJA* 115 [2011] 327) that the *AJA* has joined JSTOR's Current Scholarship Program means that every article published in the *Journal*, from 1885 to the most recent issue, will now be available online through an electronic subscription package or as a single article purchase. The effort to make content available in electronic format has also extended to the publication of book reviews, which since January 2010 have been published exclusively online and are available as open-access documents from the *AJA* website (www.ajaonline.org). This change was gradual, and many may remember the transitional phase when some book reviews were published online and others appeared in the printed pages of the *Journal*.

As the first entirely "online" Book Review Editors, we embrace the opportunity to publish *AJA* reviews as open-access PDFs. The editors consider online reviews to be bona fide publications of the *AJA*; all reviews are fully vetted by the Book Review Editors for organization and content and are edited by *AJA* editors. Select longer review articles, which are subject to the same process, continue to appear in the printed fascicles. *AJA* reviews serve as an important scholarly resource, and an electronic format provides the widest, most efficient means of dissemination and the most convenient way to access the content. Through social and academic online media, we increasingly find ourselves within a global community of scholars sharing information and ideas across continents; expanding availability and access to the *AJA* has become an essential aspect of the *Journal*'s mission. It is understandable that some longtime readers will miss finding the reviews while browsing through the pages of the *Journal*; neverthe-

less, the benefits of our online platform far outweigh any perceived disadvantages. All book reviews are published in conjunction with the printed journal and are thus listed in the hard copy of that fascicle's table of contents. The reviews themselves remain online (and searchable) in perpetuity and are available for free download (www.ajaonline.org/bookreviews). They are also easily accessible worldwide via computers, tablets, and mobile devices. Furthermore, each quarter, a hyperlinked list of all reviews (including online museum reviews) tied to the most recent fascicle of the *Journal* and a list of books received during that period (as well as books still available for review) are circulated via the *AJA* e-Update (to subscribe, visit www.ajaonline.org/eupdate). This added convenience allows readers to scan quickly all published reviews, follow links to read the reviews online, download PDFs to read and/or print later, or even distribute/post reviews for classroom use. Readers will also notice an exciting feature linked to each online review on the *AJA* website: a comments section that provides a forum for response and discussion of published reviews. This creates a dynamic environment for scholarly dialogue, and we hope readers will take advantage of the opportunity to comment on reviews. Finally, the powerful text-search features in PDF files make browsing reviews for specific content more efficient and have the potential to transform the way readers use reviews for their own research.

In other respects, we plan to build on the principles established by our predecessors. Coverage within the reviews section will continue to mirror that of the *Journal* (the art and archaeology of ancient Europe and the Mediterranean world, including the Near East and Egypt, from prehistoric to Late Antique times) and will continue to embrace books on method, theory, and the history of the discipline. Recognizing that the field of classical art and archaeology continues to be brought (sometimes dragged) into dialogues with other disciplines, we will also consider books from further afield provided that they highlight developments in methodological or theoretical approaches both relevant and applicable to ancient material culture. In the same way, we would also like to "stretch" the geographical and chronological limits of the subjects reviewed where the same standards of relevance and applicability are met. We invite both domestic and international publishers of all stripes to submit appropriate books for review to the Book Review Editors at the Department of Art History, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201. Likewise, we are al-

ways seeking to increase our cadre of reviewers, and we welcome any suggestions or self-nominations; those who wish to become reviewers should contact the Book Review Editors directly (bookreviews@aia.bu.edu) and provide an up-to-date curriculum vitae that includes credentials and a list of relevant publications, as well as a statement of research interests. As the *AJA* responds to the needs of its readers and the discipline as a whole, we welcome any thoughts, criticisms, or suggestions for improving the book review section. We are especially interested in ideas that help us advance our efforts at wide distribution and user-friendly access, as well as more general comments on the breadth, depth, and balance of coverage within the section.

We seek reviews that provide a critical, balanced, and, most importantly, substantiated assessment of a book's strengths and weaknesses, as well as its place within the current field of scholarship. Reviews of single works should be roughly 1,000 words (slightly longer for more expansive or multiauthored volumes); review articles may be up to 4,000 words, depending on the nature and number of works covered. Authors should note that we do not accept unsolicited reviews. Further guidelines for book reviews can be found on the *AJA* website (www.ajaonline.org/submissions#6).

On a final note, our transition into this role has been made easier by the advice, logistical support, and collegiality of many people. Foss and Schindler, our immediate predecessors, continue to offer a wealth of wisdom and assistance, and we sincerely thank them for facilitating our work and providing an example to emulate; Younger has provided wise counsel and generously shared with us research used in the historical section at the beginning of this editorial. We would also like to acknowledge the crucial support given to us by the College of Letters and Science and our deans at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, as well as our respective departments (Art History and Foreign Languages and Literature). Finally, we thank Editor-in-Chief Naomi J. Norman for the invitation to assume this role and Madeleine J. Donachie, Vanessa Lord, and Katrina Swartz for their professionalism, patience, and direction. The success of the book reviews is dependent on the quality and dedication of our reviewers, and we thank them all—past, present, and future—for sharing their time and expertise.

DEREK B. COUNTS AND ELISABETTA COVA
Book Review Editors