

A Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

In preparation for writing my first letter as Editor-in-Chief, I read with great profit and considerable amusement the article by A.A. Donohue entitled “One Hundred Years of the *American Journal of Archaeology*: An Archival History,” published in the centennial issue of the *AJA* (89 [1985] 3–30). Much has changed since the *Journal* was first launched in 1885. Book reviewers are no longer paid (they apparently made at least \$3.00 a page in the 1920s), and Renaissance art and American archaeology are no longer subjects covered in its pages. And while the *AJA* is now on a more sound financial footing than it was for much of its early history, there are still concerns about the dwindling number of subscribers and the need to increase the endowment. Of course, any challenges I might confront as Editor-in-Chief pale in comparison with those faced by the individuals who held this position during the two world wars or the stock-market crash of 1929, although there are some that are familiar: Mary Hamilton Swindler, the first female editor of the *AJA* (1932–1946), occasionally bemoaned that some contributors seemed unable to conform to the *AJA* format. I have also read through the editorial statements of my distinguished predecessors, a process that was both edifying and humbling. I want to respect this long and distinguished history of the *AJA* as I move the *Journal* forward, and I am honored to have been chosen as the new Editor-in-Chief.

My vision for the *AJA* is straightforward: to process and review manuscript submissions in a timely fashion, to publish as swiftly as possible the results of recent archaeological fieldwork, and to encourage the submission of thought-provoking interpretive articles. I welcome the more experimental ideas of younger scholars and hope to expand our international outreach; the latter has already been greatly facilitated by the online submission system. I will continue the Forum section initiated by the previous Editor-in-Chief and would welcome for this purpose articles on a specific topic or problem, including but not limited to issues of methodology or theoretical approaches in archaeology, current trends and future avenues of research, and controversies or current debates in the field. To foster intellectual and scholarly debate, I am reintroducing the Archaeological Notes section of the

Journal. These short notes might respond in a formal way to topics discussed in the Forum or to interpretations put forth in articles; they may also announce new finds or new discoveries or take the form of a Letter to the Editor. In accordance with long-standing editorial policy, the *AJA* will continue to focus on “the art and archaeology of ancient Europe and the Mediterranean world, including the Near East and Egypt, from prehistoric to Late Antique times.” And as the official journal of the Archaeological Institute of America, the *AJA* will not publish any articles, forum pieces, notes, or reviews of books that discuss objects acquired after 30 December 1973 (for complete details, see *AJA* 109 [2005] 135–36).

I believe that the *AJA* remains one of the leading academic journals for Old World archaeology. The rigorous blind peer-review process and the meticulous care taken in copyediting and production by the staff in Boston ensure the journal’s place as a premier venue for scholarly publishing in archaeology. Indeed, it is clear from manuscript submissions that publishing in the *AJA* is an important and much-desired achievement for scholars approaching tenure both in North America and Europe. There are, however, several challenges that we currently face, including the decrease in the number of print subscriptions, the issue of open access to the publication of archaeological excavation and research funded through public monies, and the difficulties in finding colleagues to review manuscripts, particularly in an age of ever-increasing administrative duties. The need to endow the editorship, a cause my predecessor also championed, is a particularly important goal, which will help ensure the future of the *Journal*; in the current financial climate, many universities are unable or unwilling to provide the necessary support for faculty to take on this vital and time-consuming professional responsibility. I would also like to expand the size of the *Journal*, but this task will require additional resources, as the editorial staff is at the limit of the number of pages they can handle effectively and professionally. All four issues for 2014 are already filled; at the time of this writing, I am working on submissions for the first issue of 2015.

On a positive note, I am happy to announce that Derek Counts and Elisabetta Cova will stay on as Book

Review Editors; I am grateful for their willingness to continue in this important role and for the generous support they receive from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. A new Advisory Board has been appointed; I plan to rely heavily on their expertise and counsel to help define and shape the *Journal*, and I thank them for agreeing to serve.

I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to my predecessor, Naomi J. Norman, who provided helpful advice and assistance during the transition and who graciously agreed to see through as editor the October 2013 issue while I learned the ropes of my new position. Under her editorship, the *AJA* moved to a wholly online system for manuscript submission and peer review, which has made the process much more streamlined and efficient and the status of submissions easier for the editorial staff to monitor; Naomi also initiated the posting of open access content on the *AJA* website. I am very grateful for all her hard work on behalf of the *Journal*, and I wish her all the best.

Nothing would get done without the devotion, hard work, and professional acumen of the produc-

tion staff in Boston: Madeleine Donachie, Director of Publishing; Katrina Swartz, Editor; and Vanessa Lord, Electronic Content Editor. In the editorial office at Duke University, I am very ably assisted by Elizabeth Baltes, an advanced graduate student in Greek art and archaeology, and Tara Trahey, an undergraduate major in art history. For the new cover design that appears with this issue, I must thank my colleague Raquel Salvatella de Prada, Assistant Professor of the Practice of Visual and Media Arts, who kindly donated her time, talent, and expertise. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the generous support of the deans of Duke University's Trinity College of Arts & Sciences, and of Hans van Miegroet, chair of the Department of Art, Art History & Visual Studies, which made it possible for me to take on this important professional responsibility.

SHEILA DILLON
Editor-in-Chief