

# A Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

*Open Access on AJA Online*

With my inaugural issue last January, we debuted a completely redesigned cover for the *AJA*. In 2015, readers will see design and format changes on the interior, which will be rolled out throughout the volume year and will make the journal as a whole more consistent and visually coherent. *AJA Online* has also been redesigned, and the open access policies have been revised.

I would like to thank sincerely all the peer reviewers who contribute their time and expertise to vetting manuscripts submitted to the *AJA*. These reviewers are the anonymous and therefore the unsung heroes of this enterprise. Without their willingness to take on this important professional responsibility, to do it thoroughly, and to complete it within a relatively short amount of time, the *AJA* could not exist. I have tried to increase both the number of reviewers per manuscript and the pool of experts on which I rely. If anyone who has yet to be called on would like to serve in this capacity, please do let me know. While I may be Editor-in-Chief, this is a deeply collaborative endeavor, and I am profoundly grateful to all who help me maintain both the high quality of the journal and the prestige of publishing in the *AJA*.

The first in the newly revived category of Archaeological Notes appears in this issue, and additional notes are scheduled for this year. Publishing these shorter contributions has allowed us to include more articles in an issue. I have also been advocating to the Governing Board of the AIA for more resources and a higher priority for fundraising for the *AJA*. In addition to endowing the position of Editor-in-Chief, more resources would allow us to increase the number of pages in each issue and to restore the option of publishing some illustrations in color at *AJA* expense. As of this writing (1 November 2014), I am beginning to fill the January 2016 issue of the *AJA*. Even a modest increase in the number of pages per issue would help shorten the time from initial submission to final publication, which now stands at about 18–20 months.

Nothing would get done without the dedication, industriousness, and professionalism of the staff in Boston—Madeleine Donachie, Director of Publishing; Katrina Swartz, Editor; Vanessa Lord, Electronic Content Editor; and Kimberly Huynh, Editorial Assistant. I am also deeply indebted to Book Review Editors Derek Counts and Elisabetta Cova and to our freelance proofreaders. In the editorial office at Duke University, I am very ably assisted by Lindsey Mazurek, an advanced graduate student in Roman art and archaeology. I would also like to acknowledge the generous support of the deans of Duke University's Trinity College of Arts & Sciences, and of the Department of Art, Art History & Visual Studies, without which I would not be able to undertake this important professional responsibility.

Finally, in light of recent events both in this country and abroad, it is important to restate that the *AJA* maintains its commitment to protecting archaeological heritage. In keeping with the 2004 policy of the AIA, the *AJA* will not accept any article that serves as the primary publication of any object or archaeological material in a private or public collection acquired after 30 December 1973 unless its existence is documented before that date or it was legally exported from the country of origin.

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In addition, given the recent and continuing threats to the archaeological sites and material culture of countries such as Syria, Iraq, Egypt, and Libya, the Editor-in-Chief and members of the Advisory Board condemn in the strongest possible terms the recent sale of Egyptian artifacts and the scheduled sale of Mesoamerican artifacts by the AIA St. Louis Society through the auction house Bonhams. While technically not illegal, the sale of the Egyptian antiquities certainly violated the spirit if not the letter of the agreement that brought the objects to St. Louis in the first place. The selling off of archaeological artifacts in the society's possession not only contravenes the ethical standards current in archaeology but

also reinforces the commodification of archaeological material and in effect condones the traffic in antiquities, which is in opposition to the AIA's principal missions of research and education. As stewards of the past, no one associated with the AIA should be incentivizing the illicit trade in antiquities, which is a global criminal activity. High-profile sales such as these can have the unintended consequence of putting further at risk the archaeological heritage that the AIA has vowed to protect.

SHEILA DILLON  
Editor-in-Chief