

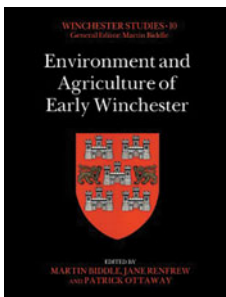
The twelfth chapter also focuses on something newly discovered and extends the time span covered by the volume. Davide Tanasi explores the reuse of a Bronze Age cemetery in Cozzo del Pantano in the region of Siracusa, long after it was used for burials. This reclaim is believed to be from Classical Antiquity to the Late Medieval period. It allows an interesting glimpse into archaeological fieldwork and explores the use of several techniques, but also highlights the limitations of the archaeological discipline. As the suggested date of reuse can often only be guessed due to lacking sufficient finds and, in most cases, there is no datable material at all and only general observed evidence that change and reuse occurred. The final chapter is very different from the others, yet also touches on the need for methodology, chronology and especially a common language in the research. Here, Santino Alessandro Cugno and Franco Dell'Aquila explore the Arched Blind Niches in Medieval Rupestrian architecture in Southern Italy. They examine several churches that were carved into caves, and the techniques and the fashions of their different niches, and offer several explanations about their construction, alongside an attempt to reorganise the terminology.

To conclude, this volume is diverse and interesting but, as often happens in such publications, the diversity means that the content is slightly different from what the title promises. In this case, its time span is broader, while geographically it is more limited. A better title would have been 'Essays on Greek and central Mediterranean archaeology from the Classical to the Medieval period'. In any case, the volume offers an interesting addition to the debate regarding what occurred after Rome fell as it brings forward new material, reanalyses the old, and strives for common language and methodological improvements in this field and period. With its many interesting topics and periods, readers will find it useful, which make it a must in the library of every university.

HAGGAI OLSHANETSKY
Department of Ancient History
University of Warsaw, Poland
✉ haggai1990@gmail.com

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MARTIN BIDDLE, JANE RENFREW & PATRICK OTTAWAY (ed.). 2018. *Environment and agriculture of early Winchester*. Oxford: Archaeopress; 978-180-32-7066-1 hardback £75.



Winchester is one of the most comprehensively excavated historic towns in England, with archaeology providing a valuable insight into its development from the Roman capital of the *civitas* of the Belgae to power base of the West Saxon kingdom. While there were important interventions in the decades immediately following the Second World War, the most extensive excavations of the walled city were those led by Martin Biddle between 1961 to 1971. Over this 11-year period, four sites at Cathedral Green, Lower Brook Street, Castle Yard and Wolvesey Palace were investigated in detail and more limited excavation was

carried out at 16 further locations. The book is based on palaeoenvironmental data derived from 10 of these sites, nine of which lie within the historic walls, and is the first wide-ranging study of this type to focus on a single historic town in Britain. This monograph has taken several decades to reach publication and some of the contributions were written some time ago, but it is still an important, insightful and engaging collection.

The volume is divided into three sections; the first provides the background, with the opening chapter focusing on Winchester itself and the excavation and sampling methodologies adopted by the investigators. This is a useful orientation for anyone who is not familiar with the previous publications on the excavations, published in a series of annual interim reports called the *Winchester Historic Town Atlas* and the Urban Archaeological Assessment. The second chapter casts the net wider to look at the region in which Winchester is located, reviewing elements such as geology, hydrology, soils and natural vegetation. This part of Hampshire is known for its chalk rivers and streams that provide unique ecological environments and has attracted persistent occupation throughout human history. These remarkable but delicate watercourses are today facing an existential threat from drought, intensive fisheries, pollution from agricultural run-off and the dumping of raw sewage.

In the second section of the volume, the written evidence takes centre stage with each of the contributions skilfully contrasting textual sources with the archaeological data. In Chapter 3, Debby Banham examines Ælfric of Enysham's *Nomina Herbarum* ('Names of plants'), a Latin–Old English glossary of terms to be used by students. Written at some point between 992 and 1002, the *Herbarum* has been used in the past to identify species of plants growing at that time but here Banham demonstrates that there are 21 plants cited in the text that currently have not yet been identified in the archaeological record of early medieval sites in England. In the following chapter, which surveys the medieval period at large, Derek Keene finds greater agreement between the archaeological evidence for plant remains and the documentary record. Keene makes it clear that heavy plant processing is probably behind the lack of archaeological material for herbs such as coriander and dye-plants like woad and madder but, on the flipside, archaeology does make visible wild fruits such as blackberry and raspberry that do not appear in the written sources. While most crops, fruit, and herbs occur in both textual and material forms, it is apparent the real diversity of the medieval environment becomes clearer only by combining sources. The section closes with a chapter on the elite gardens of the castle, Wolvesey Palace, and Eastgate House (Chapter 5) and a further contribution on the field crops of Hampshire (Chapter 6).

The archaeological evidence is the main focus in the third and final section, with seven chapters on subjects including pollen analysis (Chapter 7), the evidence for the utilisation of wood (Chapter 8) and insect fauna (Chapter 13). In this section, arguably, we gain the most developed picture of the plants and crops available in the city and how this varied over time, but we also get glimpses of organics used for different purposes such as fodder and bedding for animals. Notable across the Roman to medieval period is the persistent presence of wild plant species; however, there is also a lack of evidence for agricultural processing within Winchester, which suggests that grain was brought into the city as a finished product. Processing and storage of grain may have taken place within the suburbs, and arable fields

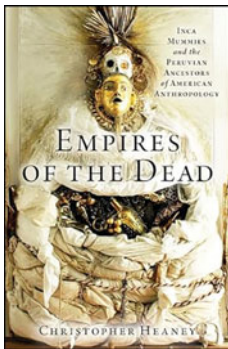
probably came up close to the city walls in numerous periods. There are hints too within the palaeoenvironmental assemblage of the early medieval and medieval periods of plants being used for medicinal purposes; opium seeds may have been used as an anaesthetic, and bistort was perhaps used specifically to remedy toothache.

In summary, this is an extremely informative and enjoyable series of contributions that neatly dovetails the archaeological and textual sources for the environmental history of Winchester. The range of chapters includes discrete themes or data alongside ‘bigger picture’ contributions that together generate a most useful and highly readable volume.

DUNCAN W. WRIGHT
School of History, Classics and Archaeology
Newcastle University, UK
✉ duncan.wright@ncl.ac.uk

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CHRISTOPHER HEANEY. 2023. *Empires of the dead: Inca mummies and the Peruvian ancestors of American anthropology*. New York: Oxford University Press; 978-0-19-754255-2 hardback £22.99.



In 1965, the Smithsonian in Washington DC, USA, opened the Hall of Physical Anthropology where visitors could find ‘the Skull Wall’, a display of 160 Peruvian crania meant to reveal and explain the growth of human population. Why are Peruvian human remains, particularly crania and ‘mummies’, disproportionately represented in Western museums and especially US institutions? That important question is the starting point of Christopher Heaney’s fascinating book *Empires of the dead*. Heaney uses an impressive variety of archives to trace a five-century-long history of the Andean dead, from powerful and agential ancestors to tools of Spanish colonial power, objects of natural science, curiosities at the

World’s Fairs, specimens for racist theories—but also a way for Peruvians to reclaim their past. Thoroughly researched, this book succeeds brilliantly in unravelling the complicated history and untangling issues surrounding Andean human remains in both Western and Peruvian museums.

The book is divided into three main sections, each sub-divided into three chapters. The first part (‘Opening, 1525–1795’) synthesises Andean and Inca ontology of death which is foundational for understanding the rest of the book. Here, Heaney also analyses grave re-opening by the Spanish and the manipulation of pre-Hispanic remains for their colonial endeavour. The author highlights the colonial roots of looting in the Andes, where destroying the dead was a tool used to colonise the living. But the Spanish not only destroyed Andean remains, they also transformed them into curiosities and specimens for study. In Chapter 3 (‘Mummifying Inca: colonial grave-opening and the racialization of Ancient