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Editorial JCA 14.2&3

The papers in this double issue of the *Journal of Conflict Archaeology* brings to publication material from across the world, with contributions relating to Europe, the UK, America, Africa and Central Asia. The mention of the UK as distinct from Europe is a reflection of current events; at the time of writing, Britain has left the European Union and is negotiating its future relationship with Europe and the rest of the world. Whatever one's personal opinions on the matter, whether it is a bold step into an exciting new future or an act of self-harm whose effects will be felt for generations, it is clear that the UK and Europe are currently on different trajectories. Rest assured, however, that this is the one and only mention of Brexit in the *Journal*. The feelings of those of us responsible for the production of the *Journal* may perhaps be glimpsed in the fact that the first group of papers puts the UK together with the European ones, but we couldn't possibly comment...

This first group of papers consists of three papers. The first, by Derwin Gregory, looks at the archaeology of what appears to be personal memorialisation on a RAF base in England. This personal aspect of the material hints at so much, from the impact on the individuals who were left behind as their friends fell in battle, to the way that public ceremonies of commemoration were not necessarily enough for the individual. The next paper is a very useful artefact paper by Julian Bennett looking at the saw-backed bayonet, a weapon that was the basis of a lot of anti-German propaganda. The paper shows how the bayonet was not intended to inflict terrible wounds and is not the equivalent of a dum-dum bullet, and that it was instead a practical tool for the pioneers. Finally for the papers in this group, Mirja Arnshav provides a discussion of the impact of guns on WWII refugees crossing the Baltic to Sweden to escape either the Red Army or the Nazis. This is a fascinating mixture of the history of the refugee process and of the impact of being armed on the refugees. There are some very interesting ideas within these papers that go far beyond the basic information they provide. Memorialisation tends to be a collective act even when looking at unofficial examples, and when memorialisation becomes collective, the individual has to become part of a narrative that is accepted by the group with a set of reactions that conform to a norm. This is easiest to see where the memorialisation was a public affair directed by the establishment; there is plenty of evidence of WWI veterans reacting against the public events organised in their honour. However, there can be an element of this reaction with unofficial situations such as street shrines. Gregory's paper presents evidence of material culture that certainly appears like an act of individual commemoration, something which is so often lost to history. There is a hint of the individual perspective in war poetry, but this was written for posterity and was intended as a public statement. Gregory has opened up the attempt of an individual or small group of men to commemorate their comrades in a situation where there is no attempt to make a public statement; the statement is made to themselves and the memory of those they lost.

Bennett's discussion of the saw-backed bayonet is a necessary corrective to the reputation that this bayonet developed as a terror weapon. This is an interpretation that still

appears in a lot of popular publications, so it is not an oddity that can be ignored. What the issue of the saw-backed bayonet demonstrates is quite how effective propaganda could be. Bennett shows that the reputation of the bayonet as a terrible weapon designed to inflict pain spread quickly throughout the Allied trenches. It led to threats to treat use of the bayonet as the equivalent of using dum-dum bullets, which would mean that any person captured with such a bayonet would be shot as a war criminal. The effect of this propaganda was to cause German troops to refuse to carry the bayonet and certainly acted as a successful psy-op on the part of the Allies. It shows how propaganda was an important weapon in WWI just as it was in WWII, and that it could have demonstrable impact in affecting enemy morale.

Arnshav's paper opens up an element of WWII that few in the West know about, the flooding of refugees into neutral Sweden from the Baltic states as people fled the Soviet occupation, the German occupation, and then the final Soviet advance in 1944-45. This is in itself a fascinating story, while the discussion of the carrying of weapons and the potential purposes they could have is a chilling exposure of the reality of trying to flee oppression by boat across dangerous seas. There is a lesson in there for the present day and our refugee crises. No one reading about the terrors of the Baltic night crossing on a smugglers' boat could think that refugees from the Middle East or Africa are anything other than desperate; in the face of this WWII example, to condemn modern refugees taking the same risks is to have no empathy or understanding at all. More than this, one of the most striking ideas within Arnshav's paper is the way that the nature of the individual is altered by the presence of a weapon. A refugee without a weapon is a subordinate, a supplicant to be given charity or spurned and mistreated according to the reaction of the local population. A refugee with a weapon is a threat and not a supplicant, a powerful figure to be treated with caution. Arnshav talks about the way that a weapon even affected the physical deportment of refugees; there is much food for thought in this for the conflict archaeologist of whatever period.

The second batch of papers moves the geographical scope outside Europe and takes in Central Asia, Africa, and the United States. The first of the group is Emily Boak's paper on the archaeology of conflict in the war zone of Afghanistan, looking at both the archaeology and the archaeological methodologies. The second paper, by Njabulo Chipangura and Keith Silika, deals with issues of exhuming bodies from mass graves in Zimbabwe, with a clash of world views and the issues that creates. Both papers represent conflicts that have not been covered previously in the *Journal* and we are excited to be able to expand our scope with their publication. The final paper is a look at Camp Lawton, a Confederate prisoner of war camp from the final stages of the American Civil War. McNutt and Jones' paper is a masterclass in answering historical questions through the use of archaeological material.

Emily Boak's paper discusses the difficulties of working in a live conflict zone where terrestrial fieldwork is far too dangerous to undertake. The research was accomplished using satellite imagery, which has been a sometimes controversial approach. The reason for this is

that the satellites are a part of a politically motivated system of control and observation that allows the US and Afghan military to target insurgents; the technology is seen as a tool of oppression and control. Whether or not that is a valid point, Boak notes that the same data can be used for other purposes, and she argues it is possible to map the control mechanisms and thus reveal the authoritarian landscape that the military create. At the same time, she is able to map the military structures of the past Afghan landscapes and start to look at how the historic and contemporary military landscapes overlap. The paper also demonstrates that it is possible to work on areas of active conflict without creating unacceptable risks. Conflict Archaeology is frequently hazardous because of unexploded material and any project on a modern conflict has to take health and safety seriously; working without properly qualified UXO officers is criminally dangerous if there is any risk at all of unexploded ordnance. When the fighting is still ongoing and there are risks from IEDs on roads, the risks for fieldwork are unacceptable. However, satellite imagery means that effective survey and mapping of the archaeological resource is possible without risk to life or limb; it reminds us that there is no reason for macho risk-taking to undertake archaeological projects.

Chipangura and Silika's paper is a fascinating insight into events that are little known outside Zimbabwe. The atrocities committed by Rhodesian security forces, and the later atrocities of the 5th Brigade, have rarely been discussed at all, while few people are aware of the attempts to recover the victims of the past 60 years in Zimbabwe. The paper is interesting purely from that perspective, but the circumstances of the recoveries are unique. It is fairly normal for such projects to be a theatre of conflict between the researchers' scientific and forensic perspective, the families' personal perspective, and the state's political concerns. What is unusual is to have the addition of a state-sponsored non-rational and supernatural perspective alongside some very murky politics and political sensitivities. Many archaeologists have faced having to deal with people whose relationship with archaeological material is perhaps rather more founded in faith or mythology than academic rigour, but few have had to face the situation in Zimbabwe where the supernatural is given more weight by officials than the scientific. One can only admire the fortitude of the Zimbabwean archaeologists having to deal with these circumstances.

The third article in this section is Ryan McNutt and Emily Jones' analysis of the distribution of artefacts from Camp Lawton in Georgia. This ongoing project is looking at the camp that took a large number of the inmates of the infamous Andersonville camp, also known as Fort Sumter. Although the archaeology is largely ephemeral and created by a short occupation, there is a good density of contemporary material scattered across the site, recovered by metal detection and by excavation. This material was used to look at the guard-prisoner dynamic and to try to address the questions that arose over Andersonville about supply issues and whether the malnutrition and appalling conditions were unavoidable in the dying days of the American Civil War. McNutt and Jones looked at the distribution of nails across the site, and the results seem to suggest that the guards were far better supplied than the prisoners. The ability of archaeology to give an answer to a question that history has

failed to answer is very clear from this work. This is a testimony for the meticulous fieldwork undertaken by Georgia Southern University, firstly by Lance Greene and currently by Ryan McNutt. This is a testament to the effectiveness of studying material culture in understanding historical questions.

The final element in the volume is a review by Camilla Damlund and Sophie McMillan of the 2019 Postgraduate Conflict Archaeology conference (PGCA), held in Glasgow in October 2019 over two days. The *Journal* has not often published conference reviews, although we did publish a review of the very first PGCA conference back in 2012 (Norris 2012). As this was the first time that the PGCA conference had returned to Glasgow, we felt that it would be appropriate to have a review of this return, not least to see how the discipline has changed in the intervening period. The review gives an excellent overview of the conference and the state of Conflict Archaeology as a whole. The authors are both female and early career researchers, so one of the issues they explore is the position of women in Conflict Archaeology. This is a concern for the *Journal* and their comments are very welcome. One thing they identified was the safe space that the PGCA can provide both for female researchers and for early career researchers. They note the welcoming and inclusive approach of the conference, both in terms of organisers and of participants. They also noted that the percentage of women as first authors or sole authors of the presentations was 37%. This is far too low and requires improvement, but it is a distinct improvement on the 23% that the *Fields of Conflict* conferences had attained by 2016 when we did an analysis of the figures, which matched exactly the percentage of women authors (many of whom were not first authors) in papers published by the *Journal*; this was noted in the editorial of the first issue of this volume (Banks 2019).

What is very encouraging is the fact, noted by Damlund and McMillan, that the keynotes were evenly divided between men and women, and more women than men were actually involved in delivering these keynotes. This is a credit to the organisers of that conference (Marc Conaghan, Jesper Ericsson, and Euan Loarridge) because this is something that can be controlled. A conference organiser cannot easily balance the ratio of presenters if the call for papers produces an imbalance. What they can do is avoid 'manels' and balance the keynotes. These are the things that start breaking down barriers to participation, when people at the start of their careers can see a balance at senior levels. The PGCA 2019 did an excellent job in this regard, but it should not be seen as men coming to the rescue of disadvantaged women. Men often wonder what they can do to help or what is expected of them; quite simply, it is to be aware of the privileged position of men in Archaeology and academia generally, to avoid making things worse by organising or participating in manels, and generally not to hinder women as they are resetting the balance through their own efforts. For the *Journal of Conflict Archaeology*, we are aiming for an editorial panel that is balanced (a work still in progress), and we are encouraging women to submit papers to us. There is a lot of relevant work on all aspects of conflict archaeology being undertaken by female academics at the moment, and we would encourage them to use the *Journal* as a

vehicle. Our dream is to get papers covering all the many aspects of conflict archaeology, so to all women conflict archaeologists out there: Bring us your papers!

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