



Archaeological Review from Cambridge

Department of Archaeology, University of Cambridge, Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3DZ, United Kingdom

Call for Papers

Desert Archaeology

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Theme Editors: Camila Alday and Sara Morrisset

Although deserts cover more than twenty per cent of the world, few efforts have been made to conduct a cross-cultural analysis of how humans have adapted to these arid climes. Inspired by the seminal work, *Desert Peoples: Archaeological Perspectives* (2005) by P. Veth et al., this volume aims to broaden current case studies beyond the scope of hunter-gatherer societies and apply new theoretical perspectives in archaeological research to the study of desert landscapes. Notably, deserts provide access to well-preserved archaeological records of perishable materials that are not often available in other archaeological contexts. This material record enriches our understanding of the people living in these environments, while also enabling cross-cultural exploration of the history of desert peoples. Ultimately, this volume seeks to address human adaptations to this extreme environment from a global perspective by examining and the long-term social dynamics of the diverse range of communities that inhabit these areas

Volume 34.1 of the *Archaeological Review from Cambridge* encourages perspectives from archaeology, history, anthropology, ecology and philosophy to discuss how humans have inhabited desert landscapes and their different cultural trajectories. It not only considers deserts as places of accumulated records, but also as meaningful landscapes that preserve human action. Contributors might wish to explore, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- ❖ *Phenomenology of deserts.* How do people inhabit deserts? Rather than viewing desert landscapes as harsh places to merely survive, this question seeks to explore the different sensory experiences these landscapes evoke. We challenge researchers to think more broadly about the human experience of living in deserts and how cultures have flourished in desert landscapes for centuries.
- ❖ *Economic strategies and subsistence in desert areas.* How variable is the development of cultural responses and technologies to cope with desert environments? This question seeks to explore the potential deserts have as an archive of human behavioural diversity. Also, it aims to attract studies of different human pathways and sophisticated adaptive systems to arid lands.
- ❖ *Water as an essential resource.* How does water's role as a critical resource in arid lands impact cultural beliefs about the element? Water is often considered the most critical and vitally important aspect of desert environments. Exploring the cultural beliefs of water can include water as a source of life, as a symbol of power, and as a meditative element.
- ❖ *Desert routes.* How do people traverse deserts by caravans and other means? Deserts are materialized settings that serve not only as the backdrop of human movement, but also as active contributors. Studies of desert landscape routes involve analyzing how paths are connected to networks of physical and cultural references. The movement of people, embedded in the desert through these networks, is essential to understanding the experience of dwelling in the desert.

Papers of no more than 4000 words should be submitted before **1 August 2018** to Camila Alday (cca28@cam.ac.uk) and Sara Morrisset (sm2114@cam.ac.uk), for publication in April 2019. Potential contributors are encouraged to contact the editors with questions or to further discuss their ideas.

More information about the *Archaeological Review from Cambridge*, including back issues and submission guidelines, may be found online at <http://arc.soc.srccf.net/>.