

Art and Archaeology

Two books came out in this review period that set out to investigate monuments that were once considered amongst the wonders of the ancient world but of which no trace remains today: the Pharos of Alexandria is reconstructed by Andrew Michael Chugg and the Colossus at Rhodes explored by Nathan Badoud.¹ These monuments were initiated within a few years of each other and both were completed around 283 BC. The Colossus was short lived, destroyed by earthquake in the 220s BC; the lighthouse lasted much longer, perhaps surviving several earthquakes in an increasingly depleted state, the initial, most damaging one occurring in the late eighth century CE. Their complete absence from the physical landscape since then has always fuelled imaginative and academic speculation as to their form. Both authors spend considerable time on the legacy of these speculations and the way that subsequent fantasies have shaped our imagination, particular in terms of the Colossus of Rhodes straddling the harbour, a foot on each promontory. Maerten van Heemskerck's 1570 illustrations of the *Octo mundi miracula* were key to the creation of this fantasy, one that Badoud traces not only in European tradition but also to early nineteenth-century Japan and of course to the Statue of Liberty with her rayed head. Heemskerck's image of the Pharos was equally influential. It shows the Pharos as a spiral tower springing from a wide cylindrical base leading up to a colonnaded rotunda from which spews smoke, omitting the sculpture that is so prominent on ancient coins.

Both Badoud and Chugg set out with a seeming confidence that they can set right the mistakes of Heemskerck with greater scrutiny of the evidence that will uncover the details others have missed. Though the books cover very similar territory for their respective monuments, seeking to shed light on the monuments' form, location, and creator, they could not be more different in tone and approach. Badoud's exploration of the Colossus of Rhodes is thoroughly academic: inscriptions are compiled and scrutinized; the history of scholarship on each question unpacked; the reasoning for coming down on one side or another of conflicting sources meticulously explained; and ideas that cannot be fully verified from extant sources are backed up with comparative evidence. Occasionally, the reasoning seems a bit suspect. Attempting to disprove a story that the last remains of the Colossus were purchased by a Jewish trader from Emesa, Badoud says that the story's insistence that it took 900 or more camels to carry away its bronze is incredible since it took only twenty-four elephants to cart away Nero's colossus in Rome (72). That latter number comes from the *Historia Augusta*, which is hardly the most reliable of sources.

Badoud does not attempt a reconstruction of the Colossus, rather he compiles a list of what he sees as its key features: that it depicted Helios, was seventy cubits high, made of bronze (probably not gilded), and had its arms and legs together. Given the influence of Heemskerck's Colossus with his legs astride the harbour, this latter point is perhaps

¹ *The Pharos Lighthouse in Alexandria. Second Sun and Seventh Wonder of Antiquity*. By Andrew Michael Chugg. London, New York, Routledge, 2024. Pp. xiv + 215. 79 black and white illustrations. Hardback, £150. ISBN: 978-1-032-56936-9. *The Colossus of Rhodes. Archaeology of a Lost Wonder*. By Nathan Badoud. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2024. Pp. xx + 269. 116 black and white and colour illustrations. Hardback £90, ISBN: 978-0-19-890373-4.

the most important of Badoud's conclusions. One of the reasons that the form of the Colossus is such an enigma is because we do not actually really know what a colossus is. On the basis of inscriptions, Badoud suggests that the term only came to mean something big after the Colossus at Rhodes became so famous as to obscure the term's original meanings. He interprets its original meaning to have indicated a statue still and rigid, with closed legs; a statue that fixes a being in place. This might match not only the necessarily sturdy form of the Colossus but its purpose. It was built by the Rhodians after victory against the Antigonids in 304 BCE, its rigid form serving to fix the success and the lasting nature of Rhodes' land and sea empire.

By contrast, Chugg has no such restraint in creating his own vision of the Pharos, employing both evidence and rhetorical technique to support his interpretation. The text is written in a much more tabloid way, with a love of alliteration and repeated phallic metaphors that start in the very first paragraph of chapter one and are repeated throughout, broken only by a moment in which the erstwhile phallic lighthouse becomes the 'spiralling teat on a cylindrical nipple' (8). I found these metaphors a little wearing, but that is not to dismiss Chugg's attempts to write and entertain a broad audience. There are some nice features here such as the bullet-pointed conclusions to many of the chapters that clearly sum up the argument and keep the text accessible. Rhetoric also guides the way in which Chugg sets himself as the authoritative voice against, not named authors or artists, but 'everyone' who wrongly insists that the fire was located in a *tholos*-style lantern (as imagined by Heemskerck) and 'everybody' (141) who thinks a lighthouse must have a rotating beam (which surely, to be as rhetorical, nobody expects of the Alexandrian Pharos).

Whilst, like Badoud, Chugg presents all the literary sources that mention the Pharos, his mode of interrogating them is rather different, choosing an aspect to run with and then building from there, often producing no additional or comparative evidence to back up claims. By the end of a discussion in which the statue at the top of the lighthouse is identified as Helios (persuasive), then as Alexander-Helios (possibly), we end up with the idea that the Trajan on top of Trajan's Column was also a Helios (130) despite no evidence whatsoever to suggest Trajan was inclined towards such costumes.

The use of visual evidence seems particularly problematic. On the basis of coin evidence, Chugg concludes that the tritons on the Pharos had heftily appendaged genitalia, a claim supported by the author's own drawings. However, no evidence is produced to show that tritons were ever shown in this way in art elsewhere. By the Roman period (in which the coins were produced), however, tritons are almost always shown with forelegs of almost Tyrannosaurus Rex-style, useless proportions. That is not to claim that the Hellenistic era tritons of the Pharos did have forelegs or that they cannot have had phalli, just to say that there is little to support Chugg's argument that the appendages he has drawn signalled the virility of Alexandria. An oversized, floppy penis is no use to anybody and more usually evoked hilarity and disdain in ancient audiences rather than awe and respect.

Elsewhere, Chugg responds to the fact that on some coins the statue crowning the Pharos has an orb in its hand and on others apparently not, by deciding that the latter must record moments when the orb had been taken down for 'maintenance activity' (132). The idea that each craftsperson wandered down to the harbour, observed from life the Pharos, and then returned to work to translate what they had seen directly into

image just does not match the work of the mints, which was surely to reproduce an 'ideal' view of the monument's most important features that best served their patrons.

Chugg's eventual vision, of a statue of Helios holding in his hand an orb that was essentially a giant oil lamp (a real 'second sun'), is original and daring (qualities that were certainly shared by the Ptolemaic court), though one wonders why Pliny would not have tried a bit harder with his own description of the Pharos and how exactly it worked had it been quite so innovative. In the end, the problem with Chugg's work is not that it may be wrong, because certainly NO reconstruction of either the Pharos or the Colossus – imagined, virtual, or architectural – will be completely right, nor is it in its boldness to think completely differently, but it is in not better supporting his ideas so as to convince more sceptical readers.

The biggest difference between the approaches of the two authors can be seen in the closing chapters in which they both turn to plans for the possible physical reconstruction of these wonders. Several suggestions have been floated for rebuilding the Colossus at Rhodes (most recently in 2015) and Badoud looks on aghast, considering the proposed design for the Colossus, which plays exactly to the popular imagination of a huge Helios with his legs astride, as 'a monument of both ignorance and deculturalization' (217). Chugg, however, is not the commentator on but rather the advocate for rebuilding the Pharos according to his design, though acknowledging that the only way this might happen is in the realm of virtual archaeology.

From two enormous waterside monuments, we turn to domestic water features. Ginny Wheeler's book aims to investigate the water displays installed in *domus* and *villae* across the Roman West between the third to the sixth centuries.² To some extent, these water features perpetuate a preoccupation with using water to assert social status, celebrate the homeowner's exploitation of natural resources, and create impressive environments, but anybody who has walked into the Domus of Cupid and Psyche at Ostia and wondered why anybody would devote so much of a modestly sized home to a gigantic marble fountain would recognize that water plays a distinctive role in later homes. The book traces these particular Late-Antique fashions. In later houses, water features escape the confines of increasingly elaborate fountains and basins – entire dining room floors might be flooded, as in a couple of houses in Cuicul, North Africa. The most memorable of the examples is probably from Piazza Armerina, where an eight-metre-wide hemicycle fountain with three semicircular niches faced a huge triconch dining room across an oval peristyle, the two joined conceptually by a parade of fountain basins that marched between them, perhaps even allowing the flooding of the peristyle floor. Again and again, the importance of such water features is reinforced by sculpture, wall paintings, and mosaics that depict marine mythology or watery themes, such as fish-stocked depths.

The attention paid to how the features worked and the practicalities of installing features in pre-existing space (the pipes that needed to be laid, the floors and walls that had to be rearranged; the taps required) elucidates the effort involved and helps us think how these features operated. For example, how could anybody conduct a conversation in the 'Serapeum' dining grotto at Tivoli (a villa whose glamorous and ingenious use of

² *Water Displays in Domestic Spaces across the Late Roman West*. By Ginny Wheeler. Oxford, Philadelphia, Oxbow, 2025. Pp. xiv + 222. 100 black and white and colour illustrations. Hardback £45, ISBN: 979-8-88-857112-5.

water Wheeler considers an enormous inspiration for later water features across the West), given the roar that the water of its cascade would have produced? In this case, Wheeler considers how this crashing water was harnessed to suit the theatrical spectacle of imperial dining (remember Richard Beacham and Hugh Denard's recent exploration of the 'theatricalism' of Roman dinner parties),³ to be turned on and off at the most dramatic moments, such as the entrance of the emperor (14).

But Wheeler goes far beyond recognizing water features as key aesthetic and architectural fancies of individual houses. Another important aspect of the book's emphasis on the workings of these features is that it looks beyond individual properties to consider neighbourhood supply. Looking at late Ostia, Wheeler investigates how the owners of adjacent properties must have been cooperating in the maintenance of the civic water supply as it reached their part of town, adding another dimension of neighborhood identity to those considered in *Neighbourhoods and City Quarters in Antiquity. Design and Experience*, another volume we recently reviewed.⁴ With only so much water to hand, property owners installing new features would have been affecting others' displays if they diverted too much water. The neighbourhood Wheeler investigates has a brilliant example of Roman utilitarian thinking: the water from a fabulous semicircular public fountain drains into a latrine arranged around the back of its curved rear wall.

Here, too, Wheeler is able to show how these late installations relied on adapting and reusing not only existing piping but also materials salvaged from the remains of previous building splurges. As a small example, the Domus del Protiro had reused a stone bearing a funerary epitaph of an imperial freedman as a drain cover, cutting teardrop holes through the middle of the inscription. It was laid in a prominent position in the house, between the vestibule and fountain basin, whose water it drains, revealing no qualms about the second-hand nature of the stone.

Chapter 5 considers specifically how water features helped control the domestic environment, using as case studies two villas in Baetica at El Ruedo and Quinta das Longas. El Ruedo was well served with water: it was near fresh springs, a dammed river, and had a large cistern for collecting rainwater. In its late phase, perhaps dated to the later third or early fourth century CE, the villa's dining room was remodelled to feature a fountain in elevation and a water-equipped *stibadium*, whilst the peristyle court onto which it looked was given a fashionably biapsidal basin surrounded by a garden, replacing a previously mosaiced surface. Thinking systematically about how the winds and sun affected different spaces, Wheeler is able to consider how the new water features helped regulate the environment. The new peristyle configuration would have had a positive effect on the villa's ambience, absorbing more of the sun's rays through solar radiation and evaporative cooling from the water in the basin than the mosaic surface it replaced. Meanwhile, in the dining room, the cascade fountain behind their backs cooled diners huddled on the *stibadia* (and Wheeler's description of the intimacy of reclining on a *stibadium* does make you wonder why the Romans ever thought they were

³ Richard C. Beacham and Hugh Denard, *Living Theatre in the Ancient Roman House. Theatricalism in the Domestic Sphere* (Cambridge, 2023). Reviewed in Shelley Hales, 'Art and Archaeology', *G&R* 70.2 (2023), 343–5.

⁴ Annette Haug, Adrian Hielscher, and Anna-Lena Krüger (eds.), *Neighbourhoods and City Quarters in Antiquity. Design and Experience* (De Gruyter, 2023). Reviewed in Shelley Hales, 'Art and Archaeology', *G&R* 71.2 (2024), 313–14.

a good replacement for *triclinia*). Wheeler notes how the two new features were connected separately to the supply, presumably reflecting their different consumption needs. The peristyle basin was in need of constant supply to keep it full, but the features in the dining room, as at Tivoli, were presumably only needed for creating a dramatic environment during dinner parties. The perceived value of these dramatic effects seems to be demonstrated by the choices made when the water features needed fixing: repairs around the *stibadium* became more and more intrusive on the decoration of the room, leaving lead pipes on view and ugly cuts in the decorative floors. Water was clearly more than a nice addition to late homes in the West.

Many of the same villas explored by Wheeler reappear in Beth Munro's book, *Recycling the Roman Villa*, during the stage after their late florescences, when they were being dismantled.⁵ These villas' extravagant water features are now sources for lead piping that can be melted and reused; pools are used as depositories for rubbish; and the extant water supplies have become necessary for craftspeople to prepare materials and clean tools. Here we meet again the villa at El Ruedo, but this time it is equipped with installations for metalworking and utilitarian water tanks. The fancy peristyle basin is now empty and filled with a dump of marble sculpture, presumably eventually destined for a lime kiln (165).

The topic of reuse and recycling clearly meets contemporary concerns and we might place Munro's book alongside other recently reviewed books on recycling and reuse: Sitz's book on the reuse of temple inscription stones and Cheung's on the life cycle of *dolia*, for example.⁶ Contemporary preoccupations not only provide a theme but the relevant theory arising in other disciplines provide a framework in which we can discuss these issues as they relate to antiquity: here Munro draws on models of the circular economy. The key point of Munro's work is to reframe what are usually described as squatter or ransacking visitors, who leave traces in the remains of the villas, as wrecking crews and specialist craftspeople brought into systematically dismantle and move on the precious metals and stones of which the villa is made.

The prevalence of recycling and reuse in late antiquity came not only because so many abandoned buildings offered opportunity but because supplies of some of the materials they contained were becoming harder to source, as supply chains and exploitation of quarries and mines weakened. Using the example of the villa at San Giovanni di Ruoti in southern Italy, Munro moves from top to bottom of the building to elucidate just how much reclaimable 'stuff' the villa contained: over 90,000 kg of roof tile; huge quantities of wood in the roof beams; the stone and brick of walls and the marble veneer that covered them; window glass; floor tiles and tesserae; underfloor hypocaust *pilae*; and finally lead pipes. These quantities are then used to calculate, given the size of installations found elsewhere, the time it might take to process all that material: the lead alone might have taken one to two months.

⁵ *Recycling the Roman Villa. Material Salvage and the Medieval Circular Economy*. By Beth Munro. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2024. Pp. xvi + 262. 42 black and white illustrations + 19 tables. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-1-00-9475587.

⁶ Anna M. Sitz, *Pagan Inscriptions, Christian Viewers. The Afterlives of Temples and Their Texts in the Late Antique Eastern Mediterranean* (Oxford, 2023). Reviewed in Shelley Hales, 'Art and Archaeology' *G&R* 71.1 (2024), 160–1. Caroline Cheung, *Dolia. The Containers that Made Rome an Empire of Wine* (Princeton, Oxford, 2024). Reviewed in Shelley Hales, 'Art and Archaeology' *G&R* 72.1 (2025), 156–8.

The evidence for the exploitation of this material comes from evidence for the sorting and storing of the dismantled materials and for the installations used to process them. In many villas there is clear evidence that the materials had been carefully sorted: at Milhaud, *dolia* were filled with broken glass of sorted colours; at Monte Gelato a random collection of iron objects seems to have been deliberately kept together. The villa at Fishbourne provides evidence of extensive sorting, with different areas of the north wing clearly designated as spots for different materials, such as *tesserae*. The lengths to which demolition crews might go to rescue as much usable material as possible is well demonstrated at Saint-Émilion, where a marble column was split open in order to retrieve the lead pipe inside (85). Meanwhile, kilns, tools, and debris provide traces of the process of transforming what had been gathered. At Faragola, six different metalworking areas were apparently simultaneously in use: one for lead, one for copper or bronze, and the others for blacksmithing. This intensity and diversity of activity speak to a professional, coordinated multi-skilled team.

As the book progresses, the reader might begin to get increasingly impatient to know who these teams actually were. I would have liked to see the direct representation of key literary/epigraphic evidence that supported the idea of a recognized group of specialist workers. It is a bit frustrating to find that for the evidence for key facts, such as that building demolishers had their own guild or that they worshipped Silvanus, we are referred in the notes to other secondary reading. Readers might feel more engaged if they could see the evidence for themselves. More pressingly, one must also ask how relevant would this evidence be to every dismantling team in this book. The case studies cover a huge geographical range, right across the western empire, and a similarly broad chronological range, from the fourth to the seventh century, and yet the book seems to suggest an apparent uniformity of practice and organization. To be fair, Munro is open from the start about the decision deliberately to steer clear of the cultural or ethnic identities of the teams, and I have some sympathy with this decision, given how it would probably overshadow the emphasis on process. Nevertheless, the circumstances of life during that fourth–seventh century window were very different in different parts of the western empire. By the time El Ruedo was dismantled, Spain was under Vandal ownership. Munro does eventually address this issue directly in the final chapters of the book, where some demolishers are imagined to have been Germanic. Had this come earlier, it might have encouraged more emphasis on the diversity of practice.

Culture and ethnicity is key to Hallie Franks's *Ancient Sculpture and Twentieth-Century American Womanhood*, which offers a great example of material reception studies.⁷ Studies of the reception of Venus are hardly novel and the ancient sculptures with which this volume opens – the Aphrodite of Knidos, the Medici Venus, and the Venus de Milo – are all well mulled over. However, this book not only considers their influence in a new area (twentieth-century American popular culture, particularly health and lifestyle magazines), but reframes what their receptions should look like in the twenty-first century. The author offers a critique of these sculptures that moves beyond binary gender thinking and considers racial experience and, whilst it ostensibly looks at the

⁷ *Ancient Sculpture and Twentieth-Century American Womanhood. Venus Envy*. By Hallie Franks. London, New York, Bloomsbury Academic, 2025. Pp. ix + 241. 30 black and white illustrations + 1 table. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-1-35-046986-0.

early twentieth century, each chapter opens with a contemporary popular culture example: Kim Kardashian, Beyoncé, and Britney all play a role here.

From the start of the book, Franks challenges terms that have become deep seated in Classics, problematizing the idea of the 'male gaze' and the distinction between nudity and nakedness. One of the weaknesses of books taking a reception angle is that authors sometimes duck giving their own interpretations of the ancient material whose reimaginings they are tracing, but Hallie Franks steps up, offering a fresh critique of the power of the Aphrodite of Knidos, whose absent presence is always at the start of a story of the naked woman. In her interpretation, the *aidos* (shame/modesty) shown by Aphrodite, apparently turning her head from an imagined male gaze, is an *aidos* not of the shame felt by an observed woman but a way of instilling appropriate *aidos* in visitors, reminding them of the appropriate response to the power of a deity.

Having looked at the three most famous ancient Venus sculptures, the book turns to the birth of health movements in the early twentieth century. Franks reveals the steps by which the 'ideal' sculptural body came to be confused with an archetypal 'real' body and by which white marble changed from being misleadingly understood as symptomatic of classical taste to even more misleadingly being used to demand that this real body must be white-skinned. Franks does not shy away from the racism and white nationalism that underlie the material she is scrutinizing. It is a tendency that starts much earlier: the eighteenth-century Sable Venus may affect the pose of the white Venus but in her thin underwear she is overtly sexualized: she is 'sexual rather than aesthetic' (86). Part of the process by which Venus's body descended from ideal to real came about during the development of ethnology in which Greek statues started serving as stand-ins for the populations that produced them: their bodies and, particularly, their faces and heads measured and sketched to demonstrate ideal (white) anthropometry. In the early twentieth century, at the moment when Americans become anxious that modern life was leading the population away from this ideal, such sketches became aspirational models. A belief that contemporary fashions and increasingly leisured lifestyles were leading the population into decline drove some to seek a corrective, based on the imagined lifestyle of the Greeks, whose bodies and minds were equally trained. Franks shows how Venus played into these concerns in several ways. First, she explores how the anti-corset movement contrasted the thick, 'natural' waist of naked Venuses with the unnatural squashing of ribs and organs caused by women squeezing themselves into their corsets. Second, we are shown how Venus's unfettered body suited her to the promotion of physical activity and fitness. Third, Venus became an actual measurement model. Young, white women competed to be crowned as the perfect specimen of womanhood because their vital statistics allegedly matched those of the Venus de Milo. Of course, they did not, not least because that Venus is nearly 6' 8". Instead, as Franks shows, the measurements attributed to her changed frequently at the whim of judges or editors.

As much as the definition of American beauty through Venus was implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) a definition of WHITE beauty, Franks pays close attention to the ways in which magazines, aimed at a growing Black middle class, sold aspirational health and beauty to their female readers and found a space for Blackness within the dominant ideals inspired by the Venuses. Pauline E. Hopkins, the editor of *The Colored American Magazine*, picked up on a suggestion that, actually, classical sculptors used enslaved

Africans as their models in a move to locate that ideal beauty in Blackness. Another Black magazine, *Half Century*, advised its readers how to present themselves according to the same values sold to white women. Stories published in both publications repeatedly used Venus as a model and metaphor for the beauty of their heroines.

Of course, whatever their ethnicity, no American woman of the early twentieth century could hope to emulate the power of Venus. She was all too easily reminded of her mortality and a patriarchal subjugation that the Venus of Knidos's divinity could allow her to escape. Men were careful not to allow women to go too far in the pursuit of physical liberation and bodily strength. Such women were not Venuses, but Amazons, who became cast as the unsavoury, barbaric antitype of the Venus ideal, an ideal that could quickly be retracted by those who seemed so eager to offer it.

The final book, *Roman Bioarchaeology*, is a volume of eleven contributions edited by Elizabeth A. Bews and Kathryn E. Marklein.⁸ The editors have several aims for the book: to introduce a wider audience to their specialisms; to showcase how social theory can shape their work (and the contribution bioarchaeologists can make to matters of identity and experience); and to consider how what is a relatively young field, at least in the terms of Classics, should develop. They have a lot to balance here and deserve great credit for their curatorship of the volume, ensuring a breadth in terms of coverage of different aspects of bioarchaeological investigation, social theories, and geographical range, ensuring that much of the Roman world is included, from Italy to Britain to the Levant. On the first point, the book does an admirable job, as the authors of the various chapters carefully explain their specialism, and the complex science behind it, to a wider audience. Tracey L. Prowse, for example, gives a particularly accessible explanation of stable isotope analysis. I particularly enjoyed Marissa L. Ledger and Piers D. Mitchell's contribution on paleoparasitology, which looks at the parasites and worms that made themselves at home inside and on the surface of ancient populations: headlice at Herculaneum; pubic lice in Britain; and roundworm and whipworms all over. Many of these parasites spread easily where humans lived near fecal matter, a situation for huge numbers of the population, with the result that suffering nausea and diarrhea was 'likely commonplace in the Roman empire' (158).

The second strand of the book sets out to show how the application of social theory illuminates the material. This approach rather contradicts the opening assertion that 'bioarchaeological perspectives invite the people in the Roman period to "speak for themselves"' (1). Of course they do not and social theory becomes a way of making ancient people speak to us in a way we are willing or able to hear them. Throughout the volume, contributors take on different social theories to frame their work. Sometimes this can be a bit misleading: the chapter on violence by Mario Novak, Mario Carić, and Anna J. Osterholtz gives a long overview of violence in the Roman world, focusing largely on gladiators, so it is a bit of a surprise when the case study is actually about the disposal of enemy soldiers following the late-third century Battle of Mursa on the Danubian limes. The case study is utterly compelling, but could have been better

⁸ *Roman Bioarchaeology. Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Life and Death in the Roman World*. Edited by Elizabeth A. Bews and Kathryn E. Marklein. Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 2025. Pp. xiii + 280. 23 black and white illustrations + 10 tables. Hardback \$90, ISBN: 978-1-68-340477-4.

supported by a discussion of current thinking about military rather than gladiatorial violence. Sex and gender, perhaps unsurprisingly, lead the way. As with Franks, bioarcheologists have also adapted to a non-binary world, tricky in a discipline in which traditionally skeletons have always been sexed decisively as male or female. Leslie Quade and Rebecca Gowland demonstrate that sex is just as culturally conditioned a term as gender and that sexual difference is not constant across different populations. Throughout the volume, gender is demonstrated to have affected people's life experiences in the Roman world in ways perhaps we have not considered before. Readers are probably not surprised that men were more mobile than women, suffered more skeletal damage from activities and accidents, and had more exposure to light. They might be more taken aback to find that several chapters point to the likelihood of children beginning to be fed different diets as they reached adolescence.

The most fascinating aspect of the book is how big issues such as migration and colonization show up in the lives of individuals. Rebecca Pitt and Mary Lewis, by comparing Iron Age and Roman era samples in Britain, can begin to see some of the effects on the population of conquest and the growth of an urban infrastructure. Children in the countryside seem to suffer poorer nutrition than their Iron-Age predecessors, a fact tentatively put down to the diversion of resources to the cities and the military. Meanwhile urban life brings with it increased exposure to lead and allows the easier spread of communicable diseases such as tuberculosis (which the chapter by Serena Viva, Gabriele Scorrano, Olga Rickards, Pier Francesco Fabbri, and Fabio Macciardi shows was very high in that densest of dense urban spaces, Rome). Some of these diseases, such as thalassemia, are introductions from migrant populations.

In terms of the call to determine the future of Roman bioarchaeology, the editors set out three major themes they would like to see embraced: the emphasis of individual agency and cultural interconnectivity in the Roman Empire; the adoption of a holistic approach in examining skeletal evidence; and the pursuit of interdisciplinarity (257). They also consider what is needed in order effectively to pursue these themes, in particular pointing to the need for a more systematic gathering of data so that sites can be compared and larger data sets collected. Throughout, this book showcases the state of a discipline, but it is perhaps a comment from Rebecca Redfern's chapter – which calls for an 'archaeology of the heart' that considers people with empathy – that most sharply characterizes the book as a work of the early twenty-first century.

SHELLEY HALES

University of Bristol, UK
Shelley.Hales@bristol.ac.uk

doi:[10.1017/S0017383525100417](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383525100417)

This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.